

# 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, sought a glimpse of the Kennedy motorcade on the visit to Dallas that was to result in tragedy and a changed course for history.

Like many others that day, he loaded his camera with color film, hoping for some good footage.

Secret Service agents who had accompanied the motorcade learned that it was probable that Mr. Zapruder, who had taken a stand near the Texas Book Depository, had some films of the actual moment of the assassination, and they examined his pictures at once.

The agents permitted Mr. Zapruder to keep the film or sell it, as he saw fit. Mr. Zapruder was approached by Dallas representatives of Time-Life, Inc., the evening of the assassination, following the visit of the Secret Service men.

He made a deal to sell the 15-second close-up sequence of 8-mm. film for "well over \$25,000 and close to \$40,000." 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 Life's bid topped that of the news agency.

The films showed the President being hit and slumping forward in his car. The sequence ran from just before the impact until the motorcade set out for Parkland Hospital.

The films were used extensively by the Warren Commission in its report and they also figured later in the Clay L. Shaw trial in New Orleans.

At the Shaw trial, Mr. Zapruder gave a vivid description of the assassination as he saw it while photographing the motorcade from the north side of Elm Street in Dealey Plaza.

"As they were approaching where I was standing," he said, "I heard a shot and noticed when the President leaned toward Jacqueline. Then I heard another shot. It hit him in the head and practically opened it up."

When the first shot struck the President, Mr. Zapruder recounted, "he grabbed himself toward his chest," and then, with the second shot, "he laid about the same way, leaning forward toward Jackie, almost falling."

Speaking with a slight accent, Mr. Zapruder recalled his own reaction. "I was extremely shattered. I kept on saying, 'They killed him, they killed him.'"

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 1968 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 conclusions could be drawn.

Mr. Zapruder's death followed by a day the death of another figure prominent in events surrounding the assassination.

James Eric (Bill) Decker, sheriff of Dallas County for the last 22 years, was riding in the first car of the motorcade. Mr. Decker, who would have been 72 years old Monday, died in Baylor Hospital Saturday.