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Subject: Records Related to JFK Gravesite

MEETING REPORTDocument's Author: Brian Rosen/ARRB Date Created: 09/19/96Meeting Logistics Date: 09/19/96Agecny Name: Arlington National CemeteryAttendees: John C. Metzler, Jr.Topic: Records Related to JFK GravesiteSummary of the Meeting Tim Wray and I met with Metzler and Thomas L. Sherlock, the Chief Historian at Arlington. Following up on a previous letter, we explained the role of the Review Board and our interest in any records related to the JFK funeral, reinterment and gravesite. Metzler and Sherlock were cooperative and offered us access to their limited collection of JFK records.We briefly reviewed the records that were immediately accessible. These documents consisted largely of correspondence and plans related to the physical maintenance of the gravesite. We also examined photographs of the funeral and reinterment. Sherlock said that many of these photograph are copies he received from Dave Powers of the Kennedy Library.I will return to Arlington at a future date in order to review additional documents that we could not view today and also to determine which records we should copy for the JFK Collection. In addition, I will also follow up on the photographs to determine whether the originals may be available from Dave Powers, the Kennedy Library or another source.Finally, Metzler and Sherlock clarified the mystery of the small wooden box visible in several photos of the reinterment. Speculation has existed that the box may have contained JFK's missing brain, which, as the theory goes, was then placed in the Kennedy grave prior to reburial. In the photographs, the box can be seen in the foreground in front of one of the new graves at the relocated gravesite. Metzler initially suggested that the box likely contained the remains of one of the two Kennedy children buried alongside JFK (2-day old Patrick and the unnamed stillborn baby). After viewing photographs showing the box, Sherlock confirmed that Metzler's suggestion was probably correct. Both Metzler and Sherlock also discounted the possibility that the brain could have been placed in the casket at the reinterment because no method existed to open JFK's coffin without destroying it and preventing it from being resealed. Don't forget to compose individual Action Item documents for any action items that came from the meeting!

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