

Dallas Times

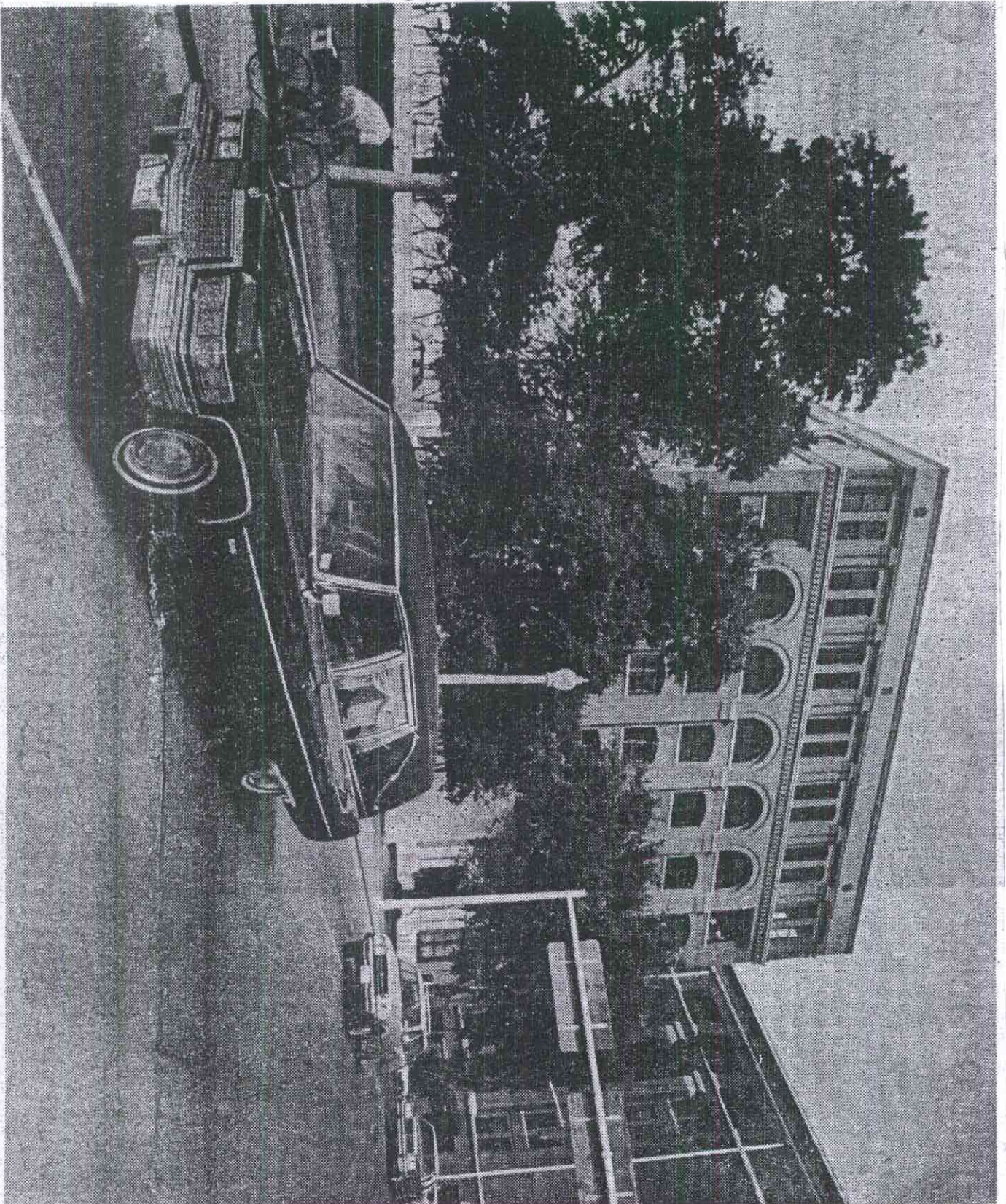
MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1981

Body in grave Oswald's,

Herald

25 Cents

autopsy proves



Assassination site revisited

With the former Texas School Book Depository in the background, the hearse containing the body of Lee Harvey Oswald passes the site where the Warren Commission Report concluded Oswald killed President John F. Kennedy

on Nov. 22, 1963. The hearse, returning Oswald's body to Rose Hill Memorial Park in Fort Worth, is at the approximate site where Kennedy was shot. Visitors at the assassination site were not aware that Oswald's hearse was passing.

—Copyright 1981, Dallas Times Herald, staff photo by Jay Dickman

Eddowes surprised, 'not disappointed'

By RUTH EYRE
and PETER ELKIND

Staff Writers

FORT WORTH — The 78-year-old Englishman whose tenacity led to Sunday's exhumation of Lee Harvey Oswald stood alone as the coffin was unearthed.

Michael H. B. Eddowes had fought for three years for this moment.

And when it came early Sunday morning, he watched silently with his arms behind his back as workers dug for nearly two hours to open the grave.

Wearing a black vest, navy blue suit and a dark hat, Eddowes tried to downplay his role in what was happening. He said Oswald's widow, Marina Oswald Porter, was the person to talk to.

"She is the one in charge. I am just the bystander," he said. "At least, we can get at the truth at last. It has not been my speculation and theories, but has been based on documented evidence."

Later Sunday, after the autopsy showed it was Oswald's body, Eddowes said, "Though surprised, I am in no way disappointed in the apparent disproving in my theory of imposture. Rather, I have accomplished my objective in obtaining the exhumation, and I'm glad for those who have steadfastly maintained the contrary for whatever reason.

"It is a very sad business," Eddowes said as he stood by the grave Sunday morning.

He had not thought his legal battle to exhume the body would end so soon. He expected it to be another six months or a year, he said. Then, his attorney called to tell Eddowes that the body would be dug up Sunday.

Eddowes' attorney, Cue Lips-

comb, said he expected his client to pay for the exhumation.

Eddowes declined to confirm that. "You better ask Marina," he said. "Of course, I have offered to help her."

Eddowes is used to challenging the system. Twenty-five years ago he successfully persuaded British authorities they had hanged the wrong man in a bizarre sex-murder case. The man was given a posthumous pardon and the case figured prominently in arguments that eventually brought an end to capital punishment in England.

Eddowes' book about his work on the murder case, "The Man on Your Conscience," gave him an international reputation.

In recent years, Eddowes has turned to America to prove that the man who assassinated President John F. Kennedy in Dallas in 1963 was not Lee Harvey Oswald. He argued that the body in the grave — if there was a body in the grave — was that of a Russian spy.

He claimed in a book published in 1975 that there were actually two Oswalds, the real man who defected in Russia and a KGB imposter who returned to the United States on June 13, 1962. His book was called "The Oswald File" when it was published in the United States. In England, it was called "November 22: How They Killed Kennedy."

Some dismissed him as an eccentric, one of the hordes of assassination buffs who follow the Kennedy case. But, Sunday his three years of legal battles, culminating with agreements from relatives of Oswald to permit the exhumation, ended.

A reporter at the London Times once said of the British author, "Eddowes is obviously a bit obsessed, but it's interesting, nevertheless, that he might actually persuade someone to exhume Mr. Oswald."



— Staff photo by Barron Ludlum

Assassination writer *Eddowes* at the cemetery

Doubts still linger at assassination site

By RUTH EYRE

Staff Writer

It was the normal Sunday parade of the curious coming to visit the spot where a president was gunned down 18 years ago.

Normal, but for the hearse that passed by Dealey Plaza shortly after 3 p.m., bound for a Fort Worth cemetery and carrying the body of accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald.

Normal, but for the whispers of conspiracies as people looked at the orange-bricked building that formerly was the Texas School Book Depository, at the stark monument to President John F. Kennedy, at the skies rippled with clouds.

"It proves that Oswald was buried in Oswald's grave. What's to be confirmed by that?" asked Richard McLean of 3721 Spring Valley Road. "If it's Oswald's body in there, it is all for naught, if it was not — wow."

Each Sunday, dozens of visitors come to see where Kennedy was shot Nov. 22, 1963, in downtown Dallas. Sunday was no exception. They came from as far away as South America to look and take snapshots. And they still are willing to discuss the questions that have surrounded the death of the president.

"I don't really believe it was done by Oswald," said Ed Hodges of Midland, who was 4 when Kennedy was assassinated. "I think our government did it. For what reason, I don't know. Maybe Kennedy was too liberal."

"I don't think we'll ever get the straight story," said his friend, Joanne Cunha, also of Midland.

Mike Cinolotac Sr., who was visiting from Cleveland, said, "I think there really was a conspiracy. I didn't believe the Warren Commission report."

Steve Cobus of Detroit said, "There have been so many questions raised, I don't think it will ever end."

"The only thing it proved is who was in the grave," said Robin Rivard of Garland. "But I assumed the body that's in the grave is the same body as the person who shot the president. It still doesn't prove that it was a conspiracy or not a conspiracy."

"I was shocked this morning when I heard the news that they had exhumed the body," said Brian Freeman, who moved to Dallas a few months ago.

And George Blanco of Cucuta, Colombia, said, "Either way doesn't make any difference. The harm is already done — to do it is not going to bring a great leader back."

Small crowd gathers at grave

By TRAVIS BROWN

Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — The sun had yet to rise Sunday when they began digging up the remains of Lee Harvey Oswald.

Bob Flannigan already was sweating through his red shirt when he climbed onto a backhoe and began digging up Oswald's grave at Rose Hill Memorial Park in Fort Worth.

Other workmen quickly built a fence of green tents around the grave site.

The exhumation of Oswald was supposed to be a secret, but the people who lived on Rose Hill Drive across from the grave weren't fooled.

They knew as soon as they heard the backhoe and saw the tents. And a few of them stood with reporters at the fence surrounding the cemetery, trying to catch a glimpse of history.

"I was fixing to go to Bonham to fix a big dinner when my neighbor called," said Lillian Kincher, 57. "I stood right here at this fence and saw them put him down there. So I thought I'd better see them dig him up."

Mrs. Kincher sipped coffee and smoked a cigarette as she peered over the chain-link fence into the cemetery. Her husband was buried there after a scuba diving accident in the Gulf of Mexico.

"I'd like for it to get settled," said Mrs. Kincher. "There's something deeper in this that I'll never know."

Soon after sunrise, the workers were joined by doctors, lawyers, court officials, police, FBI agents and relatives of Oswald.

Marina Oswald Porter sat in the back seat of a silver Toyota station wagon, shielded from view by two armed guards.

Oswald's brother, Robert, who had fought the exhumation, did not attend.

Michael H.B. Eddowes, the British author who claimed the body in the grave is not Oswald's, stood quietly away from the grave site and watched the backhoe dig deeper.

Dressed in a navy blue suit and

hat and carrying a cane, Eddowes occasionally was briefed on the progress of the backhoe.

When the wooden casket was uncovered, workmen used heavy hammers to break the side of the cement vault around it.

"I'm told the casket was broken," said Eddowes. "They said the ends had come off and that the remains were only skeletal. But that would be sufficient."

After the backhoe completed its work, a tent was hastily erected over the grave. A small crowd gathered inside the sagging tent and stared down into the grave.

The wife of Paul Groody, the mortician who prepared Oswald for burial in 1963, was among those under the tent. She declined to tell about what she saw.

"From this point on, no advice will be given out free," she said. "This is a personal thing and should be dignified."

The casket was placed in a wooden container and it was loaded by workers into a black hearse. The hearse then sped away to Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, where three doctors, including an dental expert, were to study the body.

After the hearse left, the backhoe operator, Flannigan, cleared out excess dirt in the grave and loaded the broken pieces of the vault onto a flatbed truck. The headstone was carried off by officials for safekeeping.

Flannigan, 47, climbed down into the grave and posed for photographs.

"Everything was in good shape, considering it's been 18 years," he said.

Flannigan said the argument about whether the body in the grave is Oswald's is "none of my business."

"It's just another job to me. It could have been anybody."

Later in the morning, when it was quieter and hotter in the cemetery, the wind blew dead leaves across the yellowed grass and into the empty grave. The curious began the trek to the cemetery on the far east side of Fort Worth.

Some people poked at the two piles of dirt next to the grave as if they expected to find a conspiracy clue hidden there.

"There's not much to see; it's just the thought," said Bob Harmon, 50, who heard about the exhumation on the radio. "I'm proud for the public that they are doing this. It will solve bunch of questions that people always would wonder about."

A few blocks away at the Travelodge Motel, the manager and a clerk huddled over a stack of clippings and notes about Lee Harvey Oswald that they said a maid had found in a deserted room Sunday morning.

Any mysterious notions the manager or clerk had were dispelled when the Oswald memorabilia was discovered to belong to a reporter who had covered the assassination of Kennedy in 1963.

THE OSWALD FILE/ Exhumation

Oswald's brother weeps

By RALPH FRAMMOLINO
and ARNOLD HAMILTON

Staff Writers

Robert Oswald had one reaction when he learned the remains of his infamous brother would be exhumed Sunday.

He wept.

For Oswald, the tears were the culmination of an unsuccessful legal battle against British author Michael H. B. Eddowes and Marina Oswald Porter to keep the corpse of accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald undisturbed in Fort Worth's Rose Hill Memorial Park.

Oswald had fought the exhumation since Aug. 14, 1980, when he obtained a temporary restraining order halting the grave opening. The last gasp of the legal fight came Sept. 17, when the state Court of Appeals ruled that Oswald has no legal authority to block the exhumation if the dead man's widow has given consent.

Saying he was more concerned about the living than the dead, Oswald called his attorney, Craig Fowler, Sept. 25 and removed his legal objection against an exhumation, which technically was forbidden by a court order until 12:01 a.m. Sunday.

"He said he had a long discussion with the other members of his family, his wife, his two children," said Fowler. "He wanted to just simply drop all of the cases.

"He had informed me that he did not desire to pursue the litigation any longer for personal and family reasons. He at no time withdrew his opposition to these proceedings. His statement to me was that he had a higher responsibility to his living family."

Fowler called Mrs. Porter's attorney, Jerry Pittman, on Sept. 28 and informed him of Oswald's decision. The decision touched off a flurry of intense negotiations last week.

at end of legal battle

On Tuesday, Pittman called the Fort Worth cemetery and asked them to get ready for the exhumation.

Originally, Oswald was pushing for an out-of-court settlement that would require an on-site examination of the body. However, Mrs. Porter insisted on a full autopsy, so medical examiners could compare Lee Harvey Oswald's dental records with the body in the Fort Worth grave.

"Up until that time, Robert had agreed to inspection only," said Pittman. "Finally he gave in, because he could see the handwriting on the wall."

The two sides drew up an agreement detailing a compromise settlement that would nullify Oswald's lawsuit against the exhumation. It was to be signed on Thursday.

But Oswald refused to sign the agreement.

"He said there was no compromise," said Pittman. "Marina was getting everything she wanted, and he wouldn't sign."

Still, Oswald had one last request: No exhumation on Sunday "for traditional and religious reasons," said Fowler. Yet Mrs. Porter won another point. She wanted to open the grave on Sunday to limit publicity.

It was the final defeat for Os-

wald. Fowler called his client at 4:30 p.m. Friday to tell him that the Fort Worth grave would be opened early Sunday morning.

"He wept," said Fowler.

Cemetery officials made preparations of their own during the week. It wasn't until early Sunday morning, however, that they received the proper legal papers to begin the exhumation: signed statements from Mrs. Porter, the medical examiner, and author Eddowes, who agreed to bear all expense.

"It was going up to the 11th hour," said Thomas Boswell, attorney for the cemetery.

Marina: 18-year nightmare contains one less mystery

By JENNIFER BOLCH

Staff Writer

Marina Oswald Porter, the woman at the center of the longstanding legal dispute that ended Sunday with her late husband's exhumation, says the past 18 years have been a living nightmare.

It began with an infamous historic moment when Lee Harvey Oswald allegedly aimed his high-powered rifle through the round-topped windows of the Texas School Book Depository in down-

town Dallas and fired the shots that killed President John F. Kennedy.

In a recent interview, Mrs. Porter said she has felt branded ever since.

"People treat me as if I was a criminal. Some people treat me as if I have leprosy. They think I'm no good. People who have never even met me say terrible things about me. I say to them, 'Don't judge me until you walk in my shoes.'"

Through it all, the slight, sandy-haired Rockwall housewife man-

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Marina Oswald at center of entourage at hospital

Staff photo by Paul Iverson

Marina felt she must know truth

MARINA — From Page One

aged to hold a home together and raise three children. But she found being the widow of a presidential assassin wasn't a wound that healed with time.

"You learn to live with everyday life. You work in the yard, play with your kids. You forget that you have to keep your guard up. Then someone says something in the supermarket — you hear them whispering, 'Do you know who she is?' — or something comes on the TV, and it opens up all over again. It's scar after scar after scar. And you never get calluses."

Neighbors whispered behind her back, people she thought were friends spied on her, her house was robbed, her own brother-in-law sued her.

Then there was the nightmare within a nightmare — two nagging questions that filled Mrs. Porter's daytime thoughts, that woke her at 3 in the morning with her stomach churning: Is there a body in the grave marked "Lee Harvey Oswald?" If so, whose body is it?

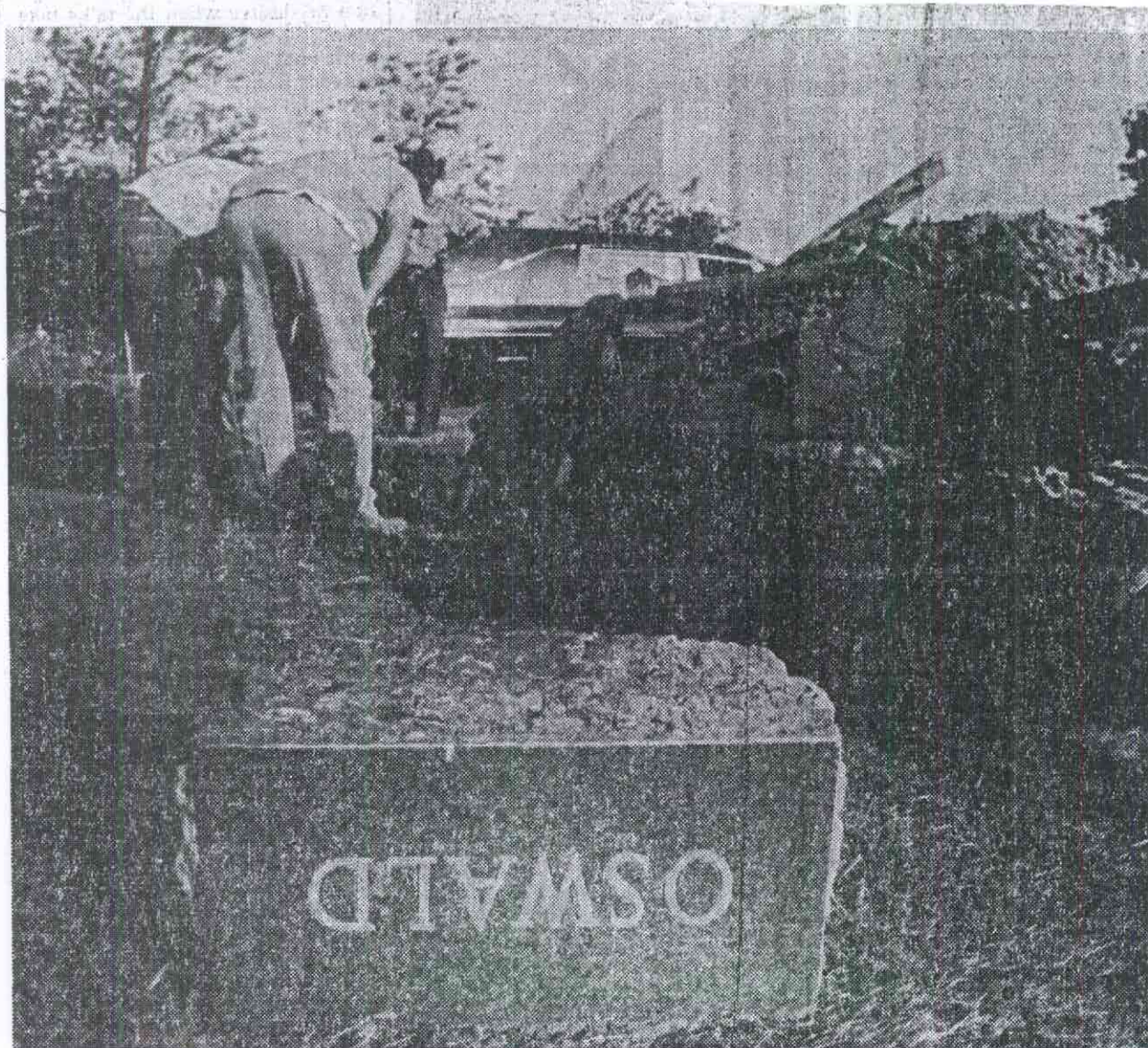
While Mrs. Porter fought her successful court battle for permission to open her former husband's grave, she talked about why she felt compelled to put herself through that additional torment.

For years, she said, she resisted taking legal action. But she said she felt so "emotionally drained" that she had to do something to resolve the question of who, if anyone, is buried in her husband's grave.

"I'm under so much stress," she said. "I just want to finish this and get on with my life."

On that fateful day in 1963, a time Mrs. Porter refers to simply as "November," she was a shy 23-year-old mother of a newborn and a baby girl not yet 2. Russian-born, she was all alone and lost in a country whose language she didn't speak.

The language barrier is one reason she believed someone robbed



— Staff photo by Barron Ludlum

Upturned gravestone mute witness to early exhumation Sunday morning

her husband's grave on Good Friday 1964, after she signed some papers she says she didn't understand. "I signed so many papers. They keep asking me to sign, and I sign. I didn't speak English. I didn't know what I was signing."

Who would have wanted to steal Lee Harvey Oswald's body? And why?

Mrs. Porter shrugged. "Some people in powerful places made a mistake and they wanted to cover it up."

She called the exhumation suit "one more milestone on the lonely road to the truth."

After the assassination and Oswald's death two days later at the

hands of Dallas nightclub owner Jack Ruby, she said a number of people urged her to give up her little girls or at least to change their names. Others suggested she take a new name herself and leave Dallas.

"It is atrocious to me to even think about it," she said. "As if we'd done something wrong. How could I live with a lie or hiding?"

By the time the girls reached school age, she had married Rockwall carpenter Kenneth Porter. Although he never adopted them, the girls used the Porter name in school. Even so, word of who their real father was got around somehow, and Mrs. Porter said June and Rachel had to put up with their share of

snickers and whispered insults.

"They never came home crying about it, but sometimes they'd tell me later about some awful thing someone said."

Marina Oswald Porter, trim and attractive at 40, is a woman who feels betrayed by just about everybody.

"All my well-wishers from the past, where are they now? I never hear a word from them. So I wonder now, were they friends or were they just sent to watch me?"

"They tell me just be quiet or it will be worse for me. Well, what can be worse than to be the wife of an assassin?"

Tests end doubts on identity

By PETER ELKIND and CHARLOTTE-ANNE LUCAS

Staff Writers

A team of pathologists Sunday ended almost 18 years of controversy and speculation when they confirmed that a Fort Worth grave contains the body of accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald.

The disinterment began at 7:10 a.m. in Rose Hill Memorial Park, just hours after a court order forbidding the action had expired. Oswald's widow, Marina Oswald Porter, and his brother, Robert, had been locked in a three-year legal battle. But last week, Robert decided he would no longer fight to prevent the autopsy.

By 9 a.m., the remains had been taken to Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, where a three-hour, 50-minute autopsy proved that Oswald's body was in the grave that carried his name.

"We both individually and as a team have concluded beyond any doubt, and I mean beyond any doubt, that the individual buried under the name Lee Harvey Oswald in Rose Hill Cemetery is Lee Harvey Oswald," Linda Norton, the doctor in charge of the pathology team, announced at 3 p.m.

The ruling disproves a theory advanced by British author Michael H.B. Eddowes that a Russian spy, not Oswald, murdered President John F. Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963, in Dallas and was buried in the cemetery on the east side of Fort Worth.

Eddowes said he was convinced

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OSWALD — From Page One

Oswald, who defected to the Soviet Union in 1959, was abducted and replaced by a Russian imposter, Alek James Hiddell.

After Sunday's ruling, Eddowes, in a statement issued by his attorney John Collins, said: "I want to express my gratitude for the joint effort . . . to ascertain the truth in this matter. Though surprised, I am not disappointed in the apparent disproving of my evidence."

Hal Monk, another of his attorneys, said "Mr. Eddowes was wiped out by all this. He went to take a nap."

Collins said Eddowes is financing the exhumation, estimated to cost between \$10,000 and \$12,000.

In the most critical test, doctors matched the teeth of the remains with Oswald's dental records from the Marine Corps in the mid-1950s, before his 1959 defection to the Soviet Union.

The pathologists also discovered the scars left by a mastoid operation — conducted in 1945 when Oswald was 6 — on the skull behind the ear.

Finally, two gold rings Mrs. Porter placed on the corpse moments before it was buried were found.

The results of the autopsy also allayed Mrs. Porter's concerns that the grave was empty.

"I believe she's totally satisfied now," said her attorney, Michael Pezzulli. "Hopefully, this has laid this entire matter to rest."

Hal Nelson, of Nelson Service Co., said contractors began exhuming the body about 7:10 a.m. Sunday. Mrs. Porter had requested the exhumation be performed Sunday to help avoid publicity. Her brother-in-law had objected for religious reasons to the choice of days.

When the backhoes reached the cement vault surrounding the casket, contractors carried in another canopy and used it to block the view as they stepped down into the grave and began scooping dirt by hand.

At 8:48 a.m., a cemetery worker said: "Ready? Are you ready?"

Then the casket was pulled from the grave.

Mrs. Porter, sitting in a silver Toyota station wagon guarded by two armed security officers, shifted nervously in her seat.

In seconds, the casket was slid into a hearse. A motorcycle officer and a car carrying private investigator William C. Dear led a procession of about 20 cars on the 40-minute drive to Baylor University Medical

Center in East Dallas.

Dear said cemetery workers lifted the concrete lid of the vault with a chain, then slid the oak casket onto a board, because it was so deteriorated, it was "impossible to lift."

"You could see hair tissue on his scalp," he said, adding that although most of the remains were skeletal, "His face looked like it was still partly there. The skin was over the skull area. There was a musty smell, (but not) an offensive odor."

At the moment the casket was uncovered, Dear said, "It was real quiet. It was a very tense moment. A very dramatic moment in my life."

He said he originally planned to videotape the exhumation, but Eddowes decided to retain others to take photographs. The autopsy was videotaped.

The examination was conducted by Dr. Norton, a former Dallas County medical examiner who now practices in Birmingham, Ala.; Dr. Vincent DiMaio, Bexar County medical examiner in San Antonio; Dr. Irving Sopher, West Virginia state medical examiner who has written several books on forensic dentistry, and Dr. James A. Cottone, associate professor and expert on forensic dentistry at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Cottone said he brought 200 pounds of sophisticated equipment, "a complete forensic dental laboratory," to Dallas from his office in San Antonio. He said he and his staff had been packing for two weeks, "prepared to come up on a minute's notice."

The body was put back in the

ground at 3:55 p.m. as about 200 spectators watched from outside the cemetery fence. The mood was a stark contrast to the anticipation Sunday morning when an aura of mystery permeated the scene.

Sunday afternoon, they knew they were only seeing an 18-year-old corpse reinterred.

"This is all because of that idiot from England," said Martha Bracken, who lived across the street from the cemetery when Oswald was first buried. "It's silly. That's all it is, silly."

Eddowes' attorneys said a temporary restraining order against the exhumation that was imposed by a Fort Worth judge at the request of Robert Oswald expired Sunday, prompting the negotiations last week between the attorneys for Oswald's brother and widow.

The major obstacle in reaching a decision, Collins said, was "to overcome Robert Oswald's opposition — to show that he had no legal standing to oppose Marina's position." An appeals court ruling last month said Mrs. Porter had the right to decide whether the body was exhumed because she is Oswald's closest surviving relative.

Dr. Norton worked for Dallas County Medical Examiner Charles Petty when the department first requested the exhumation two years ago because of discrepancies between the autopsy report and Oswald's military records.

Oswald defected to the Soviet Union in 1959 after he was discharged from the U.S. Marine Corps. He married a Russian woman, Marina, and subsequently returned to the United States.

Assassination theorists have suggested that Oswald never returned and his identity was assumed by a Soviet look-alike who resumed Oswald's life in the United States.

Following the autopsy at Baylor, a hearse carried Oswald's corpse — in a new coffin — back to Fort Worth, passing through Dealey Plaza and the old Texas School Book Depository along the way. It was from a sixth floor window of that building that Oswald allegedly shot Kennedy in 1963.

"We didn't know they were going that way back," said Allen Baumgardner, 39, of Baumgardner Funeral Home in Fort Worth. "I thought, this is where it happened 18 years ago, and here I am again."

Also contributing to this story were Alan Gathright, Julia Wallace, Travis Brown and George Wysatta. It was written by Arnold Hamilton.

Mastoid scar, teeth yield proof

JULIA WALLACE

Staff Writer

The four pathologists huddled around the stainless steel table at Baylor University Medical Center, examining a human skull. They worked slowly and cautiously, seeking proof that the bones belonged to the man accused of killing John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

Then they spotted a hole in a bone of the inner ear.

Identity tentatively confirmed.

After almost 18 years of questions and speculation, the people in the autopsy room had the first hint that the body in Lee Harvey Oswald's grave was indeed the body of Lee Harvey Oswald.

"We were delighted. We knew we were homing in," said Dr. Linda Norton, head of the team.

The 31-year-old doctor, an associate medical examiner in Birmingham, Ala., methodically described the long hole in the bone of the ear as a court reporter took notes and a friend of Oswald's widow videotaped the proceeding.

As Dr. Norton talked, the lawyers — some who had fought for exhumation, some who had fought against it — listened intently.

"Luckily, I was listening for the part about the mastoid scar, or I probably would have missed it," said Thomas Boswell, an attorney for the Fort Worth cemetery where the body was buried.

The procedure of looking for scars and comparing dental records, which is common practice when bodies are mutilated and must be identified, began and ended in the most uncommon ways.

At 9:55 a.m. Sunday, the body, encased in a plywood and cardboard box, was rolled down the linoleum hallway in the basement of the medical center by a procession of about 40 men and women. They filed into a waiting room, leaving only Michael H. B. Eddowes, the man who had fought for the exhumation for three years, waiting in the hall.

The 78-year-old author, who has maintained that the body in the

grave belonged to a Russian spy, not Oswald, stood tall, wearing a black hat and carrying a briefcase. He peered in, knowing soon the world would have the answer.

"This is Mr. Eddowes. Can he go in?" Eddowes' secretary asked hospital personnel. The answer was no. He went to the cafeteria to eat boiled chicken with sauce.

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MEDICAL — From Page One

Inside the beige-tiled autopsy room, Dr. Norton, Dr. Vincent DiMaio, medical examiner of Bexar County in San Antonio; Dr. James Cottone, specialist in dental pathology from San Antonio, and Dr. Irving Sopher, West Virginia medical examiner and expert in forensic dentistry, began.

The first comment recorded was not describing the body, but listing the lawyers and observers. Then Dr. Norton began. The body smelled "musty and was in an advanced state of decomposition," Dr. Norton said.

Pieces of tissue and clothing clung to the skeleton, which was covered with blue and green mold. "Everything was mushy and amorphous," DiMaio said.

The doctors then found two rings on the left little finger. They were removed and taken to Marina Porter Oswald for identification. She recognized them as a wedding ring and another ring with a red stone.

The height of the body was measured. It was estimated at 5 feet 9 inches, the same height recorded in the first autopsy but 2 inches shorter than recorded when Oswald was in the Marines.

The pathologists then studied the condition of the remains and the molds on it, estimating the man had been dead about 18 years.

As the doctors worked meticulously, three rings of security guards protected them from curiosity seekers. Because the body was decomposed, it remained in the rotting oak coffin.

The skull was sawed off and placed on the autopsy table. It was then that the doctors found the critical hole in the ear they had been seeking. When Oswald was 6, he had undergone a mastoidectomy, where a piece of bone in the ear is removed. In the first autopsy, no mention was made of the missing piece of bone.

The doctors proceeded to the most important part. Sopher and Cottone moved into action, slowly positioning an X-ray machine around the teeth. It was slow and tricky work. Dental X-

rays ideally should be taken at 45-degree angles. However, the X-rays from Oswald's Marine days were several degrees off, and the pathologists had to take the new X-rays at the same angle.

"We were very careful," Cottone said. "In the end, we will not be judged by the public or press, but by our peers."

A report on the autopsy will be published in a medical journal, officials said.

Sixteen times the camera clicked. The shape and placing of 10 fillings were compared. They all matched.

"With 10 fillings, there was a lot of grist for the mill," Sopher said. "We had a lot to work from, so it made our work much easier."

After the first set of X-rays, the teeth were cleaned and another set of pictures was taken. Four X-rays were key factors in identifying the body as Oswald's, Sopher said. Soft dental material was placed in the mouth cavity. Yellowish casts were made of the lower and upper teeth. Indentations, where the fillings were, could be seen.

"It's (comparing dental X-rays to X-rays taken after death) what we do every day," Sopher said. "Using teeth for identification is standard procedure — a slow but effective process."

Three hours and 50 minutes after they had begun, it was over. The doctors all agreed it was Oswald who had been buried in the grave 18 years ago.

"Beyond any doubt," Dr. Norton announced, "and I mean any doubt, the individual buried under the name Lee Harvey Oswald in Rose Hill Cemetery is in fact Lee Harvey Oswald."

Conspiracy theory deflated.

Dr. Norton explained the results to Oswald's widow, Eddowes and the lawyers. Then the doctors took the elevator to a conference room to tell the world.

The skull was placed back in the coffin, which was placed back in the holding case and wheeled out of the autopsy room.

THE OSWALD EXHUMATION

Memos prompt questions

By Earl Golz

Staff Writer of The News

FORT WORTH — Marina Oswald Porter says she may have been duped into signing a document 17 years ago giving federal officials permission to secretly exhume the body of her late husband.

During the spring of 1964, several months after her husband, Lee Harvey Oswald, was buried as the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy, Mrs. Porter was called to a military base near Dallas to give testimony.

At the time, she thought it was her third session before the Warren Commission or commission attorneys. But no record of her testimony was recorded and the questions by people who identified themselves as commission lawyers were innocuous, she said recently.

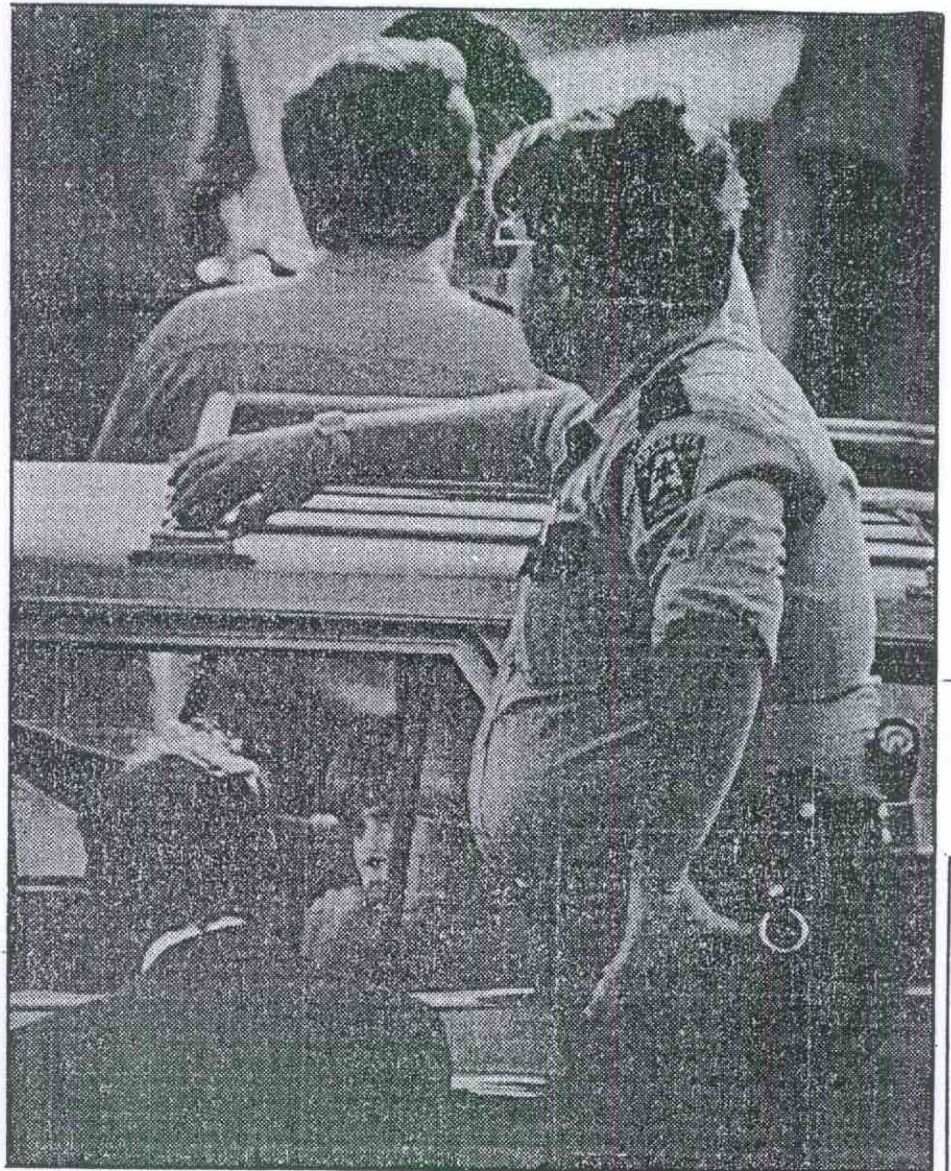
Mrs. Porter said that while she was being questioned at the session in Dallas, she signed a form that federal officials told her was a deposition.

Her testimony at the military base took place about a month after an assistant counsel for the Warren Commission wrote a secret memo suggesting the body be exhumed.

David Slawson wrote the memo on March 17, 1964, four months after the assassination. The memo was entitled "Questions to Ask Norman Redlich." Redlich was an assistant counsel for the Warren Commission.

The handwritten memo began with the heading "Subject: Exhuming Oswald." Referring to Navy commander Dr. James J. Humes, the memo said he "is a doctor who Arlen Specter says is competent and trustworthy." In 1964, Specter was an assistant counsel with the Warren Commission. He is now a U.S. senator from Pennsylvania. Humes, now in private practice in Detroit, was the navy commander who wrote the controversial Kennedy autopsy report.

Mrs. Porter said the memo and others like it, released in recent years under the



The Dallas Morning News: Evans Caglione

Marina Oswald Porter waits in a car before the remains of her former husband, Lee Harvey Oswald, are transported to Dallas.

federal Freedom of Information Act, caused her to wonder whether she unwittingly signed a document allowing a secret exhumation. At the time of the initial investigation, she spoke little English and did not understand the document she signed, she said.

Oswald's champion absent

Devoted mother died before exhumation

By Ray Bell
Staff Writer of The News

She was outspoken, at times abrasive, and seldom missed a chance to vehemently maintain that Lee Harvey Oswald did not kill President John F. Kennedy.

So, regardless of the results Sunday, it was unfortunate for history that Marguerite Claverie Oswald, mother of the accused presidential assassin and one of his staunchest defenders, was not present to confirm — or challenge — the conclusions of four pathologists who performed exhaustive tests at Baylor Medical Center following the exhumation.

A year ago, had the situation arisen, Mrs. Oswald likely would have pursued the legal and medical experts through every macabre step.

On Sunday, however, it was not to be. Marguerite Claverie Oswald, a mother who

never stopped defending her son, died Saturday, Jan. 17, 1981.

And, although few of those present Sunday for the exhumation from Fort Worth's Rose Hill Burial Park may have realized it, the grave of Mrs. Oswald is only a few scant feet from that of her son.

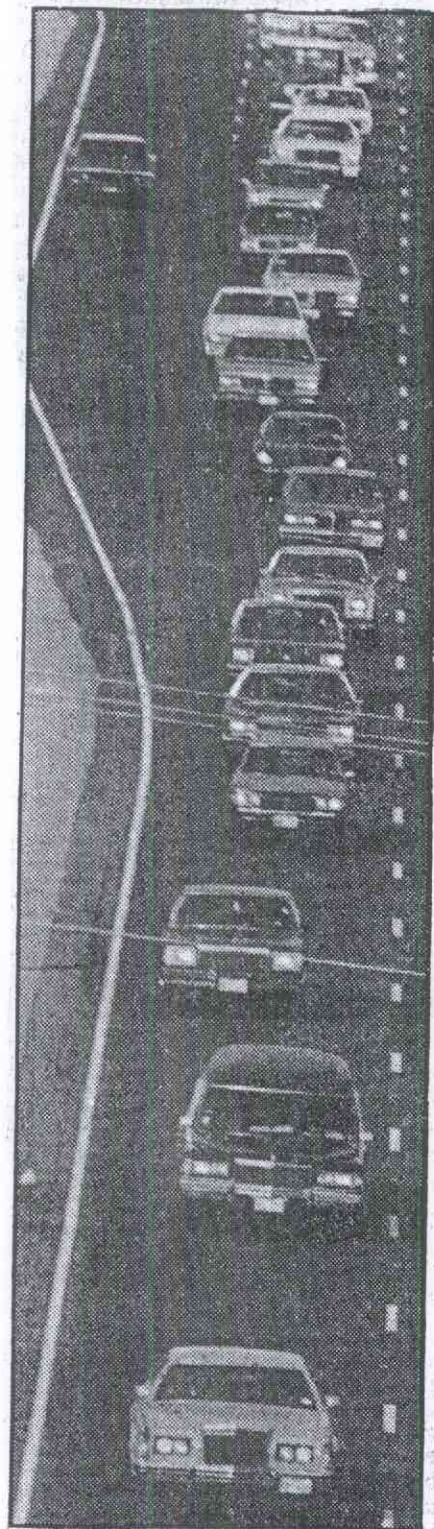
Unlike her infamous son, Mrs. Oswald has no tombstone, no marker on her grave.

It was, on Sunday, almost as if she never existed.

But Mrs. Oswald, concerned and carrying the convictions of a mother's devotion, did exist. And despite the evidence, despite the conclusions of the Warren Commission, despite investigations by the Secret Service, the FBI and various police agencies and private groups, she never wavered in her belief.

"Nothing in my investigation shows any involvement of Lee at all," she had said.

"I know my son was framed. Since he died, he was used as a pacifier for the nation."



The Dallas Morning News: Geof Payne

Motorcade transports Oswald remains to Baylor Medical Center.

Exhumation fight ends after 6 years

By Ann Atterberry
Staff Writer of The News

A chronology of the 6-year battle that culminated Sunday in the opening of the grave of Lee Harvey Oswald, who was accused of assassinating President John F. Kennedy:

■ Nov. 23, 1975: Briton Michael Eddowes says his book, to be published in January 1976, would claim that the body in Oswald's grave is a Soviet agent.

■ Jan. 10, 1979: Eddowes files suit to exhume Oswald's body from Rose Hill Burial Park in Fort Worth.

■ Feb. 23, 1979: Eddowes wins the right to see Oswald's medical records.

■ June 1, 1979: State Dist. Judge James Wright rejects Eddowes' request to open the grave.

■ Aug. 17, 1979: Eddowes' attorney presents "all the medical inconsistencies" between Oswald's Marine Corps medical records and information on the man arrested in Dallas to Dr. Linda Norton, pathologist with the Dallas County Medical Examiner's office.

■ Aug. 23, 1979: Dr. Norton, convinced of a legally "reasonable doubt" about the identity in the grave, presides at a court of inquest. The Navy Reference Department in St. Louis turns over Oswald's military medical and dental X-rays.

■ Aug. 31, 1979: Dallas County Medical Examiner Dr. Charles Petty asks his counterpart in Fort Worth to "order an exhumation," saying he has "certain information" leading him to doubt the identity of the body.

■ Oct. 19, 1979: Petty calls for the exhumation.

■ Oct. 22, 1979: The Fort Worth Court of Civil Appeals schedules arguments in Eddowes' appeal of Wright's decision.

■ Nov. 21, 1979: The Tarrant County district attorney's office rejects Eddowes' offer to pay a \$15,000 premium on a \$100,000 indemnification bond for the exhumation.

■ Feb. 21, 1980: Petty reverses himself, saying he will not order the exhumation.

■ May 15, 1980: The court rules that Eddowes lacks "legal standing" to force Tarrant County officials to open the grave.

■ Aug. 13, 1980: Petty, with consent from Marina Oswald Porter, proposes exhumation.

■ Aug. 15, 1980: Oswald's brother, Robert of Wichita Falls, wins a court order blocking exhumation.

■ Sept. 5, 1980: Mrs. Porter tells Wright she wants the exhumation because she believes the grave is empty.

■ Sept. 25, 1980: The Texas Supreme Court upholds 1979 decisions that thwarted Eddowes' initial attempts to open the grave.

■ Aug. 1, 1981: Out-of-court negotiations fail when Robert Oswald rejects a compromise.

■ Aug. 20, 1981: Mrs. Porter files suit to open the grave.

■ Sept. 18, 1981: The court rules that Robert Oswald cannot block the opening of the grave. He appeals.

■ Sept. 23, 1981: Wright issues a 10-day restraining order.

■ Midnight, Oct. 3, 1981: Temporary restraining order expires. Lawyers for Mrs. Porter meet secretly for two hours at Baylor University Medical Center to make final arrangements.

■ Oct. 4, 1981: Workmen open the grave and take the remains to Baylor where pathologists conclude the remains are Oswald. The remains are returned to Rose Hill Burial Park and buried.



Medical team members and other workers watch exhumation.

The Dallas Morning News: Ed Hille

MDs called at last minute

By Jane Wolfe

Staff Writer of The News

The top members of the medical team chosen to X-ray and perform an autopsy on the remains in Lee Harvey Oswald's coffin Sunday came to Dallas from three states "at the last minute," their colleagues said.

The eight members of the team — four primary members and four doctors who assisted them — donated their services, said Jerry Pittman, a lawyer for Marina Oswald Porter. The examiners were paid only enough to cover their actual expenses, Pittman said.

British author Michael Eddowes, who raised speculation that the body in Oswald's grave was that of a Soviet spy, financed the exhumation.

The four top-ranking members of the team were Dr. Vincent DiMaio,

chief medical examiner in San Antonio and a former assistant to Dallas County medical examiner Dr. Charles Petty; Dr. Linda Norton, associate chief medical examiner in Birmingham, Ala., also a former assistant to Petty; Dr. Irving Sopher, chief medical examiner for West Virginia and a colleague of Petty; and Dr. James A. Cottone, associate professor of dental diagnostic science at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

"Dr. DiMaio is the most thorough forensic pathologist around, the best I've seen," said Gary Biggs, an assistant to DiMaio. "He won't jump to conclusions. If Dr. DiMaio says that's Oswald, then that's Oswald."

Examiners in Sopher's office in West Virginia said they were not surprised Sopher was chosen.

"Dr. Petty has known Dr. Sopher for a long time, but I'm sure the reason he was called to Dallas is he's a nationally known forensic expert with a strong background in dentistry," said Vasudeo Kshirsagar.

Sopher, 46, author of a book on forensic dentistry, was a medical examiner in Baltimore before becoming chief medical examiner for West Virginia in 1975.

The four doctors assisting the primary medical team included Dr. George Race, director of pathology, Baylor University Medical Center; Dr. Weldon Tillery, associate director of pathology, Baylor University Medical Center; Hamo Meguerditchian, forensic pathology assistant, Dallas County medical examiner's office; and Felix Cordero Jr., X-ray technician, University of Texas at San Antonio.

JFK study expensive, British author says

Staff Special to The News

FORT WORTH — Michael Eddowes, the British author and lawyer who started the clamor for exhuming Lee Harvey Oswald, looked almost lonely as he stood near the graveside Sunday watching a crane remove Oswald's casket.

"Please remember, Dr. Charles Petty (Dallas County medical examiner) was persuaded sufficiently by the evidence I presented to call for an exhumation and autopsy," said Eddowes, 77, who reportedly paid for the disinterment. "I don't want to be branded as some nut."

Eddowes, a wealthy owner of a restaurant chain in England, estimates he has spent more than \$250,000 since 1963 in his own investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. His expenses include numerous trips between London and Dallas, legal fees, chauffeurs and private investigators.

Last year, Eddowes said he still had "a comfortable income, but at the rate I am spending it at the moment, it's an uncomfortable income with the number of lawyers I am employing ... I am just about breaking even."



The Dallas Morning News

Michael Eddowes ... "I don't want to be branded as some nut."

Body identified by X-rays

By Bill Deener
Staff Writer of The News

The haunting mystery of whose body was actually buried in the grave of Lee Harvey Oswald was solved within minutes Sunday morning through a simple procedure of comparing dental records, said Dr. Irving Sopher, chief medical examiner for West Virginia.

"This (comparing dental records) is as exact as using fingerprints," Sopher said. "The main point is the shape of the fillings. Lee Harvey had about 10 fillings, so after we took X-rays, it was clear beyond any doubt that the body was, in fact, Oswald's."

The examination began about 10:30 a.m. A description of the clothing and the general condition of the body was recorded. The examination

was videotaped at the request of Marina Oswald Porter.

Two rings on Oswald's left hand were removed and given to Mrs. Porter for positive identification. The 4-member team of pathologists then focused on identifying the body through dental records.

The head was severed from the body so that the skull and teeth could be X-rayed accurately, Sopher said. The rest of the body was left in the coffin for the 5-hour examination.

X-rays taken March 27, 1963, while Oswald was in the U.S. Marine Corps, were compared with the 16 X-rays taken Sunday, Sopher said.

"The comparison of the X-rays showed no incompatibility whatsoever," Sopher said.

Dr. James Cottone, one of the team members from San Antonio, said the

only difference between this case and the hundreds of others he has worked during seven years in the field was the significance.

"There was a lot more security involved and there was a myriad of details to be covered. Then the documentation had to be done a lot more carefully than usual because of the significance of the case," he said.

"We went over it tooth by tooth, taking X-rays at different angles to get all the dental impressions. It was a rather painstaking process," Cottone said.

The pathologists also found a "bone scar" on the left side of the skull from a mastoid operation that Oswald had when he was 8 years old.

Dr. Linda Norton, head of the team, said the findings will be published in a medical journal.

THE OSWALD EXHUMATION

Second burial lacks eulogy, solemn rites

By Brad Bailey
Staff Writer of The News

No scriptures were read. No kind words were said.

Lee Harvey Oswald was reinterred Sunday afternoon at Rose Hill Burial Park in Fort Worth with even less ceremony than at his burial in 1963, when reporters were drafted to serve as pallbearers and a minister was brought out of retirement to read from the 23d Psalm and St. John.

The four gravediggers listened to the Dallas Cowboys game on the truck radio and sat on the new vault as they waited for the remains to be returned to the gravesite after an autopsy in Dallas.

They smoked cigarettes and took occasional swigs of water out of a red picnic jug until the anti-climactic 3-car funeral procession led by Lawrence Wood, a retired Fort Worth police captain riding a motorcycle, pulled into view.

Security guards picked cockleburs out of their socks and, passing the 5-foot mound next to the 7-by-7 foot hole in the earth, shielded their eyes from the blowing red dust.

Absolute Security Co. had evicted all sightseers from the cemetery.

"Be nice to the public, boys, the TV cameras are rolling. Watch them;

they'll probably try to bluff their way back in," one security officer said. But the group of about 75 spectators and 20 or so journalists were for the most part well-behaved.

Among those in the crowd, mostly neighborhood people who had grown up in the shadow of Oswald's grave, were Southwest Seminary students Tim Evans and Richard Morrell.

"It's fine with me to break into the grave if it answers the questions," Evans said.

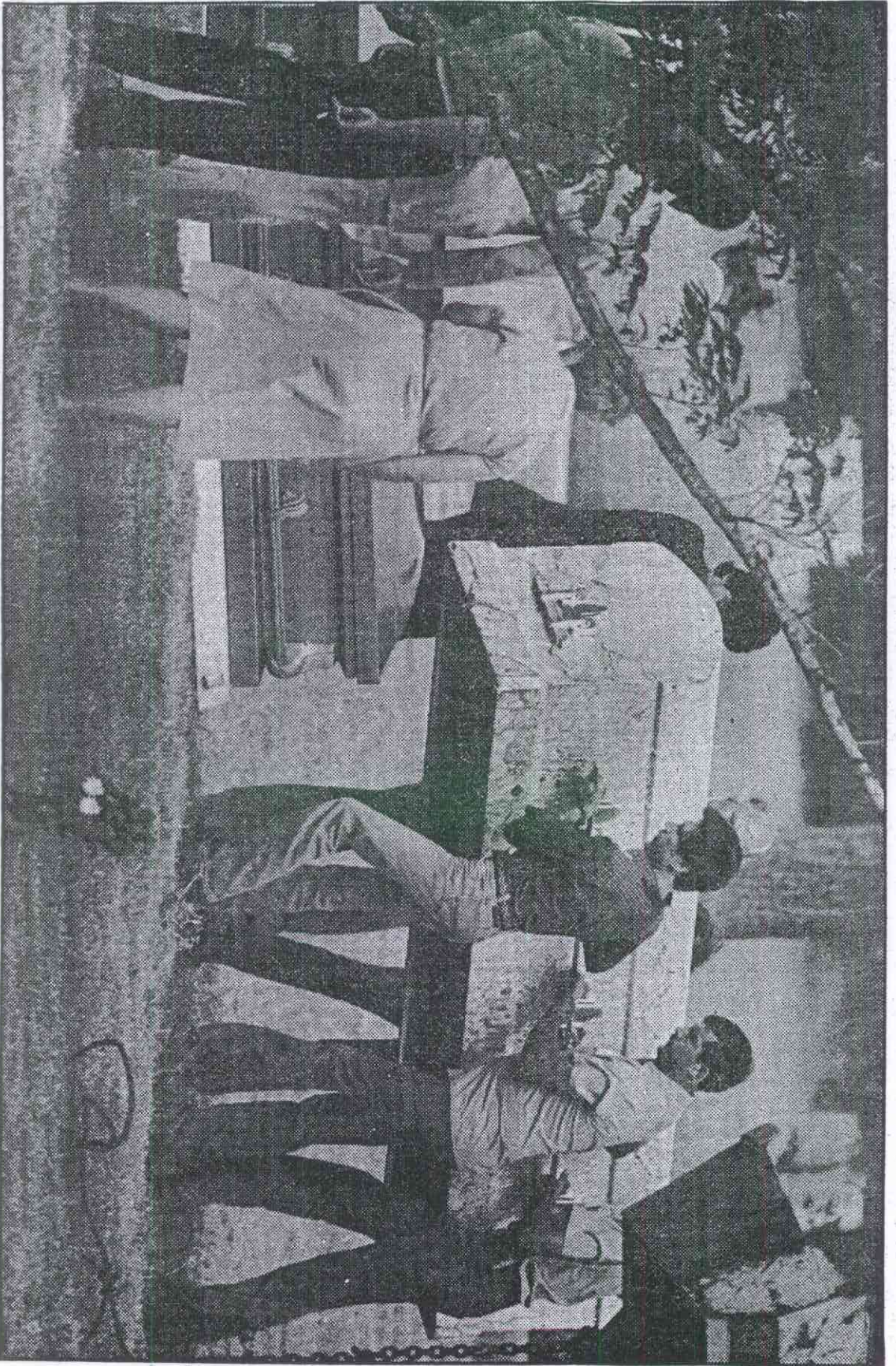
Said Morrell, "It's interesting because it's part of history. I think his soul is probably in hell or wherever it went, and they're just fooling with the body, so I don't see any religious significance to the disinterment."

Another bystander was more blunt in stating his reason for being there: "It ain't every day you get to see Lee Harvey Oswald's coffin."

The only witnesses authorized to be inside the cemetery were security officers patrolling the fence to keep the media and the public out, cemetery officials, and, watching from her station wagon, Marina Oswald Porter.

There wasn't much to witness.

Four men wrested Oswald's new beige coffin out of the black hearse and into the new shiny-steel Arkansas Casket Co. vault brought Sunday



The Dallas Morning News: Jay Godwin

Pallbearers place the vault top over Oswald's casket before it is lowered back into the ground.

morning to replace the water-damaged one in which the remains of Oswald had spent the past 18 years.

Foreman John Dougherty performed the reinterment, using a backhoe.

It took two minutes for gravediggers Jerry Walden, his brother,

Darryl, and David Shetter to hook chains to the vault. Dougherty, at the controls, said, "Don't get it too short, boys. Watch your hands."

David Shetter stood atop the mound, directing. "Come forward, come forward, a little more, little more, more, more — hold it!"

Dougherty hit a lever, and

Oswald's remains began the slow descent back into the soil they had left less than eight hours before. "Slowly, slowly now," Shetter said. Then, "Great."

Dougherty backed the rig away, then approached the mound from the west. The clods fell on the new vault with a hollow, ronging sound, while

off in the distance, over the wind, a crow called.

As a security official got into his car, preparing to leave, one of his officers called out, "See you later. We'll do it again."

He paused before answering. "I hope not," he said.