

2/14/67

Dear Shirley,

Frist thanks for your dated and very interesting letter of 2/10, then, there is no special delivery in the country, not here and not ⁱⁿ ~~wa~~ move, which I hope will be soon. He has a beautiful and more quiet place, a little farther from Washington, closer to Frederick. As soon as some work is done we'll begin pouring ourselves in. But we'll still have an RFD service, with one mail in and out a day, some mail, unless I make a trip to town, which I suspect I'll be doing nightly there.

I have been certain for some time that the man who spoke to Oswald was Pierce Allman. I indicated to you I had a suspicion. I have spoken to two others about him, one a friend who once worked with him not in Texas but in Okla and another a Texas student, whose last letter, in today's mail, gives me Allman's address as 11423 Royal-shire. All man would not talk much to him.

It has been so long I am not certain of my source. If it were important I could go back over my notes. I suspect it was a year ago in May, at the Archives, File they call them Documents) 87. This is in general agreement with Sylvia's belief Allman's name got to Epstein (stalwart character, didn't use it!) from the Archives. If you want to do some writing on your own on this before I can, let me know and I'll get a copy of the SS report from which it probably comes. I am certain it is in my notes, which were what I used instead of getting Xeroxes then, I was that broke and in debt. I do not recall, however, what you say about his going up to the Knoll. Perhaps that was in the SS report, perhaps not. When I was next in Washington, if I have a few minutes, I'll check it out.

I have had no reply from MacNeil. I think Fena's explanation, that these men know what is good for them covers Allman too.

Remember also, that we have only the SS word for it that O said SS men. Maybe he did (crew-cut type, etc), Maybe Kelly misunderstood him. There are no actual notes to consult, only the versions of the interrogations made after he was killed.

However, your Knoll stuff is exciting, for now you see why I was interested in his clothing. We are getting more and more from the pix as Dick works away. He will show up. I am confident that in the future we'll be able to spot him in a picture that can be fairly accurately dated. Recall now my emphasis on the refusal to see pictures of the front of the bldg, going back to the first book?

On the tape, I had no concern over Sylvia. I do not want to attract any attention to my sources. You now know how helpful they have been, and I want them not to be bothered so they will be willing to do what they can. They will eventually be very valuable, more than they have already been. I told Jim about what I got from them immediately and Dick Billings was to make a copy of the tape for him. (I have never asked him, but I suspect Billings is the man who got the ~~xxxxxx~~ film from Zap)

Neither of my two reporter friends who worked with Allman is from your area. One worked in Dallas. No accent. The other, by the way, was Jim's witness in the Andrews trial, the man who interviewed Dean 2/17 when the story broke. I had briefed him and several others beginning with lunch 2/8 and ending 3 am 2/9. I caught a 7 a.m. plane out of Boston the next day. A story-book incident. I had been to do a radio and a TV show on their station, WHAC. Did the radio, but with the engineers about to strike, they took vengeance on the station by making no tape of my show and there was, for the same reason, no TV taping. So, we spent out time in the bar nextdoor, none of us getting drunk. The reporters worked and drank in shifts with me. I knew of the Garrison investigation and briefed them as much as I could along the lines of what could develop. Boy sensed what to do

with no prompting from me-not even a hint. The first I knew he had done this was when he sent me the tape, which I immediately sent to Jim.

I wrote this hours ago, before a series of interruptions that took my train of thought and too much time.

Do not worry about me overdoing it. I am just tired and weak in body from a lack of exercise. I'll ~~not~~ get that when my work has reached the point where I can ease off. That will not be too long. And I am up to it.

I do not remember getting the stuff on Robertson.

Many thanks.

Best,

8/10/67

Harold: Will detail the "crewcut" story. Was always interested in this man as I felt Oswald would have tried to use him (crewcut man) as a witness in regard to time-angle. However, I must have failed to indicate my interest to Sylvia: recently talking about Manchester-MacNeil nonsense to her, she wrote back that she had known for over a year who "crewcut" man was. This floored me as you can imagine, because here I had been spinning my wheels over what suddenly appeared to be a non-existent issue. According to Sylvia, Epstein had found a reference (Secret Service reference) in Archives to effect that crewcut man was Dallas WFAA man, Pierce Allman. This automatically put Manchester-MacNeil item into new light, but at the same time hit me with new astonishment that if Allman was indeed man in question, why in hell had he been so damn silent about it! Not customary for a newsman--whether MacNeil or Allman. So I called him. He left WFAA three years ago according to newslady I talked with; is now with SMU as "Executive Director." (Isn't this an interesting up in the world?) Called SMU; had terrible time getting him on phone, finally made it.

I asked: Was he man who asked Oswald were phone was in building at approximately 12:33 (Commission time)? Mr. Allman countered with: I don't rightly know. The SS says I am. I asked: What do you mean? The story is as follows:

On Nov22, 1963, Allman was on corner of Elm and Houston (southwest corner), near Brennan, in fact right in front of Brennan. After shots fired, he (Allman) ran straight to grassy knoll, where he said every body else almost also ran. He went to top, saw Bob Jackson (Dallas Times Herald, this is interesting, more on this later), saw policemen there, and then walked back to TSBDB. Once there he went up front steps to glass doors and saw inside glass doors a man. He (Allman) pushed open doors and asked man if there was a phone inside building he (Allman) could use. Man indicated phone on first floor, back slightly. Allman ran to phone which he says he then proceeded to keep tied up for one half hour, at which time a man with Army Intelligence approached him and told him to get off the line. Allman then tried to leave building but building was cordoned off by police. He left a little later.

My question: Was the man he talked to Lee Oswald? Allman has no idea. He says he can remember absolutely nothing about the man (height, color of clothes, age, hair, voice, etc.) except that he was not wearing a dress suit. Man indicated more with thumb than with voice where phone was. Man seemed to be looking out glass doors when Allman approached. Allman conceded that 12:33pm was much too soon for him to be where he was after having waited for shots to cease, having seen Presidential limousine completely disappear and then moving to knoll where he saw Jackson and spoke to others, returning then to book building. This much I got out of him at least, this concession that 12:33 pm was an unrealistic figure for his alleged confrontation with Lee Oswald. Allman claims that he is an unusually reliable observer in most cases, that he was trained this way for his earlier profession, but that he cannot remember a thing about man. Did Allman have a crewcut on Nov22? Yes. Can he (Allman) be considered "young"? Yes. Did he (Allman) introduce himself to Lee as a SSman? No. Did he show Lee any "credentials," "book" etc.? No; not that he (Allman) Can remember.

Allman has no idea how the SS learned that he may have been the man to encounter Lee on the steps. He says, however, that they approached him just a short time after the assassination. He was asked to make a positive identification of Lee, but he refused. The FBI never talked to him. The Commission never called him. In fact, after the brief talk with the SSmen, he has talked to no one in an official capacity about the assassination. Yet he was a newsman, an eye witness to the crime and allegedly the man who could admit to having spoken to Lee Oswald immediately after Mrs. Reid's confrontation with him.

Allman has no interest in the assassination story. He has no doubts about the verdict, although he says that at first he too, like nearly everyone else, thought the shots had come from the knoll. Otherwise why in hell should he have run to it?

He has no southwestern accent at all. This is the only thing that made me wonder if I were really talking to the right man, always something to think about in a phone call long distance when you do not get your party on the first try. I introduced myself as "Victoria Harris" who was writing a review on the Manchester book. (Since the Schiller and Lewis fiasco I have introduced myself this way, in case anyone in or around the Dallas area happens to catch my name. Fortunately, I was correct to make the assumption, as Allman asked me if I had heard the Controversy record.) The Manchester-MacNeil allegation had Allman completely stumped. He said at once that he had Death of A President at home, but of course he hadn't read it. Most people read very little. Allman encouraged me to write to MacNeil, which I have done. Allman repeated that MacNeil most definitely could not have been on the phone at the depository (Manchester as you recall claims that MacNeil telephoned NBC from the TSBDB. This is really absurd and is negated by NBC's own tapes.); Allman says he was on the phone for one half hour and that it was the only phone available there. Thus, we have Manchester making either another flat error or else he, MacNeil and the SS have felt it necessary to put the "crewcut" story to sleep, feeling Allman may not be reliable or sufficient. I can hardly believe it is this devious, but I must say when a story becomes so red-herringed to death as this one seems to have been done, then there may be dirty work somewhere. Obviously the story is cock-eyed. Either Kelley is an extremely poor reporter or Oswald was insane to mistake no identification at all for "SSman with a book". At any rate, we will keep looking.

One other important (relatively important) item. Allman is an old Dallas hand. He knows every newsman in that town and they know him. He says Bob Jackson was on top of the knoll immediately after the shots were fired. Read Jackson's testimony (Vol 2); Jackson says that he (Jackson) never got out of the car. I wrote Allman about this, saying that Jackson had sworn under oath that he had not gotten out of the car, but Allman persisted by saying that he saw Bob Jackson right behind him (Allman) on the knoll. Strange. I think this is another perjury (as with Robertson for the sake of Aynesworth). Jackson claimed to have seen the rifle. If he saw the rifle sticking out of the window of the TSBDB why in hell did he run instinctively and automatically for the knoll after the shots were fired. (The Commission attorney asked Jackson if he thought any one else in the car heard Jackson state: I saw the gun," but Jackson said he could not remember if anyone else heard him make this brilliant statement. Testimony taken in March '64: you know damn well that Underwood--also in car--and one other, oh, yes, Dillard--had talked to Jackson any number of times before he (Jackson) went to Washington. One finds it extremely difficult to believe (in fact impossible) that at sometime in those four months between the assassination and the visit to Washington Jackson had not come across Dillard or Underwood somewhere and said: Boy, wasn't I smart? I saw the gun. Remember?

But, no, apparently this didn't happen, since Jackson did not feel assured enough about it to tell the Commission attorney to ask his car companions about his immediate allegation. Nor did Jackson want to admit to the Commission that he (Jackson) not only didn't see a gun, but instead he thought the shots had come from the knoll and consequently he ran directly to this area. This would have made him look silly, on top of an earlier statement to a policeman that he had observed the gun. (Decker deposition, exhibit. I think this statement was made much after Nov 22, but of course this is getting into a very complicated area.) However, there is no doubt some perjury involved here, as is the case with poor Mr. Robertson who lied for Aynesworth. Notice

that none of these men were called to the Commission, not Aynesworth, Eiland or Allman--and all worked in one form or another for WFAA or the Dallas Morning News (WFAA is a spin-off of the DMN).

What happened in Dallas in my opinion was that anyone who could give testimony to the Commission that would destroy the credibility of the Dallas police case against Lee Oswald in regard to the Tippit killing were not called. (Notice Bowley was not called, nor Mrs. Clemons, nor the ? oh, God, I have forgotten their names--the landlady and husband the Nashes interviewed who lived one block down on Tenth.

The Dallas police completely contrived the case against Oswald in regard to Tippit. They did not in my opinion have anything actually tangible to do with the assassination of President Kennedy. In a sense their hands are clean in this regard. However, once they were alerted (anonymously) to the possibility that an employee of the TSBDB was in the Texas Theatre or at least on Zangs or Beckley, they (the Dallas police) contrived to involve him in an actual crime of some sort. Whether the Tippit killing worked to their advantage in this regard, or whether they deliberately had one of their least desirable members killed, time will tell. At any rate, this is where we must unravel the Dallas mysteries. Oswald did NOT kill Tippit. And any witness whose impression of the time element would be detrimental to the Dallas police case against Oswald in this regard was not heard in Washington. Pressure was brought to bear through certain members of the Dallas FBI and the Dallas SS, and through influential city members of the Council and the DMN, to keep this angle of the case very steady and true.

This does not negate the possibility that Oswald killed Kennedy. However, had the Commission had all the evidence I think we now have in regard to the Tippit killing, no verdict against Lee Oswald in this regard would have been returned by the Commission, in spite of its steady reaction to Oswald in regard to the assassination. The two situations must be completely separated before they can be undone.

Harold, this is a terrible letter, but I am anxious for you to have the information, for whatever you can do with it. I am typing so fast my arms are shaking. Will take a break and then answer every question you asked. I did not like to hear in your letter about how tired you are. Please do not overdo for there is so much to do NBC book from Tulsa Library. Returned it but think I have most of the meat out, which I sent.

I am so glad you are offering tape to Sylvia. She is very trustworthy and honorable. Plus she has a truly fine mind, and sometimes one of us can catch what the other misses, or say something seemingly inconsequential that can set the other off on a new line of search. What a bunch we are! Do you think they will do a film on us? Who do you want to do your part? Rock Hudson or Richard Burton? Elizabeth Taylor may be too old to do me!!!!

I am thoroughly disgusted with myself that I didn't ask Allman what he was wearing at time of alleged confrontation with Lee as you suggest. I forgot all about pictures. I am so slipshod. However, will write to him at once on this; if he is not too impatient with me by now (because by now he knows exactly who I am you can be sure) perhaps he will answer.

Harold, has any of this helped? Does it encourage or discourage you? Frankly, I am encouraged by Allman's statement that he agreed he could not have been to top of steps and through glass doors by 12:33pm (Commission time) after scrambling all over knoll. Did I send you details of Robertson's perjury (in my opinion)? Write when you are able. Much love, S.