

2/16/70

Dick, Howard, Gary, re Dick 2/9, Howard 2/9, 12:

N.O. Transcripts-I have already written you all and I do not recommend copying of any of those I'd already listed to you. Now I do have a copy that can be circulated or even on the list, and the warts can copy that little he might find of interest or value. I suggest a distribution system be worked out, with the one having most free time getting first. The reminds of that Lifton reportedly had and is selling Shaneyfelt and Zapruder. Having read Z, I can see no reason for anyone having any great interest in it. I have it in the above. Now, with N.O. not having Shaneyfelt, I am quite interested in where and how Dave got his transcript. The cost from the court reporter is enormous. If any of you gets Shaneyfelt, I'd be very interested in a copy. Unless John bought a copy and didn't tell us, I have difficulty finding a ready source other than "the other side".

Fibres on 399: This has been my presumption, for it is packed in cotton or a similar material. Or was.

Dick on short slits and missing lead: I agree. I disagree with Howard's suggestion this had to be like brain surgery and, on the basis of my own such examination, I do not believe there was a loose fragment awaiting the more vigorous application of a fingernail than I used.

Bishop: agree with Dick (Howard did not enclose carbon). I think his value to us is what I had indicated, that those who, for various reasons, will not speak to us, did speak to him. The remaining question is the fidelity of his reporting of what they told him.

I've heard nothing further from the Archives on my requests for enlargements of the slits-areas of the shirt negative, for duplication of my own picture of 399 (Howard, when you are again here, you should examine the two side views I also have, on the squeezing), or for a statement whether or not they have the panels' materials. Simmons tells me they have copies of the final documents only. He may or may not know, but I see no reason to assume he does not. This is an area I'll have to explore with care. I am trying to take it step by step. I have sent you copies of my correspondence on this, which now includes Justice, Archives and all doctors. I have, for the moment not included Bromley. Until there is response, there is no more I can now do except conjecture, which I'd prefer not to spend time on.

Sincerely,

9 Feb 1970 (AM)

Dear Harold:

A bit more time has come my way, and I can now mention a few more things related to your recent letters-- not re Nichols yet, since I haven't gone over correspondence.

N.O. transcripts: These do not interest me greatly, since I have accounts in the N.O. papers, which seem adequate. I would pay a reasonable price for them, but would not go for the same cost as for Finck and Frazier, though they were worth it.

I would, however, be willing to chip in my share on a floating copy that I could have for a few weeks, so as to read and copy what I want.

Jim Bishop: In many ways this seems LBJ's answer to Manchester. I bought the hard cover edition when it was first published, but have not yet had the stomach to finish it. I suppose that I shall eventually, for-- as you say-- it might contain good leads.

I doubt whether Bishop did much of his own thinking about what happened on the Plaza. I suspect that Chas. Roberts spoon fed him much of the crap that he disgorges.

If I ever get any thinkable thoughts on this book, I'll pass them. At present, all that goes through my mind is "Aaarrrrggghhh!"

.303: The name of this cartridge is ".303 British". It is roughly comparable in all respects with the 30/06, except that in military loadings it fires a somewhat heavier bullet than the 30/06 and at slightly less velocity. Like the 30/06, it fires a .30 caliber (7.62mm) bullet. Offhand, you can say that it will do about what the 30/06 will do, although generally it is considered less versital than 30/06, ~~since~~ since in civilian versions the 30/06 is produced with a greater variety of bullet weights.

It is normally used in the Enfield rifle and its derivatives. I don't know of commercial manufacturers who produce rifles for this cartridge. It never really caught on in the States, since its performance is about parallel to the 30/06.

As you know, initially the rifle on the Plaza ~~was~~ was identified as .303. It would not surprise me to learn that there was one on the scene, but I have no proof of it.

Interestingly, a carbine version of the rifle (popularly known as the "Jungle Carbine") when disassembled breaks down into two pieces, the longest of which is 27 inches, the same length as the package described by B.W. Frazier and Randle. I imply nothing here but coincidence.

"Hair-like" things in your 399 photo: Fibers of the material in which the bullet was wrapped, I imagine. I'm not sure. I don't regard this of any importance.

Roffman test re shirt slits: This is not comparable to the test I did for craters in lead. My test merely corroborated and elaborated what was already known, and has evidentiary value in that regard. If I had done those tests for craters without knowing

that Frazier had removed lead, the results would have been suggestive. Since I did them knowing that F had removed lead, the results are conclusive.

However valuable they may be, Roffman's tests cannot now be more than suggestive.

JFK back wound location: Your comments "right on". If we know the location, then its location is important; ~~if not~~ if not, then what is important is that we don't know. If I did not make it clear, I meant to say that knowledge of the location does not itself bear on the question whether the bullet traversed. High or low, the bullet that struck JFK in the back did not pass through. Perhaps it hit bone but did not damage it sufficiently for the bone damage to be visible in X-rays. Anyway, the bullet could have come to rest in flesh alone, without striking bone. I can't assess the probability of this without knowing specifically what type of bullet hit him in the back.

Must stop now. Will write again soon.

still,

gick

cc Roffman
Schroener