

In 232, while still facing forward, his right hand is plainly visible, in an apparently normal condition, big knuckles up, fingers down over the hold-bar (at Life, the separate fingers were clearly visible in the 4x5 slides). Therefore in that frame his right wrist is roughly at shoulder height (see height of hold-bar above side of car in Willis #4) -- and clearly not in position or condition to have yet been struck by a descending bullet exiting under the right nipple.

In 238 however, after the shoulder-drop, it is only the forward portion of ~~his~~ his right hand (approx. from the middle knuckles forward, if I recall) that is visible at the top of the car door. Not only is it inches lower than when on the hold-bar in 232 -- and therefore, already closer to a permissible position to have taken the exiting body-bullet-- but ~~this~~ this is made further possible by considering that from the forward part of the hand visible in 238 to the point of entry on his forearm is a distance of perhaps six inches. Furthermore, from the position of the visible part of his ~~knuckles~~ fingers in 238, his wrist is almost certainly bent downward, making the trajectory seem still less inconsistent for a single shot. ~~accepting the fact that~~

Accepting for the moment, ~~that~~ then, that a body-wrist hit is not ruled out at 238 on the basis of trajectory, the fact that his hand was not knocked down out of sight might be accounted for as follows:

1. the front of his hand is on the top of the door when his forearm is hit.
2. the bullet's trajectory would then drive his wrist -- and portion of hand between wrist and big knuckles-- forward and down; forcing palm against inside of door.
3. movement of wrist and hand in 2 could have occurred leaving position of forward part of fingers relatively unchanged, and visible to camera.

While I neglected to note the exact frame number at Life or the archives, from ~~photograph~~ JC-2 I believe he starts to raise his right forearm to his chest at 242. I determined this by first noting the appearance of his right shirt-cuff in color frame 258*; then checking the white line representing the cuff in preceding frames to the point where it first appears--242.

*(in 258, his forearm is going up across the chest, and the wrist bent downward at almost 90°. I feel, broken; with the hand hanging limp. The dark area across right hand is shadow from overhead windshield frame. Flesh-colored hemisphere at lower right I take to be his left hand; front view, with knuckles up, fingers down).

Believe it or not, even in JC-2 I feel I can see the right hand dangling by 249, and perhaps even before that (by comparing carefully with color 258).

3 Therefore, either 238 was a body-wrist hit (leaving ~~his~~ aside the thigh wound); or welse the back-hit came at 238, followed by a wrist-hit between then and 249.

I heard George Herman on CBS Cronkite news last week say from the Archives that:

1. the (four)missing frames were ~~not~~ missing from the archives 8 mm. film (they were missing, with the splice lines showing, in the slides we saw there; and also from the 8 mm film I saw at Life.)

The Life film was a copy; the original was said to be in a ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ safe)

2. the film and slides were viewable there on specialty equipment -- aside from the regular projection room. We were not aware of this when we were at the Archives.

Perhaps the next time down you'll get a chance to check into the above, and also note the exact frame where his hand first appears to dangle. I want to reiterate that the shoulder-drop itself ~~is discernible~~ was discernible ~~in motion~~ in motion only in the 16 mm.; and then, only if you keep your eyes glued to his shoulder as soon as he emerges from behind the sign.

Best regards,

Ray