

July 9, 1969

Dear Gary:

This is undoubtedly going to be not very long, as not too much is happening around here. I got a letter today from George Rennar, in which he mentions that the tape library of Uncle Chester may yet make honest folk out of the Dallas police transcribers. I think that would be only fitting.

Before I forget, did William Turner ever come out with a full-fledged book? If so, I never even heard of it. I also don't have Epstein's latest, although I presume the substance (or lack of it, actually) was in the New Yorker. If you could give me the publishers, I could send away for them.

There are two qualifications to what I thought about the Alvarez analysis failing to explain different amounts of blurring in different parts of the same frame. Obviously (although I didn't say it) there has to be some difference in blurring between moving objects (the cars and motorcycles) and stationary backgrounds. In fact, as everyone recognizes, this is one way of telling which way the camera is swinging (the + or - signs for Alvarez). What I meant was that 221 and 227, for example (among others), seemed to have a good deal more difference than any others. In fact, comparison can be made with the clearest frames to get some kind of reference point. I forget just which frames I was comparing with, but it may have been 180, 183, 188, 216, 200, or 219 (to choose clear frames from this area of the film). Since 183 was printed enlarged by Life, we can get the best look at it; the others may even be better. The background is almost perfect, judging from the clarity of the faces, Willis camera, and other details. Yet the highlights on the car (Alvarez' reference points), the faces of those in the motorcade, the badges (?) on the motorcycle cops, etc. are all very clear. Thus the "background" difference in blurs due to car motion cannot be any larger than in this frame, and may even be smaller. It was against this background that I considered certain frames to have differential blurrings far beyond what Alvarez would explain -- these frames I would guess resulted from camera troubles. Obviously, nobody can really prove anything conclusively to anybody else's satisfaction. Anyhow, the only way "out" for the CBS analysis of these frames would be if the Zapruder camera had the type of shutter which sweeps across the aperture to expose the film. In some movie cameras the so-called "guillotine" blade (actually not a blade, but an opening) goes down and up, some 18 times a second. In other cases, the holes are in a circular little thing which revolves at the proper rate to keep things dark while the film jumps forward and then sweeps light across the frame. I don't know what Zapruder had or how long it stayed open for each frame or really much of anything about his camera. Did anyone ever describe the portion of the $1/18.3$ in which the shutter was open, versus the dark time? I think I remember someone mentioning it, but I can't find it. If you know of no information, I can write to Bell and Howell, of course. The whole point is that, by a remote possibility, the top halves of frames may be exposed at slightly different times than the bottoms of the frames. Checking frames 194-202 of Alvarez' graph, I find the motion reversing in every frame. If we can accept that for some intervals the "period" of a full oscillation can be as low as $1/9$ th of a second, it might be relevant to know the details of how Zapruder's shutter worked.

Looking at highway 35, I see that it goes right through Kansas City, Kansas. As you well know, Prairie Village is a suburb of KC with the attraction of:

H.W. Betzner, Sr., 3700 West 73rd Terrace, Prairie Village, Kansas. He told me, and probably you, that he has a 10x13 of the third Betzner photo as well as a copy negative of it (of all things). He said that he would not mind a personal inspection in his home, although he has been not too cooperative at getting copies made for us. Anyhow, if you have some gift of gab we might talk him into letting us borrow the negative, since you can probably get copies made just as we would like. At any rate a 10x13 would be clear enough to tell if there is anything worthwhile in the background. For what it's worth (which is not much) Turner has friends in the KC police dept. who could do copies. Now who could be more trustworthy than the KC Police?

Speaking of Turner, I suppose everyone is convinced that I have joined the ranks of the CIA along with you, Thompson, and God knows who else. In fact, Turner has been an employe of the CIA, in Viet-Nam no less. I have often been tempted to go through his files on Viet-Nam (he has five big ones), but how can you burgle a police professor, even if you wanted to? Turner will be going to Taipei for the latter part of the summer, and I would guess that he is helping them set up the criminology sections of some governmental police force (that's what he did in Viet-Nam).

Although I can explain it more some later time, I didn't mean to suggest that the even row of boxes near the window in the Studebaker photos could look one bit like a man -- rather, because I observed that the Murray picture may have been taken from closer up than the others, perhaps the stack forming the beginning of the aisle (8feet from the window?) might have been invisible to Murray, but visible to Hughes and Weaver as the "head", which is, after all, the salient feature making the appearance of a "man." I have so far not taken the time to calculate the difference in distance it would take to create this illusion. Having just thought of it, I'll see if any conclusion can be drawn with some pretty triangles.

Let me know as soon as you know more about the Dallas trip -- there is a slim chance that something family will interfere here, but I hope not.

Sincerely,

Don

Did you ever get Muchmore or the
UPI Oswald film?