

The curious aftermath of JFK's best and brightest affair

By Phillip Nobile
and Ron Rosenbaum

Still officially unsolved, the death of Mary Pinchot Meyer triggered a bizarre series of events involving some of the most powerful figures in Washington

When he looked over the wall, Wiggins saw a black man in a light jacket, dark slacks and a dark cap standing over the body of a white woman in a blue sweater. Wiggins saw the man place a dark object in the pocket of his windbreaker, then watched him disappear down the far side of the towpath into the wooded incline dropping down to the edge of the Potomac.

James Angleton was angry at his wife, Cicely. Here he was in the middle of a big conference at CIA headquarters—Angleton was then chief of counter-intelligence for the CIA—and his wife was interrupting the meeting with a silly fantasy. According to a radio bulletin, an unidentified woman had been slain on the towpath that afternoon, and Cicely was sure the victim was their close friend Mary Meyer. She had often warned Mary not to go there alone.

Angleton dismissed his wife's anxiety. That evening they had plans to drive Mary Meyer to a poetry reading, and he saw no reason to change anything.

When they arrived at Mary's home that night, her car was in the driveway yet the lights were out inside. A sign hanging on her door said, "Free Kittens—Ring Bell or Call." No one answered the bell. At his wife's insistence, Angleton checked Mary's answering service. They told him Mary had been murdered. The Angletons hurried to the Bradlees' home, where they helped make funeral arrangements. Later that night Angleton returned and rescued three kittens from the empty house.

Soon the CIA chief would learn he had a mission of great delicacy to perform. An intimate of Mary Meyer's had charged him with recovering and disposing of her secret diary, a diary that contained references to a very special affair.

The paint was still damp on Mary Meyer's final canvas when she left her studio for a walk. It was a circular canvas. In her recent work she had been exploring the effects of swaying velvety semicircles of color across unprimed circles of canvas.

She pointed an electric fan at the undried painting. It was a chilly fall day; she put on gloves, pulled on a sweater and a sweatshirt over her blouse and covered those three layers with a heavy blue cable-knit angora, complete with hood.

From the outside, the studio looked like the garage it had once been. It was one among a row of garages along an alleyway behind the backs of two rows of brick townhouses fronting on N and O streets in Georgetown. Since her divorce, she had spent three or four days a week working in her studio, a few steps away from some of her closest friends whose homes abutted that alley. Her sister, Tony, and Tony's husband, Ben Bradlee, lived on one end; Mr. and Mrs. John Kennedy lived on the other end until they moved to the White House. Occasionally, Mary Meyer would take walks with Jackie along the towpath paralleling the old Chesapeake and Ohio barge canal.

That was where she was heading now, in fact: out the alley, left on 34th Street, down to the foot bridge that leads across the canal and onto the towpath between the canal and the wooded embankment that descends to the Potomac.

She reached the towpath about noon that day, Monday, October 12, 1964. John F. Kennedy had been dead almost a year. It was two days away from Mary Meyer's 44th birthday.

Air Force Lieutenant William Mitchell left the Pentagon Athletic Center on the Virginia side of the Potomac about noon, crossed over the Key Bridge, exited down the steps to the towpath and began his regular run 2 miles west to a fishing spot on the river called Fletcher's Landing and back again. He passed three people on his way west—a middle-aged couple and a young white man in Bermuda shorts.

He passed two more people on his way back east to Key Bridge. First there was the woman in a blue-hooded sweater. He met her just as she was crossing the wooden footbridge a mile from Key Bridge. He came to a full stop in front of the bridge and allowed her to cross it alone to avoid jostling her in mid-passage. Picking up speed again, 200 yards farther east, the lieutenant came upon a black man walking in the same direction as the woman. The man seemed to the lieutenant to be about his size, wearing a light-colored windbreaker, dark slacks and a peaked golf hat. The man's face didn't leave much of an impression on the lieutenant.

Henry Wiggins had just raised the hood of the grey Rambler when he heard the screams. Wiggins had been pumping gas at the M Street Esso station when he got a call to take his truck over to Canal Road, where a Rambler with a dead battery was stalled on a shoulder across from the canal.

The screams were coming from the vicinity of the canal. It was a woman. "Someone help me, someone help me," she cried. Then there was a gunshot. Wiggins ran across the road to the stone wall above the canal. A second gunshot.



The manhunt began less than five minutes after the murder. When Henry Wiggins phoned the D.C. police from the nearby Esso station, the dispatcher sent squad cars full of men from all over the precinct racing to seal off the five well-marked exits from the towpath across the canal to the streets of Georgetown. With the exits sealed off soon enough, police figured they'd trapped the murderer on the hilly wooded strip of bank between the canal and the river (which was chilly and too wide at that point to afford an escape).

Officer Warner was heading east through the underbrush along the roadbed of the old C & O tracks. He emerged from a detour into a shadowy spillway to find standing, in the middle of the tracks, a short wiry black man, dripping wet and covered with grass and twigs. Water ran out of the wallet the man offered as identification. He said his name was Raymond Crump Jr. He had been fishing around the bend, he told the officer, had fallen asleep on the riverbank and woke up only when he found himself sliding down the bank into the water.

Officer Warner asked Raymond Crump Jr. to show him exactly where "around the bend" he had been fishing. Raymond Crump started to lead him west along the shore. They didn't get far.

When he arrived at the body with the medical examiner and eyewitness Wiggins in tow, Detective Bernard Crooke was struck immediately by how beautiful the murdered woman was. "I've seen a lot of dead women," Detective Crooke says, "but none who looked beautiful when dead. She even looked beautiful with a bullet in her head."

Crooke didn't have much time to reflect upon this. A few minutes after he arrived, as he was still trying and failing to find some identification on the body, a cry went up from Henry Wiggins, who was peering down the bank that descended from the towpath to the C & O roadbed and then down to the river. Wiggins was pointing at two figures on the roadbed below. One was Officer Warner; the other was Raymond Crump Jr. "That's him," shouted Wiggins, pointing at Crump.

Five minutes later, a handcuffed Crump was brought before Crooke.

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"Why is your fly open?" Crooke asked Crump.

"You did it," Crump said. Crooke didn't like that. He didn't like the fishing alibi Crump told him, but Crump stuck to his story. As he was led past Mary Meyer's body toward a squad car to be booked, Crump looked down at the blue-angora-clad body.

"You think I did that?" he asked.

Crooke thought he did it. Then came what was for Crooke the clincher. He was interrogating Crump back at the stationhouse when one of the men who had been searching the shoreline for the still missing murder weapon brought back to Crooke something he had found in the Potomac—a light-colored windbreaker jacket with a half empty pack of Pall Malls in one of the pockets. Crooke told Crump to try it on. According to Crooke, it fit Crump perfectly.

"It looks like you got a stacked deck," Crooke recalls Crump telling him. Then Crump began to cry. Crooke says he patted him on the back, but the sobs only increased.

Ms. Dovey Roundtree is a black woman, an ordained minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and one of the best homicide lawyers in Washington. She claims an acquittal rate of 80 percent for clients accused of murder. In addition to a steel-trap legal intellect and an aggressive courtroom style, she brings to the task of winning over a jury some of the righteous fervor and persuasive eloquence of the pulpit.

One day in December 1964 a black woman, a church-going A.M.E. Christian, came to Ms. Roundtree's law offices and asked for her help. Her son, Raymond Crump Jr., stood accused of first-degree murder and couldn't make bail. Her son was innocent, the mother told Ms. Roundtree. She knew in her heart he was a meek, gentle boy. He had had some hard times—a bad accident a year ago, troubles with his wife, some problems with drinking and work—but he was not a murderer. Roundtree took the case. She started her own private investigation: she was determined to find out who this woman Mary Meyer was, and who her friends were.

It was a wedding of special grace and promise. When Mary Eno Pinchot and Cord Meyer Jr. married in the spring of 1945, life seemed rather splendid. They were both monied, talented and justly full of expectation. She was the most beautiful girl in Vassar's class of '42. He graduated Yale Phi Beta Kappa,

summa cum laude and won the Alpheus Henry Snow Award as "the senior adjudged by the faculty to have done the most for Yale by inspiring his classmates."

Mary came from one of America's prominent political families—the Pinchots of Pennsylvania. Her uncle, Gifford Pinchot, a two-term governor of his home state in the twenties and thirties as well as a noted forester, was often mentioned as a dark horse for the Republican presidential nomination. Her father, Amos Pinchot, a radical lawyer, helped organize the breakaway Bull Moose Party for Teddy Roosevelt in 1912. He later became a pacifist and an American First critic of FDR's internationalism. Our declaration of war against the Axis drove him to attempt suicide. The Pinchot fortune, based on the lucrative dry goods business of Mary's paternal grandfather, James, and augmented by the large inheritance of his wife, Mary Eno, reached into the millions.

Cord's blood lines were less illustrious but similarly marked by wealth



PHOTOGRAPH BY THE NATIONAL ENQUIRER

Author of the piece: of all the stories Mary Meyer wrote as a journalist, her personal diary in the end attracted the most attention from the public.

and politics. His great grandfather grew rich in sugar and his grandfather, a state chairman of the New York Democratic Party, in Long Island real estate. Cord Meyer Sr. served as a diplomat in Cuba, Italy and Sweden before retiring from government service when he fathered a second set of twin sons in the twenties.

At the time of the marriage, Cord was serving as a military aide to Commander Harold E. Stassen, then a U.S. delegate at the drafting of the United Nation's Charter in San Francisco. He had lost an eye to a Japanese grenade on Guam and published "Waves of Dark-

ness," a moving, often anthologized short story of the disillusion of war, in the December 1945 *Atlantic*. In 1947 the Junior Chamber of Commerce named him one of the ten outstanding young men in the United States. As spokesman for the liberal United World Federalists, he crusaded across the country for the idea of world government. After listening to one of Cord's speeches, Merle

Kennedy (Harvard '40) dated several members of Mary's class, including her chum Dorothy Burns. "Everybody knew everybody then," says Scottie Fitzgerald Smith, F. Scott Fitzgerald's daughter and Mary's classmate. The women closest to Mary on campus refused to reminisce about her. But interviews with acquaintances indicate that she did not particularly distinguish her-

clinking against ice, Beatrice's voice rising and falling. The low murmur hummed on and on, and Ruth fell asleep. And because her eyes were closed, she heard nothing to disturb her, and slept forever on the chaise longue.

After Vassar, Mary went to work for the United Press in New York City, and there fell in love with Bob Schwartz, a home-front staffer for the GI newspaper *Yank*. For the sake of Mary's mother, they maintained separate quarters, but their intense three-year involvement was public knowledge. The Pinchots accepted the relationship. The couple traveled together and passed many weekends at the several-thousand-acre Pinchot estate in the Poconos. Now an entrepreneur in Tarrytown, New York, Schwartz would say only that he was Mary's first love and that he had ended it in 1944, before Cord returned from the Pacific. "Mary was unbelievable to behold," Schwartz avowed. "She was uncompromising about her view of the world and had great strength about it."

Although Mary considered medical school, she took her \$30-a-week feature writing job at U.P. seriously. In 1944 she free-lanced three well-turned pieces on "meteorbiology," venereal disease and college sex courses for *Mademoiselle*. Criticizing squeamish public attitudes toward the wartime epidemic of syphilis and gonorrhea, she wrote, "Though the spirochete is better barred from the body, there's no reason to ban awareness of it from the mind." In "Credits for Love," she endorsed sex education "as a means to a happier and less hazardous private life."

Scottie Fitzgerald Smith was at *Time* during this same period and saw a lot of Mary. They lunched and partied together. Scottie recalls that Mary enjoyed skinny-dipping *ensemble* in the bubbling "champagne pond" under the idyllic waterfall on the Pocono property. "She was unconventional and broke the rules of our generation. But her unconventionality was quiet and disciplined. She was never a showoff." Asked to describe Mary's appeal to men, her old friend remarked, "Mary had perfectly lovely skin and coloring. She always looked like she had just taken a bath. A man once told me that she reminded him of a cat walking on a roof in the moonlight. She had such tremendous poise. Whether she was merely shy or just controlled, I don't know. She was very cool physically and psychologically, a liberated woman long before it was fashionable."

Mary's first son, named Quentin after Cord's twin who had died on Oki-



Great expectations: life was splendid for the young Meyers, who were monied, talented and, as *Mademoiselle* cooed in 1948, leading the nation to peace.

Miller noted in his journal: "If Cord goes into politics he'll probably not only be President of the United States; he may be the first president of the parliament of man. And if he does become a writer, he's sure to win the Nobel Prize."

Cord did not fulfill Miller's prophecy. At the urging of Allen Dulles, he joined the Central Intelligence Agency in 1951 and developed into a determined anti-Communist operative, eventually rising to the post of assistant deputy director of plans, better known as the dirty tricks department. His presence was deemed difficult in Washington society. Apparently, he handled neither himself nor women very well. By 1956, after 11 years of marriage, Mary, then 36, could no longer tolerate living with Cord and the CIA, a business she hated. She divorced him and moved across the Potomac from McLean, Virginia, where RFK was her next-door neighbor and friend, to a Georgetown townhouse around the corner from her sister, Mrs. Benjamin Bradlee, and their mutual good friend Senator John Kennedy.

It was Mary, not Cord, who eventually attained the White House. The grace and promise of their wedding twisted in unforeseen fashion. While he skulked in the CIA, even briefing JFK on occasion, she became the secret Lady Ottoline of Camelot.

Jack and Mary first met at Vassar.

self at Vassar. Selection for the daisy chain, a wreath of daisies borne at graduation by the comeliest and most personable sophomores, seems her only honor. "Mary wasn't very gregarious," Scottie Smith remarks. "She didn't mingle about. She was an independent soul. I always thought of her as a fawn running through the forest."

A short story entitled "Futility" in the April 1941 *Vassar Review and Little Magazine*, the single extant sample of her campus writing, suggests a free and wildly imaginative spirit. A young lady, bored with the "chicly cadaverous" women who are "being too killing about Noel Coward's love life" at a Park Avenue cocktail party, runs off to a hospital for a strange operation. She wants to have the ends of her optical nerves attached to the hearing part of the brain and the auditory ends to the seeing part so that everything she sees she hears and vice versa. The surgery was a success. The young lady returned to the apartment now empty of partygoers and lay down on the hostess' sofa. Mary concluded the fantasy: "The lighted aquarium, like a window to a green outdoors, shone above the mantle in the dark room. The copper fish undulated aimlessly among the other weeds, and as she watched them, she heard the far off buzz of men's and women's voices chattering in the room, the sound of glass

nawa, was born in 1946. She thereupon combined motherhood and manuscript-reading at *Atlantic Monthly* while Cord studied at Harvard. Soon she retired from her literary career to assist her husband's world government efforts and bear two more sons, Michael and Mark. After the divorce was all but decided in 1956, Michael was killed by a car in McLean. This tragedy affected both parents deeply, but it did not bring them back together; it could not salvage the marriage. "She respected Cord but wanted to make it on her own as a painter," explains a Washington intimate. "Why should she have to go to dinners with the director of the CIA when she'd rather be in her studio?"

After the separation, Mary fell under the influence of Kenneth Noland, a painter who was one of the founders of what became known as the "Washington Color School." Inspired by Helen Frankenthaler's revolt against the "too painterly" qualities of Abstract Expressionism, Noland and the late Morris Louis, both residents of Washington in the fifties, began experimenting with new techniques of applying paint to canvas. They made color, rather than structure or subject, their primary concern. They and their disciples tended to concentrate on a single format. Louis worked with the bleeding edge, Noland on targets and Gene Davis in stripes. This small community significantly affected the history of American art and made some of its members famous and wealthy.

Mary chose to paint in *tondo*; that is, on rounded canvasses. Like her lover Noland, four years her junior, she focused on swaths of circular color. Her painting *Blue Sky* presently hangs in the Manhattan apartment of poet Barbara Higgins, a friend from the early sixties. *Blue Sky*, a very early work, is a 6' by 5'6" rectangle, but large semicircular bands of green, blue and orange color resting above and below two hard-edged horizontal lines show evidence of her later direction. "When Mary started painting large pictures, she began freeing herself," Mrs. Higgins says. "She felt she was making a breakthrough and was happier than I'd ever seen her."

Mary's long friendship with John F. Kennedy continued throughout their respective marriages. She regularly attended Kennedy White House soirees in the company of her sister, Tony, and Ben Bradlee. We now know, originally through the *National Enquirer*, that a sexual relationship began in January 1962. In September 1963, Mary and

Tony Bradlee flew with JFK in the presidential helicopter to the Pinchot estate in Milford, Pennsylvania, where JFK officially accepted on behalf of the government the donation of a mansion and some land.

"That in itself was probably not enough to command the President's presence," writes Ben Bradlee in *Conversations with Kennedy*, "but a chance to see where his friends the Pinchot girls had grown up, and especially a chance to see their mother, was apparently irresistible. . . ."

A few weeks later, in the awful month of November 1963, Mary Meyer's first show opened at Washington's Jefferson Place Gallery. The reviews were quite good, recalls Nesta Dorrance, then director of the now-defunct gallery. She feels it was too soon for Mary's potential as an artist to be judged.

The friends of Mary Meyer choose words like "warmth . . . vibrance . . . loyalty . . . mystery and strength" to describe her.

It was Mary, not Cord, who eventually attained the White House. While he skulked in the CIA, she became the secret Lady Ottoline of Camelot

"Mary had a half-sister, Rosamond, a Broadway actress who committed suicide in 1938," one friend remarked. "Rosamond used to go down to the Pinchot stables at midnight, saddle a horse and gallop at full speed across the estate. Mary was awed by her, she thought it was poetic. That was the feeling we all had for Mary."

On the Saturday following Mary Meyer's murder, five people gathered at her Georgetown home and tore it apart searching for the secret diary. Sometime before she died, Mary had entrusted to her friends James and Ann Truitt the fact of her affair with JFK and the existence of a diary recounting some of her evenings with the President. Truitt was then a vice-president of the *Washington Post*; his wife, Ann, was a sculptor and confidante of Mary. Before they departed for Tokyo in 1963, where Truitt was to become *Newsweek* bureau chief, Mary discussed the disposition of her diary in the event of her death. She asked them to preserve it, and to show it to her son

Quentin when he reached the age of 21.

The Truitts were still in Tokyo when they received word of the towpath murder, and the responsibility for the diary was communicated to their mutual friend James Angleton, through still uncertain channels.

Mary Meyer was accustomed to leaving her diary in the bookcase in her bedroom where, incidentally, she kept clippings of the JFK assassination. The diary was not there after her death.

Angleton therefore brought some of the specialized tools of his black-bag trade—white gloves, drills, etc.—to the task of combing the house. Also there to aid in the search were other members of Mary Meyer's circle: Tony Bradlee; Cord Meyer; a former college roommate, Ann Chamberlain; and Angleton's wife, Cicely.

They tapped walls, looked in the fireplace and turned over bricks in the garden, finding nothing and exhausting themselves in the process. Cord lit a smoky fire, Angleton pitched in washing dishes and the whiskey flowed. One frustrated seeker went out into the garden and yelled up to the sky, "Mary, where's your damned diary?"

It wasn't in the house at all. Tony located it in Mary's studio later, along with the canvasses she was readying for what would have been her second gallery show. The diary was in a locked steel box filled with hundreds of letters.

Neither the police nor the prosecutor was aware of the existence of a diary when Raymond Crump went on trial for the murder of Mary Meyer on July 19, 1965.

"This is a classic textbook case of circumstantial evidence," Prosecutor Albert Hantman told the jury.

Prosecutor Albert Hantman was missing certain direct links in what seemed on the surface an airtight case. He didn't have the murder weapon. He'd had the riverbank searched, he'd had scuba divers rake through the muck at the bottom of the Potomac. No gun. And his eyewitness, Henry Wiggins, would only testify to a "glance" at the man he saw standing over Mary Meyer's body. Hantman's case had many strengths despite this. Crump's fishing alibi sounded implausible in many ways. He claimed he'd lost his fishing pole and "chicken hair" bait in his fall into the Potomac. But a nosy neighbor had observed him leaving home that morning carrying no fishing tackle at all and wearing a dark plaid cap and a light colored windbreaker which matched those worn by the assailant.

Hantman decided the only way to prove that Mary Meyer's murderer and Raymond Crump were one and the same man was to reconstruct in detail the movements of each before, during and after the murder, and to prove that no one but Raymond Crump was present on or about the towpath when Mary Meyer died.

Hantman even went so far as to try to introduce a large tree branch into court as evidence. Hantman justified this unusual request by claiming that the position of the bloodstains on the tree—and he waved about in open court a vial of Mary Meyer's blood scraped from the tree—would support his reconstruction of Mary Meyer's death struggle.

The murderer first tried to drag Mary Meyer down into the bushes on the bank behind the towpath, the prosecutor told the jury, hinting strongly at a sexual motive for the initial assault. Then, Hantman said, "she grabbed the tree . . . holding on for her life. She didn't want to lose sight of the people; and he was attempting to pull her down behind the canal. She struggled and fought. His jacket was torn. Her slacks were torn. His finger was cut. She had abrasions and contusions on various parts of her body. He shot her once and she resisted. She broke away from him. She ran across the towpath. She fell. She was alive and he had to shoot her again so she couldn't identify him."

By trying to prove everything so precisely from circumstantial evidence, Hantman left Roundtree several opportunities to challenge successfully any absolute interpretation of such elements as the bloodstains and hair fiber analysis. She forced a National Park Service mapmaker to concede that there were other possible exits from the riverbank area that had not been sealed off by the police. In the end she rested her case without calling a single witness. Instead, she presented a powerful final summation that came down hard on Air Forcé Lieutenant Mitchell's description of the man following Mary Meyer on the towpath as "about my size." William Mitchell's size was 5'8", 145 pounds. Roundtree told the jury: "Look at this little man, Ray Crump. He is your Exhibit A." Crump, she said, was only 5'3". She reminded the jury that "only the official exits had been sealed" and raised the specter of "a phantom" killer who escaped the manhunt by way of an unmarked exit.

Dramatic as Roundtree's summation was, Prosecutor Hantman pushed the pitch of the drama almost over the edge into farce in his rebuttal argument. He decided to take on directly Round-

tree's Exhibit A—Ray Crump's short stature as compared to the 5'8" height of the man William Mitchell had observed following Mary Meyer. Hantman played his trump: the elevator shoe demonstration. "The defendant," Hantman said, "was 5' 5½" when he was taken to identification."

Then Hantman dramatically placed government Exhibit 17 on the lectern in full view of the jury. Government Exhibit 17 was a pair of Ray Crump's shoes—the pair he was wearing when he was arrested.

"Look at the heels of these shoes," Hantman cried. "They are practically Adler-heel shoes. There are at least . . . two inches of heel on that pair of shoes. . . . This is what gave Lt. Mitchell the appearance that this defendant was his size."

The case went to the jury on July 29, 1965. After five hours of deliberation the jury foreman sent to the judge for answers to the following questions: "Was Ray Crump right-handed or left-handed? Did the police ever permit Crump to show them where he claimed to be fishing and from where he fell?"

The real questions circle around Mary's diary: what was in it, who read it, what became of it?

The judge told the jury they would have to depend upon their own recollection for the answers to those questions. The jury deliberated for a few more hours, then sent a second note to the judge informing him they were deadlocked eight to four. They did not say which way. The judge instructed them they were not "hopelessly" deadlocked and ordered them to return to their deliberations. At 11:35 a.m. on July 30, after a total of 11 hours, they sent word they had finally reached a verdict. They found Raymond Crump not guilty.

The acquittal left the murder of Mary Meyer officially unsolved. But Washington police never reopened the investigation. They closed the towpath murder file after the trial. "Without a full confession and witnessing it myself," remarks Inspector Bernard Crooke, "there's no question in my mind that Ray Crump shot Mary Meyer." Like the detective in the film *Laura*, Crooke became somewhat captivated by the victim. He leafed through several old homicide notebooks stored in his current office at Third District Headquarters on

V Street to refresh his recollection of the case. Homicide detectives interviewed at least 100 friends of Mary Meyer. Apparently, nothing untoward turned up; any prior association with Crump was ruled out after a check of her personal belongings. Crooke recalls going through her deep, narrow townhouse and being amused by the contrast of the exquisite antique furnishings and the starkly functional bathroom with a sunken tub. Crooke was also struck by the formal written invitation to a simple date with a gentleman that he found on her desk. "We learned that she was seeing several men," he says, "and most healthy women engage in sex, especially when you look 25 and you're free. She would have quickened the pulse of many men."

Crooke discovered a diary-type calendar in Mary Meyer's home, but not any larger diary. "I'd have been very upset at the time if I knew the deceased's diary had been destroyed. It could be a crime if something in it were related to her death."

Dovey Roundtree believes Mary Meyer's murderer is still at large, although she has no particular person in mind. In her pre-trial investigation, Roundtree pursued the ghost of Mary Meyer in the hope of locating another suspect or a suggestion of one. If her client was innocent, as she truly believed, then somebody else, perhaps a boyfriend, committed the act. Although she despised making sexual innuendos about dead women in court, she was prepared to raise the matter. "She had a lot of different men," Ms. Roundtree comments in her law office at Roundtree, Knox, Hunter and Pendarvis. "Some were younger. For a woman her age, you'd think she'd just have one person. I thought it was unusual even though she was an artist. I was looking for motivation. I narrowed it down to people who knew her and her habits, who may have argued with her and had a confrontation. I thought we were getting close to something sexual or some other reason which I didn't understand myself. But after the prosecution introduced a mountain of evidence, I decided to keep my case as simple as possible. Hantman was a most frustrated man. He wanted Ray Crump on the witness stand and would have destroyed him. Ray had goofed off from work and took a six-pack of beer fishing to get away from his bitchin' wife. They wanted to massacre and burn this boy. If I failed, he would die."

Ms. Roundtree recalls a number of anonymous phone calls in the course of the case, directing her to secret meetings. Wary of a trap, she stayed away.



Gone fishing: Raymond Crump Jr. was found, dripping wet, a short distance from the site of the murder. He said he'd been fishing and fell into the canal.

The trial proceedings seemed rushed to her. She learned that Mary Meyer had a high White House clearance and that her diary was burned before the trial. "I thought the government had something to do with the whole case," she says. Her client, Ray Crump, left Washington after the trial. He thinks he was framed the first time, she says, and lives in fear that someone will come after him again.

Fourteen years after the murder, the *National Enquirer* disinterred the untold story of Mary Meyer in its issue dated March 2, 1976. The bold front-page headline read "JFK 2 YEAR WHITE HOUSE ROMANCE . . . Socialite Then Murdered and Diary Burned by CIA." The tabloid's eager source was James Truitt. According to Truitt, whose quotes comprised almost the entire text, JFK first asked her to go to bed with him in the White House in December 1961. A current involvement with an artist caused her to reject his proposal. But beginning in January she kept regular sexual rendezvous with the President until his assassination. "She said she had to tell

someone what was happening," Truitt informed the *Enquirer*. "So she confided in me and my former wife, Ann."

If Truitt's revelations are to be believed, Mary loved JFK but realized their liaison would be limited to brief encounters even though, as she told Truitt, he felt "no affection of a lasting kind" for his wife. Their arrangement apparently had its comic moments. Truitt's notes record an episode in July of 1962 during which Mary turned on JFK with two joints of marijuana. He laughed as he mentioned an imminent White House conference on narcotics. "This isn't like cocaine," he reputedly said. "I'll get you some of that."

Furthermore, the *Enquirer* disclosed that Mary's personal diary, containing references to JFK and several love letters from him, were discovered by her sister, Tony Bradlee, in her garage studio and surrendered to James Angleton of the CIA, who had aided in the search.

The *Enquirer* account raised the question of an official CIA connection to the death. The tabloid called the murder "unsolved" and suggestively character-

ized the official view of the case as "a lone gunman" theory. Immediately after the acquittal of Ray Crump there was talk in Georgetown circles of the possibility of conspiracy in Mary Meyer's death—one person close to the case heard speculation about "KGB sacrificial murders." And Patrick Anderson's recent novel, *The President's Mistress*, postulates a Georgetown paramour of a Kennedyesque president murdered by an overzealous aide in a struggle over a memoir of the White House affair. But no evidence to support such talk has ever been uncovered, and no one has ever pointed to a better suspect than Ray Crump. Even if someone other than Ray Crump did kill Mary Meyer—another black man in a light windbreaker, dark slacks and golf cap—in the absence of evidence to the contrary from any source, the violence done to her on the towpath that day is more likely to have been random rather than conspiratorial. None of the many friends of Mary Meyer we spoke to has suggested any other motive.

The real questions left unanswered in the wake of the *Enquirer* revelation circle around Mary Meyer's diary: What was in it, who read it, what became of it, what if anything did it reveal about the nature of her relationship with JFK and why did the people involved in the search for the diary behave so strangely when its existence became public after 14 years of silence?

The close circle of friends that linked Mary Meyer and JFK had gathered at her home in the wake of her murder to search for the diary in order to fulfill one of her final requests. Some of them had even, several years later, attended a seance in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, at which some attempt was made to establish "contact" with her departed spirit. And for 14 years all of them had kept the story not only out of the public press but for the most part out of the mainstream of subterranean Washington gossip. For years before Judith Exner or any of the women with whom JFK consorted became household words in the mass media, the names of many of them were quite familiar to the Georgetown Camelot set.

But the Mary Meyer revelation shocked even some veteran observers of that scene. "It was a bombshell," said one, "not because it *happened* but because nobody I know ever heard a whisper."

After the secret legacy shared by that circle of friends became tabloid headlines in 1976, all the resentments, hatreds, bitterness and infighting that

had been building among the members of the circle since the deaths of the secret lovers suddenly broke out into the open. Without that shared secret they appeared to have nothing to unite them. James Truitt betrayed his confidence to get Ben Bradlee. Bradlee's newspaper questioned Truitt's mental health. Bradlee accused Angleton of a lock-pick "break-in" at Mary Meyer's studio, Angleton called Bradlee a liar, Tony Brad-

Without the secret, Mary's friends had nothing to unite them: Truitt betrayed his confidence to get Bradlee; Bradlee accused Angleton of a break-in; Angleton called Bradlee a liar

lee, now divorced from Ben, contradicted her husband's version of some of the key events.

The aftermath is a tale of disappointed expectations, revenge and disloyalty, as sad and pathetic in its way as the death of Mary Meyer and the destruction of other illusions of Camelot.

James Truitt strongly resents Ben Bradlee. The fact that he would trample the memory of his beloved friend Mary to embarrass Bradlee is one measure of his animus. In happier days, Truitt held a position of some importance at the *Washington Post*. He was the right-hand man of its publisher, Philip Graham. After Graham shot himself in the summer of 1963, Truitt wound up in the Tokyo bureau of *Newsweek*, another *Post* company. Bradlee, transferred to the *Post* from *Newsweek*'s Washington bureau in 1965, brought Truitt back to Washington, where he worked on the paper's new "Style" section. Unfortunately, he did not perform especially well and had a nervous breakdown in 1969. Truitt believes that Bradlee conspired to have him fired and that the *Post* did not keep certain promises to him after Graham's suicide. Truitt told *Enquirer* researcher Bernie Ward that he exposed the Mary Meyer affair with JFK in order to show up Bradlee. "Here is this great crusading Watergate editor who claimed to tell everything in his Kennedy book," Ward quotes Truitt as saying, "but really told nothing."

If the executive editor of the *Post* covered up for JFK, his paper did not extend the same courtesy to Truitt. The *Post* gave front-page attention to Truitt's

crack-up in its February 23 story on the Mary Meyer revelations.

After reporting the *Enquirer*'s assertions in detail, including confirmation of the upcoming narcotics conference that JFK supposedly referred to while stoned in the White House, *Post* staffer Don Oberdorfer cited a doctor's certification contained in court records that Truitt had suffered from a mental illness "such as to impair his judgment and cause him to be irresponsible." An anonymous Washington attorney added that Truitt had threatened Bradlee and others in recent years with exposure of the "alleged scandals." Thus the *Post*, while giving admirable play to an extremely touchy subject, created the hard impression that Truitt was an unreliable source—even though Bradlee knew that Truitt was essentially truthful about Mary Meyer and JFK.

The motives behind the Bradlee-Angleton clash are less clear. They also had been friends. But as far back as 1965 Bradlee seems to have hurt Angleton in the *Post*. According to one source, in 1968 Bradlee took the initiative to write an unsigned *Post* story on a book by Kim Philby (Britain's counter-intelligence chief in the pay of the KGB), a story that purposely ignored all favorable references to Angleton while quoting the unfavorable mentions. When Angleton asked him why he treated a friend like that, Bradlee denied authorship.

Their feud burst forth again over the matter of Mary Meyer. A *Post* reporter close to Bradlee recalls that Bradlee informed him long ago that he, Bradlee, had caught Angleton breaking into Mary's studio in quest of the hot document. "Ben was surprised to see him there with his lock pick," he says. *Post* columnist Nicholas Von Hoffman cited the same hearsay in *The New York Review of Books* (June 10, 1976), where he observed that the residence of a presidential paramour "was broken into by a CIA agent and her diary burned." During Seymour Hersh's attempt to pin down his CIA domestic surveillance scoop, a man from the *Times* called Angleton and accused him of the studio break-in.

Ben Bradlee, who seems to have been telling the Angleton lock-pick tale around town for some time, stood by its accuracy. "Angleton was trying to get in," he affirmed in a phone interview, "but ultimately he was invited in." But Bradlee, while he could not account for Angleton's lock-picking zeal, quickly disavows any CIA angle. "If there was anything there," Bradlee said regarding the agency's shadow over the case, "I

would have done it [written the story] myself."

Angleton angrily denies the break-in charge. "It is a total lie," Angleton told us. "I was never at the studio."

One source, who tends to take Angleton's side in the Angleton/Bradlee dispute, also accuses Bradlee of disloyalty to Mary Meyer. According to this source, Bradlee considered exposing her affair with JFK himself in *Conversations with Kennedy*, until others pressured him against it.

In fact, Bradlee did allude to JFK's fascination with Mary Meyer in the following passage:

The conversation ended, as those conversations often ended, with his views on some of the women present—the overall appeal of the daughter of Prince Paul of Yugoslavia and Mary Meyer. "Mary would be rough



PHOTOGRAPH BY THE WASHINGTON POST

Chatty confidant: James Truitt, who learned of the Kennedy affair from Mary, gave the *Enquirer* the story to show up Ben Bradlee and his Kennedy book.

to live with," Kennedy noted, not for the first time. And I agreed, not for the first time.

What did JFK mean? "I don't know," Bradlee told us. What sort of woman was Mary? "She was marvelous," he said. (The Bradlee-Kennedy exchange on Mary Meyer took place in February of 1962—just a month after the affair was inaugurated in Truitt's chronology.)

Also, according to the same source allied to Angleton, Mary Meyer herself was not on speaking terms with



Dear diary: CIA chief Angleton, who read Mary's letters and diary, let some people know he had burned everything.

Bradlee for the last six months of her life because she felt he had given away a confidence of hers in *Newsweek*. Bradlee continues to deny that he was aware of the JFK-Mary Meyer affair before the *Enquirer* story—even though, as he admitted to us, he read through the diary in 1964.

"Were you surprised to learn of the liaison?" we asked Bradlee.

"Of course I was surprised," he said. "I was amazed."

The whole story of the life, death and resurrection of Mary Meyer is immensely complex and it is not complete here. Many friends and relatives understandably drew back from the public controversy. Many refused all comment, others misled and misspoke. However, from unpublished materials and interviews with intimate sources, we have found certain things that can be said about the contents of the diary and the letters and the nature of the affair itself.

James Angleton read those letters. He also read the diary. He catalogued the letters. He took notes on some of them. He offered certain people the opportunity to repossess letters they had written to Mary Meyer.

In a letter Angleton wrote to Truitt after the diary search, he said two other persons whom Angleton identified only as "M" and "F" had read the diary. "M" and "F" told Angleton they wanted to preserve certain edited parts.

One other person was permitted

to see the diary: Mary Meyer's older son, Quentin, then 18, read deeply in the private papers and subsequently wrote his brother, Mark, about the contents.

In an unpublished draft of the *Enquirer* story, Mary's sister, Tony, reveals far more about Mary, JFK and the diary. (Publicly, Tony denies corroborating the *Enquirer* story.)

"Mary and JFK did have a close relationship. You obviously know that much and that's true," she told the *Enquirer*, according to this draft. She continues:

I didn't know anything at all about it at the time. What I understand of it afterwards, it was a fling, another of Jack's flings. If Mary had any relationship of the kind she went into it with her eyes open.

We did find it [the diary] in the studio. I don't remember where. It may have been in a filing cabinet. I was the one who found it. We were going through her belongings and there it was. Yes, it's true we were looking for it. None of us read it. We were all honor bound not to. [Here Truitt wrote "no" in the margin.] The diary was a slim volume. All I remember is that it was like a sketchbook with a nice paisley-colored cover on it. It was kind of a loose leaf book, nothing

like Ben's book he was taking things down in, just a woman's notes about what she had been doing. I swear I don't remember what was in it, I went through it so quickly. And I remember there were some JFK's in it. There were some references to him. It was a dreadful time but as I remember it had pencil marks. It was very cryptic and difficult to understand. Not much there but some reference to JFK. I felt it was something we shouldn't look at. There were some references to him. But the diary was destroyed. I'll tell you that much is true.

When James Angleton read the diary, he thought that although Mary Meyer's prose was informal, the implications in the entries were transparent. Angleton decided that in the wrong hands the diary might be troublesome to the children and others. (Angleton had a fatherly relationship to Mary Meyer's sons, and later, when Cord Meyer left for London to assume his present post as CIA station chief, Angleton became trustee for the children.)

"I burned them," Angleton later wrote Truitt. Yet Angleton also wrote Truitt that he had informed certain members of Mary Meyer's family that the papers still reposed somewhere at the Pinchot estate in Milford.

Does the diary still exist? Unless it shows up again somehow, only those familiar with its contents can help us form a judgment about the real nature of the 20-month relationship between Mary Meyer and John F. Kennedy.

One person who is in a unique position to comment authoritatively on that relationship, and who has never before spoken to the press about it, agreed to entertain a limited number of questions about the affair:

"How could a woman so admired for her integrity as Mary Meyer traduce her friendship with Jackie Kennedy?"

"They weren't friends," he said curtly.

"Did JFK actually love Mary Meyer?"

"I think so."

"Then why would he carry on an affair simultaneously with Judy Exner?"

"My friend, there's a difference between sex and love."

"But why Mary Meyer over all other women?"

"He was an unusual man. He wanted the best." ●