

Jim Bishop

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On Trail of Oswald



DALLAS — Four years is a long time to track a story. A very long time. But there is one more year to go.

At the moment, I have 5400 pages of notes that concern themselves with a minute-by-minute account of Nov. 22, 1963. They are in 18 volumes, and there are more to come.

Now the trail has led to Dallas, the Concrete Canyon on the Trinity River, and I am possessed of a conviction that the sane, the sensible, the accurate story of John F. Kennedy's assassination has yet to be told.

The literary weepers have grown rich. Some have told the story of poor Queen Guinevere and the knight in search of the Holy Grail. Some have made a Mickey Spillane saga of it.

Others have bent the facts into surmise, and made us believe that men were hiding all over Dealey Plaza with guns.

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DALLAS TRIES to forget that day. Big D wears it like a birthmark, and it prefers that you not mention it.

Kennedy died. Oswald died. Ruby died. But the story won't. The trouble with Dallas is that the big men in the cowboy boots think that the world blames the city for what happened.

Dallas didn't like Kennedy. But, for three days before the visit, the Dallas News and the Dallas Times Herald exhorted the citizens to accord the President of the United States a friendly welcome.

Jesse Curry, the chief of police, got on TV and admonished all residents to report political hotheads to him.

The President knew the risk, and took

it. Sudden death could have occurred in Bangor, Boise or Bayonne. But Dallas won't buy it.

I've been here a week and I have yet to meet a casual man. Dallasites are strong and firm on everything. Dallas is rich and hospitable, and yet it will shake a phone off a wall if it gets a busy signal and the dime doesn't come back.

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I WENT OUT to Oak Cliff yesterday to take a look at Lee Harvey Oswald's room at 1026 No. Beckley. Mrs. A. C. Johnson, the owner, asked me for \$5 to look at Oswald's room.

I gave it to her. She was a sweet small-eyed woman with pockets. "The bed used to be turned around the other way," she said, so I altered my notes. "You going to write a book?" she said. I nodded.

The room isn't much. It measures about 5 feet by 11 with a white iron bed and, when you get in that room, you get into bed or fall out the window.

Sometimes I think Oswald wanted to get caught. He left the gun where it could be found and traced. He knew he had been spotted at the sixth floor window by a fellow employe.

When he hopped a bus, he knew he'd be the only missing employe at the Texas School Book Depository.

He was walking almost aimlessly when he shot Officer Tippit. He was cocky when he was caught in the Texas Theater. He fenced with Captain Fritz in the Homicide Bureau. There was no fear in him. There should have been.

There is fear in Dallas about Oswald. And there shouldn't be. He could have happened anywhere.

SEE ALSO CHRON. II, 11 DEC. 67