

problem. From studying the trajectory and behavior of the bullet inflicting the massive head wound, I had determined that it could not have originated from Oswald's Carcano. The line of flight was from left to right and up to down, ruling out the possibility of Oswald firing that shot. The explosive effect, small entry wound, and enormous skull destruction indicated it was a small caliber, high velocity ^(bullet) ~~bullet~~ in the 3000 feet per second class. Where was the gun and who fired the shot? Another uncanny coincidence took place. A friend of mine, Warner Minetree, walked into my gunshop one Friday evening. He handed me William Manchester's book Death of a President. I thumbed rapidly through the pages, stopping by chance at the beginning of chapter III, "Market." Manchester was describing the chaos in the motorcade immediately after the shooting. I had an eerie sensation, a sudden chill. There, near the middle of the page in italics, in a single sentence, was what I was looking for. Manchester described one of the Secret Service bodyguards in the "Queen Mary" as pointing the barrel of an AR-15 aimlessly around [1, p. 159]. Here, perhaps, was the loose thread that would unravel the mystery. Even though Secret Service chief James Rowley had refused to tell me one of his agents was armed with this type weapon, it had already been published in a national best seller. Why the deception? What were they hiding? On March 23, 1977, I discovered the location of the weapon.

Manchester described the location of the agents in the Queen Mary:

Agent George Hickey sat in the left rear, agent Glen Bennet in the right rear. On the seat between them lay an AR-15 .223 automatic rifle, with a muzzle velocity so powerful that should a bullet strike a man's chest it would blow his head off. [1, p. 134]

*At the
the shot
were fired!*

SS 100 X, the Presidential car, District of Columbia license number GG 300. Its six passengers were in their usual places: Kellerman beside Greer; the Connallys in the jump seats, John to the right of Nellie; the Kennedys in the rear, with the roses between them. Four motorcycles, two on each side, flanked the rear of GG 300.

Halfback, the follow-up convertible, District license number GG 678. Agent Sam Kinney, at the wheel, kept his eyes on the back of the President's head. Emory Roberts, Halfback's commander, was next to Kinney. Clint Hill stood on the left front running board. Agent Bill McIntyre was behind him. John Ready was on the right front running board, Agent Landis behind him. Dave Powers was in the right jump seat, Ken O'Donnell in the left. Agent George Hickey sat in the left rear, Agent Glen Bennett in the right rear, and on the seat between them lay an AR-15 .223 automatic rifle, with a muzzle velocity so powerful that should a bullet strike a man's chest it would blow his head off.

The Vice Presidential convertible. Two-and-a-half car lengths separated it from Halfback, to indicate that the appearance of the Vice President was a separate event. Ralph Yarborough, who loved parades, was under the impression that Lyndon Johnson wasn't enjoying the distinction. The Senator, in the left rear, was waving jubilantly. Johnson stared glumly ahead.

Varsity, the follow-up hardtop, was driven by a Texas state policeman. Cliff Carter was in the middle of the front seat. Agent Jerry Kivett was on his right. Agent Lem Johns was in the right rear, Agent Taylor in the left rear.

The pool car was on loan from the telephone company, and the driver came with it. Kilduff and Merriman Smith of United Press International were in front, Kilduff on the right. As the senior White House correspondent Smith always rode in the middle. Thus he was the newspaperman closest to the radiophone on the transmission hump under the dashboard. Jack Bell of the Associated Press, Baskin of the *Dallas News*, and Bob Clark of the American Broadcasting Company were in the back. In a crisis they could report nothing from this car unless Smith surrendered the phone, and Smith, with his hard, pocked face, was one of the most competitive men in journalism.

The photographers' convertibles came next. The bulk of the motorcade trailed them.

They passed the airport's "Spirit of Flight," a graceful statue of a figure whose arms stretched upward, and turned northeast, or left, at Mockingbird Lane.

On a map the Love Field-Trade Mart-Love Field motorcade route resembled a crude bottle. Mockingbird was the base. Lemmon Avenue, which ran perpendicular to it, became the left side. Turtle Creek and Cedar Springs sloped inward and then straightened at Harwood, forming

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MARKET

Lee Oswald, watched by the stupefied Brennan, steps back into the shadows in the deliberate lock step of a Marine marksman retiring from the range.

Below him he leaves madness.

The plaza resembles nothing so much as a field which has just been swept by a mighty wind. Charles Brend has thrown his son to the ground and is shielding him with his body. From his station behind the right fender of SS 100 X Officer Clyde Haygood rams the north curb with his motorcycle, overturns, leaves the wheels spinning, and scrambles up the grassy side of the overpass embankment, pistol in hand. A man, thinking to save a woman, tackles her from behind. Bob Jackson, a photographer for the Dallas Times Herald, has just seen the rifle barrel being withdrawn. He gapes, unbelieving, at the open window. Motorcyclist Marrion Baker, riding right beside the Lincoln, is staring up at the pigeons. A policeman near Roy Truly mutters hoarsely, "Goddamn." Abe Zapruder screeches over and over, "They killed him! They killed him! They killed him! They killed him!"

From the rear of the follow-up car Agent Hickey raises the barrel of the AR-15 and points it about aimlessly. In the jump seats Ken O'Donnell and Dave Powers have heard the sickening impact of the fatal bullet, and Dave has seen it. O'Donnell crosses himself. Powers whispers, "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph . . ." Sam Kinney, seeing the back of the President's head erupt, stamps on his siren button with his left foot to alert Kellerman and Greer; Halfback's fender siren opens up with an ear-shattering wail. Simultaneously, Sam swerves to the right to avoid Clint Hill. Clint is in the street between Halfback's front bumper and the rear bumper of SS 100 X. His head is low, he is about to leave his feet.

The Lincoln continues to slow down. Its interior is a place of horror. The last bullet has torn through John Kennedy's cerebellum, the lower part of his brain. Leaning toward her husband Jacqueline Kennedy has

after the shooting!