

Kennedy Wound 'Placed'

New York

X-rays and photographs taken during the autopsy of President Kennedy do verify the location of a disputed wound at the base of the back of his neck. But this evidence by itself cannot end the controversy over a bullet's path through his body.

This was the opinion yesterday of an autopsy surgeon, who has now seen the X-rays and photographs placed into the National Archives on Oct. 31.

In a telephone interview from Bethesda, Md., Dr. J. Thornton Boswell, a retired navy commander now in private medical practice, said he and the chief autopsy pathologist, Captain James J. Humes, agreed that the pictures cannot prove the so-called single bullet theory.

This theory holds that one bullet pierced the back base of the President's neck, went on to emerge at the lower left part of his tie-knot and then wounded Governor John B. Connally Jr. of Texas in the back, chest, wrist and thigh.

'PERSUASIVE'

The report of the Warren Commission said there was "persuasive evidence" for the single bullet theory "although it is not necessary to any essential findings."

The commission found that Lee Harvey Oswald alone assassinated the President, firing three shots in less than eight seconds, including one probable miss. If the President and governor were wounded separately, questions of timing and the possibility that there were two rifles have been raised by critics.

Boswell said that he saw the photographs for the first time last Nov. 1. They show clearly, he said, the accuracy

of the autopsy report and of the autopsy surgeons' testimony as to the location of the wound.

Boswell said that it was his diagram, commission exhibit 397, that critics of the Warren Commission have cited in arguing that the wound was farther down the back.

'ERROR'

Boswell said this hasty "work sheet," made during the autopsy, had a "diagram error" — a dot that placed the wound incorrectly. He said that the notes he had written on the diagram, however, located the wound accurately.

The tracing of the bullet's path must still depend on medical interpretation because it went through soft tissues and muscles, Boswell said. These were bruised, he said, but the pictures do not conclusively show the path.

'UNFORTUNATE'

Boswell said of his diagram:

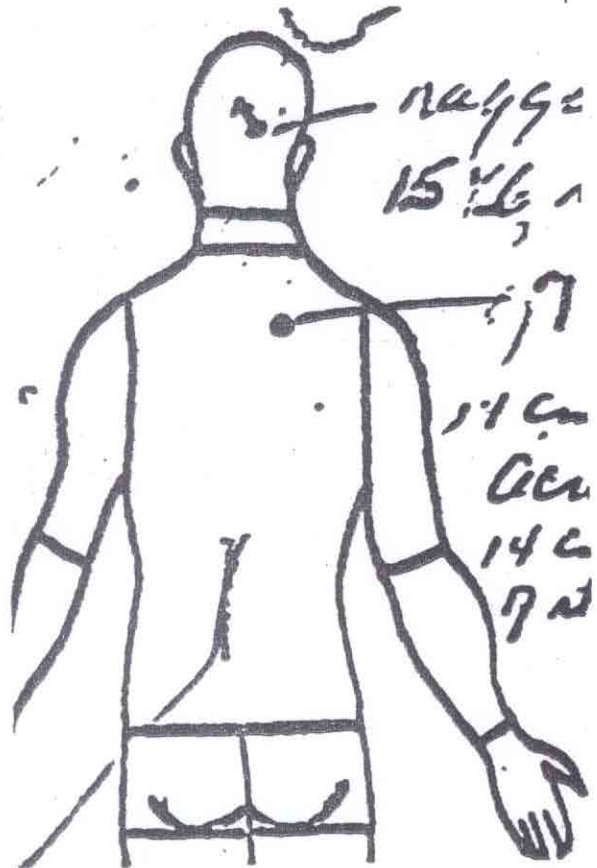
"This was unfortunate. If I had known at the time that this sketch would become public record, I would have been more careful."

"Its sole purpose was to indicate for the autopsy doctors right, left, front, back — thinks like that. The photographs were to provide the exact visual description."

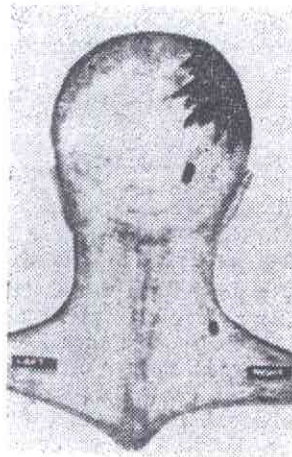
The autopsy surgeons have "absolutely no doubt in our minds now" that a single bullet hit both Kennedy and Connally, Boswell said.

Boswell said FBI reports used by the critics were "simply wrong." The FBI agents present during the autopsy were "not trained in medicine," he said.

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AP Wirephoto
Dr. Boswell's hasty autopsy sketch had the bullet wound too far down the back



AP Wirephoto
Later, correct sketch had wound on neck