

From the people whose lives crossed his,
a clinical study of Lee Harvey Oswald

THE EVOLUTION OF AN ASSASSIN



OSWALD AT 2. Smiling and chubby, with his hair combed into a curl by his mother, Lee poses for a baby picture. It was 1941 and the family lived in New Orleans where Lee was born.

Ever since the assassination of President Kennedy, two questions have haunted the nation and the world: what was the President's killer really like? How did he grow up to commit this terrible act?

Before Lee Harvey Oswald himself could supply any answers, he was killed by Jack Ruby (p. 26). But, though he led an elusive life during his 24 years, he brushed against many people in many places—and left a trail behind him of brief but unforgettable impressions.

Soon after Oswald's death, LIFE's staff began to assemble these clues. Dozens of reporters searched for the people who had known him—neighbors, teachers, classmates, employers, fellow Marines. They told what they knew and in some cases provided the rare pictures of Oswald shown on these pages. LIFE Reporter Donald Jackson wove the accounts into the article that begins on the next page and gives, in extraordinary detail, the evolution—from babyhood to death—of the assassin.

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