

## THE END OF CAMELOT

# She Asked the Impossible

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Of the myriad people in the world who would gladly do Mrs. John F. Kennedy's bidding, none seemed more likely than author William Manchester.

She is an imperious beauty, accustomed to having her

Edward Kennedy Hopeful on Book Fight. Page A-3

way. He is a diffident, self-effacing man, who was overwhelmed at being chosen to write, subject to her approval, the story of her husband's death and funeral.

But Manchester has set his face against the changes she has demanded in the manuscript, and the distressing prospect is that they will face each other in court.

For the first time in her life, Mrs. Kennedy has her back to the wall. The sympathy and understanding which the world has accorded her since her superlative demeanor during the tragedy is begrudged her, perhaps because her trouble is of her own making. She engaged an author she did not know and talked to him too much behind the shield of an agreement he should never have signed.

She has appealed in vain to old friends of her husband—Evan Thomas of Harper & Row, William Attwood of Look. She has been accused of tampering with history and a writer's integrity, of fighting to preserve her own idea of herself and the legend of her husband.

She is supposedly beleaguered among the remnants of "Camelot."

Actually, according to her allies in the struggle, she is merely trying to spare herself the excruciating embarrassment of some intimate revela-



—United Press International

MRS. JOHN F. KENNEDY

tions scattered through some seven pages of a 700-page manuscript that everyone agrees is a "fascinating and moving" document.

Mrs. Kennedy is a perfectionist. She is remembered here for having caused six coats of paint to be applied to a White House wall in the search for the very shade of white.

She tried to bring that perfectionism to the chronicle of her husband's assassination. She failed, of course, because she was asking the impossible. A writer eventually thinks that what he has written belongs to him, no matter what kind of agreement for approval he has signed.

Mrs. Kennedy chose Manchester in March 1964, after canvassing Theodore H. White, author of "The Making of a President" and Walter Lord, the historian of the Titanic. Manchester was chosen on the basis of a sketch of President Kennedy in mid-term which many reviewers found too adoring to be valuable.

Ironically, in view of current events, the press release issued by the Justice Department (Robert F. Kennedy was still attorney general) spoke of an authorized version "to prevent distortion and sensationalism."

Manchester went to work for 10 months, first in the Executive Office Building and later  
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## KENNEDY

# The Days of 'Camelot' Are No More

Continued From Page A-1 in the Archives, sharing an office with an "unauthorized" Kennedy biographer, President Kennedy's secretary, Evelyn M. Lincoln, whose reminiscences were among others Mrs. Kennedy was to disapprove.

He interviewed numerous members of Washington's officialdom and press corps, who, like Mrs. Kennedy, experienced total recall of the four harrowing days of November 1963.

To many it seemed that he had transferred the worshipful attitude he displayed toward the President to the beautiful, distraught widow. He told one subject of the long sessions with Mrs. Kennedy, which are

now in contention, how her voice dropped so low during emotional moments that he was not sure his tape-recorder had caught every word.

But everything was recorded, and it is these moments of intimate revelation—her thoughts in the car, when she was alone the night of the assassination in the White House—that are the subject of her suit. The first readers, Edwin O. Guthman and John M. Seigenthaler, two Kennedy intimates suggested by Harper & Row, Mrs. Kennedy's handpicked publisher, raised questions.

By late August, author and source were both thoroughly alarmed, Mrs. Kennedy at notice of the personal details

and Manchester by the specter that the book might never be published.

Sen. Robert F. Kennedy dispatched to Manchester a telegram, drafted by Harper & Row, in which he said the family would not stop publication.

Mrs. Kennedy asked her press secretary, Pamela Turnure Timmins, to read the book. She also invited Manchester to Hyannis Port. In the presence of Richard N. Goodwin, a speechwriter to both Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, and a neighbor of Manchester's at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Conn., she detailed her objections. Manchester promised to make the deletions, if he

could. He had, meanwhile, sold the serialization right to Look magazine.

Soon afterward, Goodwin gave Manchester galley's with the offensive passages circled. Again Manchester promised to make the changes if he could. Mrs. Kennedy and her representatives heard no more.

For several months, all involved moved in total misapprehension. The publishers thought Mrs. Kennedy would never sue. Mrs. Kennedy was sure that Manchester would honor her wishes and their agreement. The author felt that posterity should judge.

"No matter how you look at it," said one of the principals, "it's the end of Camelot."