

Pictures of casing etc
Nichols, Bernabei, Hoch, Fensterwald

Harold Weisberg 8/28/69

Having written him earlier setting up the date and explaining what I wanted to see, and having phoned (Simmons) yesterday prior to my arrival, I examined the series of pictures again yesterday beginning a little after 11. The package in the search room for me had this note from Marion Johnson, dated 8/27:

"After you have examined these pictures, there are some larger prints we can show you will call me or Mike on 222 23171 (stricken through) & 34092. We do not place these large prints in the search room. We do not have the FBI negatives."

The rest of the note is a belated answer to a bookkeeping inquiry made in May.

The envelope awaiting me contained the glossy prints marked as exhibits. I phoned Simmons on arrival at the building and by the time I had examined some of the contents, Johnson arrived with the second envelope, larger copies of the same materials, not marked as exhibits, most of them mounted on a stiff backing. I did examine them

About C3 and K1 I made no note.

C14 and C2 (Ex 568) I saw obvious cuts at right angles to the linear markings on one of the two and thought I should make hasty notes (I had little time). It seemed to me this mark, cut a chisel cut, should be on both, that it was not enough for the linear markings to seem to be identical.

C14 bolt face, Ex 568, for the first time in examining this picture it struck me, possibly an illusion from the lighting, that as it is faced the plunger is to the left, not in the center of the bolt face. If this is so, if visible to the unaided eye, should it not reflect in the markings on the shells? If this firing pins is not exactly in the center, is the hole in which it moves enlarged? Or is it bent?

C14-C6 (566) My note is illegible. I think it says the comparison is off. One of this sequences has a prominent piece of lint circling over the right specimen. It struck me this would not happen were a comparison microscope use, that this would have been detected immediately before the picture was taken, while the specimens were being visually examined.

C-14-C6 (561); C14-C7 (562); C14-C7 (563)- the markings are similar but not identical (see my letter of last night). 563 has different lighting.

C14-C38. There is a large mark on C14 not on C38. This is Ex 564. The same comparison, Ex 565, my note is illegible, (almost an ???).

C14-C1-566. some coincide, some different. I then made this note while waiting for Johnson to return with those negatives they do have: I think an expert should be asked to examine as though he were a defense expert, not because I think some were not fired from the rifle but because I think there is evidence there had been considerable use of the weapon between the time the evidence and test samples were made. To my untrained eye and without knowledge of what variations, if any, are normal from shot to shot, I believe the changes are of sufficient magnitude to seek such an opinion. If the evidence of these exhibits supports such ~~an~~ this belief, then the rifle has an unexplained history after the exhibit shots were fired, before or after it got into federal hands. This could well mean the exhibit casing was fired much earlier than the assassination- in time of shooting rather than calendar time.

Comment solicited.