

## The Oswald rifle scope installation at the Irving Sport Shop of Monday, November 11, 1963

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*Recapitulation of the Furniture Mart study* (“The mystery of the Furniture Mart sighting of Lee and Marina Oswald and their children and its solution”, <https://www.scrollery.com/?p=1450>). On Monday, November 11, 1963, Veterans Day, Ruth Paine arranged for babysitting for her two children with a neighbor next door and drove from her Irving, Texas home at 9 a.m. to go to Dallas for several hours. After Ruth left, Lee Oswald, who was at Ruth Paine’s home visiting his wife Marina and their two children, 2-year old June and 3-week-old baby Rachel, drove Michael Paine’s blue-and-white 1955 Oldsmobile parked in front of the house, with Marina and the child and baby, to the Furniture Mart in Irving, located a little over two miles away. Lee’s driving of Michael Paine’s ’55 Olds was without Ruth Paine’s knowledge or permission. Lee first entered the Furniture Mart by himself, while Marina and the children waited in the car outside. Lee asked for a gunsmith advertised on a sign outside the store. Furniture Mart owner Edith Whitworth informed Oswald that the gunsmith was no longer at that location and directed Lee to the Irving Sport Shop about 1-1/2 blocks down the street to find a gunsmith. Lee briefly brought Marina and their 2-year old daughter and newborn baby into the store to look at furniture. All four returned to the car. Oswald was last seen driving away from the Furniture Mart appearing to be going to the Irving Sport Shop.

Mrs. WHITWORTH. ... I told him we didn't have a gunsmith and he asked for this part and I don't remember really just what he asked for, but whatever it was, it led me to know that **he wanted a gunsmith**, which we didn't have.

Mrs. HUNTER. ... he went down to the door on that end of the building and went in and he asked her, he says, **‘Where is your gunsmith?’** I remember that and he had something—I won't say just what it was, because I wasn't particularly interested. I wasn't in here being down there at the time. She told him that the

gunsmith was moved—that he wasn't there, and **she showed him down the street where to go to.**

Mr. McKENZIE. Where did she tell him to go?

Mrs. HUNTER. Well, now, I don't know, but it was **back down east on Irving Boulevard.**

Mrs. WHITWORTH. There was **a gunsmith or a sports shop** or something back down there.

Mrs. HUNTER. **There was a sport shop down there where she showed him to go. I remember that much of it. . . .**

The present paper picks up the story at the Irving Sport Shop, where Oswald went next that morning of Nov 11, 1963.

***Nov 24, 1963.* A report that the accused assassin of President Kennedy, Lee Harvey Oswald, had a rifle sighted at the Irving Sport Shop just before the assassination comes to the attention of the FBI**

On the weekend of the assassination, on Sunday Nov 24, 1963, an anonymous male called WFAA-TV in Dallas and spoke to journalist Ray John at about 3-3:30 p.m. The caller advised John that “‘Oswald’ had had a rifle sighted at a gun shop located in the 200 block on Irving Boulevard in Irving, Texas”

(<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=11462#relPageId=205>). John notified the Dallas Police of this phone call at 3:45 p.m.

At 6:30 p.m. that evening an anonymous male caller phoned the local FBI office and claimed he had overheard at 5:30 p.m. at an Irving supermarket that Oswald “‘had his rifle sighted at the Irving Sports Shop, 221 Irving Boulevard, Irving, Texas” on Thursday, November 21, 1963, the day before the assassination. Like the caller to WFAA-TV, this caller also would not identify himself

(<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=11462#relPageId=203>).

**Upon FBI inquiry, Irving Sport Shop employee Dial Ryder discloses the existence of a job ticket for a scope installed on a rifle for “Oswald” earlier in November**

In response to the lead from the anonymous phone call to the FBI, on Mon Nov 25 FBI agent Emory Horton went to Irving and found the Irving Sport Shop closed due to the assassination. Horton attempted unsuccessfully to contact Sport Shop owner, Woodrow Greener, who was out of town. Horton then knocked on the door of Sport Shop employee Dial Ryder at his home. Ryder informed Horton that two days earlier,

on Sat Nov 23, he, Ryder, had located at his workbench at the shop a job ticket in his handwriting telling of a rifle scope installation done for an “Oswald”. Ryder said the job ticket was from sometime between Nov 1 and Nov 14, when owner Woodward Greener had been on vacation and Ryder had taken care of the shop in Greener’s absence. Horton and Ryder went to the shop where Ryder showed Horton the job ticket.

The job ticket was handwritten in pencil and authenticated by Dial Ryder as his handwriting. The ticket had no date but was a writeup of a \$6.00 total charge for two itemized subcharges: \$4.50 for drill-and-tapping of a rifle scope installation plus \$1.50 for boresighting. The kind of rifle or scope was not stated. The customer’s name was “Oswald”, no further information. The stub at the bottom of the numbered job ticket had not been torn off and given to the customer as a claim for later pickup. There was no contact information for the customer such as a phone number. Ryder told Horton he had done the job of that ticket, and that ticket was the only record of that job. He told Horton what he remembered of the customer and the rifle (taken up below).

The only other Sport Shop employee at the time, a woman who worked as a clerk, Carol Berry, was interviewed by agent Horton the same day. She did not recognize either a photo of Oswald or a photo of the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository (<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10406#relPageId=401>).

### **The Sport Shop scope installation for Oswald becomes national news**

Although Dial Ryder told the FBI of the job ticket on Mon Nov 25, Ryder appears to have told no one else except possibly his wife. He did not initiate contact with any reporter. Surprisingly, the next two days at work after the FBI visited him, Tue-Wed Nov 26-27, Ryder did not even tell his boss, Greener, of the Oswald job ticket or the FBI visit, despite working in the shop with Greener those two days. Greener learned an Oswald job ticket existed in his shop from an article in the *Dallas Times Herald* on Thanksgiving Day, Nov 28, which by that evening exploded into a national news story.

The *Dallas Times Herald* article came about as follows. Early Thursday morning, Thanksgiving Day, reporter Hunter Schmidt of the *Times Herald*—following up on what he later told the Warren Commission was a tip he had received from “around the police station somewhere”—phoned Dial Ryder at home, woke him up, and, according to Schmidt, spoke with Ryder for maybe fifteen minutes. That afternoon the *Dallas Times Herald* ran Schmidt’s story. According to Schmidt, Dial Ryder said

“that he had a ticket with the name Oswald on it, that it was a foreign-made rifle, that he did put the scope, bored the holes and sighted it in”

(<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=45#relPageId=250>).

### **Greener and Ryder deny the Sport Shop worked on Oswald’s rifle**

That evening, Thu Nov 28, Walter Cronkite, anchor of CBS News, told the nation that Dial Ryder “denied the report that he put the sight on the rifle” that killed the president. The next morning, Fri Nov 29, reporter Schmidt called Sport Shop owner Greener. Greener told Schmidt that Dial Ryder denied he had spoken to Schmidt. Ryder told the Secret Service, two days later, meanwhile, that Schmidt had misquoted him (“he claims to have been misquoted”,

<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10490#relPageId=523>). In later testimony to the Warren Commission Ryder said he had received a phone call from the reporter on the morning in question but had made no comment. Ryder:

“I answered the phone and a guy introduced himself and I told him I didn’t have any comment and hung up (. . .) the only people I talked to were Mr. Horton with the FBI and then the Dallas Police Department or the sheriff’s department—is the only ones I talked to about this, until, like I told you—the CBS reporters came out and we made the television deal after radios and everything got the thing and then we thought we had it straightened out with them, but as far as that morning [Thanksgiving Nov 28], I didn’t talk to anybody over the phone about it except I said I had no comment and hung up the receiver and then took the receiver off the hook and went on about my business of sleeping on this Sunday [sic] morning.”

(<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=45#relPageId=235>)

Schmidt told the Warren Commission Ryder’s denials were not true. Schmidt said that Ryder had answered his questions, had been agreeable to talk, albeit sounding sleepy, and that they had spoken for maybe fifteen minutes. A fellow *Dallas Times Herald* reporter testified he was present when Schmidt called Dial Ryder and “heard the entire conversation between Schmidt and yourself [Ryder] and he said that Schmidt did talk to you for an extended period of time, or to a person by the name of Dial Ryder, who gave him this information about the gun work being done” (Liebeler, in Dial Ryder’s Warren Commission testimony). Schmidt himself:

“I had no reason to fabricate anything about Mr. Ryder. I don’t know the man. I have nothing against him. I just have a story, and I will stick by that story we had in the paper . . . I don’t know that much about rifles as to why he would

deny it, except that he possibly could have thought that wouldn't go over too well with the public, 'Here I mounted a sight on the gun that killed the President' ... I wouldn't have any reason to fabricate anything."

Schmidt volunteered to take a polygraph. Ryder said he would take a polygraph if asked but would not volunteer. The Warren Commission said they would accept polygraph information if it was volunteered but could not request it. No polygraphs were done. The appearance is reporter Schmidt was the truthful one in this and Dial Ryder the dissembler, possibly influenced following the reaction from his boss, Greener. Greener publicly praised and defended his long-time employee Ryder. But it was clear Greener did not want his Sport Shop thought of and known as having put the scope on the rifle that killed President Kennedy.

Dial Ryder said he had no contact with any reporter until the phone call from Hunter Schmidt on Thanksgiving morning. A Secret Service report however says that "Ryder stated that he had been interviewed by an Agent Horton of the Federal Bureau of Investigation on Monday, November 25, 1963, and that on Wednesday (Nov 27) and Friday (Nov 29) had been interviewed by a woman who stated that she was from the White House Press"

(<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10490#relPageId=523>). There is no further information on the identity of this reporter or details of this interaction. One possibility is the "Wednesday" is a mistake on Ryder's part for "Thursday" and the "White House Press" affiliated woman called Ryder at the time the story was going national after Hunter Schmidt's Thanksgiving Day *Dallas Times Herald* story went out on national wire services. I suspect that is the explanation here. Ryder never elsewhere referred to contact with any reporter prior to the *Dallas Times Herald* story on Thanksgiving.

### **Greener learns of the Oswald job ticket in his shop**

As noted, Irving Sport Shop owner Greener first learned of the Oswald job ticket from the news on Thanksgiving Nov 28. Greener recalls he was "a little bit aggravated" at the story.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you remember when you asked Ryder about this?

Mr. GREENER. Must have been on Friday, because I was a little bit aggravated at the whole setup. They got me out of bed a time or two at night, and I believe that I had called the Times Herald to talk to this reporter to see where he was supposed to have been getting his information. I'm sure that after I talked to them that day was when I questioned Ryder. So I feel pretty sure it

was Friday or Saturday.

Mr. LIEBELER. The 29th or 30th of November?

Mr. GREENER. Yes.

That is when Dial Ryder denied to Greener that he had talked to *Dallas Times Herald* reporter Schmidt. It is possible Dial Ryder denied the conversation with the reporter because he was in trouble with his boss, Greener, over the publicity.

It appears Ryder never was fully forthcoming with Greener even after the national news story broke. As late as the time of Greener's testimony to the Warren Commission in April 1964, Dial Ryder *still* had not told his boss, Greener, of the FBI visit to Dial Ryder of Mon Nov 25, 1963.

Mr. LIEBELER. Have you ever seen that tag before?

Mr. GREENER. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you remember the first time that you ever saw it?

Mr. GREENER. **Approximately a week or less after the assassination was the first time I had seen it. That was on Thanksgiving Day**, I guess, because they called me at home and I was eating and I met some of the news media to go through this Thanksgiving.

Mr. LIEBELER. Had there been anything in the newspaper about this tag, or about Oswald having any work done here before you saw the tag?

Mr. GREENER. Yes; it had come out in the news, and this was Walter Cronkite was to run a retraction on it, or at least clarify the thing.

Mr. LIEBELER. What kind of retraction?

Mr. GREENER. Well, they tried to clarify the thing to say that **we had a tag showing a certain amount of work for an Oswald, but as far as relating to that particular gun or that particular man, we had no real knowledge of the thing.**

Mr. LIEBELER. Had the FBI been out there at the shop before this thing came out in the newspaper?

Mr. GREENER. **No; I don't think so. They came out after all the news stories.**

Greener still did not realize the FBI had contacted Ryder Mon Nov 25 and Ryder had shown the Oswald job ticket to the FBI then.

### **The primary evidence of Dial Ryder's memory of the customer and rifle of the Oswald job ticket: an FBI report of Nov 25, 1963**

Dial Ryder's account changed following the national news blowup on Thanksgiving. Dial Ryder's position *after* discussion with Greener, *after* Greener learned of the Oswald job ticket, is represented in Ryder's Warren Commission testimony. That account of Ryder, repeated in many forms, was to the effect of, idiomatically put, "*I don't know nuthin'* about the rifle I worked on for that customer—whether it was Oswald I don't know, whoever it was—therefore it wasn't *that* rifle, the rifle used in the assassination, because I don't remember."

In other words, Ryder's post-Thanksgiving 1963 position was that although he could not remember the customer or the rifle of the Oswald job ticket, he and owner Greener were certain—certain—that the rifle which he could not remember was not the Mannlicher-Carcano found at the Texas School Book Depository on Nov 22.

That narrative of Dial Ryder, enshrined by the Warren Commission—a claim of no memory of the customer or rifle; combined with certainty that the unremembered rifle was not Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano—has been so widely accepted that it is surprising to realize that in his earliest statement to FBI agent Horton on Nov 25 Dial Ryder *did* express *some memory*, although couched in uncertainty, of the customer and the rifle. Because Ryder's statement on Mon Nov 25 was early and precedes Sport Shop owner Greener's reaction to the news of the Oswald job ticket, I believe this first FBI interview of Ryder reflects information missing in Ryder's later statements and testimony and is critically important for that reason. Methodologically, *this Nov 25, 1963 FBI interview report* becomes *the primary evidence* for what Dial Ryder knew and remembered of his work on the Oswald rifle. Here is this earliest FBI interview report of Dial Ryder of Nov 25, 1963, in full (emphasis added):

“Mr. Dial D. Ryder, 2028 Harvard (BL 3-4876) stated he is employed as Service Manager, Irving Sport Shop, 221 South Irving Boulevard. Mr. Ryder viewed a photograph of the gun used to assassinate President Kennedy after which he stated he did not sell the mount on the gun as that is not the type of mount handled by Irving Sport Shop and does not recall the gun.

“Mr. Ryder located Irving Sport Shop repair tag number 18374, which is undated and contains the name ‘Oswald’ as the owner of the gun being repaired. The tag reflects the work as being ‘drill and tap \$4.50’ and ‘bore sight \$1.50’ for a total of \$6.00. The tag contains no additional information, is prepared in pencil, is not dated and Mr. Ryder stated this is the only record in existence of

this transaction. Ryder said the tag was prepared by himself. He pointed out that as there is no record of sale of mounts or other items this would reflect that customer Oswald brought in the gun, scope and mounts with <the> only work being performed which was drill and tap and bore sight. Mr. Ryder stated that the work for Oswald was performed between November 1 and 14, 1963, and the only other person employed in the store during that period was Carol Berry, a clerk who resided at 2302 Druid Drive, Irving, Texas.

“Mr. Ryder stated he has no recollection of mounting a side mount of the type on the gun used to assassinate President Kennedy but pointed out that during the past few weeks he had attached a tremendous number of scopes, therefore, it is possible he did mount this scope and does not have any recollection of it at this time.

“Mr. Ryder viewed a photograph of Lee Harvey Oswald, taken August 9, 1963, after which he stated that he cannot be positive that Oswald has been a customer in the Irving Sport Shop but is quite sure that he **has seen and/or talked to Oswald** probably in the store. He stated that **he associates Oswald’s picture** with that of **an individual who brought in an Argentine made rifle about two weeks ago** and he, Ryder, **attached a scope on that gun**. He pointed out that an Argentine rifle of the type he has in mind has a different bolt assembly than does the gun used to assassinate President Kennedy, therefore he cannot be definitely sure that the person he has in mind is identical with Lee Harvey Oswald.” (CE 1333, Nov 25, 1963, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10406#relPageId=400>)

The key points from this earliest law enforcement interview of Dial Ryder:

- “quite sure that *he has seen and/or talked to [Lee Harvey] Oswald*” (reaction to photograph)
- “*associated Oswald’s picture* with that of *an individual ... about two weeks ago*” (specific customer remembered)
- “*who brought in an Argentine made rifle*” (specific kind of rifle remembered: a Mauser)
- “*attached a scope on that gun*”
- “*about two weeks ago*” before Nov 25 (good agreement with the date independently established of Nov 11 for Oswald witnessed at the Furniture Mart directed to the Irving Sport Shop)



The most important detail is Dial Ryder's memory that the rifle was "Argentine made". That is specific. It is other language for a Mauser, very similar to a Mannlicher-Carcano, so much so that law officers on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository at first mistakenly identified the rifle discovered there as a Mauser.

The only rifle Lee Oswald ever had was the mail-order Mannlicher-Carcano from Klein's of Chicago, the rifle found on the sixth floor of the Book Depository on Dealey Plaza. This was not Dial Ryder remembering some second, different rifle of Oswald which was *close* to being Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano but was really a Mauser. Nor was the customer some different Oswald other than the Lee Oswald who with his wife Marina and their two children were witnessed at the Furniture Mart looking for a gunsmith and directed to the Irving Sport Shop. By sheer random accident Dial Ryder happened to be behind the counter at the Sport Shop that Veterans Day, Nov 11, when Oswald walked in. It was *our Lee Oswald* in the Sport Shop that day and *therefore—therefore—the rifle was Oswald's rifle*, the Mannlicher-Carcano, *that* rifle, the rifle used in the assassination. As will become clear, there is no other good reading of this evidence.

Against this, the Warren Commission's final Report rejected the evidence of the Oswald job ticket, the testimony of Dial Ryder that that was a real customer job which he had personally done, and the Furniture Mart witnesses who placed Oswald as looking for a gunsmith and referred to the Sport Shop that day. The Warren Commission insinuated in its final report that Dial Ryder fabricated the job ticket, for which there is no evidence or reasonability.

### **The Carcano mistaken for a Mauser**

Despite Warren Commission attempts to make it sound so in the final Report, there was nothing improbable or unlikely in Dial Ryder's story in its earliest form to the FBI on Nov 25, 1963, properly understood. Ryder's identification of the rifle as a Mauser was the same mistake in identification made eleven days later by Dallas Police officers Seymour Weitzman and J.W. Fritz, and deputy sheriffs Gene Boone and Roger Craig, upon discovery of the Oswald Mannlicher-Carcano on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository on Nov 22. Those officers' identification of the Mannlicher-Carcano as a Mauser entered police paperwork and news reports until the error was corrected. Film footage of reporter Tom Alyea of WFAA-TV of the retrieval of the rifle from its hiding-place with officers standing by shows that the rifle was a

Mannlicher-Carcano, and that the Mauser identification was a mistake (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsnIeaAWFfo>).

Dial Ryder's recollection that the rifle of the customer of two weeks earlier was a Mauser ("Argentine made") is significant in being the identical mistake made concerning Oswald's rifle on Nov 22. The difference is there was no WFAA-TV camera filming Ryder handling the rifle on Nov 11, as there was with the officers at the Texas School Book Depository on Nov 22. If there had been film footage of Ryder and the Oswald rifle at the Sport Shop, it too would have showed a Mannlicher-Carcano, not a Mauser, for the simple reason that we know Oswald's rifle was a Mannlicher-Carcano, that it was Oswald in the Furniture Mart directed by Mrs. Whitworth to the Sport Shop on Nov 11, and the Mannlicher-Carcano is the only rifle it could be.

Dial Ryder told the Warren Commission that in six years of employment at Greener's shop, he, Ryder, had not once handled a Mannlicher-Carcano ("on this Italian rifle [photo of TSBD Mannlicher-Carcano] I never worked on these ... I haven't done none even to this date"). It is not surprising that Ryder would fail to accurately identify in his memory a rifle with which he had no familiarity, and instead remember it as a closely-similar rifle with which he was familiar, a Mauser, just as was done by the law officers on Nov 22. It is the kind of error in identification one might expect from a witness unfamiliar with the Mannlicher-Carcano.

The conclusion is that Dial Ryder's identification of the make of the rifle as a *Mauser* in this earliest report of his memory, even though Oswald's rifle was *not* a Mauser, ironically functions as corroboration that the rifle *was* Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano, because of the nature of the error, the similarity, the analogy of the same mistake with respect to the same rifle on Nov 22.

### **Date of the Irving Sport Shop Oswald rifle repair: November 11, 1963**

The Furniture Mart study established the date that Lee and Marina and their two children were in the Furniture Mart as Monday, Nov 11, 1963, Veterans Day (<https://www.scrollery.com/?p=1450>). Since the Furniture Mart and Irving Sport Shop visits occurred the same day, the Sport Shop visit also was Monday, Nov 11, Veterans Day. The Nov 11 date is in agreement with the two earliest independent date indications from Sport Shop-specific information for the Oswald visit: "between Nov 1 and Nov 14" and "about two weeks" before Nov 25.

### **The use of a pencil on the Oswald job ticket as a possible date indicator**

The Sport Shop Oswald job ticket was written in pencil. Dial Ryder said he normally filled out job tickets using a pen carried in his shirt pocket, but said he remembered a particular day in that time period when he had made a trip to a supplier in Dallas and used a pencil that day. Ryder said the point would not be decisive, because on any particular occasion he would write with whatever was handy and it could be either pen or pencil. But nevertheless Ryder thought it possible the penciled Oswald job ticket could be from that day he remembered using a pencil all day, differing from normal. But, he did not remember what day that was.

“Mr. Ryder said he usually prepares repair tags in pen as he carries a ballpoint pen in his shirt pocket, but does recall that on one occasion on an unrecalled date during the first two weeks of November 1963 he had used a pencil during the greater part of a day. He recalled that on the date he had used a pencil he made a trip to Cullum and Boren Company, Dallas, Texas, and picked up some items of unrecalled nature.” (FBI, 5/18/64, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=1317#relPageId=563>)

The FBI went to Cullum and Boren and from their records found six invoices and receipts signed by Dial Ryder in the period Nov 1-14, of which three signatures were in pen (Nov 7, 8, 12) and three in pencil (Nov 6, 12, 13). All but one were at the retail store of Cullum and Boren in Dallas. One (the pen signature of Nov 12) was a trip to a larger Cullum and Boren warehouse elsewhere in Dallas. It is possible the warehouse trip of Nov 12 which happened on one of the days signed with a pencil at the retail store, could suggest Tue Nov 12 as the day Ryder was remembering. If so, the pencil signatures of Nov 12 and 13 at the Cullum and Boren retail store might continue from use of a pencil a day earlier on Nov 11, which would be in agreement with the Oswald job ticket written in pencil on Nov 11.

### **The scope which came with the Mannlicher-Carcano from Klein’s of Chicago was “cheap ... very poor quality”**

The Mannlicher-Carcano associated with the assassination of President Kennedy was traced to Klein’s of Chicago which shipped it to Lee Oswald’s post office box in Dallas in March 1963 according to Klein’s records. The mail order for the rifle in the name of an alias used by Oswald was authenticated as in Oswald’s handwriting. Oswald ordered a 36” Mannlicher-Carcano with scope, and Klein’s shipped a 40” rifle with a scope installed on it in fulfillment of that order.

Robert Prudhomme, a poster on the Education Forum with firearms expertise, reposted a report written by an Alex \_\_\_\_\_ (last name blocked by Prudhomme) of Martin B. Retting, Inc., the company which bought the inventory of 4x scopes from Ordnance Optics, one of which was installed on the 40” Mannlicher-Carcano shipped to Oswald. Alex explains why that scope might be disliked and removed by a gun owner:

“When Ordnance Optics went out of business, we (Martin B. Retting, Inc.) bought their remaining inventory of 4x scopes. From what I hear...it was a pretty big lot and the scopes **were such poor quality** that Jim Thompson (who was the mgr at the time and responsible for the purchase) never heard the end of it. For a while the scopes were sold on the floor for use with .22 rifles, I think they were under \$10.00 in the late 70’s. I remember buying one as a kid for my 10/22. Their more infamous role came when one of the scopes that we sold Kline’s ended up on a certain Carcano. Here are the facts as I know them to be:

“a) There was only one lot of scopes sold off by Ordnance Optics... but there were two slight variations within it. The one on Oswald’s rifle had a knurled ocular lens bell housing. The remaining scopes have smooth ocular bell housings. Otherwise the markings are the same.

“b) There is only one type of mount, both the 3 hole and 4 hole started out the same. Some mounts were ground to fit 95 Mausers (in order to clear the bolt stop). The Carcano should have had a four hole mount, with no need for grinding...but Kline’s had both styles and simply installed the wrong one [= a 3 hole one].

“c) The best photo of the rifle, for reference of the scope and mount, appears in the November, 1983 issue of Life Magazine. A photographer was allowed access to the Oswald rifle. The resulting photos show much more detail than the Warren commission pics.

“d) **The scopes themselves are horrible ... very poor optically ... very frail crosshairs!** In addition, the crosshairs are not self centering, so depending on the rifle, the sight picture may be a little annoying. The mounts are also prone to bending. If I had to vote, **I go along with the school of thought that argues that Oswald either used the iron sights or simply pointed the rifle by looking over the scope ... Alex**” (date unknown, posted by Prudhomme Oct 20, 2015, <https://educationforum.ipbhost.com/topic/22360-more-on-the-rifle-scope/page/3/>)

Robert Prudhomme commented himself:

“I strongly maintain the scope on C2766 [the TSBD Mannlicher-Carcano] is the weak link in the conspiracy lie. It was basically a **toy scope** designed to be mounted on a pellet gun or .22 calibre rifle and, with its extremely limited field of vision, **meant for shooting at very close ranges**. As admitted by the FBI's SA Robert A. Frazier, it was of **very poor quality** and quite difficult to make adjustments on while sighting it in. (. . .) Not only was this a cheap poorly made scope, the very mechanics of the 6.5mm Carcano rifle required it to be mounted in an awkward and unusual fashion. Even then, further modifications were required to allow the rifle to function properly. Each of these problems by themselves would make **sighting this rifle in to a target very difficult**. **Together, they presented what I believe would be a scope so difficult to sight in, it is difficult to believe Oswald could have accomplished this feat.**”

Prudhomme concluded that Oswald would have found the scope so unsuitable he would have removed it. Prudhomme calls a removal of the scope by Oswald “an obvious conclusion”.

“What I intend to prove is that Oswald, who the records show owned or used no other scoped rifle in civilian life and who had no training with scopes in the USMC [United States Marine Corps], would have had **such difficulty sighting in** this scope, it is probable the scope never was sighted in at all. Knowing this, Oswald would have been forced to use the open sights; an awkward and limiting practice if one has the scope in one's face while doing so. **From this I draw the obvious conclusion: with such deficiencies in the scope, Oswald would have removed the scope and mount** weeks before he brought the rifle to the assassination.”

(<https://educationforum.ipbhost.com/topic/22360-more-on-the-rifle-scope/>)

### **The scope would be taken off by unscrewing, no gunsmith necessary**

The scope was removed by unscrewing (<https://maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=4268#relPageId=21>). Oswald could take the scope off on his own with a screwdriver, without cost out of pocket or need for a gunsmith. Prudhomme (link above):

“The scope [on the Oswald Mannlicher-Carcano] is offset to the left far enough that it is possible for a shooter to see the iron sights. However, I can

tell you from experience shooting a lever action Winchester Model 94 with a side mounted scope **that it is extremely uncomfortable**, with the scope poking you in the face as you try to crowd in close enough to use the iron sights. **If C2766 was my rifle**, and I couldn't get the scope sighted in, **I would take two minutes with a flat bladed screwdriver and remove the scope** by unscrewing the two screws holding the mount to the receiver.”

### **Putting the scope back on**

Putting the base mount and scope back on the Mannlicher-Carcano after it had been taken off, should one choose to do so, also would not normally require a gunsmith since it would be a simple matter of screwing the scope and base mount back on reusing the same screws. However if Oswald damaged or stripped the threads, or sheared or broke a screw in the process of doing so, then it would be necessary to go to a gunsmith. An article on a firearms site, “Repairing Damaged Screw Holes”, explains that damaged screw threads when attaching scopes “is not an uncommon problem in hunting rifles in general. Somewhere along the line, someone who doesn’t know how, attempts to mount a scope on a rifle and damages the holes in the process” (<https://www.gunsamerica.com/digest/repairing-damaged-scope-mount-holes/>).

On Nov 11, 1963 Oswald went into the Sport Shop to have a scope put on that he was unable to do himself, and left with a scope installed and boresighted. Independently of the Oswald job ticket, Dial Ryder told FBI agent Horton on Nov 25, 1963 that he remembered a customer about two weeks earlier, who Ryder associated with a photo of Oswald, who had brought in what Ryder remembered as an “Argentine made” rifle or Mauser, with which the Mannlicher-Carcano of Oswald could easily be confused due to similarity. Ryder said he had installed a scope on that rifle for that customer, at about the same time that Oswald, scope-sized wrapped object in hand, was witnessed at the Furniture Mart asking for a gunsmith and referred to the Sport Mart. Therefore a scope installation on Oswald’s rifle at the Irving Sport Shop has that confirmation from the Sport Shop even without the job ticket.

### **What scope was put on Oswald’s rifle at the Irving Sport Shop?**

It was not a new scope or newly-purchased scope. Dial Ryder said the customer of the Oswald job ticket had brought in his own scope and base mount, since nothing on the job ticket indicates a sale of a scope or base mount from the Sport Shop. That is consistent with the ca. 15-18” x 2-3” scope-sized wrapped object in Oswald’s hand

seen by Mrs. Whitworth when he was in her store before she sent him to the Sport Shop. The FBI searched but found no indication, either from local gun stores or in Oswald's personal belongings, that Oswald bought a separate scope or base mount. And the scope on the C2766 Mannlicher-Carcano on Nov 22 was the same scope on the rifle shipped by Klein's. Therefore the scope installed on the rifle brought in by Oswald to the Irving Sport Shop on Nov 11 was a reinstallation of the original scope, the scope Klein's had put on it originally.

### **Why would Oswald put a disliked scope back on after taking it off?**

The best interpretation is the reinstallation of the scope was not for Oswald's own use but a preparation of the rifle for sale. Oswald did not like the scope; the evidence for that is he had removed it. The evidence Oswald had removed it is he was paying to have a scope put on a rifle known previously to have had a scope, meaning the scope had been removed. The conclusion is Lee was paying hard-earned money to reinstall a scope he disliked. And hard-earned is right: that \$6.00 charge written on the Oswald job ticket at the Sport Shop (the equivalent of \$60 or so today) represents about five hours of labor at Oswald's low-paying \$1.25/hr. job at the Texas School Book Depository, to earn the money to pay that charge.

*Why* would Oswald pay *that much* to have the same scope put back on? The best interpretation is Oswald intended to sell the rifle, a restoration of the rifle to its original state to ready it for a sale or conveyance out of his hands. That is about the only explanation that makes that financial outlay rational. Lee anticipated a sale of the rifle and recovery of the expense in the sale. Marina's presence with him on that trip on Nov 11 may support that as the reason: Marina did not like him having the rifle and accompanied him as he took steps to prepare it for sale.

The Warren Commission reasoned a different way, that an Oswald Irving Sport Shop scope installation would mean Oswald had a *second* rifle since the rifle from Klein's already had a scope. From the Warren Report:

*“Ownership of a second rifle.—*The Commission has investigated a report that, during the first 2 weeks of November 1963, Oswald had a telescopic sight mounted and sighted on a rifle at a sporting goods store in Irving, Texas. The main evidence that Oswald had such work performed for him is an undated repair tag bearing the name ‘Oswald’ from the Irving Sports Shop in Irving, Tex. ... As discussed in chapter IV, the telescopic sight on the C2766 Mannlicher-Carcano rifle was already mounted when shipped to Oswald, and both Ryder and his employer, Charles W. Greener, feel certain that they never

did any work on this rifle. If the repair tag actually represented a transaction involving Lee Harvey Oswald, therefore, it would mean that Oswald owned another rifle ...” (Warren Report, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=946#relPageId=339>)

The only evidence offered that the Oswald rifle at the Irving Sport Shop was not the Mannlicher-Carcano was a citation that Dial Ryder and owner Greener “feel certain” that the Sport Shop had not worked on the rifle that killed President Kennedy. Greener’s feeling is irrelevant since he was on vacation and not in the shop at the time. The relevant issue is the validity of Ryder’s “feeling of certainty” that he did not work on the rifle of the assassination. Ryder’s earliest known words do not reflect such certainty.

“Mr. Ryder stated he has no recollection of mounting a side mount of the type on the gun used to assassinate President Kennedy but pointed out that during the past few weeks he had attached a tremendous number of scopes; therefore, **it is possible he did mount this scope and does not have any recollection** of it at this time.” (FBI, 11/25/63)

That is hardly an expression of certainty that he had not worked on Oswald’s Mannlicher-Carcano, in Ryder’s earliest statement, in which Ryder acknowledged it was possible that he did, because he *really didn’t know* from memory. The Warren Commission in its final report never questioned its premise that Oswald would not have a scope installed on a rifle that had already been shipped with a scope. But the evidence is that is exactly what happened. The Mannlicher-Carcano was shipped with a scope. At some point after receiving it Oswald removed the scope and base mount. On Nov 11 Oswald had the original base mount and scope reinstalled to return the rifle to its original state, in preparation for a sale or conveyance. Oswald had the *original scope reinstalled* on the Mannlicher-Carcano at the Irving Sport Shop on Nov 11, 1963.

### **Cash transaction**

The Warren Commission noted seeming anomalies in the Oswald job ticket: that Dial Ryder did not tell his employer of the job ticket immediately; a lack of verification of the Oswald \$6.00 transaction in the shop’s cash register tapes; a lack of customer contact information on the job ticket; no ticket stub torn off at the bottom.

All of these details are well understood in terms of an explanation the FBI and Warren Commission did not consider: that that Oswald scope installation was a



situation of an employee doing a job on the spot, with the employee putting the cash into his pocket rather than running it through the cash register as was supposed to be done.

That phenomenon, so ubiquitous in retail, explains the anomalies including why Ryder was slow to tell his boss about that job ticket. It explains how Ryder knew from the beginning that the job ticket was from between Nov 1 and Nov 14, because Ryder knew he had done it during Greener's absence. Once Greener learned of the Oswald job ticket, on Thanksgiving Day Nov 28, Greener would have realized what had happened but publicly Greener defended his long-term employee and praised him, rather than have that indiscretion made public.

Dial Ryder alluded to the cash-on-the-side nature of the Oswald scope installation to FBI agent Horton on Nov 25 when he told Horton that no record of the transaction would be found on the store's cash register tapes: "Mr. Ryder stated this is the only record in existence of this transaction". In other words Ryder was telling the FBI the cash had gone into Ryder's pocket, not into the cash register.

### **The Oswald scope installation was done the same day Oswald brought it in**

Oswald's scope installation occurred during what Dial Ryder described as a busy season for the shop, with dozens of scope installations during the two weeks of Nov 1-14 when Ryder took care of the shop in Greener's absence (hunting season opened Nov 15). Reference is made in Greener's Warren Commission testimony to a "rack" in the shop in which rifles were placed after having been left by customers at the front counter to be worked on and picked up on a later day. The impression is that rifles needing the attention of a gunsmith would be dropped off and wait their turn in a queue, similar to how dry cleaners operate.

But that would not have worked for Oswald logistically, given that he lived in Oak Cliff and had no car. Oswald would need the scope installed while he waited. Ryder might or might not have accommodated a customer's request to do a job on the spot in any case, but Ryder's willingness to accommodate Oswald might be enhanced by knowledge that the job would be paid in cash. The only other employee besides owner Greener on vacation was a woman who did office work and may normally have covered the front counter, but Nov 11 was Veterans Day and she would have been off for the holiday. Ryder would be alone in the store working the front counter himself Nov 11, Veterans Day. Dial Ryder was the face Oswald would see when he walked in the door that day.

Oswald would have explained what he wanted and that he needed it done while he waited. That the Oswald job ticket exists is itself evidence the job was done while Oswald waited (because the job would not have been done otherwise). This conclusion—that the scope installation happened while Oswald waited—explains the minimal customer information written on the job ticket, unnecessary since there was no return for pickup.

Investigators also noted the stub of the numbered Oswald job ticket had not been torn off and given to the customer. If the rifle had been left for pickup at a later time, surely, one would think, the stub would have been torn off and given to the customer, something tangible to the customer as evidence their property had been left there.

Greener, defending his employee Dial Ryder, explained that not tearing off and giving a ticket stub was not unusual shop procedure. Greener told the Warren Commission that ticket stubs were not given out all the time (he admitted they were some of the time). Greener said stubs were not required for pickup as long as the shop knew the person doing the pickup was the right person (that would be either by recognition or other identification). Greener said 90 percent of the tags attached to rifles on the rack in his shop at any given time did not have the stub torn off.

Greener's 90 percent statement could give a wrong impression if the rifles on the rack included subcontract allotments not involving individual customer pickups. From everything I know of retail, a new, previously unknown, walk-in customer who leaves a valuable rifle or other item in a store for later pickup will *certainly* be given a stub or something on paper, and contact information of some kind obtained even if only a name and phone number. That is, if the Oswald job ticket *had* involved a return for pickup it would have been among the 10% of cases in which Greener acknowledged the shop did give out ticket stubs. This was not done with the Oswald job ticket because there was no later pickup. Instead Ryder did that scope installation while Oswald waited in the shop, and Marina and the children waited in the car outside. Dial Ryder might have been in the back at his workbench for perhaps 30 minutes or however long it took to do the work needed. Oswald might have been mostly in the front of the shop, perhaps going out to the car periodically to check in with and update Marina and the children.

### **The three drill-and-taps on the Oswald job ticket**

The Oswald job ticket showed charges of \$4.50 for drill and tapping and \$1.50 for boresighting, \$6.00 total. The \$4.50 for drill and tapping was the normal Sport Shop charge for three drill and taps based on \$1.50 each.

But the FBI and Warren Commission gave much attention to the fact that Oswald's rifle, the Mannlicher-Carcano shipped from Klein's, used only two screws, not three, of the three holes in a line of the base mount. Klein's of Chicago which had installed the scope had used only the two outer ones, skipping the one in the middle.

Mr. LIEBELER. Did that tag indicate the nature of the work that was to be done?

Mr. RYDER. Well, actually, all it had on it was drill and tapping; it said drill and tap and a price of \$4.50, I believe it was and boresight, of course, no charge on that [*sic*] so by us charging \$1.50 a hole that's what we normally charge for drillin' and tappin'—would on this particular thing, **would have been three holes drill and tap, where in the picture of the gun [Mannlicher-Carcano] there was only two screws holding the mount of the scope on which is, more or less, made it positive we hadn't mounted it on the gun,** so Mr. Horton, so he took it for granted that I hadn't done the work on it and I am sure I haven't because—[sentence not completed: interrupted by next question]

Mr. LIEBELER. Now I show you two pictures that have been marked Exhibits Nos. 3 and 4 on Mr. Greener's deposition. They are pictures of a rifle [the assassination weapon, the Mannlicher-Carcano] and I ask you if you have ever seen a rifle like that or ever worked on one here in your shop?

Mr. RYDER. I have seen them but never have worked on one of them.

Mr. LIEBELER. Had you seen them before the assassination?

Mr. RYDER. This is what I was talking about the other day. This is not as plain a picture as Mr. Horton had. Evidently that is a reprint, but **there are two screws, one here and one here, where on the tag I have charged for three holes.**

Mr. LIEBELER. You are indicating the screws on Exhibit No. 3, that hold the scope mount to the rifle; is that correct?

Mr. RYDER. Mr. Horton, the FBI man, on the rifle he had it was real plain and you could see these two screws, **and this was a hole, but there wasn't any screws. There was just two screws in the mount.**

Mr. LIEBELER. **The mount had three holes but only two screws?**

Mr. RYDER. That is apparently in the picture you have here, and this is what I was referring to as a cheap mount. This looked to me like even in this picture it was real thin gage metal. I can show you something like that, that we use on a .22 scope, and that is all we use.

Mr. LIEBELER. But in your opinion it is too light a mount?

Mr. RYDER. Yes; it is too easy to get jarred off on a high-powered rifle.

Mr. LIEBELER. That would throw the accuracy of the rifle off, wouldn't it?  
Mr. RYDER. Yes.

In making sense of the difference from what is on the job ticket, a first point is the rifle of Oswald on Nov 11 had to have been the Mannlicher-Carcano from Klein's because that was Oswald's rifle and there was no other. A second point is the job ticket is instructions for what work is to be done and a record of what was quoted at intake. It is not a record of payment, how much was charged or received, or even of what work was actually done. If the actual work done or the amount charged or collected from the customer became different, it would not necessarily be corrected on the job ticket, there is no reason why it would. What the customer was actually charged or paid would be reflected in the cash register record or carbon of a paper store receipt, but in this case there was no cash register record or other store record of payment, because the cash went into the employee's pocket not through the store records.

And the third point is that although it is true only two screws are *used* of the Mannlicher-Carcano (CE 139)'s base mount shipped from Klein's, that particular base mount on Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano has *three* screw *holes*, and it is undoubtedly *that* number which underlies the writeup of the charge on the Oswald job ticket, for *three*.

As described earlier by Alex of Martin B. Retting, Inc., the scope base mounts of the kind used by Klein's were manufactured with four holes, four in a line. If these base mounts were used on a Mauser, it was necessary to cut off part of one end removing one hole leaving three holes in a row. Such modification to three holes was the case in the base mount installed by Klein's on the Mannlicher-Carcano shipped to Oswald.

“There is only one type of mount, both the **3 hole** and 4 hole started out the same. Some mounts were ground to fit 95 Mausers (in order to clear the bolt stop). The Carcano should have had a four hole mount, with no need for grinding ... but Kline's had both styles and simply **installed the wrong one [a 3 hole]**”

Let us now run through and try to reconstruct what may have happened. When Oswald arrived to the Irving Sport Shop on Veterans Day, Nov 11, he would have parked the car (Michael Paine's blue-and-white '55 Olds which Lee and Marina had “borrowed” that morning unknown to Ruth Paine). The broken-down rifle would have been removed from the garage that morning by Lee and taken to the car where it was placed on the back seat or in the trunk. At the Sport Shop the rifle would remain

in the car as Lee walked in the shop with only the scope and base mount with him, just as he did at the Furniture Mart. (The 15-18" x 2-3" unidentified wrapped object seen in Oswald's hand by Mrs. Whitworth, dimensions as remembered by Mrs. Whitworth, corresponds to the size of the scope Oswald wanted reinstalled.)

Dial Ryder will be the person Oswald encountered. Oswald will have gone to the counter, shown Dial Ryder the scope and base mount that he wanted installed, asked if it could be done while he waited and what it would cost. Dial Ryder would look at and examine the scope and the base mount, paying particular attention to three screw holes in a line in the base mount. Ryder, not yet seeing the rifle, based on seeing three holes, will then quote for three drill-and-taps: \$4.50 for the installation (three drill-and-taps) plus \$1.50 boresighting, \$6.00 total.

This point—Dial Ryder seeing three screw holes on the base mount and *pricing for three* (not two)—can be misunderstood, because Klein's of Chicago drilled only two holes in the rifle's receiver, using only two of the three of the base mount, the two at the ends, skipping the hole in the middle. Klein's did that because they could, because the third was judged not needed, because they were cranking them out and to save time. But that was a choice at Klein's, and does not determine what any other gun owner or gunsmith would choose or do with the same base mount. For example, the following link is a photo of a Mannlicher-Carcano which has the same base mount in the original 4-hole version, and the same kind of scope as the Oswald rifle shipped by Klein's, except *this* base mount on *this* Carcano has screws in *all four* of the four holes in a line on its base mount:

[https://farm5.static.flickr.com/4026/4396069441\\_af323b5713\\_b.jpg](https://farm5.static.flickr.com/4026/4396069441_af323b5713_b.jpg).

In this photo *all four* holes have been drilled and tapped and have screws in them—*four out of four*, not the *two out of three* done by Klein's on the *same* kind of rifle and scope shipped to Oswald. Therefore, just as in this case of four out of four holes in that rifle's receiver drilled and tapped, of the previous link, it is reasonable that Ryder, looking at the base mount Oswald brought in, and seeing three holes, would quote for drill-and-tapping three.

This will account for Ryder quoting a price to Oswald for *three* drill-and-taps (before Ryder sees the rifle), based on looking at the base mount Oswald brought in which had three screw holes. Oswald wants to know the price before he brings in the rifle, and Ryder tells the price based on drill-and-taps for three holes: \$4.50 plus \$1.50 for boresighting, \$6.00 total. Ryder says he is willing to do the job right then if Oswald has the money to pay for it and would like to bring the rifle in now. That is good news to Oswald. At the last moment before Oswald turns to go get the rifle Ryder has

grabbed a blank job ticket and pencil and asks the customer's name ("And your name, sir?"). Ryder writes the last name of the customer's answer, "Oswald", on the job ticket, likely from prior programming on the importance of *always* getting a name on the job ticket. However nothing more than a last name was needed. There is no need for a full name or phone number because this job was going to be done while the customer waited.

As Oswald goes out the door to get the rifle Ryder continues writing up the job ticket for the intake, writing the details of what he had quoted while fresh in memory before forgetting.

The careful reader will note that there has been an assumption up to this point, a necessary assumption in order to make sense of the job ticket, and that is: in the way Oswald made the request, Ryder mistakenly believed that he would be installing the scope and base mount a first time on the rifle. (As in response to a question: "How much would you charge to put this scope on? I have the rifle, broken down, out in the car." "What kind of rifle is it?" "An old Italian rifle, Carcano, similar to a Mauser." "\$4.50 plus \$1.50, total \$6.00.") Ryder did not see the rifle when he quoted that price. Installing scopes on rifles for the first time may have been the majority of Ryder's scope installations. Ryder might have known the foreign military-issue Mausers (Carcanos too) were not manufactured with predrilled holes for a scope.

That assumption of Ryder, of a new installation at the time he quoted the price to Oswald, will account for the job ticket writeup for three drill-and-taps corresponding to three holes in the base mount. Ryder wrote that up on the job ticket as Oswald went out to the car, in the belief that is what he, Ryder, would be doing to install the scope.

Oswald will have returned with the rifle, handed it over the counter and Ryder accepts it. However what Oswald hands Ryder is not an intact rifle. It is the rifle in its broken-down form inside some means of conveying it, whether brought in the blanket in which it was stored in Ruth Paine's garage or some other means of carrying it if the blanket was left in the garage. Ryder still does not see the rifle, even after having it handed to him. It has to be taken out and assembled for Ryder to see it.

Rather than assemble it at the counter, Ryder would take the package and the job ticket to his workbench in the back to assemble there. At that point he would discover to his surprise the two drilled holes in the receiver. He might also immediately see why Oswald had not been able to install the scope himself, such as a stuck or sheared screw in one of the holes.

Oswald's objective was to have the scope installed. That does not change. What changes is what must be done to accomplish that. No longer is it the job Ryder assumed, a straightforward three brand-new virgin drill-and-taps and install the scope. The job now is diagnosis and repair of a problem in the existing holes, the two screw holes drilled by Klein's, necessary to install the scope.

We can imagine Ryder returning to the front to Oswald and saying something like, "I see your rifle looks like it has had a scope on it in the past". Oswald: "Yeah, that's the scope I gave you, I want it put back on." Ryder would tell Oswald what the problem was, what he was going to do, any change in the charge, and will have received Oswald's OK. Ryder then would finish assembling the rifle, make the repair and install and boresight the scope.

The job ticket was obsolete at that point. Ryder did not drill-and-tap three new holes. He repaired some form of damage in the two existing holes.

### **The nature of the repair needed to reinstall Oswald's scope**

Concerning why Oswald was unable to screw back on the base mount himself, there are two main possibilities: stripped screw threads, or a screw sheared or its head broken off or the head stripped stuck in one of the holes. In the first case (stripped threads) the gunsmith would drill a slightly larger size hole over the existing one, tap for the new larger size, and install the larger screw size, i.e. drill-and-tap. In the second case no drilling of a larger hole size or tapping for a larger size of screw would be needed. The damaged screw or shaft would normally be extracted and the existing hole and threads cleaned up, possibly retapped to the existing size of hole and screw, but not a new larger hole drilled.

It happens there is external information concerning the Klein's Oswald Mannlicher-Carcano, CE 139, which *excludes* that any drill-and-tapping was done on the receiver of that rifle *after* it was shipped from Klein's. This is learned from Robert Frazier of the FBI Laboratory in Washington, D.C. in testimony to the Warren Commission.

Robert Frazier testified that the FBI asked Klein's of Chicago to install a scope on another Mannlicher-Carcano rifle the way they always did and send the rifle to them. When the second rifle arrived from Klein's the FBI compared the two and found in the comparison rifle the same 3-hole base mount used as on CE 139; the same use of only the two outermost holes and skipping of the middle hole of that base mount; and—importantly—the same sizes of holes, screws, and threads as CE 139. The significance of this is it means CE 139, the rifle of Oswald, did not have any drill-and-

tapping done (drilling a larger size of hole over an existing one) after CE 139 left Klein's.

Mr. EISENBERG - Have you removed the mount [from CE 139]?

Mr. FRAZIER - Yes, I have.

Mr. EISENBERG - How many holes did you find drilled into the receiver?

Mr. FRAZIER - There are two holes in the receiver.

Mr. EISENBERG - Could you form an opinion as to whether these were original holes or whether new holes—new and larger holes had been formed over the original holes?

Mr. FRAZIER - Normally, the receiver would have no holes at all, and would have to be drilled and tapped for the screws. In the sight itself there normally are three holes, two of which have been enlarged to accommodate the two mounting screws presently holding the mount to the rifle.

Mr. EISENBERG - Do you think, based on your experience with types of screws used in mounts, that these were the original screws and the original holes for the screws?

Mr. FRAZIER - I could not say—I could not answer that specifically.

However, they appear to be the same type of screw as is present on the rest of the mount—although they are somewhat larger in size than the remaining hole which is present in the lower portion of the mount.

Mr. EISENBERG - Now, I now hand you a rifle which is marked C-250. Are you familiar with this rifle?

Mr. FRAZIER - Yes, sir.

Mr. EISENBERG - Can you describe it briefly?

Mr. FRAZIER - It is an identical rifle physically to the rifle Commission's Exhibit 139, in that it is the same caliber, 6.5 mm. Mannlicher-Carcano Italian Military rifle Model 91/38.

Mr. EISENBERG - Did you attempt to determine by use of this rifle whether the scope was mounted on Exhibit 139 by the firm which is thought to have sold Exhibit 139?

Mr. FRAZIER - Would you repeat that, please?

Mr. EISENBERG - Yes. Did you make an attempt to determine, by use of this C-250, whether the firm which had sold Exhibit 139 had mounted the scope on Exhibit 139?

Mr. FRAZIER - Yes, sir.

Mr. EISENBERG - Can you describe how you made that attempt?

Mr. FRAZIER - We contacted the firm, Klein's Sporting Goods in Chicago, and asked them concerning this matter to provide us with a similar rifle



mounted in the way in which they normally mount scopes of this type on these rifles, and forward the rifle to us for examination. In this connection, we did inform them that the scope should be in approximately this position on the frame of the weapon.

Mr. EISENBERG - Pardon me, Mr. Frazier. When you say "this position," so that the record is clear could you--

Mr. FRAZIER - Oh, yes; in the position in which it now is, approximately three-eighths of an inch to the rear of the receiver ring.

Mr. EISENBERG - On the—

Mr. FRAZIER - On the C-250 rifle. When we received the rifle C-250, we examined the mount and found that two of the holes had been enlarged, and that screws had been placed through them and threaded into the receiver of the C-250 rifle. The third hole in the mount had not been used. We also found that an identical scope to the one on the Commission's rifle 139 was present on the C-250 rifle.

Mr. EISENBERG - **Were the screws used in mounting the C-250 rifle—in mounting the scope on the C-250 rifle—type of screws as those used in mounting the scope on Exhibit 139?**

Mr. FRAZIER - **Yes, sir.**

Mr. EISENBERG - **And the holes were the same dimensions?**

Mr. FRAZIER - **Yes, they are. And the threads in the holes are the same.**

There could have been *tapping* done at the Irving Sport Shop but there was no *drill-and-tapping* done on the receiver of the rifle, because no *drill-and-tapping* (of a larger size hole) was done on the receiver of Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano by anyone after Klein's shipped that rifle. Therefore the problem which caused Oswald to seek the services of a gunsmith to reinstall the scope will have been something not requiring drill-and-tapping as its solution, such as a sheared screw or broken-off or stripped screw head stuck in one of the holes (<https://www.wikihow.com/Remove-a-Broken-Screw>; <https://rifleshooter.com/2019/12/remington-700-sheared-screw-removal/>; <https://www.thefirearmsforum.com/threads/screw-broke-on-scope-base.69646/>). The gunsmith, Ryder, would extract the screw or shank of a headless screw (by methods described in the links). Following that Ryder would clean the threads of the existing holes and ensure they were working in good order, then have installed the scope and boresighted.

The difference in what was actually done in Oswald's scope installation from what was on the job ticket is now explained. Dial Ryder wrote up the job ticket at intake, in the belief that he would be doing three virgin drill-and-taps to install a scope on a rifle

that had no previous scope. He wrote the job ticket before he saw the rifle. Once he saw the rifle, the three drill-and-taps was obsolete. Instead Ryder did the repair that was needed which did not involve drill-and-tapping. The original job ticket was not updated because there was no need to do so; it never was meant as a record of work done. The only reason the job ticket would be kept at all by Dial Ryder would be either oversight that it had not been thrown away, or it was intentionally kept with others for a certain period in case a customer returned later with a complaint or question—on analogy to a writer discarding rough draft sheets slated for disposal but delaying the disposal until the writing project is over in case there was a change of mind and a desire to recall something in one of the earlier drafts. Oswald will have paid in cash, the cash went into Ryder's pocket, and nothing went into store records telling what was done or what was paid.

What then does the Oswald job ticket (the price quoted and job instructions at intake) tell us if it does not document work actually done or how much was actually charged? It is evidence that Oswald was in the Sport Shop. And it is evidence that the reason Oswald was at the Sport Shop was for a scope installation. And based on the information brought out in the testimony of Robert Frazier, it is evidence the job ticket was written by Dial Ryder after he had seen the base mount but before he had seen the receiver of the rifle.

### **No store record of payment**

At the point Ryder received cash payment from Oswald it is unclear whether there would have been a written receipt but there could have been, just not anything that went into store records. Ryder could have asked Oswald if he would like a receipt and then, if the answer was affirmative, handwritten one perhaps from a pad he might have nearby for that purpose, but if so Ryder would do so without entering a copy into store records. On the other hand Oswald, satisfied with scoped rifle in hand, might have said a receipt would not be necessary, or the matter might not have come up.

Owner Greener, who had been asked by the FBI to try to find the Oswald transaction on his cash register tapes, told the Warren Commission there were so many \$6.00 cash register charges in the Nov 1-14 period that he gave up even trying to find the item corresponding to the Oswald job ticket. That was Greener's explanation for not being able to find or identify that transaction on the cash register tapes. Greener knew. Greener knew it was as Ryder originally told FBI agent Horton: there was no cash register record of that transaction to be found, because that one never went through the cash register. But Greener like a wise boss defended Ryder and made him

look good publicly, perhaps because in other respects Ryder was the outstanding long-time productive employee Greener said he was.

Therefore the three screw holes in the base mount on Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano account for the writeup of the job ticket reflecting the shop price for three drill-and-taps. The job ticket reflecting the price for drill-and-taps which were not done does not prove Ryder worked on a different rifle for Oswald (there was no different rifle of Oswald), or that it was a different Oswald (it was no other Oswald), or that neither Oswald nor Oswald's rifle at the Sport Shop existed (the Warren Commission's wrong conclusion).

### **Recapitulation of how the job ticket worked**

The job ticket writeup at the front counter was the necessary information for the technician in the back to do the job and then ring up the sale and final paperwork when the job was completed.

The tag would have a customer's name on it and be physically attached to the rifle, the instructions to the technician of what was to be done, like a waitress's handwritten order for a customer's breakfast handed back to the cook. In this particular case, on Nov 11, with Ryder alone in the shop that day, it was as if the cook had gone out and taken the customer's order and then went back to the kitchen to prepare the meal based on the written order written up by the cook.

After the customer, Oswald, left the shop with the scoped rifle, Dial Ryder will have the obsolete and unneeded job ticket. Job tickets for completed work might usually have been tossed into a box somewhere in the shop, for later rechecking if it were ever necessary. In a cash-on-the-side situation such as this one in which the cash went into Ryder's pocket and not into the cash register, Ryder probably would not toss that job ticket into whatever "box" was for completed job tickets. But Ryder might not destroy such "cash" job tickets immediately either, for reference if a customer came back with a question or complaint. Ryder did not destroy the Oswald job ticket, and it is reasonable Ryder would preserve such job tickets for a period of time although apart from store records.

After the assassination on Nov 22, that Friday afternoon, both Ryder and Greener refer to their having discussed in the shop as the news developed, with particular interest on Greener's part on whether the accused assassin, Oswald, might have been a customer in his shop. Greener took particular interest in photos and descriptions of the rifle on the news and satisfied himself that he did not remember that rifle in his

shop, which he believed he would remember if it had come through the shop when he was there. But of course there was that two-week vacation Nov 1-14 when he was gone. Greener could not know if it was then. Ryder for his part might be agreeable in discussion with his boss, but keeping his own counsel, noncommittal.

Whether at the shop that day or in his car that evening or the next day at the shop after a seminar he attended on Saturday, Ryder might check and review his cash job tickets from the Nov 1-14 period, however many there were, unknown to Greener. Ryder would locate or find one of them in his unmistakable handwriting plainly reading “Oswald”, perhaps accompanied by a gasp and an “oh, shit!” under his breath, a racing of the heart, as he thought hard trying to remember that job if he could. That evening Ryder might have told his wife under heavy promise of secrecy as he wondered what to do. His wife, an unknown factor in this equation (there is no record she was interviewed by the FBI), depending on temperament might be distraught urging him to call Greener and notify authorities. Ryder might stall his wife, promising he would talk to Greener. Ryder’s wife might not realize (unless Dial told her at that point) that there was an added complication in that that transaction had not been run through the shop’s cash register, which would be an awkward conversation with Greener if and when he told Greener, a conversation Ryder may have been in no rush to have.

On Monday morning Nov 25 Ryder’s stalling and dilemma of if he should tell and what to do was solved for him by the unexpected appearance of the FBI knocking on his front door (Ryder having no idea how that happened—though FBI agent Horton assured him it was just routine checking of gun shops in the area). No doubt scared to death, aware of the “hot potato” of his up-to-now undisclosed Oswald job ticket, Ryder whether because he believed it was the right thing to do or because he was scared to death not to do so (did the FBI know?), told the truth to FBI agent Horton, told agent Horton of the Oswald job ticket, showed the ticket to Horton at the shop, told Horton there were no other store records of it, told Horton what he knew.

### **Greener and Ryder distancing from the JFK assassination rifle**

The national publicity surrounding the Oswald job ticket at the Irving Sport Shop threatened the reputation and livelihood of Greener’s business. The reactions of Greener and Dial Ryder as the story developed are therefore hardly neutral or disinterested.

Greener and Ryder’s post-Thanksgiving 1963 position reflected in their Warren Commission testimony was that the customer named “Oswald” of Ryder’s job ticket

was either a different Oswald or if it was Lee Oswald it was a second rifle of Oswald other than the one in the news. Either way, whether or not it was Oswald, said Greener and Ryder, the rifle had not been *that* rifle, the rifle that killed the president.

But owner Greener could have had no knowledge of either the customer or the rifle since he was not there. Greener is irrelevant. It comes down to Ryder, and a closer look at the change in Ryder's story from before Nov 28 to after Nov 28 when Greener entered the picture, and Greener and Ryder coordinated on a denial by Ryder told on national news that evening by CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite.

Backed up by discussion and counsel from business owner and his mentor Greener, Dial Ryder set forth various reasons of varying degrees of persuasiveness why, he claimed, he and Greener agreed that the rifle he had worked on had not been the rifle used to assassinate the president. For example, Ryder said the scope was cheap and he doubted he would have worked on such a cheap scope without remembering it. If he had seen such a cheap scope he would remember having tried to sell the customer a better scope. He said he remembered nothing about a scope offset to the left as was the case with the Mannlicher-Carcano, and cited that lack of memory as evidence of what the rifle could not have been, etc. and etc. All of these arguments can be regarded as *ex post facto* rationalizations on the part of Ryder, reasons put forth to others and perhaps to self for rejecting that the scope he had installed of his Oswald job ticket had been used to kill the president. How troubling that thought may have been. There was every motive for Ryder, reinforced by his mentor and shop owner Greener's wish, to find and cite reasons why "the" rifle, *that* rifle, had *not* been the one in their shop, even though there was that job ticket, in Ryder's handwriting, with Oswald's name on it. Some excerpts of Warren Commission testimony.

Mr. LIEBELER. The Italian rifle. **Do you have any recollection of the kind of rifle that this Oswald tag referred to?**

Mr. RYDER. **No, sir; I don't.**

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you remember telling the Secret Service agent that you were certain after viewing photographs of Oswald that you had never done any work for him; in fact had never seen him?

Mr. RYDER. Not actually in that tone; like I say, like I told all of them that interviewed me, even the reporter [*the reporter Ryder said he never talked to?*] that his features are very common, I say, for the working class in the Dallas and Fort Worth area and he could have been in the shop, sport shop, I might ought to say, and be easily mistaken for another person or another person similar to his features could have been in, but **I couldn't say specific** if he had been in

the shop **or not**, I mean, that's something I won't draw a conclusion on because like I say his features, face and all is common with the working class here and he could easily be mistaken one way or the other either for him or for another person.

Mr. LIEBELER. ... I'm troubled to some extent because I have before me a report of the agent from the Secret Service and a report from the agent of the FBI. **One report says you are quite sure you have seen and talked to Oswald and the other one says you are quite sure you have not seen him. I am puzzled by those statements.**

Mr. RYDER. Like I continue to say all the way through on their investigation, both that Secret Service man and from the FBI that **he could have been in the shop; I could have talked to him** but to say I had definitely, I couldn't say I have really talked to him.

Mr. RYDER. ... **we have drawn a conclusion**, of course, that is, **I and the boys and people concerned at the sport shop there that it was either this Oswald with another gun or another Oswald with another gun. We know definitely that it was another gun. We know that for sure.**

*Comment:* The sole issue is Ryder, the only one involved with the rifle of the Oswald job ticket. Ryder tells it as if it is a community consensus or committee decision concerning what occurred of which he was the sole witness. His “*we know definitely ... we know that for sure*” is expressed as a result of a group discussion. It is not Dial Ryder saying *I know* definitely ... *I know* for sure, *no matter* what anybody else may say. (That could still be mistaken, but it would be Dial Ryder owning it fully as his personal knowledge, unassisted; he is not doing that here.) It should not be necessary to have a group assist concerning firsthand knowledge. When Ryder does speak of his personal memory and firsthand knowledge, *time after time after time* Ryder repeats that he *does not know*, that he *cannot say for sure* one way or the other. Both Greener and the Warren Commission, not because they directly wish Ryder to be dishonest (or would admit it if they did), but for motivated reasons, want to convert Ryder’s *actual uncertainty* into *certainty in the negative* on the question of whether Ryder had worked on Oswald’s Mannlicher-Carcano, the rifle that killed the president, *that* rifle.

And the expression of consensus certainty (“we know definitely that it was another gun”) is counterindicated by the evidence that it was Oswald, and therefore the rifle was Oswald’s rifle, *that* rifle.

Mr. LIEBELER. So you aren't able to say whether this man was in the shop?  
 Mr. RYDER. He may have or may not have been. I couldn't say for sure.

Ryder continually says he *cannot say for sure* (he *cannot say the negative for sure*, that it was not Oswald).

Mr. RYDER. (...) **Of course, from the picture [of the rifle] I told him as far as I could remember I told him I hadn't mounted that scope**, you know. Mr. LIEBELER. You based that statement that you had not mounted the scope on your recollection that you had not worked on that particular kind of rifle, is that correct?

Mr. RYDER. Right, **on this Italian rifle I never worked on them. I seen them but as far as doing any physical work, I haven't done none even to this date, I haven't worked on any of them.**

Mr. LIEBELER. You are absolutely sure about that?

Mr. RYDER. **I am positive on that, very positive.**

*Comment:* Ryder goes from a qualified statement that “*as far as I could remember*” he had not installed a scope on a Mannlicher-Carcano, a claim of *not remembering* working on a Mannlicher-Carcano, to a statement of certainty (“very positive”) that he *did not*.

There is a big leap between not remembering or knowing for sure, and claiming certainty that a rifle of a customer named Oswald was *not* the rifle of Oswald. The Warren Commission wanted badly to hear certainty of the negative as sworn testimony from Ryder, as much as told Ryder so directly, and at times obtained it. But if Dial Ryder *really was* certain in the negative why does he speak *most of the time* in the language of “I *really can't say* for sure”? That language which in Ryder's testimony is *most of the time* suggests “I really can't say for sure” was closer to the actual truth for Ryder, and his “very positive” was overstatement, induced and wanted from those around him.

In the following exchange Warren Commission counsel Liebel, in his position of authority, *tells* witness Dial Ryder that “Lee Oswald *could not* have had any scope mounted on the rifle that he used to assassinate the President in your shop”.

Mr. LIEBELER. **Now, it is not the ordinary practice, of course, for the Commission to advise witnesses what kind of an investigation it has made in connection with this thing, at least, not until the report comes out, but I think you ought to know that** as a result of the existence of this gun ticket and the story that you told the FBI and the Commission, the FBI has

attempted to find every Oswald in the whole Dallas and Fort Worth area and the surrounding area and it has found many of them and it has questioned all of them, some of whom have moved out of Dallas and Fort Worth, as to whether or not they ever had any work done in that gunshop, and you should know that none of them ever did, **and you should also know, and I think you probably do by now, that Lee Oswald could not have had any scope mounted on the rifle that he used to assassinate the President in your shop**, and in fact, I don't think you claim you did mount that particular scope? Mr. RYDER. That's right. **We have claimed that it wasn't that one**. On the Monday after, well, it was the Monday of the funeral of President Kennedy, that Mr. Horton came out and I thought at that time I had it cleared with him that I hadn't mounted the scope on the gun he used to assassinate the President.

Mr. LIEBELER. That you had not?

Mr. RYDER. That we had not.

Mr. LIEBELER. And you weren't able to remember Lee Harvey Oswald's face as being the face of the man who had previously been in that shop: isn't that right?

Mr. RYDER. That's right.

Mr. LIEBELER. And you **couldn't associate any specific gun or any specific man** with that particular work ticket; isn't that right?

Mr. RYDER. Right.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you have any possible suggestions as to where that work ticket could have come from if it appears, and it certainly does appear that no other Oswald came in there and there is no evidence of any sort to indicate that Lee Harvey Oswald ever had any other rifle than the one he used to assassinate the President, and he never brought that one in the sports shop?

Mr. RYDER. **All I know is that we had the ticket laying on the workbench back there and I had written it up and completed the work on it and the gun had been picked up. Now, as to whether it was Lee Oswald, I couldn't positively identify him...**

Mr. LIEBELER. But you are **not able to associate that particular ticket with any particular gun in your own mind?**

Mr. RYDER. That's right.

And for a finale, with vague echoes of that final scene in George Orwell's novel *1984* in which Winston Smith is asked how many fingers he sees:



Mr. LIEBELER. **Would you be surprised if the Commission concluded, after this investigation that the FBI conducted and the questioning that we have done, that there was never any man in there by the name of Oswald with any gun at all?**

Mr. RYDER. Yeah—like I said—all I've got is that ticket with his name on it and the work being done.

Mr. LIEBELER. Well, at this point I think we might as well conclude the deposition.

Yet the facts indicate the truth was the opposite. Ryder had worked on Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano. The Warren Commission got it wrong on this one.

### **Oswald's scope reinstallation as intent to sell or convey the rifle, and the role of Marina**

As has been noted, it is difficult to interpret Oswald's scope reinstallation as for his own use, given that he disliked the scope. The evidence that he disliked it is he had removed it. The evidence he had removed it is he was having it put back on. But the scope reinstallation makes sense as a preparation of the rifle for sale, restoring the rifle to the condition he had received it, scope reinstalled.

As for why Oswald would decide to sell or convey the rifle at that particular time, a reason which would account for the facts is that Marina was uncomfortable with Lee having the rifle in Ruth Paine's garage without Ruth's knowledge. Marina will have become aware of strong anti-gun views held and at times expressed by Ruth Paine. This put Marina in the awkward position of knowing but not telling Ruth of the rifle. It is possible Marina, not happy with Lee having the rifle but Lee did not listen to her, pressed Lee to remove the rifle from Ruth Paine's premises citing Ruth's scruples, and their upcoming move.

Marina's views on her husband's rifle, from Marina's testimony in 1977 and 1978 to the House Select Committee on Assassinations:

“[T]he rifle and the gun, first of all I was always against it” (p. 336)

“*Q. Did you ask him though about the gun and the rifle and tell him that you didn't like guns? A. He knew that. Q. What was his reaction? A. That it was none of my business*” (p. 382)

“I was very upset that he spent money on such an unnecessary, stupid thing when we barely could survive on what he was making” (p. 385)

*“Q. Did you ever hold the rifle that Lee had when he was in Dallas? Did you ever physically hold it to look at it or examine it? A. I hope not. Q. Do you remember any time that you did it? A. No.”* (p. 388)

[https://www.aarclibrary.org/publib/jfk/hasca/reportvols/vol12/pdf/HSCA\\_Vol12\\_MarinaOswald.pdf](https://www.aarclibrary.org/publib/jfk/hasca/reportvols/vol12/pdf/HSCA_Vol12_MarinaOswald.pdf)

A sale of the rifle he was not using would be the most practical means for Oswald to resolve the issue and remove a source of marital tension. But to be able to sell the rifle Lee needed to have damage in one of the screw holes in the receiver repaired and the scope put back on by a gunsmith, beyond Lee’s ability to do. Left to himself Lee might have postponed getting his rifle fixed or disposed of indefinitely. But on Nov 11 Marina helped Lee get it done, went with him with their two children, likely to give directions to Lee to where she had noticed the gunsmith sign at the Furniture Mart on some occasion when she was with Ruth Paine driving around Irving.

In the police searches of Oswald’s belongings after his arrest on Nov 22, 1963, no ammunition was found. No cleaning equipment for a rifle was found. That is not consistent with a gun owner using or practicing with a gun. Oswald was not using the rifle at this point, after his return to Dallas on Oct 3. He was not taking the rifle out for target practice. He was doing nothing with it. The rifle was in a blanket in Ruth Paine’s garage, known to Marina who withheld that knowledge from Ruth but who was not happy with Lee having the rifle for her own reasons. All of these factors are consistent with and support a conclusion that on Mon Nov 11, eleven days before the assassination, Oswald, very possibly with the support of and urging of Marina, went to a gunsmith to have the scope reinstalled, not for his own use, but to ready the rifle for a sale or disposition out of his hands. Did Marina go in the car that day to give Lee street directions?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; I can remember—I’m sure, I never forget and the baby is just 2 weeks. I would like to know under what circumstances these two ladies saw me at that particular time?

Mr. McKENZIE. And furthermore, where the store is located?

Mr. LIEBELER. Let the record show that Mrs. Whitworth and Mrs. Hunter have come into the room [reporter’s note: 11:10 a.m.], and let the record further show that they have both previously testified that sometime in early November 1963, they saw Marina and the two children and Lee Oswald in a furniture store located on East Irving Boulevard in Irving, Tex.

Mrs. OSWALD. **I don't remember the name of the street.**

Mr. LIEBELER. Now, I will ask Mrs. Whitworth, who was the operator of that store, the address of the store and to describe the store generally for Marina and its name.

Mrs. WHITWORTH. The store was known as the Furniture Mart. The name was clearly on it, and it was located at 149 East Irving Boulevard. That's at the corner of Jefferson and Irving Boulevard on the north side of the street and in the same block with the bank. In fact, the back of it was up to the Bank & Trust there and it looked like at one time it might have been a service station and we had changed it into a furniture store, and they would have seen more used furniture in it, because we had new and used furniture. This clear enough?

Mrs. OSWALD. **I don't remember the names of the streets—that wouldn't be material to me. I wouldn't remember it.**

*Comment:* This is the second time Marina volunteers that she does not remember the names of streets, even though that is not a question that has been put to her. The likely reason she accompanied Lee in the car going to the Furniture Mart on Nov 11, 1963 was because Lee did not know where the Furniture Mart was but Marina did—Marina will have noticed the gunsmith sign sometime while in Ruth Paine's car driving that thoroughfare in Irving, whereas Lee will not have had occasion to have been in a car driving on East Irving Boulevard in Irving to have noticed that sign.

(It is remotely conceivable Lee could have seen it when Ruth Paine drove him to Dallas once or twice depending on the route or errands Ruth took on the way to Dallas, but that would not be the most natural route to Dallas nor was it on the route Buell Wesley Frazier told of his regular commute to Dallas [east then north on O'Conner to the Stemmons Freeway and east into Dallas]. Any natural driving to Dallas using the Stemmons Freeway from the location of Ruth Paine's or Buell Wesley Frazier's houses would involve briefly going east then turning north to the Stemmons Freeway, before one would be far enough east in Irving to be in the area of the Furniture Mart. In all likelihood Lee Oswald never was in a car which passed by the Furniture Mart at any time. On the other hand, Marina frequently accompanied Ruth in driving errands around Irving during the two months she lived there.)

That is, the only reason Lee would know of the gunsmith sign's existence would be because Marina told him, then offered to go with him and show him how to get there. Marina's above claim, in her Warren Commission testimony in the presence of the Furniture Mart ladies who plainly did see Marina in the store, was total denial: it never happened, says Marina, and Marina keeps volunteering she does not remember the

names of streets. But not knowing the names of streets is beside the point. Marina would know where to show Lee to drive to the Furniture Mart, to direct him while in the car, from visual memory. Marina would be able to remember being at the Furniture Mart without knowing the name of the street. Marina's interjections of the irrelevancy that she does not remember street names may be "protesting too much".

Mrs. WHITWORTH. That would be the main thoroughfare in Irving.

Mr. GREGORY. That's the street across from the bank?

Mrs. WHITWORTH. No; it would be in the same block with the Irving Bank & Trust.

Mrs. OSWALD. The only thing I am interested in is whether Mrs. Whitworth actually knows me or not, whether this lady actually saw me or knows me or not. That's what I am interested in.

*Comment:* Marina expresses impatience with Mrs. Whitworth being questioned concerning the Furniture Mart's location.

Mr. McKENZIE. Marina, do you remember a blue and white car?\*

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know—what kind of car did Mrs. Paine have?\*

(\* The only time in the entirety of FBI and Warren Commission documents that Marina is asked if she remembers the blue-and-white '55 Olds belonging to Michael Paine, parked at Ruth Paine's house, the car of the trip to the Furniture Mart and Sport Shop. This sole instance in known recorded history of Marina asked this question was however not the doing of the FBI or Warren Commission. Mr. McKenzie was Marina Oswald's personal attorney who accompanied Marina to the questioning of Marina, Mrs. Whitworth, and Mrs. Hunter by the Warren Commission on July 24, 1964.)

(\*\* The only answer given by Marina in known recorded history to the question of if she remembered Michael Paine's blue-and-white car. A non-answer and deflection to a different car.)

Mr. LIEBELER. You are now standing directly in front of the store at 149 East Irving Boulevard, aren't you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. And you are sure you have never been here before?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; I have never been here before.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you have anything to add, Mr. McKenzie?

Mr. McKENZIE. No.

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know if I were inside this store, but I don't recall it now.

Mr. LIEBELER. You don't recognize this store as a place you have ever been before?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

*Comment:* That's Marina's story and she has stuck to it to the present day. But her denial is not true. Although Marina had nothing to do with the assassination of President Kennedy, her role in accompanying Lee to get the scope repaired on the rifle used in the assassination, done in secrecy from Ruth Paine and involving an otherwise extraordinary, out-of-character borrowing by Lee and Marina of a car of Michael Paine parked at Ruth's house without permission, would place her closer to the assassination and the rifle than she wished, perhaps compromising her sympathetic treatment by the American public. That Marina prevaricated in the days following the assassination, on specific matters of fact, both in her own interests and in defense of Lee, is not in the slightest dispute. Marina corrected many, perhaps most, of her early prevarications in the succeeding days and weeks and months under questioning from the Secret Service, FBI, and Warren Commission. But she did not correct this one.

I add a final personal comment, unverified and perhaps unverifiable but it is my belief: the very ongoing lack of correction of this early prevarication concerning the Furniture Mart and Sport Shop trip, of Nov 11, 1963, is the best explanation for why Marina to the present day has declined, for no reason otherwise sensible, to reconnect with Ruth Paine, who cared for her, who did nothing against her, but from whom Marina cut off with no explanation. I believe it may go to this ongoing prevarication, this still-unconfessed truth concerning the Nov 11 trip to the Furniture Mart and Sport Shop which Marina appears intent on taking to her grave.

### **Source of the anonymous phone calls on Nov 24, 1963 telling that Oswald had a rifle sighted at the Irving Sport Shop**

The source of the anonymous phone calls on Sun Nov 24 to a TV news station and then to the FBI, claiming that on Thu Nov 21, the day before the assassination, Oswald had had a rifle sighted at the Irving Sport Shop, remain unknown to the present day.

On the one hand the story was accurate that Oswald had a rifle sighted at that shop. On the other hand details seem garbled: the date Oswald was there is wrong; the caller does not seem to know about the scope installation. Unless one adds a further

layer of complexity by postulating intentional error introduced into that anonymous tip to add realism, the simplest explanation accounting for both what the tipster had right and mistaken is that the caller learned the information from hearsay, one or two or three persons removed from an original source of the information who was not the anonymous tipster.

Who then was the original source? Well, in the end that information is going to trace back originally to either Marina, Lee, or Dial Ryder, one of those three—there are no other possibilities that do not go back to one of those three, which is not to say any one of those three intended it to be leaked to the press and FBI the way it was, as surely was not the intent of the original source. Of the three, Marina can probably immediately be ruled out as one who might have talked (she had little interest in guns and a track record of disciplined not talking unless she decided to do so; she continues to deny she was at the Furniture Mart or Sport Shop to the present day, is how tight-lipped Marina has been about it). That leaves either Dial Ryder or Oswald himself as the only two realistic candidates for original source of the hearsay reflected in the anonymous calls of Nov 24.

The Warren Commission baselessly suspected Dial Ryder of having been the anonymous tipster but that is unlikely in the extreme. There is no evidence or reason Ryder would do so; it makes zero sense that he would do so. Ryder's behavior indicates the opposite, that he was not seeking publicity, had been thrown into the national spotlight through no doing of his own and not of his wish. There is no known track record of Dial Ryder fabricating a story like that. The best analysis therefore is either Oswald or Ryder was the original source of information of the hearsay which then at one or two steps removed was phoned on Nov 24 to the press and FBI anonymously not of the original source's doing.

Although the identities of both the original source and the anonymous tipster (these two identification issues being distinct) may remain forever unknown, two scenarios can be suggested as possibilities.

- *Possibility #1:* Dial Ryder may have told his wife of the job ticket Sat Nov 23 in strict confidence. His wife then told someone in confidence who told someone ... who leaked it, getting the information out but anonymously because it was a breach of confidence in a trusted relationship. (There is no record of an FBI interview of Ryder's wife asking when she first learned of the Oswald job ticket, if her husband told her on Sat Nov 23, if she told anyone that first weekend.) A possible variant: despite denial, Ryder told a friend in confidence who told someone who told someone.

- *Possibility #2*: Oswald himself told someone, such as a buyer or recipient of the rifle, that the rifle had been sighted at the Sport Shop in Irving, to enhance satisfaction or smooth the sale. The buyer was involved with people who were motivated after the assassination to direct authorities in Oswald's direction in furtherance of Oswald's guilt.

I can say why I believe #2 is a better fit to the known facts than #1: because under the assumption of #1, the motive would be a good citizen wanting to see the authorities alerted to information, and the anonymity was prompted by a breach of confidentiality of a trusted relative or friend. But in *that* case the call to the FBI would make sense but *not* the call to WFAA-TV. Good citizens call the police, call law enforcement, turn in tips to the authorities, not to news media. The story does not ring right as a good citizen motivation for the anonymous phone call to the TV station. Also, even if the good citizen tipster did not want to be "outed" to the family member or friend whose confidence was being breached, the usual way that is handled is by going to the police or FBI and disclosing one's name and asking and receiving law enforcement cooperation in preserving confidentiality.

Because #1 appears inadequate in explanation of the anonymous calls, that increases a focus of consideration on some form of #2. The reasoning is this: Oswald was having a rifle he was not using restored to its original condition, reflecting intent to sell the rifle. Because that was his intention and because there is no evidence the rifle went back into Ruth Paine's garage after it was taken out of the garage the morning of Nov 11, it is at least a reasonable possibility that Oswald could have conveyed the rifle to a buyer or recipient at some point between Nov 11 and 22, i.e. succeeded in his intention, even if the means and mechanism of that conveyance are unclear.

If Oswald did convey the rifle to a buyer (or in a trade, or as part of a "sting" operation for an agency), *whoever* was that recipient *was involved with those who did the assassination*, the only issue being how many steps removed and how witting.

The ones party to the assassination then acted proactively, following the silencing of Oswald at the hands of Jack Ruby earlier that day on Nov 24, by means of those anonymous phone calls not only to alert the FBI (the relevant law enforcement agency taking over investigation of the assassination from the Dallas Police) but also *news media*—not only getting the fact of Oswald's recent sighting of a rifle in Irving to law enforcement but *shaping public opinion*.

Under this scenario, in which parties involved in the assassination wished to shape public opinion in having Oswald confirmed guilty, the way those phone calls were

made and to whom would be accounted for, and the anonymity. In this light those anonymous phone calls become very sinister indeed, but not because the original source of the information was sinister (under the present scenario that would be Oswald himself) but because Oswald in a sense stepped into a trap in the specifics of his sale or conveyance of that rifle, in who he was dealing with.

### **Interpretation of the “plunger” Oswald asked about at the Furniture Mart**

When Oswald walked into the Furniture Mart looking for a gunsmith he spoke to Furniture Mart owner Mrs. Whitworth. According to both Mrs. Whitworth and Mrs. Hunter, Oswald asked Mrs. Whitworth if she had a particular item related to a firearm. Mrs. Whitworth could not remember what it was, but Mrs. Hunter, sitting some distance away, said she heard Oswald ask for a “plunger”. It has been assumed that the reference was to a firing pin of a rifle. The puzzle has been: the FBI reported there was nothing wrong with the firing pin of Oswald’s rifle. The FBI reported to the Warren Commission:

“You are advised that the term ‘plunger’ is a colloquial term applied to the firing pin or striker of a firearm. The assassination rifle has been examined and nothing was found to indicate that the firing pin had been changed. In this connection it should be noted that the firing pin of this rifle has been used extensively as shown by wear on the nose or striking portion of the firing pin and, further, the presence of rust on the firing pin and its spring may be an indication that the firing pin had not been recently changed prior to November 22, 1963.”

(<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=11797#relPageId=2>).

However there are grounds to suppose this minor mystery has been a misunderstanding, that Oswald was inquiring not about a firing pin but something related to the scope. This was suggested in a January 22, 2023 discussion of Gerry Down, Jean Paul Ceulemans, and Lance Payette on the Education Forum. Down noted some scope base mounts used plungers (<http://benchrest.com/showthread.php?84510-Bausch-amp-Lomb-Scope-Mount-how-to-attach-the-scope>). Ceulemans noted that the Ordnance Optics base mount on the Oswald Mannlicher-Carcano was not of the plunger type and offered this link explaining a plunger kind of scope (<https://hi-luxoptics.com/pages/malcolm-use-and-compatibility>); compare <http://www.bauschandlombscopemounts.freeservers.com/mounts.htm>). Payette:



“I think Gerry probably has the solution. Something to do with the scope occurred to me as well, but I didn’t find what Gerry did. Now I see that ‘plunger-type mount’ is indeed a common term relating to rifle scopes. The package Oswald was carrying sounds scope-sized. Due to the sign out front, he may have assumed at first that Mrs. Whitworth knew something about guns. Oswald’s rifle had a metal mount that allowed it to be mounted on the side. JFK Ordnance Optics Carcano Oswald Rifle Scope and Mount ([gunsinternational.com](http://gunsinternational.com)) It’s possible he wanted it modified to use a plunger mount.” (<https://educationforum.ipbhost.com/topic/28683-the-mystery-of-the-furniture-mart-sighting-of-lee-and-marina-oswald-and-their-children-and-its-solution/page/3/>)

It is sensible that Oswald’s inquiry would be concerned with his purpose for being there and what he was holding in his hand, the scope. Mrs. Whitworth told Oswald she could not help him with his request and referred him to the Sport Shop. It is not known whether Oswald asked about that item at the Sport Shop.

### **Did Marina later allude to seeing the rifle on the day she went with Lee to the Furniture Mart and Sport Shop?**

On the afternoon of the assassination, Nov 22, 1963, at Ruth Paine’s house in Irving, Dallas Police officer Gus Rose asked Marina, with Ruth Paine translating, if her husband had a rifle. To Ruth’s surprise Marina said yes. Rose asked where her husband’s rifle was at that moment. Marina indicated a blanket in the garage. When Rose picked up the blanket it was empty. Fellow officer Adamcik testified that Rose coming out of the garage moments later told him, Adamcik, that Marina had just told of her husband’s rifle. Ruth Paine told of Marina identifying the blanket where the rifle was, Marina told of it, the Rose-Stovall-Adamcik police report for that day told of it. Marina signed a statement Friday night telling of it.

Marina was taken to the Dallas Police station and that evening was shown the Mannlicher-Carcano that had been found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository, and asked if that was her husband’s rifle. Marina said it looked similar to her husband’s rifle but thought there was a difference. She said she thought her husband’s rifle *when she saw it in the blanket* two weeks earlier *had no scope*, unlike the assassination rifle shown her which had a scope.

Marina claimed she had seen the rifle one time during the two months she lived with Ruth Paine in Irving. She told the Dallas Police that time was “two weeks before” Fri Nov 22. Was Marina alluding to Nov 11?

Because of the strength and specificity of the two key points of contact of Marina's rifle in the blanket story to Nov 11—the date and the missing scope—I believe Marina's statements to the Dallas Police of Fri Nov 22 indeed allude to the removal of the rifle *without a scope* from Ruth Paine's garage by Lee, with Marina's awareness, the morning of Mon Nov 11, in order to have the scope *put on* that day. Here is Marina's earliest statement to the Dallas Police in full, Fri Nov 22, the evening of the assassination.

*Marina Oswald, Affidavit at the Dallas Police Department, Nov 22, 1963.* “I am the wife of Lee Harvey Oswald. I will be married to him 3 years in April. We got married in Minsk, Russia. We came to America in June 13, 1962. One day in New York then we took a plane to Fort Worth. We stayed with Lee's brother Robert Oswald in Fort Worth. Robert now is in Denton with his company. We stayed one month with his brother and then rented a apartment. We left Fort Worth. In October 1962 we rented an apartment in Dallas. This was on Elsbeth and then on Neeley. Lee then went to New Orleans in May to look for work. In the last part of May of this year I went to New Orleans. At the end of September about the 24<sup>th</sup> I came back to Irving. Lee came back to Dallas about 2 weeks later. Lee rented a room in Dallas and would come to Irving and spend the weekends. Lee went to work for a book company. Mrs. Paine pointed out the place on Hines that Lee worked for. Lee started working there on October 15, 1963. Lee spent the night last night in Irving. This morning Lee was gone before I got up. When the Officers came to my house they asked me if Lee had a rifle. I told them he used to have a rifle to hunt with in Russia. I knew there was a rifle in Mrs. Paine's garage. **Two weeks ago I was in the garage and saw the same blanket that the Police got. I opened the blanket and saw a rifle in it.** This blanket is the same one that I saw today in the same place. Today is the first time I saw the blanket empty. Today at Police station they showed me a rifle. This was like the rifle my husband had. It was a dark gun. **But I didn't remember the sight on it. It could be the same rifle but I'm not sure.** Lee packed our things in Mrs. Paine's car in New Orleans. Mrs. Paine and me drove to Dallas. [Signed] Mrs. Marina Oswald.”

<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph338563/m1/1/>

When Lee with Marina's support, perhaps even urging, took the rifle out of Ruth Paine's garage the morning of Nov 11 it *did not* have a scope on it. Marina was *not* making up the allusion to a lack of a scope in her Friday evening Nov 22 affidavit even though she never explained the allusion. Marina did not tell the Dallas Police where she had gone with Lee on Nov 11. But what Marina told came from that, with

possible echoes of what in law is referred to as an “excited utterance” in which truth is unintentionally spoken, referring here to the date.

Marina’s date estimate is all the more striking in that on Fri night Nov 22 she knew nothing of the Irving Sport Shop job ticket with Oswald’s name on it that would come to the attention of the FBI three days later on Mon Nov 25, attesting that her husband had been in that shop for the purpose of having a scope put on, estimated by the Sport Shop employee who did that scope installation to have been “about two weeks ago”, the *same* date estimate as Marina’s because it was the *same* events of the *same* day involving the *same* rifle. The two independent accounts allude to that same day: Marina (Fri Nov 22, to the Dallas Police) and Dial Ryder (Mon Nov 25, to the FBI).

Note also a progression in Marina’s story. Between Marina’s Nov 22 Dallas Police statement and her Warren Commission testimony three significant developments or changes can be seen, reflecting Marina distancing her story away from its original allusion to Nov 11.

- (i) *Above all, she shifts the date dramatically earlier*, about as extreme of movement in time away from Nov 11 as it was possible to do. Instead of two weeks before Nov 22, Marina now says in her Warren Commission testimony: “for the first and last time I saw the rifle [in Ruth Paine’s garage] about a week after I had come to Mrs. Paine [last week of Sept 1963 or first days of Oct]”. It doesn’t get much more definitive than that: she is repudiating the Nov 11-compatible date that *she herself* had said to the Dallas Police.
- (ii) *She says she saw only a peek*, only a glimpse of the wood stock, did not see the full rifle. In her original Friday night Nov 22 Dallas Police statement she spoke of seeing the rifle without qualification.
- (iii) *She adds an extraneous reason for looking inside that blanket, looking for crib supplies*, not present in the earliest versions.

On Sunday night, Nov 24, two days after her statement to the Dallas Police, Marina was interviewed by the Secret Service. Marina gave the same date estimate for having seen the rifle in the blanket—*without a scope* she again says, this time without ambiguity. The only minor change is that “two weeks ago” has now become “two or three weeks ago”. Here is Marina to the Secret Service Nov 24 (Marina’s answers are told in the third person by the translator):

“She says there was an elevation on the rifle but **there was no scope—no telescope**. *Would you recognize a rifle scope if you saw one?* Yes. She says that now

she knows the difference between a rifle with a scope and one without a scope. **She says until she saw the rifle with a scope on TV the other day she did not know that rifles with scopes existed.** (...) She looked inside the blanket once and she knew that the rifle was there. Now she does not remember that she looked at it again, whether she unwrapped the blanket again or not. She does not remember whether she did or did not because she was not interested. (...) *Now, when did you look into this blanket and see this rifle?* She did not quite answer this question. She made a side remark that she did not unwrap the blanket and that when she saw the rifle she simply turned a corner of the blanket and she saw the barrel of the gun in it. The gun was wrapped in the blanket. She opened the end of the blanket or part of the blanket and saw the barrel of the gun. *When did you do this? When did you actually last see the gun?* She says **she saw that rifle there two or three weeks ago for the last time.** She saw that the rifle was wrapped in the blanket **two or three weeks ago** but she never opened the blanket again and she discovered that the rifle was gone when the police came and unwrapped the blanket.” (Secret Service interview, Nov 24, 1963, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10745#relPageId=27>)

By the time of Marina’s Warren Commission testimony note how *dramatically* changed the date has become without explanation:

Mrs. OSWALD. **After we arrived [late Sept]**, I tried to put the bed, the child's crib together, the metallic parts, and I looked for a certain part, and I came upon something wrapped in a blanket. I thought that was part of the bed, but **it turned out to be the rifle.**

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever check to see whether the rifle was in the blanket?

Mrs. OSWALD. I never checked to see that. There was **only once** that I was interested in finding out what was in that blanket, and I **saw that it was a rifle.**

Mr. RANKIN. When was that?

Mrs. OSWALD. **About a week after I came from New Orleans [late Sept]**

Mr. RANKIN. And then you found that the rifle was in the blanket, did you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, I saw the wooden part of it, the wooden stock.

(Minor point: she told the Secret Service she saw the metal gun barrel at one end of the blanket; here she sees the wooden stock, the other end of the rifle.)

Mr. RANKIN. When was the last time that you had noticed the rifle before that day?

Mrs. OSWALD. I said that I saw—for **the first and last time I saw the rifle about a week after I had come to Mrs. Paine.**

Rather than Marina remembering differently the date of a single event, it appears rather that Marina has changed to denying the allusion to Nov 11 altogether, analogous to the denial that she ever went to the Furniture Mart. In place of the original real date allusion to Nov 11 Marina has now substituted a perhaps invented similar-sounding instance on another occasion much earlier. In her earlier interviews Marina never mentioned to the Dallas Police or Secret Service anything about a late-September crib parts search resulting in an accidental discovery that Lee had his rifle in that blanket.

(In Priscilla McMillan's book, *Marina and Lee* [1977], Marina says she knew the rifle was in the blanket all along, knew it had been packed that way by Lee in New Orleans on Ruth Paine's station wagon carrying their belongings to Irving. In an FBI report of 7/7/64 Marina is reported as saying she had observed Lee wrapping the rifle in that blanket [<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=11653#relPageId=13>]. If Marina's knowledge of the rifle in the blanket all along is true, as it surely is, then Marina's story of an opening of the blanket in a mistaken search for crib parts is not true.)

And just so there is no mistake about it, Marina emphasizes in her Warren Commission testimony that the glimpse she saw of the rifle in the blanket right after she arrived to Irving was "the first *and last* time" she *ever* saw the rifle in Irving. The ca. Nov 11 date that she told the Dallas Police and Secret Service is *just gone, disappeared, simply vanished* by Marina into the ether, as far as Marina's testimony to the Warren Commission is concerned.

Marina, caught by surprise on Nov 22, alluded to a glimpse of a partial truth while not disclosing a fuller truth. Later, Marina sought to distance herself from even that allusion to Nov 11.

## Conclusion

The earlier paper on the Furniture Mart (<https://www.scrollery.com/?p=1450>) established the date of the Furniture Mart and Sport Shop visits: Nov 11, 1963. The purpose of the trip was a reinstallation of the scope on Oswald's rifle. Marina was party to the trip.

Dial Ryder did not fabricate the Oswald job ticket at the Irving Sport Shop. It was pure accident that Dial Ryder was working at the exact place Mrs. Whitworth of the Furniture Mart told Oswald to go to find a gunsmith. Dial Ryder encountered Oswald's rifle because he happened to *be there* the day Oswald walked in. There is no basis for assuming Dial Ryder made anonymous phone calls causing the FBI to investigate himself, that he initiated contact with any journalist, or sought any of the notoriety and grief that came upon him over that job ticket. The verdict on Dial Ryder is he was a random hard-working guy caught up by an accident of history not of his intention or making—because by sheer random accident he happened to be working alone in the Sport Shop on Veterans Day 1963, the day when, down the street, Mrs. Whitworth at her furniture store was helpfully directing a young man where to go to find a gunsmith the next block over.

The Warren Commission erred in rejecting Lee and Marina at the Furniture Mart and Irving Sport Shop. It happened, on Nov 11, 1963.