

The Hours of Violence

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The assassination story began at 11:40 a. m., CST, on Friday, Nov. 22, 1963.

President John F. Kennedy, Mrs. Kennedy, and their party arrived at Love Field, Dallas, Tex.

Behind them was the first day of a Texas trip planned five months before by the President, Vice President Lyndon Johnson, and John B. Connally Jr., Governor of Texas.

Here is a condensed version as related in the Warren Commission report of the following hours of violence and death ending with the shooting of Lee Harvey Oswald by Jack Ruby.

THE MOTORCADE

The Presidential motorcade left Love Field shortly after 11:50 a. m., and proceeded through residential neighborhoods. . . . As the motorcade reached Main Street, a principal east-west artery in downtown Dallas, the welcome became tumultuous. . . . As the President's car approached the intersection of Houston and Elm Streets, there loomed directly ahead on the intersection's northwest corner a seven-story, orange brick warehouse and office building, the Texas school book depository. . . .

The President's car which had been going north made a sharp turn toward the southwest onto Elm Street. . . . The front of the Texas school depository was now on the President's right.

Seconds later shots resounded in rapid succession. Both the President and Governor were wounded, the President fatally. . . .

At Parkland (hospital) the President was immediately treated by a team of physicians. . . . However, at 1 p. m., after all heart activity ceased and the last rites were administered by a priest, President Kennedy was pronounced dead. . . .

THE EYEWITNESSES

Several eyewitnesses in front of the building reported that they saw a rifle being fired from the southeast

corner window on the sixth floor of the Texas school book depository. One eyewitness . . . promptly told a policeman that he had seen a slender man, about 5 feet 10 inches, in his early thirties, take deliberate aim from the sixth-floor corner window and fire a rifle in the direction of the President's car. . . . At 12:45 p. m., the police radio broadcast a description of the suspected assassin. . . .

Just 45 minutes after the assassination, another violent shooting occurred in Dallas. The victim was patrolman J. D. Tippit of the Dallas Police. . . .

At approximately 1:15 p. m. Tippit . . . pulled up alongside a man walking in the same direction. The man met the general description of the suspect wanted in connection with the assassination. . . . Tippit opened the door on the left side and started to walk around the front of his car. As he reached the front wheel on the driver's side, the man on the sidewalk drew a revolver and fired several times in rapid succession, hitting Tippit four times and killing him instantly. . . .

At 1:29 p. m., the police radio had noted the similarity in the descriptions of the suspects in the Tippit shooting and the assassination. At 1:45 p. m. . . . the police radio sounded the alarm: "Have information a suspect just went in the Texas Theater on West Jefferson." Within minutes the theater was surrounded. The house lights were then turned up.

After a brief struggle, Patrolman M. R. McDonald and several other police officers disarmed and handcuffed the suspect and drove him to police headquarters. . . .

Shortly before 1 p. m. Capt. J. Will Fritz . . . of the Dallas Police Department, arrived at the Book Depository to take charge of the investigation. Searching the sixth floor, Deputy Sheriff Luke Mooney noticed a pile of cartons in the southeast corner. He squeezed through the boxes. . . . On the floor were three empty cartridge cases. . . .

RIFLE FOUND

. . . At 1:22 p. m., Deputy Sheriff Eugene Boon turned his flashlight in the direction of two rows of boxes. . . . Sifted between the two rows was a bolt-action rifle with a telescopic sight. . . .

A. S. Fritz and (Police Lt. J. C.) Day were completing their examination. . . . Roy Truly, the building superintendent, approached with information. . . . Earlier, while the police were questioning the employees, Truly had observed that Lee Harvey Oswald . . . was missing. . . . Fritz . . . arrived at headquarters shortly after 2 p. m. and asked two detectives to pick up the employee who was missing from the Book Depository. . . . When Fritz mentioned the name of the missing employee, he learned that the . . . missing school book depository employee and the suspect who had been apprehended in the Texas Theater were one and the same — Lee Harvey Oswald.

. . . During October and November (weeks prior to the assassination) Oswald established a general pattern of weekend visits to Irving (Tex.), arriving on Friday afternoon and returning to Dallas Monday morning with a fellow employee, Buell Wesley Frazier. . . . On Thursday, Nov. 21, Oswald told Frazier that he would like to drive to Irving to pick up some curtain rods for an apartment in Dallas. . . .

BULKY PACKAGE

. . . The following morning Oswald . . . walked to Frazier's house about half a block away and placed a long bulky package, made out of wrapping paper and tape, into the rear seat of the car. . . . Frazier . . . saw Oswald enter the depository building carrying the long bulky package with him. . . .

The formal charge against Oswald for the assassination of President Kennedy was lodged shortly after 1:30 a. m., on Saturday, Nov. 23. By 10 p. m. of the day of the assassination, the FBI had traced the rifle found on the sixth floor of the Book Depository to a mail order

house in Chicago. . . . The Chicago firm advised that his rifle had been ordered in March, 1963 . . . for shipment to Post Office Box 2915, in Dallas, Tex., a box rented by Oswald. . . .

On Sunday morning, Nov. 26, . . . at approximately 11:20 a. m. Oswald emerged from the basement jail office flanked by detectives on either side and at his rear. He took a few steps toward the car and was in the glaring light of the television cameras when a man (Jack Ruby) suddenly darted out from an area on the right of the cameras . . . moved quickly to within a few feet of Oswald and fired one shot into Oswald's abdomen. . . . Within seven minutes Oswald was at Parkland Hospital where, without having regained consciousness, he was pronounced dead at 1:07 p. m.



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A QUICK MOVEMENT BY RUBY (r.) AND THE SECOND SHOCKING ACT IN THE TRAGEDY WAS COMPLETED
From Ruby's testimony: "... suddenly a feeling that someone owed a debt to our beloved President"