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JFK Death Expert Ethan Allen Ancestor

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NEW YORK — Critics of the Warren Commission report on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy have "told such outrageous lies" that they have stirred one of the nation's most distinguished physicians into years of elaborate experiments to prove the commission's case.

Dr. John K. Lattimer, professor and chairman of the department of urology at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, has become an acknowledged expert on the medical and ballistics aspects.

Lattimer is a descendant of Ethan Allen, the Revolutionary War hero of Ft. Ticonderoga — whom he describes as "a rude, crude S. O. B." — and in size and energy, if not in manner, he resembles his celebrated ancestor.

About the "single-bullet theory"—the Warren Commission insists one bullet passed through President Kennedy's neck and then inflicted three wounds on Gov. John Connally—Lattimer said:

"No discrepancies, inconsistencies or incompatibilities were detected between the data as determined in our experiments and the contentions of the Warren Commission."

His opinion does a lot to disarm the conspiracy theorists, most of whom base their criticism of the commission on the assertion that one bullet could not have done what the commission said it did.

Lattimer concedes the rifle used by Lee Harvey Oswald was not a "great" rifle, but he scoffs at critics' contention that it was inadequate.

He became an expert on the Kennedy assassination as an outgrowth of his interest in the murder of President Lincoln, a crime whose eerie parallels to the Kennedy assassination fascinate him.

Lattimer, 61, is one of the nation's recognized experts on the Lincoln assassination and can tick off the similarities between the two crimes.

It is the greatest parallel of all that fascinates Lattimer the most. More than a century after Lincoln's murder, it still arouses cries that it was part of a dark conspiracy that reached high into the government.

The hours he spent investigating assassinations are but a small part of Lattimer's after-hours activity.

A member of numerous historical



DR. JOHN K. LATTIMER

Imitating his forbear.

groups, he took great glee in leading a Bicentennial re-enactment of Ethan Allen's capture of Ft. Ticonderoga last May.

Allen, a frontier boozier and brawler, is a forebear that Lattimer regards with affection.

"He and his Green Mountain Boys took part in a dispute over conflicting land patents granted by Massachusetts and New York in what is now Vermont. It's interesting that while there was a great deal of brawling and farms were burned and people were tarred and feathered, no one was killed."

Allen, credited in history books with roaring at the gates of Ticonderoga, "Surrender, in the name of the great Jehovah and the Continental Congress," may even have said something like that, as out of character as it sounds.

His distinguished descendant says he also yelled to the British commander, "Come out of there, you old rat!"