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# THE IDLE WARRIORS

**KERRY W. THORNLEY**

**WHAT WAS  
LEE HARVEY OSWALD  
REALLY LIKE?**

In 1962, Marine Corp. Pvt. Kerry W. Thornley wrote a novel about a fellow Marine who defected to the USSR. Little did he know that his friend, Lee Harvey Oswald, would be the man accused of killing President John F. Kennedy. Through the fictional character Johnny Shellburn, *The Idle Warriors* gives rare insight into the mind of the man who allegedly committed one of the most infamous crimes of this century. Subpoenaed by the Warren Commission and hidden away in the National Archives since 1965, *The Idle Warriors* provides accurate information on what Lee Harvey Oswald was really like!

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*At Kerry forwarded your letter to me R.G.*

## What important people are saying about THE IDLE WARRIORS:

### From the Introduction to The Idle Warriors:

Kerry Thornley's manuscript, *The Idle Warriors*, has a special meaning for me. First, it provides an accurate picture — through the vehicle of a novel — of what it was like to be a Marine in Oswald's unit, Marine Air Control Squadron One (MACS 1), at the height of the Cold War in 1959. Here we have Oswald, as the fictionalized Johnny Shellburn, portrayed as the kibitzing wise-cracking fellow that Kerry knew, just months before Oswald defected to the Soviet Union.

Oswald's defection was an important event in Thornley's life.....

Thornley knew exactly what his first book would be about — a Marine who became sufficiently disillusioned with his country, as a result of peacetime service in Japan, and decided to defect to Russia. *The Idle Warriors* was born; and the manuscript, complete with its pre-assassination portrait of Lee Harvey Oswald, was finished well before the events of November 1963.

Reconstructing the truth — whether about a crime, or a historical event — can indeed be difficult. It all comes down to the evidence. And on the question of what Lee Harvey Oswald was like during the time he was in the Marines, Kerry provided just that: a valid eyewitness account. History is fortunate that someone who knew Oswald was intrigued enough to write a book about him — before November 1963.

—David S. Lifton  
Author of BEST EVIDENCE (Macmillan, 1980)

"After a quarter-century of theory, Lee Harvey Oswald remains the central mystery in the Kennedy assassination. A crucial part of the puzzle is his service in the Marine Corps and his subsequent defection to the USSR. Was he an oddball Russophile, an intelligence operative, or both? Kerry Thornley's novel provides the unique perspective of a fellow Marine who knew Oswald well, and found him interesting enough to write about before November 22, 1963."

— Paul L. Hoch  
Co-Editor of  
THE ASSASSINATION:  
DALLAS AND BEYOND

"*The Idle Warriors* is well known to many students of the Kennedy assassination, as its author was in the Marine Corps with Lee Harvey Oswald. It should be of considerable interest not only to buffs, but to the public in general. Remarkably, the first draft of the book was completed before November 22, 1963."

—Bud Fensterwald  
Director, Assassination Archives  
and Research Center

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-Antero Alli  
Author of Angel Tech (& other rebellious manifestos)  
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