

Dear Johann,

8/14/83

In your letter of the 8th you say "I've heard that you are quite a character. One young researcher in Dallas said that you are 'wierd.' I asked why, and he said you don't have an air conditioner."

This is amusing. I rather like being regarded as a character because it tends to diminish the time I waste on those who are.

I do not know a single young researcher in Dallas, have never met or spoken to any, don't even know the names of any - and I have four air conditioners. Moreover, I use all of them when necessary. Normally, in very hot weather and when I'm not in my office, we use the two largest only. In hot weather, when I'm in my office, I use that one.

Illustrative of the kinds of opinions you can expect from that type of "researcher," and the dependability of that kind of "research," is that fact that anyone in his right mind and knowing anything ~~at~~ at all about the facts of life ought know very well that one of my age and in my impaired health could hardly expect to survive very well in the weather we've had without relief from its effects.

I do not have the ~~XXX~~ CIA's transcript of the Oswald Mexico City transcripts. It may be that Ron Kessler of the Washington Post has one because he wrote a lengthy story and interviewed the tapper and the transcriber. You can file FOIA requests, of the CIA and the FBI, if you really want to track them down.

I have not given any thought to computerizing my records. Can you imagine the amount of work this would entail?

If I ever knew a chicken farmer named John Boecher I do not recall it now. I'm inclined to believe that if I knew a chicken farmer who was also a poet I'd not have forgotten it. The few I knew were just plain chicken farmers. I had a wider acquaintance among chicken cooks because I associated with them often at cooking competitions, which I won year after year. Need I more for qualification as a character? Especially because I was for many years Maryland chicken-cooking champion and in 1959 was the national Barbecue King? I am the one who popularized using a marinade as a barbecue sauce.

I've heard nothing from Groden.

Sincerely,

Aug 8, 1983

Dear Harold:

Apparently I forgot to respond to your questions about the big flood we had here. I'm sorry. I've got a bad habit of writing letters that I never mail. I did respond to the flood questions, but I guess the letter is still somewhere here in the house. It's a spelling problem. I like for my wife to proofread all my letters before they go out, but sometimes I misplace them before she can do that.

Yes, we had a hell of a flood down here. Some of the video tape my camerapeople shot for our local station wound up on the networks. One helicopter shot that and NBC cameraman took here is now running on a Red Cross commercial narrated by Ronald Reagan.

My house was spared by inches, but some of my neighbors got soaked. All our houses are built on concrete "slabs" which means they are just inches above the ground. Land developers down here clear forest land and fill in creeks, then they run minimum-spec culverts underground just to comply with the law. When a hard rain falls, nature tries to reestablish the old creek beds, and many of those beds run right through our houses.

I wish I had the time and money to fly up to visit you. I've heard that you are quite a character. One young researcher in Dallas said you are "wierd". I asked why, and he said you don't have an air conditioner! I don't have one in my car, so I guess I'm wierd every time I drive!

Say, do you happen to have anything on the CIA transcript of Oswald's phone conversations in Mexico City? Someone in Dallas told me the transcripts do exist, but I don't know how to track them down.

Have you thought of computerizing your FOIA papers? My wife's parents just gave her a small computer as a graduation present (she's going for a PhD in Philosophy) and I've been using it to computerize dates and events in Oswald's life.

By the way, if you ever wondered about my name, I do not have a Germanic background. I am pure American pioneer. I was named after Johann Strauss. My mother, also pioneer, grew up in a German community in Arkansas, and I was named Johann in 1942 to show the world that there were some good Germans in the world. Sort of like the reason Beethoven was played so much back then, also like ~~\*\*\*~~ ! My wife is a Jew, and her side of the family is somewhat more civilized than mine.

Did you ever know a poet/chicken-farmer by the name of John Beecher? He was a friend of mine, and your paths might have crossed in the old days.

Johann

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Johann', written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.