

B 23  
NY Times  
12/10  
RM Vol. 2  
False Oswald  
G

By FRED POWLEDGE

Special to The New York Times

DALLAS, Dec. 9—Half a dozen persons recall seeing Lee H. Oswald practice marksmanship at a suburban rifle range before President Kennedy was assassinated, the operator of the range said today.

Floyd Davis, who opened the range in Grand Prairie six weeks ago, said he himself had not seen the accused assassin.

"But four people have told me personally that they saw him," he said, "and two others told a friend of mine that they saw him."

They recalled the 24-year-old man's firing on the range on at least two occasions within three weeks of the President's visit to Dallas on Nov. 22.

Two of the customers, Malcolm Howard Price and Garland G. Slack, have said publicly they are sure they saw Oswald at Mr. Davis's Sportsdrome range. "I'd know that face anywhere," said Mr. Slack. The names of the other witnesses have not been disclosed.

A significant point, according to observers here, is that most of the customers mentioned Oswald to Mr. Davis shortly after the assassination, that is before speculation started as to where, if anywhere, Oswald had practiced with a rifle.

Mr. Davis said Mr. Slack came to the rifle range on Nov. 24, the day Oswald was slain in the Dallas police station, and told him that he remembered Oswald.

The operator said Mr. Slack and the other customers did not notify the Federal Bureau of Investigation until it became known that investigators were looking for sites where Oswald might have practiced.

Mr. Price said today that he had recognized Oswald as a frequenter of the rifle range when, on Nov. 24, he witnessed the young man's death on his television set.

Mr. Price, who helps to operate the range from time to time, recalled that Oswald visited the

range first in early November, around the weekend of Nov. 9-10.

The 34-year-old machinist said he had looked through Oswald's telescopic sight and had been impressed with its clarity.

Mr. Price declined to answer further questions because, he said, the F.B.I. had asked him not to talk. The F.B.I. here denied this.

Mr. Slack said he saw Oswald at the range on the weekend of Nov. 9-10 and on Nov. 17, the Sunday before the assassination. He remembered the young man as an excellent marksman, but an irritating person.

The 59-year-old heating engineer said he was impressed by Oswald's "tight group," that is his ability to put all his bullets into the target at approximately the same spot. Mr. Slack said:

"I was getting together 10 men for a turkey shoot and I was particularly interested in getting this fellow because he was shooting such a tight group. I looked at his targets. He could shoot as tight a group as anyone there.

"But he didn't shoot with us because he didn't have a dollar [the entry fee]. Afterward, he came over and looked at my target. He handled it, and now the F.B.I.'s got it for the fingerprints."

Mr. Slack said that Oswald was accompanied by another man on his first visit to the range.

The two men brought three rifles with them, and, when they left, Oswald handed them over a wire fence to the other man in the parking lot, Mr. Slack recalled.

He said one of the weapons was wrapped in a canvas or old

On Oswald's second visit, said Mr. Slack, he wore a jacket, which he removed and used to protect his rifle from the sand.

Mr. Slack said he was watching television after the President's assassination when Oswald was shown on the screen.

"I wasn't quite sure the first time I saw him," he said, "but the second time they had that jacket and I knew it was the same man; I felt terrible."

Mr. Davis said the man believed to be Oswald angered other customers on Nov. 17 by his crossfire.

Oswald was believed to have occupied booth No. 8, a wooden frame cubicle with a counter and sandbag to support a shooter's arm. He was firing at target No. 8, 100 yards away across a grassy plain.

Shooters on both sides of Oswald, in booths 7 and 9, complained that someone was firing at their targets.

"I was running a turkey shoot nearby," Mr. Davis said, "and I didn't have time to come over and find out who was cross-firing; I just yelled over for them to stop."

"Mr. Slack was in booth No. 9 that day," he continued. "I remember that Mr. Slack was complaining that someone was shooting into his target—and they were hitting the bullseye every time."

#### Carried Three Rifles

Mr. Davis said the customer in No. 7, who had not returned to the range, was a bearded man, well over 6 feet tall, weighed about 250 pounds, wore a red polo shirt and carried three rifles and an expensive scope for zeroing-in his weapons.

"I bet if he could be found, he'd remember Oswald, too," Mr. Davis said, "because Oswald, or whoever it was, was shooting into his target, too."

The customers recalled that on the first visit the man resembling Oswald came alone in a battered automobile. On the second visit, they said, he came with another man.

MRS. Michael R. Paine of Ir-

ving, in whose home Oswald's Russian-born wife lived for a time this fall, has said that Oswald apparently did not know how to drive a car.

She said that in late October or early November she tried to teach him how to drive her car in a parking lot, but that Oswald did not even learn to park it.

Mr. Davis said that after his customers had reported their recollections of Oswald to the F.B.I., two agents came to the range and picked up about 25 pounds of rifle shells.

Mr. Davis said he had sent other shells, fired about the time of the young man's visit, to a Dallas gunshop for reloading. He said he understood that the F.B.I. had obtained those shells, too.

#### A Second Public Range

The Sportsdrome range is about one and a half miles from Irving, where Oswald's family was staying at the time. Mr. Davis said the only other public range is in Carrollton, about 12 miles away. Customers at the Sportsdrome pay a \$1 fee to use the range.

He said more than 2,000 persons had fired at his range in the last month. Most of them were zeroing in their weapons in preparation for the deer season, which opened in Texas last month.

Meanwhile, authorities had nothing to say about their theory that it was Oswald who fired into the Dallas home of former Maj. Gen. Edwin A. Walker last April 10.

Federal investigators have said privately that they believe Oswald was the sniper. The bullet missed Mr. Walker by little more than an inch.

It was understood that Os-

wald's wife, Marina, had informed authorities that her husband had told her of his taking part in the shooting.

The Dallas Morning News said this week that the police doubted a version of the shooting given them by a 15-year-old neighbor of Mr. Walker. This version is the only one made public so far.

#### Tells of Seeing 2 Flee

The boy, Kirk Coleman, said he ran into Mr. Walker's backyard after the shooting and saw two men flee in two cars.

One of the men, he said, carried an object that looked like a rifle. The boy said the man, whom he described as resembling Oswald, thrust the object into the back seat of his car, a 1958 model, and drove away. He said the first man, driving a 1950 car, left a moment before.

A check of Mr. Walker's other neighbors showed today that none had witnessed the shooting or the snipers' departure. One neighbor said she had been watching television that night, had heard what might have been a rifle shot, but had thought nothing of it.

The Dallas Morning News, meantime, reported in a story prepared for tomorrow morning's edition that a fourth cartridge had been found in Oswald's rifle on the day of the assassination.

Investigators said previously that they had found three spent shells—matching the three bullets fired into Mr. Kennedy's motorcade—in the Texas School Book Depository after the shooting. They also found the rifle there.

Now, according to the newspaper, it has been learned that one assassin placed a fourth cartridge in the rifle.

233