

Sensory Perception

I was surprised to see that my experience of smelling gunpowder on the day of the assassination of President Kennedy had been relegated by Charles Roberts to the realm of the supernatural (NATIONAL AFFAIRS, Dec. 5).

In answer to the question, if it were possible to smell gunpowder as we raced to the hospital: yes. Out of long experience with firearms, in hunting in Texas and in military service, I have learned to expect the smell of gunpowder in certain weather conditions, which did not prevail that day, or when I am located in the area of drift from the gun muzzle.

The position of the window from which Oswald fired was 110 to 120 feet over and behind the open car in which I was riding with President and Mrs. Johnson. The trajectory of the bullet was downward and immediately over us. The absence of an odor of gunpowder would be strange, when the facts are reviewed. I smelled it immediately and so reported within five minutes. I know the odor of gunpowder and I know I smelled it. My smelling it is fact; your questioning it is merely rank speculation.

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