

Abraham Zapruder Dies; Filmed Kennedy Death

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Footage of Tragedy in Dallas Had Role in Shaw Trial and Warren Commission Report

DALLAS, Aug. 30 (UPI)—Abraham Zapruder, the only person to take motion pictures of the assassination of President Kennedy, died Sunday of cancer at Presbyterian Hospital here. He was 66 years old.

A Moment in History

Abraham Zapruder was president of Jennifer Juniors, Inc., a dress shop in downtown Dallas, a conventional business man who, like thousands of others on Nov. 22, 1963, saw a glimpse of the Kennedy motorcade on the visit to Dallas that was to result in tragedy and a changed course of history.

Like many others that day he loaded his camera on a film, hoping to capture some footage.

Secret Service agents had accompanied him and learned that Zapruder had taken a stand near the Book Depository. He had films of the actual moment of the assassination.

The agents advised Zapruder to keep his camera and sell it, as he saw fit. Zapruder was approached by Dallas representatives of Time-Life, Inc., the evening of the assassination, following the visit of the Secret Service.

He made a deal to sell the 15-second close-up of the 8-mm. film for "well over \$10,000 and close to \$20,000." While the pictures were in color, time limitations caused Life's editors, rushing for quick publication, to print the pictures in black and white.

The Associated Press had tried to make the purchase, but the Associated Press showed the President slumping in his car. The use of the film in the Warren Commission report and the Shaw trial.

Mr. Zapruder's death followed the death of another prominent in events surrounding the assassination, James Earl Ray Decker, sheriff of Tarrant County for the last 10 years, who would have been 67 years old Monday, died in Presbyterian Hospital Saturday.

Mr. Zapruder's films, which were taken with a telephoto lens, were shown in the New Orleans courtroom 11 times, nine times before the jury. The repeated showings led the defense to charge that the films were being used to inflame the jury against Mr. Shaw, a retired New Orleans businessman who was charged with conspiracy to assassinate Mr. Kennedy.

The films also figured late in 1965 in a court action in which Time, Inc. lost a copyright infringement suit against the author, publisher and distributor of a book, "Six Seconds in Dallas," which used some of the Zapruder pictures.

Publication of photographs selected from the films in the Warren report led to fresh controversy over exactly what should be drawn from the Zapruder's death followed by the death of another prominent in events surrounding the assassination, James Earl Ray Decker, sheriff of Tarrant County for the last 10 years, who would have been 67 years old Monday, died in Presbyterian Hospital Saturday.

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