

Deputy Sticks To Story: Saw Kennedy's Car

EDGARTOWN (Mass.)—(UPI)—A witness at the secret inquest into the death of Mary Jo Kopechne contradicted a crucial time element in Sen. Edward Kennedy's account of the auto accident that took her life, it was learned today.

Christopher Look Jr., an Edgartown deputy sheriff, stuck to his guns yesterday during 45 minutes of questioning at the inquest. Kennedy had denied Look's account in his appearance Monday.

Nineteen witnesses have been questioned so far in the three-day-old proceeding, but Look's testimony, more than that of anyone else, has turned the investigation into a battle of truth between the glamorous senior senator from Massachusetts and a local fuel oil dealer who has been a deputy for Dukes County since 1953.

Ending Today

The inquest was expected to wind up today following testimony by five young women who, along with Kennedy, Miss Kopechne and five male friends, attended a party the night of her death July 18.

The 28-year-old Washington secretary died when a car Kennedy said he was driving plunged off a bridge on nearby Chappaquiddick Island into a tidal pond.

Look was among nine witnesses who testified yesterday before Judge James Boyle. The testimony of the other witnesses added nothing to what is already known of the accident.

Before Midnight

Kennedy has maintained, in two public statements about the accident, that he and Miss Kopechne left a rented cottage on Chappaquiddick about 11:15 p.m. to return to Edgartown, both apparently having tired of the party.

The 37-year-old senator

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CHRISTOPHER LOOK
Kennedy was contradicted

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said he made a wrong turn driving back to a ferry that connects the tiny island with Edgartown — a wrong turn that led to the narrow wooden bridge over a salt water pond. Kennedy said the car went off the bridge and Miss Kopechne drowned.

Look maintained yesterday — as he has adamantly since the accident — that he saw the Kennedy car with two and possibly three persons in it at 12:40 or 12:45 a.m., more than an hour after Kennedy said the accident happened. Kennedy said he had been trying to catch the last ferry, which leaves at midnight.

The driver of the car, whom Look could not identify, appeared confused as the uniformed deputy sheriff, who was driving to his Chappaquiddick home after dark, approached to offer help.

When he was 20 to 30 feet away, Look said, the car sped off down the dirt road toward the bridge. He said he was certain it was the same car pulled from the pond the following morning with Miss Kopechne's body in it.

Asked how he knew this, Look replied he was certain it was a black sedan with a Massachusetts registration plate beginning with "L" and containing the number "7." Kennedy's car was a 1967 black Oldsmobile sedan with registration L78207. The only other car at the cottage that night was a rented white Valiant.