

# O'Donnell Refutes Manchester Book

By SALVATORE MICCICHE  
Special to The Star

BOSTON—Kenneth P. O'Donnell did attend the oath-taking of President Johnson following the assassination of President Kennedy.

A never-before-published photograph uncovered by the Boston Globe proves he was there.

This new picture contradicts graphically William A. Manchester's account of the oath-taking as contained in this week's Look magazine serialization of his book, "Death of a President."

Manchester reports that no "male Kennedy aide" attended the swearing-in of President Johnson at the hastily arranged ceremony aboard the presi-

dential plane at Love Field just outside Dallas.

The author depicts O'Donnell as "pacing the corridor outside the bedroom like a caged tiger, his hands clapped over his ears, as though to block the oath."

The point is made by Manchester to emphasize what he describes as intense acrimony existing between the Kennedy and Johnson people in the aftermath of the tragedy.

Reached today, O'Donnell sharply disputed Manchester's accuracy.

"I was standing next to Jackie through the whole ceremony," O'Donnell declared. "I walked with her from the bedroom to where the ceremony took place and I stayed with her the whole time."

The picture bears out O'Donnell.

It was taken by the only cameraman allowed on board the presidential craft, Air Force 1, to record the event—Cecil Stoughton, the official White House photographer during the Kennedy administration.

The picture shows O'Donnell standing next to Mrs. Kennedy. President Johnson has his right arm raised. U. S. District Court Judge Sarah Hughes is holding a microphone and is administering the oath.

Except for O'Donnell, the picture is identical with the photo of the oath-taking used around the world.

Stoughton had difficulty with his camera at the start of the ceremony. Manchester records

that his "first frame was a dud; nothing snapped."

The picture showing O'Donnell in attendance is fuzzy, unlike the high quality of those used at the time and since.

This could explain why it was never published and led Manchester to the conclusion that all Kennedy aides sulked in anger when Johnson took the oath.

O'Donnell, according to Manchester, "withdrew to the corridor" at the moment of the oath-taking.

This is not so, O'Donnell said. O'Donnell said he was present because Mrs. Kennedy was there.

Relating the chronology leading up to the ceremony, O'Donnell said:

"Everyone was standing around. Jackie was in the bedroom alone. Someone—I think it was the President—said, 'Where's Jackie?'"

"I objected to her being there for the swearing-in. I said she had been through enough."

"The President said, 'She's willing to do it.'"

"I went to the bedroom and told her that in my judgment she shouldn't. I told her it would be too much for her. Jackie said, 'I think I ought to.'"

"We then left and I took her up to where the swearing-in was to take place. That's how I was there. I was standing next to Jackie through the whole ceremony."

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—Associated Press

Kenneth P. O'Donnell (far right), personal friend and White House aide to the late President Kennedy, is seen standing behind Mrs. Kennedy at the swearing-in of Lyndon Johnson aboard Air Force 1 in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963 —evidence which disputes the detailed account of the oath taking ceremony by William Manchester in his controversial book, "Death of a President." The picture, released today by the

Boston Globe along with a copyright story, had not been seen by the public before. A similar shot, which does not show O'Donnell, had been used extensively. In the latest installment of his book Manchester says that during the ceremony O'Donnell, refusing to attend, paced the corridor "hands clapped over ears as though to block the oath."