

Eyewitness

Account Of Shooting

By Michael Harris

heard one shot, precisely at 3:30 p.m.

I had a chance to get just a glimpse of President Ford leaving the Post street entrance of the St. Francis Hotel when the sound erupted.

It was a loud, clear crack.

The President ducked and ran into his limousine, parked at the curb.

A Secret Service agent jumped in behind him.

The agent pushed the President down and shielded him with his body.

The shot came from the opposite curb, about 20 feet from where I was standing.

The sound came from near the entrance to the United Air-

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lines ticket office, at the corner of Post and Powell streets.

There was no mistaking what it was.

The police guarding the entrance to the hotel got to the suspect instantly.

I saw a policeman, his billy club extended, rush smack into the crowd.

In an instant, half a dozen other policemen were there too, grabbing the suspect, later identified as Sara Jane Moore.

They lifted her right off the ground.

They carried her, battering ram fashion, into Post street, a limousine skidded and swerved, narrowly missing the police and their captive.

The crowd, eight deep along the curb opposite the hotel, was stunned into immobility.

Where a moment before there had been a mixture of polite cheers and a few mild boos, there now was a gasp and shocked silence.

There were about 2000 persons in that block alone, shoulder to shoulder.

Within moments, the street was cleared of traffic.

Pedestrians remained in place, watching the President's car as it started, sirens roaring, down Post street and then beyond Union square.

The other cars in the President's entourage scrambled into formation as best they could.

I managed to get past the white rope set up along the curb to restrain the crowd and watched police carry Miss Moore into the St. Francis Hotel. They took her through the small Post street lobby, up the stairs to the mezzanine and into the Borgia Room.

At no time during her rapid journey could I see clearly what she looked like. Her face appeared to be covered by a light raincoat.

In fact, not much of her was visible except her legs, covered with tan slacks and her tiny feet, in black shoes.

The Borgia Room was sealed off to the public by Secret Service agents. Within minutes, a succession of about a dozen witnesses who had been standing close to the suspect, were brought into the hotel. Frightened, and ashen, they were questioned in turn by federal and San Francisco policemen.