

ACTIVITIES OF DORIS NELSON, R.N., BEGINNING

12:00 NOON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1963

At approximately 12:00 Noon I returned from lunch, and proceeded to check the various areas in the Emergency Room. At approximately 12:33 P.M. I answered the phone which was ringing in the Major Surgery Nurses' Station. Mrs. Bartlett, the telephone operator, informed me that the President had been shot, and was being brought to the hospital. I told her to "stop kidding me". She said "I am not. I have the police dispatcher on the line." I thanked her, and immediately hung up the phone.

I asked Dr. Dulaney, the Surgery Resident, to come into Trauma Room # 1, and that I wished to talk with him because I did not wish to alert everyone which might have caused general pandemonium in the Emergency Room. I informed Mrs. Standridge, and she told me that Room # 1 was set up so I proceeded into Room # 2, and had opened one bottle of Ringer's Lactate when I heard someone call for carriages.

Seconds later, Governor Connally was brought into Room # 2. I opened his shirt, and saw that he had received a gunshot wound of the chest. Mrs. Standridge was in the room assisting the doctor so as I walked out of the room to check on the President, he was wheeled into Trauma Room # 1. I checked in the room to determine what type of injury he had sustained, and was asked by the Secret Service to screen all personnel at the doorway leading to the trauma rooms. In the meantime, I answered the phone in the Surgery Nurses' Station, and Dr. Baxter was on the line. He asked what we wanted. I told him that the President had been shot, and he said "Yes - what else is new?" I said: "Get down here", and he said: "I'm on my way."

I stood at the doorway with a city policeman and secret service agent, and screened each doctor that went into the area. I offered to get Mrs. Kennedy, who was sitting outside of Trauma Room # 1, a towel, and asked her if she would like to remove her gloves which were saturated with blood. She said: "No thank you, I'm alright". On one occasion she got up, and went into the room the President was in. I went in, and asked her if she had rather wait outside, and she said "no". One of the secret service men said to let her stay in the room. She came out shortly thereafter.

Several White House aides and secretaries came in, and embraced Mrs. Kennedy, and I believe Mrs. Lyndon Johnson was among them.

Dr. Kemp Clark arrived. The cardio-verter was carried into the room, and Dr. Jenkins from Anesthesia came with an anesthesia cart.

Shortly after Dr. Clark arrived, two priests arrived, and gave the President last rites. Dr. Clark came out of the room, and talked briefly with Mrs. Kennedy. Then the priest came out, and I talked with the First Lady also.

I was informed by Dr. Clark of the President's expiration. I asked Mrs. Standridge to obtain a death certificate for Dr. Clark to complete. I asked a doctor with the Presidential Staff as to arrangements he wished carried out concerning the body.

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The President's doctor informed me that arrangements had been made to obtain a casket for the body. Shortly afterwards, Mr. O'Neal of the O'Neal Ambulance Company, arrived with a bronze casket. Miss Hinchliffe came out, and asked for some plastic to put inside the casket. I sent Mrs. Hutton to the 2nd floor to obtain a plastic mattress cover. I went in Trauma Room # 1 to determine that all was in order while Mrs. Ellis stood in the doorway. I asked David Sanders to assist the nurses in preparing the President's body before placing it in the casket. I instructed the nurses and attendants to clean up the room, and mop the floor.

After Mr. O'Neal, and some of the boys who work with him, (only one of whose name I knew - Audrey Riker) placed the President in the casket, and closed it. Mrs. Kennedy went in, and sat in a chair beside it leaning her head on the casket.

At approximately 2:10 P.M. the President's body was taken out of the Emergency Room. Mrs. Kennedy was walking beside it. All of the secret service agents left the area.

Shortly after they left, Miss Bowron informed me that she took the President's watch off so the doctor could start an intravenous, that she placed the watch in her pocket, and did not think of it until everyone had left. She went out front to find someone, and saw Mr. Wright so she gave the watch to him.

I gave a blue coat containing a white envelope labeled "cash" found, and a card with the name "Clint Hill" to one of the secret service men.

When the presidential staff left, Mr. Price obtained coffee for us, and we went into my office, drank about two sips, smoked about two puffs from a cigarette. Then I made rounds, and informed the registration desk that we were seeing all patients. Mrs. Wright came down shortly after that, and I reviewed with her briefly the past experience.

I went to coffee with Mrs. Berger. Then I went to the Nursing Service Office, and was told that all supervisors were to attend a meeting in Miss Beck's office at 3:30 P.M.

I returned to the Emergency Room, and asked all personnel on the 7-3:30 shift to report to my office. Mr. Geilich came in my office while I was talking to them. I asked them not to discuss the past events with anyone, and if any of the nurses were approached by a member of the press that they were to obtain administrative approval before saying anything. I went back upstairs to the Nursing Service Office to attend the meeting. After the meeting, I returned to the Emergency Room, made rounds, and left at approximately 5:00 P.M.

5:30 - 10:00 P.M. - I watched television at home, and got ready to return to work at 11:00 P.M.

I arrived at the hospital at 10:30 P.M., made rounds in the Emergency Room, reported to the Nursing Service Office to inform them that I was on duty. At approximately

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12:00 Midnight, Mr. Prall of the New York World Telegram, and Miss Joyce Eggington of the London Observer, came up to the registration desk, and said they wished to speak to someone who was on duty when the President was brought into the Emergency Room. I told them that there was no one on duty at this time, and they would have to obtain any information they needed from the Administrator's Office. I instructed them how to get to the Administrator's Office. A few minutes later, Mr. Dutton brought them into the Major Surgery area of the Emergency Room, showed them Trauma Room # 1, and introduced them to me, and told them who I was, and that I was on duty at the time. He asked me to talk to them. I asked him if I was supposed to. If so, what was I to say? He said: "We are telling them all of the facts." He left them with me.

I ushered them into my office. They told me they were writing a human interest story. They wanted to know what I was doing prior to the phone call stating that the President had been shot, and why I answered the phone. What did I say on the phone when informed? They wanted to know anything unusual that any of the nurses said. I told them I could not recall anything. They asked about Mrs. Kennedy's reaction. I told them she sat very quietly, and appeared to be in a state of deep grief. They asked if I offered her anything to drink. I then told them I gave her water. I also mentioned offering to remove her gloves, and wash her hands. To the best of my knowledge, this is all I can remember. Miss Beck came to my office during the time I was talking to them. I also mentioned that there was an English nurse on duty in the Emergency Room at the time. They asked me her name, but I told them that I was not at liberty to give it to them. They asked who they could obtain the name from, and I took them up to the Governor's office to talk with Mr. Read. I went into the Nursing Service Office, and told Miss Beck what had taken place. Mr. Read told Miss Beck he had no objections to releasing the name, but it was up to the hospital. Miss Beck called Mrs. Wright at home at approximately 12:30 A.M., and asked her what she wished her to do. Apparently, Mrs. Wright instructed her to give them her name. Then they wanted to know what part of England she came from so I told them.

I returned to the Emergency Room shortly afterwards. Several members of the press came in between 1:00 A.M. and 4:00 A.M. All were instructed how to get to the Governor's office.

Nothing unusual happened out of the routine between 1:00 A.M. and 4:00 A.M. I left the hospital at approximately 4:30 A.M. Saturday morning, went home, and read the paper, and went to bed until 10:00 A.M.

I did not return to the hospital until Sunday afternoon when I heard on the television that Oswald had been shot.

I arrived in the Emergency Room after Lee Harvey Oswald had been taken to the Operating Room. I made rounds in the Emergency Room, talked with Mrs. Standridge concerning the treatment Oswald had received in the Emergency Room. I helped screen employees and visitors at the Emergency Room entrance. There were numerous reporters and photographers at the registration desk. Mr. Geilich informed me there was going to be a press conference in Room # 102. I announced this at the triage desk, and most of the press left the area.

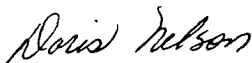
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I was told shortly afterwards that Oswald had expired, and would be brought down from the Operating Room through the Emergency Room to the X-Ray Department. I informed Miss Lozano to pull all curtains on the examining cubicles, and to clear the area.

Secret Service men arrived with Oswald's mother, wife, and children. I asked the secret service men if they would like to take them in the Minor Medicine and Surgery area, and I would have the doctor come and talk with them. I told Dr. Rose, Medical Examiner, that they were there.

After they had moved Oswald to X-Ray, Dr. Rose went to Minor Medicine, and informed the family of Oswald's death. The mother and wife came to the X-Ray Department to view the body. I assisted the police in draping him for the relatives to view. I left the X-Ray Department, and returned to the Emergency Room.

At approximately 4:00 P.M., I left the Emergency Room and went home.



Doris Nelson, R.N.

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