

Connolly, John B. 3

The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy
on November 22, 1963, at Dallas, Texas

Exh 12

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12/18/63

The President with Mrs. Kennedy and official party arrived at Love Field, Dallas, Texas, aboard AF #1 (USAF 26000) at 11:40 a.m. (cst). After receiving members of the official reception party, the President and Mrs. Kennedy walked over to a fenced area and shook hands with many of the people who had gathered there to view their arrival. At the conclusion of greeting the gathering, the President, Mrs. Kennedy, Governor and Mrs. Connally entered the presidential limousine (special car: bubble-top, 1961 Lincoln Continental, seven-passenger, four-door convertible sedan). The President sat on the right rear seat with Mrs. Kennedy to the left of him. Governor Connally sat on the right jump seat and Mrs. Connally sat on the left jump seat. I rode in the front (right side) and William Greer drove the vehicle.

In the Secret Service follow-up car, 1956 Cadillac touring sedan (top down), driven by SA Samuel Kinney, ATSAIC Emory Roberts rode in the right front seat, SA John Ready stood on the right front running board, SA Paul Landis on right rear running board, SA Clinton J. Hill on left front running board and William McIntyre on left rear running board. SA Glen Bennett rode in the right rear seat and SA George Hickey on the left rear seat. Mr. Kenneth O'Donnell and Mr. David Powers (White House staff) rode the left and right jump seats respectively.

Behind the follow-up car was the Vice President's car with Vice President and Mrs. Johnson and Senator Yarborough in the rear seat. SA Rufus Youngblood rode in the right front seat and a police officer drove the car. The following vehicles were four cars of congressional members, press cars, VIP bus and then press busses.

We departed Love Field at 11:55 a.m., along the planned motorcade route, enroute to a luncheon at the Trade Mart, given by the Democratic Citizens Council, scheduled for 12:30 p.m. cst. As the motorcade completed the main thoroughfare through Dallas, we made a sharp right turn, for about a 1/2 block, then a curved left turn into a slight downhill grade, entering an area with little or no spectators. We were still traveling at the normal rate of speed of from 12 to 15 miles per hour when I heard a noise, similar to a firecracker, exploding in the area to the rear of the car, about 12:30 p.m.

Immediately I heard what I firmly believe was the President's voice, "My God, I'm hit!" I turned around to find out what happened when two additional shots rang out, and the President slumped into Mrs. Kennedy's

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lap and Governor Connally fell into Mrs. Connally's lap. I heard Mrs. Kennedy shout, "What are they doing to you?"

Confidential yelled at William Greer (the driver) to "Step on it, we're hit!" and grabbed the mike from the car radio, called to SA Lawson in the police lead car that we were hit and to get us to a hospital.

With SA Lawson riding in the police car they quickly formed the accompanying escort for the motorcade around our limousines and sped us through the streets to the emergency entrance of Parkland Memorial Hospital. Sometime during the ride to the hospital while looking back into the car I noticed SA Hill hanging on to the back of the car, laying across the trunk. When we got to the hospital I called to the agents to get two stretchers. The special agents of the follow-up car with the police ran into the hospital, obtained two stretchers on wheels. We placed the Governor on the first one at which time I noticed he was conscious and I spoke to him saying, "Governor, everything is going to be all right." His eyes were wide open and he nodded his head in agreement. Just before we removed the President, SA Hill took off his coat, placed it over the President's head and chest and we placed him on the stretcher. Both were taken into separate emergency rooms. The hospital staff appeared quickly and went immediately to work. I accompanied the President to the emergency room. His eyes were closed but I could see no visible damage to his face. The room was crowded with the medical people so I immediately walked out into a doctor's room, asked SA Lawson for the phone number of the White House switchboard in Dallas. SA Hill dialed the number to the White House operator in Washington and I talked with Gerald A. Behn, Special Agent in Charge, White House Detail. I informed him that we had an incident in Dallas, the President and Governor Connally had been shot and both were in emergency rooms at the Parkland Memorial Hospital. This I believe was about 12:38 p.m. cst. This direct telephone line from Dallas to SAIC Behn at Washington was kept open from this time until the plane departed. SAIC Behn was kept informed of all proceedings, plans or desires of both Mrs. Kennedy and President Johnson.

We immediately secured the corridors and the emergency room area, furnished the blood type of the President to the medical staff upon their request. It should be noted that Vice President and Mrs. Johnson were placed in a separate room away from the emergency room. Some time later SA Warren Taylor came to me and said the Vice President wanted to see me. Mr. Johnson asked me the condition of the President and the Governor. I advised him that the Governor was taken up to surgery, that

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the doctors were still working on the President. He asked me to keep him informed of his condition. SA Kinney entered the emergency room area when I returned there and asked if it would be all right to drive the President's car and the follow-up car back to the airport, load them aboard the plane. I said "Yes" and told him to return the cars to Washington, D.C.

The 4 to 12 shift (ATSAIC Stout, etc.) joined us at the emergency room and the 8 to 4 shift (ATSAIC Roberts, etc.) immediately joined the Vice President and Mrs. Johnson.

Through Dr. Burkley, President's physician, we were advised officially of the death of the President which was registered on the death certificate as 1 p.m. cst. Between 1 p.m., and our departure from the hospital at 2:04 p.m. cst., a casket was obtained and with Mrs. Kennedy, SA Hill and Dr. Burkley riding in the hearse with the casket, SA Berger (Stout and Kellerman in front seat) drove the hearse with police escort to Love Field.

The Vice President and Mrs. Johnson had preceded us with Roberts shift to the airport and when we had arrived, the field had been secured and we rushed to AF 26000. All available special agents carried the casket from the ambulance up the rear steps and placed it in the rear section of the plane. When we boarded the plane, Vice President Johnson and his party were aboard the plane. The services of Federal Judge Sarah T. Hughes was obtained, she was brought into the plane, and Vice President Johnson was administered the oath of office and sworn in as President at 2:38 p.m. cst.

At 2:47 p.m., USAF 26000 was airborne for Washington, D. C., arriving at Andrews Air Force Base at 5:58 p.m., est.

While airborne, arrangements were made for a Naval ambulance from the New Naval Medical Center at Bethesda to be available at the airport. Upon landing we removed the casket, placed it into the ambulance. At the airport, Chief Rowley advised me that two FBI agents, Francis O'Neill, Jr., and James Siebert, had been assigned to this case and to allow them into the morgue at the U. S. Naval Hospital. I told Chief Rowley the cars would arrive at Andrews at about 8 p.m., and suggested he assign field agents to them to completely go over them for any evidence that might be found.

Mrs. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and General McHugh sat in the rear of the ambulance; SAs Greer, Landis and myself with Dr. Burkley rode in the front to Bethesda, with a police escort. The body was immediately taken to the morgue and the family was assigned rooms in the Towers ~~in~~

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of the Center. Hill and Landis remained with Mrs. Kennedy in her quarters and William Greer and I remained in the morgue and viewed the autopsy examinations which were performed by Vice Admiral Gallway, Commanding Officer, NNMC, Chief Pathologist Cdr. James Humes, Lt. Col. Pierre A. Finck who is Chief, Military Environmental Pathology Division and Chief of Wound Ballistics, Pathology Branch, and J. Thornton Boswell, Cdr. Medical Corps, USN, together with the Naval Medical Staff. SA O'Leary was also in the morgue briefly. Agents O'Neill and Siebert were present.

During the night Joseph Gawlers Sons, Inc., funeral directors, were notified by Robert Kennedy and Sargent Shriver and a new coffin was obtained. After the completion of the autopsy and before the embalming I summoned SA Hill down to the morgue to view the body and to witness the damage of the gunshot wounds. The embalming was performed after the autopsy by the staff of Joseph Gawlers.

Prior to our departure from the Naval Hospital I received all film, x-rays, that were used during this autopsy, and upon arrival at the White House I turned them over to SAIC Bouck.

We left the hospital at 3:56 a.m. in the Navy ambulance and with police escort motored to the White House. Mrs. Kennedy and Robert Kennedy rode in the hearse, SA Greer drove, Kellerman in the front seat, SAs Hill and Landis with members of the family rode in cars following the ambulance. We arrived at the White House at 4:24 p.m. The body was placed in the East Room.

On Wednesday, November 27, 1963, FBI Agents O'Neill and Siebert were given an oral statement along the lines of this report.

Roy H. Kellerman
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Assistant Special Agent in Charge

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