

Hyattstown, Md. 20734  
December 12, 1966

Miss Beverly Brunson  
Box 296  
Baxter Springs, Kansas 66713

Dear Miss Brunson:

I am home for only a couple of days and am now leaving until Christmastime.

I read your letter and found it interesting, altho I do not believe the President was shot from as close as you believe. Perhaps when you read my new book (sent under separate cover) you may have some new ideas.

The postal inspector assures me there is no cover on my mail. This came out during the course of an investigation of my complaints about nondelivery of books mailed from here.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

## H appenings on a Grassy Knoll

On November 22, 1963, Julia Ann Mercer drove her rented Valiant toward a triple underpass on Elm Street in Dallas, Texas. She had passed the Texas School Book Depository Building when she suddenly found her traffic lane blocked by a green pick up truck parked part way up on the curb. While she waited and through traffic was held up, a man took what looked like a gun case from the back of the truck and carried it up a grassy knoll toward some bushes and trees. Once, the end of the case caught in the grass and the man stooped to untangle it. Imagine that; the end of a gun case getting caught in the close clipped November grass. It got so tangled in this tough jungle grass that the man had to stoop down and untangle it.

Later, in the day - we assume, since the time of Miss Mercer's observation is not stated - the President of the United States was assassinated as his motorcade passed along Elm Street at approximately this same location.

Shortly before the assassination a worker on a railroad tower saw, at separate times, three cars cruising in a parking lot behind the knoll. He noticed them because they were all three unusual or in some way noticeable. Two were caked up to the windows with mud; two bore Goldwater stickers big enough to be seen from the tower; in one a man seemed to talking over a microphone. A gang of suble assassins? Never occurred to him.

During the shooting that killed the President, observers on the nearby railroad overpass saw a puff of smoke 6 to 8 feet in the air among some trees on the grassy knoll. The man in the railroad tower saw something unusual happening at about the same place. An unidentified man saw "somebody throw something into the bushes" at about the same spot. As soon as the shooting stapped several policemen - including one on a motorcycle went charging up the grassy knoll. They found all kinds of muddy footprints and meaningless marks on fences. But no shells.

Meanwhile, back at the TSBD building, strange things had happened. Two witnesses saw a man, or separate men, with a rifle in a window of the building ten minutes before the President's motorcade appeared. During the shooting a different man poked a different rifle out of a window on a different floor and apparently fired two shots. It was shortly revealed that a Red employed in the building had brazenly carried to work with him that morning a large brown bag which could have contained a rifle. Sure enough a brown paper bag eventually turned up near the window in question. Curiously enough, someone had gone to great trouble to build a sniper's nest of heavy book cartons about the window from which the rifle was poked out.

Nov. 30, 1966

Here I am again. You are a very kind man -but also brave; and I know that what has dawned on me is going to dawn on you and knock you flat out one of these days. -That won't mean it's right, of course; the danger is in the power of it to persuade, once you see. And I really am not sure I want you to see what I see - it frightens me.

I caught on to Ramparts on a second glance. I hadn't read anything but the Kennedy stuff or seen the journal before. They are perfect fiends and I am developing a love-hate relationship with them. Oh, I hate to make a fool of myself. So it can only prove salutary.

I arrived at what you must have thought was a crackbrained sort of bright idea by a slow roundabout route, as you will see if you care to read the attached. I go on the theory that, like the Fool in the Tarot pack, the only way to get There from here is to walk off a cliff. In this case, I allowed myself to think, "What if" what Julia Ann Mercer saw was a staged event? Because you know it sounds like it. This is not so fantastic, for there are several indications that the crime was to be pinned on to a left-wing conspiracy - Oswald-FPCC - instead of just one lone nut; prior to the assassination, that is. Later, they found it to their advantage, perhaps, to deny anything happened on the knoll.

I stick by what I say in the attached; except for the part about Jacqueline Kennedy. I make no claim that it is reasonable. I came upon it while dowsing -as one finds that line that "solves" a poem finally and forever - as a donee - which may sound irrational but which the heart knows and is right and the soul refuses thereafter to live without. I really "believe" it is the explanation for her vault over the trunk of the limosine. If so, she has a capacity, not for American "majesty" but for Greek tragedy; and she is magnificent. I did not know this before. -Later, maybe they confused her.

One more thing, at the risk of boring you further; if you were going to kill the President of the United States and had planned this long and this hard to kill him and had spent all that time setting Oswald up for the fall, you could not afford to fail. You would have to be sure beyond the shadow of a doubt that you would get him. With the Kennedys you would never have a second chance. And suppose you killed Jacqueline Kennedy and left Jack Kennedy alive - which could so easily have happened with snipers as far away as the knoll and the TBD building; even if you hit him, you could have left him alive and her dead. Where would you have hidden then? And the only way to be sure you would get him would be to have an executioner near enough not only not to miss but to blow his head off.

Maybe you think they wouldn't have had the nerve to place an assassin that close; but they would have; they are as crude and insolent a gang of murderers as you will ever come across in the Decline and Fall. And maybe you think they wouldn't have

*Please let me know when I can buy Whitford II. Thank you. I don't know if I can do anything I have my own little office here & a typewriter etc - so you know why I'm well - & time*

*Ensuing complications could be worked out once power had passed into the hands of the assassins - as they were.*

got away with it even if they tried. But they could have, with a concealed weapon, a silencer perhaps which didn't work very well, diversionary shots elsewhere. And they had the great psychological truth on their side that when the President of the United States - with Jacqueline Kennedy at his side - is there, no one looks at anybody else. All it takes is gall, a brutal will, and a concealed weapon. The marksmanship would have been possible too. I have done "sight" shooting. With practically no practice you can aim a pistol at a target 20 yards away and hit within a foot of your target the first time. Then each shot comes closer with no aiming except pointing. With practice you could become very good. They would have practiced. They meant to succeed.

Maybe I designated the wrong one. But if you study the wounds especially the head wound you begin to feel pretty sure. Trace the drawing of the president's head showing the arrow through the occiput and out over the ear. Then place this head and arrow, not in the distorted position in which the Commission puts it, but in the actual position that Frame 312 show the president's head was in; the arrowhead goes out slightly upward. Not to mention the back-throat wound.

This would explain the Commission's stubbornness. They simply could not see how he could have received a right-left, upward missile. So they turned it downward by a gross distortion of his position. As for the patrolman on the left getting matter on his helmet and windshield, he was riding into it, and the wind could have been blowing it. Or he might have lied. If ~~the~~ shots were originally supposed to be thought from the knoll. Several people told stories they got stuck with and had to repeat before the commission, even though they no longer fit the case.

And Zapruder 313 plainly shows an<sup>upward</sup> explosion<sup>upward</sup> and forward, with the explosion over Mrs. Kennedy's face which was above and ahead of the President's head.

If the autopsy photos <sup>or</sup> are inconclusive ~~and~~ even indicate that both of the president's wounds came from the rear right, this would explain the Kennedy's hesitancy in calling the whole thing a fraud.

Also, I have shot enough bullets to know a slit is characteristic of an exit bullet. And the photos of the collar of the shirt show, or seem to, that the slit on the buttonhole side, or top part of the overlap, is higher than that on the button or bottom part. *It seems to tear across the horizontal seam. - And a bullet through the throat from the knoll, given the position of the president in Frame 225, would have torn out left of the back coat seam, not right of it.*

Beverly Brunson  
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*Did you notice that Frames  
208, 9, 10, 11 would <sup>or could</sup> dispense my idea as to ~~which~~ <sup>the</sup> one I  
thought it was? Have they showed up yet? I felt jolted when  
I turned to study just where this hand was - for the frames  
which would have showed me were missing.*

Is it necessary to point out that assassins may have theatrical talent? That assassins would not park a truck part way up on a curb and then remove what looks like a gun case from it and walk about with it? That the end of a gun case cannot become entangled in the grass, and that even if it did, a good jerk would release it? That assassins desiring to place a rifle on this grassy knoll would have driven in the back way on the parking lot and no one the wiser? That assassins are not likely to make their cars suspicious by covering them up with mud putting big Goldwater stickers on them and talking on microphones? That assassins are too busy shooting and getting away to throw anything into the bushes? And what would they throw anyway? That modern rifles smoke very little and on a windy day are not like to smoke 8 feet in the air? A firecracker is far more likely to smoke at that height, if it is thrown there. Diversionary tactics? Many thought they heard firecrackers, many experienced gunmen in that motorcade.

Is it necessary to point out that a serious assassin should not stand with his rifle in full view of a crowd ten minutes before his target comes into view? That an assassin would have smuggled his rifle into the building secretly and not have brought it to work with him that morning instead of his lunch? That he is unlikely to spend time and waste his energy building a huge sniper's nest - and boxing himself up in a corner for 6 seconds of whimsical shooting? Theatrics.

Critics of the Warren Commission's Report on the assassination of President Kennedy are justifiably angry that the Commission refused to consider the blatant evidence that something was going on on the grassy knoll, but have they considered the improbability - the sheer theatricality-of that evidence? Have they considered the possibility that, prior to the assassination, the assassins deliberately tried to draw attention to the knoll and that it was only later that they decided it was to their advantage to drop the matter?

But if it was the intention of the assassins to draw attention to both the TSBD building and the grassy knoll, where were they drawing attention from? Who fired the shots that killed President Kennedy?

The witnesses nearest to the sixth floor window of the building - Jarman, Norman and Williams on the fifth floor - admitted to hearing only two loud blasts from above. Patrolman Foster and another witness Royce Skelton who were on the overpass each saw a bullet hit in front of the limosine - one on the turf, the other on the cement. They felt these shots came from the building. But if the assassin in the sixth floor window shot twice and missed twice, who shot Kennedy, and who shot Governor John Connally in the back? Because he knows he was shot in the back, and his doctors know he was shot in the back. Who shot him? Nobody on the knoll.

A bullet that struck a curb and rebounded to strike witness James Tague in the cheek apparently came from the knoll. If so the marksman was a poor shot for Tague was 270 feet from the limosine. He should have stuck with the firecrackers. "We'll shoot off a couple of firecrackers to signal the start of things." Why not? I bet you could find this plot written in a book somewhere. Like in those thrillers the CIA keeps on file for possible plots.

It is time now to consider the wounds suffered by the President and Governor Connally. (I won't believe anything the Commission says unless there is a picture or some other very good reason for believing it.)

There is a round hole in the back of the President's coat about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches down from the collar and  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches to the right of the middle seam. There are two slit type holes in the overlap of the shirt collar in front. In spite of the fact that the Commission says so, and the Dallas doctors originally thought the throat wound was an entrance wound, a slit type hole is typical of an exiting bullet. A small round hole is typical of an entering bullet. To use the Commission's words, this is "consistent with" a bullet that entered the president's back and exited from the throat, provided that bullet moved on a slightly upward and leftward trajectory. Where would such a bullet have gone had it travelled such a course? Well, it would have smashed into the windshield where in fact such a defect was discovered, slightly to the left of the central rear view mirror which was also nicked. Why didn't such a bullet strike the second and intervening windshield between the Connally's and the front seat. A UPI photo I have shows Governor Connally's hand through that window waving. It may have been rolled down.

About a second and a half later -almost the time it takes to fire a revolver twice -Connally was shot in the back shoulder near the armpit. A shot fired from the Depository building out to have exited in the bottom part of his rib cage as the Commission's re-enactment shows. Instead it smashed his fifth rib, and tore out through his right chest below the nipple. The Zapruder film shows that his right wrist, which was also struck, was top backward and up against his chest. The bullet entered the wrist lower than it exited, two inches above the wrist on the top side and about one inch from the wrist crease on the thumb side. It was travelling upward or level when it exited from his chest. However, it may have originally traveled on a slight downward course through his chest, but not at enough of a downward angle to have been fired from a tall building. It appears that the gun that shot Governor Connally and the gun that delivered the first bullet to President Kennedy may have been located in approximately the same location, to the rear and right of the limosine, but not very much higher than the top edge of the convertible, provided that location was mobile.

The bullet that struck the President in the head and killed him entered the right occiput and exited, going leftward ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ and upward, according to the autopsy surgeon's diagram. And according to the position of the President's

head in Zapruder frame 312 such a bullet would have travelled on a level or slightly upward course; in no case could it have been fired from above. And frame 313 of the Zapruder film which shows the President as he was struck shows an explosion of light moving upward and forward across Mrs. Kennedy's face, obscuring it from view.

Therefore, the gun that delivered the brainsmasher to the President, could have been located in approximately the same location as the one that delivered the first wound to the president and the wounds to Connally. Provided that location was to the right rear and slightly below or just even with the edge of the convertible, and was mobile, maintaining approximately the same speed as the convertible.

The Commission knew positively that there was no place for a gunman and gun to be to have fired shots from that location; so they disregarded the evidence, one-third of it that is, that that said the bullet came from level or slightly below the convertible.

Was there such a place for a gun and gunman to be placed?

In this connection we might recall that Agent Clinton Hill said that the shot that shattered the President's head sounded like a shot from "a revolver hitting a hard object". Hill would know the sound of a revolver since he would be required to practice regularly with one. Agent Greer who drove the limosine thought the shot was a backfire from one of the motorcycles flanking the right of the car. Jacqueline Kennedy thought the first shot was a motorcycle backfire. Agent John Ready riding the right front running board of the followup car thought the first shot came from "right off my post on the right front fender." Connally thought the first shot came from above. But he didn't look up. He looked directly back over his ~~right~~ right shoulder.

Which brings me to a minor mystery. What was Jacqueline Kennedy going for off the right trunk of the limosine? Not for help because her agent, Hill, was coming up rapidly on the left, and had, in fact to pull her away from the right side of the trunk. Was she, as Hill suggested, going after a portion of the president's head blown off in that direction? Her position, face downward, in frame 312 of the Zapruder film shows that she is unlikely to have seen anything fly off the right trunk of the limosine. And that explosion was forward anyway - it spattered Governor and Mrs. Connally.

Mrs. Kennedy is a passionate and vindictive woman. She is also an athlete with quick instinctive accurate reflexes. Why did she move toward the direction of the shots? Was she going after a murderer?

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are they opening your mail?