

MEMORANDUM

September 29, 1995

To: David G. Marwell
T. Jeremy Gunn

cc: Joan Zimmerman
Tom Samoluk

From: Dennis J. Quinn

Subject: Original JFK Death Certificate From Dallas

In response to a request from researcher Thomas Battocletti, I have been attempting to locate the Certificate of Death, signed by Dr. Kemp Clark at Parkland and given to Dr. Burkley to accompany JFK's body back to Washington. Dr. Burkley gave this document, along with other medical/autopsy records, to the Secret Service on November 26, 1963. Mr. Battocletti has suggested in previous correspondence that the Dallas Death Certificate has never been turned over to the Archives nor released to the public.

As you know, last week Steve Tilley located a copy of this document in the Medical Reports section of the Secret Service documents at College Park. Steve says it has been up there for years and that he does not recall any request for it from Battocletti or any other researcher. I have passed a copy of it on to Tom so that he can respond to Mr. Battocletti.

Yesterday, Steve and I spent an hour in the vault looking for the original document. We re-checked the Secret Service files, as well as the HSCA and Warren Commission records. We also checked the "Valuable Document" section, where the originals of all the medical records are stored, but we couldn't locate the original of the Dallas Death Certificate.

Steve is pretty confident that the original was never forwarded to the Archives from the Secret Service. The copy we found in the Secret Service Records has a handwritten notation in blue ink that says: "Orig to Insp. Kelly 11-27-63 RIB." We assume the notation was made by Robert Bouck, head of the Protective Research Service. We also found a 1969 letter from Inspector Kelly to James Rhoads forwarding a copy of the Dallas Death Certificate (as well as the original of the Bethesda Death Certificate) to the Archives in response to a request from Harold Weisberg.

I have no idea where the original Death Certificate is today. But the paper trail seems to end with the Secret Service. I recommend that we take this up with them.