

# Roctober

## **Confessions From the Grassy Knoll: The Shocking Truth DVD**

At 1 PM on Wednesday, June 13, 1962, amidst an unusually heavy downpour, the SS Maasdam docked at Pier B in Hoboken, New Jersey as it had many times before and continued to for several years hence. She was a fine ship, part of the prestigious Holland-America Line, and amongst its passenger roster this day was an oddly attired young man, his bride of fourteen months, and an infant girl who couldn't help but glare and screech at the stormclouds raging above.

Despite every observance to the contrary, history was indeed being written in Hoboken on June 13, 1962, but until now, the entire story has never, ever been told.

After having mysteriously defected to the then Soviet Union whilst on Marine duty in the South Pacific, Lee Harvey Oswald seemed to have remained in Russia only long enough to renounce his American citizenship, attempt suicide, take a young bride in Minsk, then perform an abrupt about-face of conscience and petition to return to the very country he had just made such a big fuss over denouncing. With a Russian wife and newborn daughter in tow, despite this being the very height of the Cold War, the Oswalds had absolutely no difficulties whatsoever in securing permission – and even Government funding – for a journey back to the U.S. in May of 1962. A mere four weeks later, the Maasdam deposited this motley trio on the wrong side of the Hudson.

It was then that a man known as Spas T. Raikin, who depending on which blogs you consult was either a representative of the Traveler's Aid Society or a high-ranking member of an anti-Communist emigré group with FBI links, met the young family and invited them to partake in refreshments at the piano bar of the Redwood Lounge, just a short walk up Third. There, to the strains of "St. James Infirmary," it was decided Lee's wife and child should take a room for the night at the nearby Meyer Hotel before continuing on to Texas the following morning.

Raikin had other plans for the man of the house, it seems.

A late-afternoon bar-crawl along Hudson Street (then nicknamed The Barbary Coast for its preponderance of watering holes) seems to have strangely endeared the usually suspicious Oswald to his traveler's aide, so much so that Lee readily agreed to accompany Spas into the nearby Lackawanna Rail Terminal. Apparently oblivious to the rush-hour crush, the two lingered here for several hours, darting in and out of Duke's Pool Room where, as if by pre-arrangement, a third man suddenly joined the proceedings. Revealed here for the first time, Oswald was now escorted outside into a waiting maroon Lincoln Continental with New York plates and driven to the far end of town, Fourteenth and Washington to be exact, to the site of the infamous Madison Hotel.

Hudson County's most notorious flophouse, where furnished rooms were rented in eight-hour shifts to visiting

seamen and their playmates, the Madison provided an incongruously seedy backdrop to a rendezvous of then-unimaginable historical import. For it was here, very late on the night of June 13, 1962 that Lee Harvey Oswald first came face-to-face with the man who would put into motion a tragic chain of events which would culminate less than a year and a half later in no less than the death of American Camelot and the squandering of an entire generation's spiritual innocence.

Despite an over-abundance of adventure and intrigue in his short life already, Oswald was scarcely prepared to break conspiratorial pasta with the man who now beckoned him forward to a rickety table in the corner of the Madison Lounge. Oswald had seen this man before: not in person of course, but on the television, in the magazines, and even on the silver screen. Why, even his friends in Russia knew of this man; this legendary American who forever seemed larger than life and was now involved, it transpires, in an escapade that overshadowed even his greatest achievements in the entertainment field.

Young Lee Harvey's eyes remained transfixed as the envelope now changed hands and his mission was described in ominous detail by the man whose voice tonight sounded a far cry from its usual silky radio baritone.

A minute later, the man quickly stood, threw a coat over his shoulder, and darted towards the Madison's side entrance, but not before tossing a wink and an oddly reassuring grin back at the twenty-two-year-old ex-Marine. "Don't let me down now," that smile seemed to say, and no, history chillingly records, each of us knows only too well that Lee Harvey Oswald did NOT let Hoboken's favorite son down.

- Waymon Timbsdayle