

File Levelady Oswald

6/23/75

MEMO re Man in Altgens Photo--Howard Roffman

After seeing Robert's new work with the scene of Levelady on TSBG steps from Martin film, I went home and started reviewing my own photos and materials again. The dark growth of beard on Levelady as depicted in Martin at first persuaded me that the man in Altgens must not be Levelady. But after a review, I am nearly certain the man must be Levelady.

There is no doubt Levelady had a shadow of beard growth, but I think the high contrast of the Martin film, even after Robert's processing, exaggerates the darkness of the growth. On my copy of Altgens, which is the clearest I've ever seen, the man's chin appears darker than his forehead, but more than that cannot be detected.

I'd always felt the Altgens man had to be Levelady and not Oswald because the face shape seems more similar to Levelady's and the hairline is identical. Levelady has a peculiar hairline, with an arch in the middle.

However, most troubling was the shirt, since most of the enlargements of Altgens show nothing that appears to be a plaid, as Levelady wore that day. But after closely studying my copy and comparing it with Levelady's shirt, I'm convinced that the shirt in Altgens, if it is not Levelady's, certainly isn't Oswald's.

The resolution of the enlargement is fair, better in my copy than that in WWII, but even WWII shows enough to tend to rule out Oswald's shirt. There seem to be too many contrasting areas of light and dark on the shirt in Altgens for it to be Oswald's rust brown shirt which, at that distance and resolution, would surely appear as a solid color. In my copy, the vague pattern of large squares is visible on the shirt, especially on the sleeve, which appears to be bisected at about 4 intervals with light lines. Also, similar white lines are visible near the right lapel (from Levelady's point of view) where the shirt is open. One of these light lines is just above and to the right of the nose of the black guy in front of Levelady on the steps in the picture (you can just see a partial profile of him). The thing that persuades me this is Levelady's shirt is that in my copy, this light line is pretty well defined and directly below it is a very dark, thinner line, which corresponds exactly to the pattern on Levelady's shirt.

As for Levelady's position being too far east, it should be noted that in Altgens he is leaning over toward the east, and would probably not be visible were he standing at attention. You can see him bend over into this position in the Weigman film, taken during the shots, in which he first appears standing straight and then leans toward the east, apparently to follow the limousine. Also, Weigman depicts a full view of the west side of the steps and TSBG entrance, and no one appears west of Levelady.

I am concerned that we get too carried away with what the Martin film seems to show, because there is little doubt that the man in Altgens is Levelady, as I have explained. The high contrast of Martin undoubtedly darkens Levelady's shadow.