

Dear Harold:

After writing the beginning of the April 3 letter, I did find the episode in Pennsylvania. It is recounted in Volume XXVI, starting on page 652. The woman who found the objects is Margaret Kathryn Hoover of Martinsburg, Pa. Her daughter (who substantiated the story and then ~~was~~ backtracked on it) is Margare⁶ Kay Kauffman.

I hope the fellow that you are handing this over to has access to the Warren Commission volumes because I can't imagine copying all this fine print. I have to read it with a magnifying glass, myself.

Me

You will find a better copy in New Orleans

April 3, 1968

Dear Harold:

This is a continuation of the thing I wrote on March 30 about Ruth Paine. It is, of course, impossible for me to organize this. I have made no notes except those in my own volumes, so all I can do is go through them. Some of the things that I've come across back in the exhibits are lost forever to me unless I just happen to see them again. I'll keep looking for the "little town in Pennsylvania" episode as you asked me to.

Now about Ruth. The first thing that sticks out like a sore thumb is that if Oswald did take a long package to work on November 22, and it turns out that he shot no one, we are left with this conveniently-shaped package that could even be a cause for questioning. How many people took a 27-inch, skinny package to work with them on that day, of all days? He could not have expected to be able to spirit a rifle (or anything shaped like a rifle) out of that house and not be seen by one of the two mothers of very young children. It might turn out that way, but he could not have counted on it. So, whatever he took would have to be something that, if detected, would be all right (Marina knew he had a rifle, so she would have thought of that). So, let's say that it wasn't a rifle but that it ~~was~~ was a long package that could conceivably have held a rifle. I just don't but ~~it~~ that after having lived in that room at 1026 N. Beckley for over a month), he chose that day to take curtain rods to work. So the natural thing was that someone else asked him to take those curtain rods with him. Ruth Paine may have asked him to take them so that Michael (who also had an apartment) could pick them up at the Book Depository sometime that day (and may have done it).

All the important evidence that I've seen has come from Ruth Paine's house and from Marina. When the business of Oswald's attempt on General Walker's life was dreamed up for use as "inclination to violence", Ruth Paine sent Marina a "Book of Household Hints" or some such name that had been missed in searches by the police and, lo and behold, neatly tucked away between the pages was a note written by Lee to Marina before he went off to do away with the General.

Ruth Paine just happened to copy the "Mexico letter" (Exh. ~~103~~ 103) I cannot find her copy of it although she said that the FBI took it from her right after the assassination. In Oswald's handwritten rough draft (Exh. 103), The Fair Play for Cuba Committee initials look more like FBCC. If anyone can find Ruth Paine's copy, it might be important to see which way she copied it. Because, on page 6 of Vol. III, Ruth says she did not know the name of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee until it appeared in the papers after the assassination. When she copied that letter (on the weekend of Nov. 9), did she not even try to figure out what the initials meant?

If the Mexico letter proved not potent enough, she produced (when an FBI man was with her) from a drawer in Marina's room (although that room and that drawer had already been cleared, surely) all kinds of things that tied him to that trip -- a coin made into a necklace, a Spanish-English Dictionary with notations written in it -- "Buy tickets for bull fight, get silver bracelet for Marina". She says, "...and there in the drawer also was a silver bracelet with the name Marina on it, which I took to be associated with this notation." This happened a week or so after the assassination "when an FBI agent asked me was there anything left in the house that would be pertinent and he and I went together and looked in the drawer in the room where Marina ~~was~~ had been staying..."

* when it appears first in the letter

When the camera, Exh. 750 (that was used for the famous "weapon pictures) was needed where did it show up -- at Ruth Paine's. The Dallas police had already taken (on the day of the assassination) a whole drawerful of cameras, according to Michael Paine. This one (the only important one) turned up "several weeks after the assassination (Vol. IV, p. 284).

Vol. III, p. 111. The wedding ring in the teacup found by Ruth and Bardwell Odum. This is strange. A ring (doesn't say what kind of ring) was taken from Lee at the Dallas police station. I can't find the reference, but it is in an exhibit some place.

Ruth tries to give a picture of herself as the thoroughly domestic hausfrau in the Redbook Magazine article (Exh. 460). If we believe that, we'd believe anything. Her whole background, both before and after marriage, is to the contrary. It reveals a completely different person than the one who wrote to Marina to "write soon about diapers and bugs and other such homely themes" (and I told you, Harold, that "Bug" written in English script with a capital "B" means a Russian word that has to do with identification). She is interested in square dancing, chamber music, Theatre Center doings, madrigal singing, tennis (according to her calendar), belongs to the A.C.L.U., the League of Women Voters. She had studied Russian off and on since she was in college, had headed a committee on East-West Cultural Exchange and had had the responsibility of setting up a pen-pals arrangement (in conjunction, I think, with the Quaker group, had been sent to England as representative of the Quaker Young Friends, had gone to Middlebury or Middleburg for a period of seven weeks where she had to speak only Russian. That was five years before, when she was pregnant with her first child. She started again with the Russian lessons at Berlitz, dropped out because it was too expensive apparently, and then took some more lessons from Mrs. Gravitis. (Dorothy Gravitis is the mother-in-law of Ilya Mamantov who was called in to interpret for Marina at the Dallas police station) After all these Russian lessons, she constantly speaks of her poor Russian. Yet Ruth did teach Russian during the summer of 1963, so she evidently knew enough to suit the Director of St. Mark's School.

The Dallas police took from the Paine home (immediately after the assassination) file cabinets of old correspondence of Ruth's. We never do find out what was in this correspondence. All we know is that she saved all the rough drafts of the letters sent to Marina (what for is a mystery). Yet she did not save the fairly recent pen-pal correspondence with Nina Aparina and Ella (whose last name she has forgotten), her contacts in Russia. It seems that this would have been interesting things to keep. When she is questioned about these people, especially Nina, she seems to go to pieces and her words don't hang together right. This is on page 135 of Volume III. At the bottom of that page she seems anxious to convince us of her disapproval (and disavowal) of one of the Russian students she had been instrumental in getting to the States. Here again, Harold, I find that it isn't so much what she says, but that she forestalls certain lines of questioning. It's as if she's beating someone to the draw. I sense this in so many of her interviews. I know this isn't "hard Facts" but it's there in so much of this. She keeps pace with, and at times, gets ahead of the questions.

A very important thing to me is the fact that when Oswald called her on Saturday to have her try to get in touch with John Abt, her reaction was that he had a nerve asking her to do this after what he had done. This is a member of the Civil Liberties Union, remember, so we should reasonably expect more of her. All this is to say Ruth was too anxious to hang Oswald when, at that point, she should have been hoping against hope (at least for Marina's sake) that there was a mistake. It was entirely too early in the game for her to have made up her mind as to his guilt. Her exact words (Vol. III, p. 86) are: "...considerable irritation at his seeming to be so apart from the situation, so presuming of his own innocence, if you will, but I did say I would make the call for him."

The whole episode of these two phone calls (one right after the other, and on the same subject -- securing John Abt) is strange. Ruth said that when she received the second call so soon after the first one that she made no reference to the fact that he had just called. She said, evading, "He ~~might~~ may have added." Jenner then says, "Did you please? Her answer: "No. I was quite stunned that he called at all or that he thought he could ask anything of me, appall@d, really." (I have scribbled in my book at this point, "No trial, but a presumption of guilt. What is this woman, really?")

Page 1 of Vol. III starts with the identification by Ruth Paine of Oswald's handwriting on the application for a Texas driver's license by comparing it with his purported handwriting in her address book. If Oswald wrote the Jaggers-Chiles-Stovall entry in that book, then he wrote other things in it, too. And Jenner knew it.

On page 7, Vol. III, she talks about Oswald doing most of the packing and loading in New Orleans. She has "wondered since whether he wasn't doing it by preference to having me handle it." She is implying, of course, that he didn't want her to see or handle the rifle. But she has goofed, because the whole load was going to her home to be unpacked by her there, and where she could see the thing at any time. Her enthusiasm has loosened her tongue just a little too much, I'd say.

The icing on the cake comes on page 11 where Ruth says, "I may say, also, I wondered, as I have already indicated for the Commission, I had wondered from time to time, whether this was a man who was working as a spy or in any way a threat to the Nation, and I thought, 'This is the first I have heard anything about a contact. I am interested to know if this is a real thing or something unreal.' And waited to see ~~what~~ really whether I would learn any more about it. But this thought crossed my mind."

Ruth seems to have made a social occasion of the Life Magazine men's visit the evening of the assassination. If this had been a great shock to Ruth and Marina (and it should have been if they had had nothing to do with it), these men should have been politely sent on their way. If her interest in an article had been mercenary so as to pay for legal aid for the husband of her friend, I could understand it better. She seemed to glory in the whole thing.

On page 85, Ruth says the police locked her front door when they had finished searching the house on Saturday while she went grocery shopping. Yet in her article that she wrote for a magazine (Exh. 460) she yacks about her front lock being broken. She says, "The front lock didn't even work. She said (meaning Marina) how glad she was to see people live with a feeling of trust toward one another." A small point, perhaps, but it shows her capable of making up a good one for the sake of a story with dramatic impact.

Back to the trying-to-reach-Abt business. Page 88. Jenner asks Ruth if she told Oswald about having tried to reach Abt for him. This was a very big and important thing with a what-to-do-next stemming from it that she couldn't forget. Yet she says she does not specifically recall any conversation with him about it. This is absolutely fantastic. She says, "Not unless such transpired in our 9:30 conversation Saturday evening, but I made no effort to call the police station itself."

On page 131, Sen. Cooper asks Ruth, "Was it your opinion that Mrs. Oswald was shaken by the assassination and by the fact that her husband was charged with it?" She says, "She was certainly shaken ... when he was at that time just charged with the shooting of Tippit. I never saw her after he was charged with the shooting of the President." Yet the whole "rifle" incident in the garage and at the police station was in relation to the assassination of President Kennedy. Maybe he had not been "charged" but that was the way things were shaping up and Marina knew that. Ruth is evading the question.

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I have touched only the high points. There are thousands of others that I can't begin to put on paper on such short notice. I want to get this in the mail. I don't know that it is worth a thing to anyone. I hope it doesn't come thru hysterical.

I will try to write about the letters exchanged between Marina and Ruth. They are most peculiar. To me, this is where someone, trained in intelligence, should delve.

Sincerely,

Shirley S. Orr
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Cuba, Mo.

P.S.

Harold, I am sending with Garrison's copy of this letter my letter to you of last August the somethingth because it has more stuff in it pertaining to Ruth Paine. It may not be relevant, but you asked for my thoughts.

Me