

'The Day JFK Was Shot'

LBJ Took Time Out to Write John and Caroline

The Examiner presents the seventh instalment in the exclusive serialization of the sensational book, "The Day Kennedy Was Shot," the book the Kennedys asked Jim Bishop not to write.

By JIM BISHOP

6:30 P.M.: Jack Valenti, who placed himself at Lyndon Johnson's side in Dallas as a buffer, listened to orders the new President was giving in the Vice Presidential suite at the old State Department Building across from the White House.

It had been suggested that Johnson move into the Presidential office. The Kennedy effects had been removed from it precipitously that afternoon. He had responded, "No. That would be presumptuous now."

Valenti knew from the President's tone that he was beginning to feel sure of himself.

"Get me Averell Harri-man," "I want to speak to the Ranch," "Let me speak to Shriver," were enunciated patiently.

Cliff Carter was told softly, "Go down the hall to a White House secretary for two White House letterheads and envelopes."

Johnson was going to take time to write letters to Caroline and John Kennedy. He would tell them how he felt about their father. He did not expect the notes would mean much to the children now, but when the children matured, they might like to know his successor thought of them on the day that their father had died.

Carter found the secretary and asked for the two letterheads and envelopes. Her mouth became firm. "Who are they for?" she said. He told her: "President Johnson." The woman stared at him as she opened a drawer for the stationery. "Damn that man!" she shouted. "The President isn't even cold in his grave and he wants to use White House stationery. Damn him!"

Carter did not tell the President what happened. Johnson wrote the notes, asked that they be delivered to the White House at once. He sat staring at his desk blotter. The President was thinking of Mrs. Kennedy. He looked up at Bill Moyers and Carter. "I wish," he said, "that I could reach up and bring down a handful of stars and give them to that wom-

an."

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At the home of Mrs. Kennedy's mother, Mrs. Hugh Auchincloss, a Secret Service man told Maude Shaw, "We'll have to take you back to the White House immediately." The children's bags had not been unpacked. The English "Nanny" went to tell Caroline and John, "Mummy wants us. Caroline, be my bestest friend and help John on with his coat." Caroline rose to the role of mother. Holding the coat, she said, "Come on John-John. We're going home again."

As they were driven from Georgetown to Washington, they could see crowds of people. In the White House driveway, flashbulbs winked like giant fireflies, and Caroline said: "What are all these people for?"

Dreaded Moment

"To see you," the nurse said sadly.

When Maude Shaw had gotten John-John to bed in the family quarters on the second floor, she went to Caroline's room and sat on the edge of the bed. The moment she dreaded confronted her. She tried to read to Caroline, but the tears came.

Caroline looked up from her pillow. "What's the matter, Miss Shaw? Why are you crying?"

The nurse placed both arms around the little body. "I have very sad news to tell you."

"What?"

Miss Shaw began the story of a terrible accident in Dal-

las which could be minimized only to a point. When a small voice asks "How badly is he hurt?" there is only one way of saying, "He died."

Caroline began to cry. Maude Shaw sat weeping and patting the child's hand until fatigue overwhelmed the little girl. Then both slept.

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The body on the autopsy table at Bethesda Naval Hospital under the lights was nude, broken. Doctors made notes. There were prescribed steps to be taken under the circumstances, and if they were carried out precisely, a President of the United States would leave the room as a shell.

Description

They noted Kennedy was 72½ inches tall, weighed 170 pounds, had blue eyes, reddish brown hair. He was 46 years of age . . .

"The body is that of a muscular, well-developed and well-nourished Caucasian . . . There is beginning rigor mortis, minimal dependent livor mortis of the dorsum, and early algor mortis."

The left eye was swollen and black and blue, obviously from the shot which hit the right rear of the head and pressed the brain violently forward toward the left optic.

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7: P.M.: Clint Hill sat outside the Kennedy suite on the 27th floor at Bethesda. The Secret Service man ordered direct telephones lines to the White House.

A naval officer arrived with a typed blank requiring Mrs. Kennedy's signature for an autopsy on John Kennedy. Hill, not wishing to distress Mrs. Kennedy with such an order, sent for Robert F. Kennedy. He took his pen and scrawled "Robert F. Kennedy" on the left side.

It was an improper signature, but the United States Navy would not quarrel with the Kennedys.

Grief, like ecstasy, is im-

possible to maintain at a high level for considerable periods of time. Some persons cried. There was laughter too. There was a wistful penchant for "Remember-the-time-Jack-said..."

There was speculation about Lyndon Johnson. His name won no endorsement from the people on the 17th floor. Johnson stood less of a chance of getting it because Robert Kennedy had never bothered to mask his animosity from the moment his brother had picked Johnson as his running mate.

Among the women, someone recalled that Caroline and John-John would have birthdays within a few days, but this mention was stifled. It is difficult to say whether the sight of Mrs. Kennedy's bloody clothes, still including gloves, was more of a shock to the women or the men.

Many Calls

The Kennedys and their

friends had many calls to make that evening. Most were to Sargent Shriver, in the White House, on arrangements for the funeral to be held on Monday. An invitation list was being drawn up. Names of the great and

near-great, crowned heads and premiers, were being bandied as though the personages were divided into two sharp camps: grata and non grata.

De Gaulle? Yes. Queen Elizabeth Yes. Harold Wil-

son? Yes. Barry Goldwater? Who said that? Governors? Indeed. Naturally, the Senate would send a delegation. So would the House. How about the Apostolic Delegate? What was his name? Something Italian. The diplomatic corps? Well, not the whole group. Those ambassadors could fill a church. The Supreme Court? Of course. Who from United Nations? Who from civil rights?

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The preliminary examination and the X-ray photography of the body were complete by the time Lieutenant Colonel Pierre Finck of the Wounds Ballistics Branch of the Armed Services Institute of Pathology arrived to assist.

Quickly, he gowned and masked and came into the autopsy room as the X-rays were being placed on illuminated opaque screens for examination.

A radiologist with a pointer took the frames one by one.



This photo of John-John and Caroline with their English nanny, Maude Shaw, was taken during May of 1963.

The youngsters started climbing on railing to watch their father honor war heroes in White House Rose Garden.

—UPI Photo

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muscles less than one inch and stop. And what had happened to such a bullet?

Bullet Found

The driver of the Presidential car, William Greer, had said that a bullet had been found on a stretcher — or rather as it fell from a stretcher — in Parkland Memorial Hospital and had been sent on to the FBI laboratory for examination. Could this be the bullet that went into the neck and, in the jostling of the President on the stretcher, fell out?

The doctors agreed that it was a possibility. They could easily have recessed the proceedings for 15 minutes or a half hour to phone Parkland Memorial Hospital and ask what were the wound findings and what methods and treatment were employed.

The news that an exit wound had been found in the lower front of the neck — one which frayed the back of the knot on the President's tie — would have settled, beyond doubt, that the bullet had gone through the back of the neck muscles and out the trachea.

The Texas doctors could have stated that the exit wound had been enlarged to perform a tracheotomy. A seeming mystery that was to foster so much contentious writing could have been dissolved at once. No one pursued it.

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Where there was no pathological finding, as in the abdomen, it was so stated, and the doctor moved on to the more dramatic studies.

Most puzzling was the wound in the right strap

muscles. It was almost certainly a wound of entry, but there seemed to be no exit wound corresponding.

The emergency tracheotomy performed at Parkland Hospital in Dallas had en-

larged the exit, but doctors at Bethesda had no knowledge of this.

It was hardly possible that a metal missile, moving at close to a half mile per second, could pierce the fleshy