

# ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF COL. W.F. STIRLING AND DR. ERNEST ALTOUNIAN

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In Nov. 1949 three men entered the house of 69-year-old Col. W.F. Stirling in Damascus and shot him six times. The "London Times" correspondent was alleged to be a British spy. Stirling's life was saved by his friend Dr. Ernest Altounian who ran a private hospital in Aleppo. The Armenian doctor, having attended the Rugby School in England, had an English wife and many friends in U.K. After the British had invaded Syria in 1941, he volunteered his services. He worked in military intelligence throughout the war in northern Syria. Dr. Altounian operated on Sterling within half an hour of the attack, extracting two of the six bullets from his friend's body. He decided the other four should have to stay in place. Sterling recovered and flew to Cairo, never to return to Syria.

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