

## Life Finds Irving's Manuscript a 'Hoax' And Cancels Plans to Publish Excerpts

By PETER KIHSS

Life magazine has canceled its plans to publish excerpts from an alleged autobiography of Howard R. Hughes because, it was charged in a statement issued for the magazine last night, the manuscript is a "hoax" perpetrated by Clifford Irving.

The statement, by Life's parent company, Time Inc., said that the work "clearly is not"

*Texts of McGraw-Hill and  
Time statements, Page 17.*

an autobiography of Mr. Hughes and that "we are not going to publish any of this" as if it were.

Moments before the Time statement, McGraw-Hill, Inc., announced that it had "discovered additional information concerning a possible source of the material in that book."

McGraw-Hill had agreed to publish Mr. Irving's Hughes book and then sold the excerpt rights to Life magazine. McGraw-Hill had given Mr. Irving checks totaling \$650,000 to pass on to Mr. Hughes for the "autobiographical" material and \$100,000 as an advance to Mr. Irving.

The two organizations announced their original deal for the Irving manuscript last Dec. 7, only to have a Hughes spokesman immediately brand it a "hoax." On Jan. 9, a telephoned interview with a man identifying himself as Mr.

Hughes was released with a charge that the work was a "fraud," but both organizations still jointly insisted the same day that it was "authentic."

Last night Time Inc. announced that it would release details on how it reached its new view in a cover story in next week's Time magazine, to be distributed Monday.

McGraw-Hill said that "the new information was provided today by James Phelan, an investigative reporter, who was a collaborator on a manuscript

about Howard Hughes written by Noah Dietrich."

Mr. Phelan spent yesterday at McGraw-Hill and later at Time Inc., piecing together, with the two publishing concerns, details on how the Hughes book was assembled.

Mr. Dietrich, who is 83 years old, was a major aide to Mr. Hughes, a billionaire industrialist, from 1925 to 1957. Mr. Dietrich's book, "Howard, The Amazing Mr. Hughes," written with Bob Thomas of The Associated Press, with research help by Mr. Phelan, is to be published by Fawcett Publications.

Ralph Daigh, executive vice president of Fawcett's book division, said earlier yesterday that Mr. Dietrich had reported "reason to believe" that Mr. Irving "got hold of my manuscript—there are some things, from what I hear, that he couldn't have gotten anywhere else."

McGraw-Hill also announced last night that its handwriting consultant, Osborn Associates, had given it a revised report that "casts doubt on the authenticity" of all the checks, handwritten letters and the book contract in the case of the alleged Hughes autobiography.

Neither Mr. Irving nor Maurice Nessen, his counsel, could be reached for comment on the Time and McGraw-Hill announcements. M. Philip Lorber,

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# Life Finds Irving Manuscript a 'Hoax'

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counsel for Mrs. Edith Irving, said:

"I can't comment upon anything. The policy of Mr. Nessen, the Irvings and myself is not to comment upon anything any longer because it complicates the issues."

Yesterday also saw the start of a Manhattan grand jury investigation into the manuscript and payments in the Hughes mystery.

Capt. Joseph P. McNally, a police handwriting expert assigned to the District Attorney's office, was the first witness. He commented later that "this particular job entailed a tremendous amount of effort on somebody's part to perpetrate this fraud."

Captain McNally would not explain his reason for his conclusion of "fraud." His closed-door testimony had accompanied introduction of a photocopy of the 1,500-page double-spaced typed manuscript and 18 to 25 other documents he had studied over the last three weeks.

Assistant District Attorney Leonard Newman, chief of District Attorney Frank S. Hogan's fraud division, said there had been "complete cooperation" between his agency and the office of United States Attorney Whitney North Seymour Jr. Mr. Newman said he had spent five hours at the Federal prosecutor's office last week exchanging information.

A broader field for criminal charges appeared possible for the investigations by the District Attorney and county grand jury, including issues of grand larceny, perjury and fraud.

The initial Federal investigation appears to have been into possible mail fraud. But Federal subpoenas have brought witnesses from overseas and around the country to the Federal inquiry here, where they could be summoned by county subpoenas.

Mr. Hughes's alleged autobiography, much of which is in the form of questions by Mr. Irving and answers by Mr. Hughes, had brought payments from McGraw-Hill of \$100,000 for Mr. Irving and \$650,000 intended for Mr. Hughes. The Hughes payments were in three checks, and Mr. Irving has said that his wife deposited and then withdrew them from a bank account in Switzerland.

Mr. Phelan, a freelance writer who once wrote an article for the Saturday Evening Post attacking the investigation by District Attorney Jim Garrison of New Orleans into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, spent the day yesterday with executives at Times and at McGraw-Hill.

At Fawcett, Mr. Daigh, the executive vice president, said Mr. Dietrich's manuscript had been in preparation for three years.

"It was submitted to various individuals for accuracy, and in so doing it reached quite a



Associated Press  
Noah Dietrich

few people on the West Coast and Las Vegas," he said.

He said Mr. Dietrich had talked to people who had seen the Irving manuscript and had remarked that the latter work had some "similar anecdotes."

One of these, Mr. Daigh said, was a memorandum dated July, 1950, in which Mr. Hughes, then producing the movie "Macao," explained how he wanted to show off the bosom of Jane Russell, its star.

Another, Mr. Daigh said, described how Mr. Dietrich was once ordered by Mr. Hughes to take all his suits, shirts, ties, socks and overcoats—even his bathroom towels and rugs—and burn them because of a fear of infection.

Both manuscripts, Mr. Daigh said, discuss a Hughes loan of \$205,000 in 1956 to Donald Nixon, a restaurant-chain operator and brother of then Vice President Nixon, but apparently in different terms.

Not in the Irving manuscript, Mr. Daigh said, is a story in which Mr. Dietrich said he visited Vice President Nixon and told him that "if this loan becomes public information, it could mean the end of your political career."

Mr. Dietrich wrote that Mr. Nixon replied, "Mr. Dietrich, I have to put my relatives ahead of my career."

Mr. Daigh said that Fawcett had paid nearly \$100,000 to Mr. Dietrich and Mr. Thomas, and that the book would be brought out in a first printing of a million copies.

Both Time Inc. and McGraw-Hill announced that they were turning over the results of their latest inquiries to government prosecuting authorities.

## 'A Supplementary Opinion'

McGraw-Hill said its handwriting consultant, Osborn Associates, had reversed its original report, in which after three weeks' study of nine known samples of Mr. Hughes's writing and 11 specimens in the publishing house's possession, it said all had been written by Mr. Hughes.

McGraw-Hill said that after Mr. Irving disclosed last month that his wife had deposited the



The New York Times  
Capt. Joseph P. McNally, handwriting expert, after testifying here yesterday.

Hughes checks, Osborn Associates was instructed to examine the documents in Switzerland, and that it had "now rendered a supplementary opinion changing their original 'overwhelming conclusion.'"

A McGraw-Hill executive editor, Beverly Jane Loo, who had dealt with Mr. Irving, was the day's only other witness before the county grand jury yesterday besides Captain McNally.

The captain, who is 53 years old, has been in the Police Department since 1941. He spent much of that time in its laboratory, of which he was commander from 1967 to 1970. One of his accomplishments was to verify the identity of George P. Metesky, the so-called "mad bomber."

Metesky exploded bombs here from 1940 until his arrest on Jan. 21, 1957, in Waterbury, Conn.

Captain McNally compared Metesky's handwriting with notes written by the "bomber" to verify his identity.