

**A SEAMSTRESS, A WEDDING RING, AND A RIFLE:  
RECONSIDERING THE LAST WEEK OF LEE HARVEY OSWALD**

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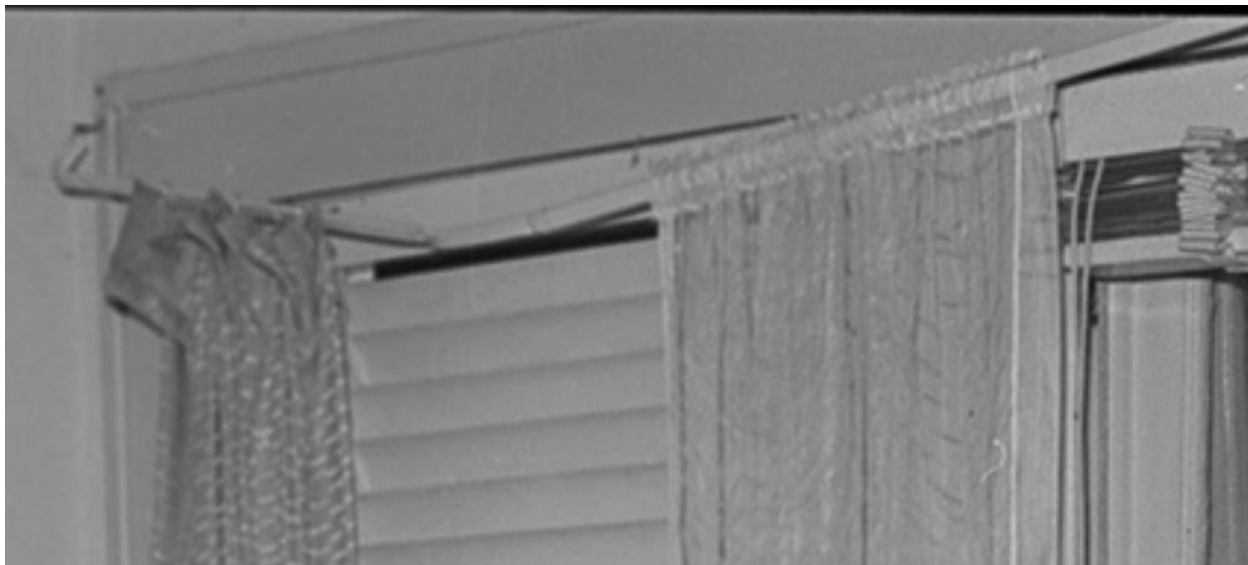
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**Lee Oswald has a need for curtains**

Let us suppose, sometime during the week of the assassination of President Kennedy, 24-year old Lee Oswald by accident pulled too hard and damaged a long traverse curtain rod which held drapes over four double-hung windows on the north wall of his tiny (5' x 13-1/2') room in the rooming house on N. Beckley in Oak Cliff, where Lee lived weekdays.

We don't need to suppose that damage since there are photos of it, although landlady Mrs. Johnson was uncertain how and when the damage happened. She first noticed the traverse curtain rod was damaged late Friday Nov 22, the afternoon of the assassination, and alternatively blamed it on news people on the 22<sup>nd</sup> (to a reporter on the 23<sup>rd</sup>) or the police on the 22<sup>nd</sup> (later to the FBI), for having caused it. However it happened, a damaged long traverse curtain rod over the windows in Oswald's

room is visible in a photograph of Fri Nov 22 taken by a photographer for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*.



And on the morning of Saturday Nov 23, Mrs. Johnson and her husband were photographed standing on the bed and hammering that end of the long traverse curtain rod back in place, by photographer Gene Daniels of Black Star.

Assume Lee, who lived in the room, realized it was damaged before Mrs. Johnson.

Imagine Lee needs that fixed—because the drapes were now inoperable, and without being able to pull the drapes closed he does not have adequate privacy. Rather than tell the Johnsons about it, he is going to solve it himself. His intended fix: instead of the now-inoperable super-long traverse curtain rod with draperies going over the four windows, he is going to put individual sets of curtains in each of the four windows.

We know curtains were on Lee's mind, *in addition to* the concrete evidence of the photos of Nov 22 and 23, 1963 showing the damaged and unusable traverse curtain rod, meaning no draperies could be drawn to cover the windows lining the wall by his bed.

We *know* curtains were on Lee's mind because of what he told his coworker Buell Wesley Frazier at the Texas School Book Depository when he arranged a ride to go to Irving on Thursday night, Nov 21, the day before President Kennedy was assassinated.

### **Going to Irving with Buell Frazier Thursday night for curtain rods**

That morning, Thursday Nov 21, Lee found and asked his coworker Buell Frazier if he could catch a ride with him to Irving at the end of that day, where his wife and children were living with Ruth Paine. Frazier said sure, asked why then, didn't he usually go on weekends? Lee told Buell he was going to get some curtain rods for curtains Marina had made for him (at least that last part was what Buell understood Lee to have said and meant).

Oswald went to Irving Thursday evening, unexpected because unannounced, had a rather ordinary evening, first playing with his daughter and neighborhood children under a large nearby oak tree. Then later in the evening he tried unsuccessfully to persuade Marina to move into an apartment with him that very weekend, promised to buy her a washing machine, anything she needed—Marina declined, postponed, brushed him off, said maybe after the holidays. Lee went to bed early, got up, caught his ride with Buell back to work in Dallas the next morning. No drama, no secret prolonged goodbye. Nothing unusual in behavior other than one detail: he left his wedding ring in an heirloom teacup on Marina's dresser. Everyone has thought that meant he was saying goodbye because he anticipated shooting President Kennedy. This narrative will propose another interpretation with the wedding ring, but wait till later for that.

In the car with Buell Frazier for the return trip to Dallas, Lee had a paper bag with him. There have been three possibilities argued for what Lee brought in that paper bag that morning: a rifle, his lunch, or curtain rods.

Imagine that the correct answer is the answer hardly ever considered, that it was curtain rods, which has in its support the lifelong testimony of Buell Frazier on the length of the package, ca. 24-27 inches according to Frazier, too short to carry the rifle, but in agreement with the length of curtain rods in Ruth Paine's garage.

After parking behind the Book Depository a little distance away, Buell saw Lee walk on ahead of him with the package under his arm that looked to Buell in length and appearance consistent with it being curtain rods. Buell saw Lee walk up the steps to a loading dock at the rear of the Book Depository, and go in a first door. Buell could not see Lee after Lee went through that door which was a covered dock or shed area. There was another door inside that covered area to enter the main floor area of the building itself. From the inside of the building, Oswald was seen entering "empty", nothing in his hands, according to employee Jack Dougherty. Assume Lee left his curtain rods on that loading dock somewhere out of the way for the moment, and that he went in to use the restroom.

### **Where did Lee get the curtain rods?**

In her Warren Commission testimony of March 20, 1964, Ruth Paine said she had confirmed after the assassination that two curtain rods, which she had previously wrapped in light brown wrapping paper and stored on a certain shelf high on a wall in the garage above her husband Michael's workbench, were still there. There were no loose curtain rods in the garage in addition to that package at that point, post-Nov 22, because if there had been, Ruth Paine would not have confirmed visually that there was only that package of two and testified that there were no more, post-Nov 22. Michael Paine—who with Ruth had bought the house originally and now lived separately from Ruth but visited and still used his workbench in the garage—thought there might have been four curtain rods originally. Imagine there were four originally, two of which were loose and visible, and on Nov 22 Lee took the two visible ones in a grocery sack of the right size to take with him to work that day. That is, Lee did not touch Ruth's pre-Nov 22 wrapped two, hidden away unseen on the high shelf. Imagine the reason Ruth saw no loose curtain rods after Nov 22 is because Lee had taken two that were.

The Warren Commission on the evening of March 23, 1964, taking testimony in Ruth Paine's garage in Irving, found no wrapped package of two curtain rods on the high shelf in the garage, but found two loose curtain rods on a shelf just below it. Michael Paine in his testimony of March 17 may have alluded to his having taken down Ruth's package from the top shelf two or three weeks earlier, opened it, and set its two curtain rods back up on another shelf loose, perhaps at the request of an

FBI inquirer wanting to verify curtain rods were there, may be the explanation of that. But the package was not found by the Warren Commission on March 23 on the high shelf in the garage where Ruth Paine had told the Warren Commission it would be in her testimony on March 20, and marked on a photo the high shelf where she said they would find it (and had agreed not to touch or disturb anything in the garage until they got there).

In response to the package not being there, Ruth Paine identified the two loose ones as the same two she thought she had wrapped (though there seems no way she could know such an identification apart from reasonable assumption). She now allowed that she could have been mistaken about having ever wrapped them, and suggested that those two could have been loose all along, meaning she was now suggesting, according to her stated testimony, that there could have been two *loose* ones in the garage on the night of Nov 21, 1963, visible and accessible with opportunity for Lee to take.

Oswald *had gone into the garage* that Thursday evening of Nov 21, said Ruth, based on her noticing, when she went out to the garage after reading her children some bedtime stories that evening, that the garage light had been left on by someone, not her, and Marina had not done it. Imagine that was when Lee got two loose curtain rods which he put into the grocery sack of the right length ready to take with him the next morning. He doesn't tell either Marina or Ruth.

Now the reader will ask, why wouldn't he tell or ask Marina or Ruth?

Hold on to that, because there will be proposed an unexpected explanation for that, just as for why he left the wedding ring.

Imagine that *of course* the curtain rods were not his *only* reason for going to Irving—he was seeing Marina and his kids, the main reason, but at the same time imagine his need for curtains was not invented, and prompted the *timing* of his going there, a day earlier than expected (usually he went on Friday nights and stayed the weekend).

### **What was Lee up to with curtains-related materials taken to *his place of work*?**

We have now traced what Lee said, and what outwardly appeared to be, a curtains-related conveyance to the location of his workplace, in the 24 hours before the assassination, one day before photographs of the N. Beckley room documented a damaged traverse rod rendering the occupant of that room, Oswald, unable to close the draperies. There is no confirmation that any fabric or curtain rods ever were taken *inside* the Texas School Book Depository by Lee. But if curtain supplies did not go *in* the building they would be *in the vicinity* of Oswald's workplace. And why would Oswald be doing that?

Well, the obvious reason why: he was having curtains made for the windows in his room in Oak Cliff so he could have privacy at night, because the traverse rod holding the drapes had become inoperable.

Imagine it is not more complicated than that.

But—the astute reader is asking—why does he go about it in this odd way—of bringing curtains-related items to his *workplace*, the Book Depository, whether or not he actually took them inside the building? Why does he not tell Marina? Most puzzling of all, why does he deny to Dallas Police Captain Fritz under questioning after his arrest, what he had told Buell Frazier? And why did he leave his wedding ring in Irving before going into work at the Book Depository on Fri Nov 22?

Imagine none of these things had anything to do with the assassination.

Imagine the assassination-related theories and reasons and explanations imagined for these things just named are all mistaken, retrospective interpretations of mundane events in daily life.

### **Was there a woman in the picture?**

Imagine the one thing that has never been considered in explanation for all of this: that a woman is in the picture. That a woman may have paid a little attention to Lee, and Lee was intrigued.

Remember the incident of the Japanese woman Lee met at a party and was smitten with talking with her, with Marina jealous, and George de Mohrenschildt thinking good for Lee, serves Marina right for the way she treats him? That would be the pattern hypothesized here.

Not sought out by Lee, but if a woman showed some attention he would not mind that. Imagine that is what is going on as a subtext here. It may be nothing came of it. The assassination interrupted. Imagine a woman smiling, Lee joking back, a lift in spirits in a dreary workday, some lunch conversations . . .

### **Oswald and seamstresses in the Dal-Tex building**

Imagine the woman was a seamstress, who sewed for her job, along with other women fellow employees, working for one of the clothing manufacturing companies in the Dal-Tex building (short for Dallas Textiles building) across from the Book Depository, on the other side of Houston Street.

Imagine she is Spanish-speaking. Perhaps she and fellow Spanish-speaking seamstresses by accident noticed Lee by himself one day eating lunch in some location nearby. Lee knew a little Spanish, enough to say some words in Spanish to them. Imagine their pleasant surprise at that, maybe some laughter and banter. Maybe there was one he met more times at the same lunch place, who knows. Then imagine Lee has this *unplanned* but *real* need for help related to curtains. She is a seamstress. He asks her advice, what can be done.

There was a report that came to the FBI on Nov 30, 1963 that something like that had been happening with Lee. Here it is:

"Mrs. Evelyn Harris . . . stated that on November 30, 1963, she had been visiting an aunt in Van, Texas, and while there met a woman who lives across the street from her aunt. She stated this woman is known as Lucy Lopez, a white woman who is married to a Mexican and had given the following story. Mrs. Lopez had just come from Dallas where she had been babysitting for her daughter. She stated **her daughter works at a sewing room across from the Texas School Book Depository Building. She stated her daughter and some of the**

**other girls knew Lee Harvey Oswald who apparently spoke Spanish well and ate with them at a nearby restaurant.** They were reportedly acquainted with Jack Ruby.

“She stated on November 22, 1963, the girls, all of Spanish descent, were watching the Presidential parade from a window of the sewing room. They reportedly observed Jack Ruby walking up and down the street near the Texas School Book Depository Building and when Oswald came out of the building, they saw Ruby give him a pistol.” (FBI, interview of Nov 30, 1963, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10672#relPageId=454>)

In followup to this, the FBI traced the weapon-transfer story back to an origin from a man named David Torres, who repeated to the FBI a story of which the FBI already was aware, concerning three seamstresses who worked at the McKell’s Sportswear company, which occupied the second floor of the seven-story Dal-Tex building. While driving out of a parking lot behind the buildings after work on the afternoon of Tuesday Nov 19, they had been momentarily blocked by a stopped car in front of them at which time they saw a man conveying a rifle to another man out of the car trunk. After the assassination the women were concerned that one of the men, who looked older and heavyset, might have been Jack Ruby, and the other, a younger lean man, might have been Oswald, though they all said they had not seen either of the men well enough to make identifications.

Since there were no identifications of either the persons or car reported, and since hunting season had started and rifles were being borrowed or returned from being borrowed, and since sheriff's department deputies used that parking lot who could have been seen with firearms out of their cars, in the end nothing came of it. Mrs. Lopez was interviewed by the FBI the same day and she said:

“Mrs. Lucy Lopez . . . advised that last week while staying at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Louis Velez . . . a man by the name of Conrad (last name unknown to her), stated that two or three Mexican girls, names not given, who work at the sewing room across from the Texas School Book Depository Building, had seen a ‘chubby’ man give a pistol to Lee Harvey Oswald when Oswald left the Texas School Book Depository Building. He stated from the conversation it appeared the girls had known Oswald and the ‘chubby’ man. She stated Conrad works as a laboratory technician with **her son-in-law, Ralph Rojas**, but she does not

know the name of the laboratory but thinks it is operated by the government. Rojas resides at 3009 Clover Drive, Mesquite, Texas, telephone BR 9-1881. She denied that **her daughter, Mrs. Louis Velez**, knew either Oswald or Jack Ruby or that she had seen Ruby give Oswald a pistol." (FBI, interview of Nov 30, 1963,

<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10672#relPagelD=455>)

Note Mrs. Lopez has two daughters above, Mrs. Velez and Mrs. Rojas. One of the two daughters, Mrs. Velez, is excluded as having known Oswald, but the other daughter, Mrs. Rojas, was never interviewed by the FBI. Next to be interviewed was Conrad Galvan, on Dec 3. Conrad Galvan gave a different account than what Mrs. Lopez said he had told her:

"Conrad Galvan advised that he resides at 3989 Park Lane, Dallas, and is employed as a dental technician for the Veterans Administration at 1114 Commerce, Dallas. He stated he is acquainted with Ralph Rojas, 3009 Clover Drive, Mesquite, Texas. Galvan was asked **specifically** if he had obtained any information from three Mexican girls allegedly working in the vicinity of 501 Elm, Dallas, to the effect that they saw Lee Oswald receiving a pistol from a 'chubby' man outside the Texas School Book Depository Building. Galvan stated that he did not hear of any information of this type, however, did hear from an acquaintance of his, one David Torres, that three girls who worked in the building at 501 Elm did see several men with a rifle two or three days before the President was shot. Torres had told him that these girls had seen several men carrying a rifle near the Texas School Book Depository and he believes it was on Tuesday, November 19, 1963." (FBI, interview of Dec 3, 1963,

<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=95643#relPagelD=284>)

Since neither Mr. Rojas nor Mrs. Rojas, Mrs. Lopez's son-in-law and daughter, respectively, play any stated role in known FBI documents, one wonders why there is a mention of Mr. Rojas at all in the Conrad Galvan interview above. Is it possible Mrs. Rojas could be the referent when Evelyn Harris said to the FBI that Mrs. Lopez told of having a daughter who worked at the Dal-Tex and knew Oswald and ate lunches with Oswald? When Conrad Galvan was asked "specifically" about the weapon-conveyance story, should "specifically" be parsed as excluding the part of Evelyn Harris's report about "[Mrs. Lopez's] daughter works at a sewing room across from the Texas School Book

Depository Building . . . her daughter and some of the other girls knew Lee Harvey Oswald who apparently spoke Spanish well and ate with them at a nearby restaurant”?

To be clear, there is no positive information that Mrs. Rojas worked at the Dal-Tex or was part of eating lunches with Oswald, other than Evelyn Harris’s report that Mrs. Lopez said she had a daughter of that description, and the FBI did not report questioning Mrs. Lopez sufficiently in their interview of her to be able to confirm or deny the existence of such a daughter. And as noted, the FBI never asked Mrs. Rojas.

Conrad Galvan’s FBI interview does clarify the weapon conveyance story. The McKell’s seamstresses looking west out of the second story of the Dal-Tex building would have had a perfect view on Nov 22 to see Oswald leave the Book Depository, if Oswald left from the rear and walked past them on Houston, then turned east on Elm. If so, he would have walked right by below them underneath their window, if any of the seamstresses knew him to recognize him. But it is unlikely Ruby was there (since he was elsewhere), and the interview with Conrad Galvan refutes that anyone claimed to have seen a pistol handed to Oswald at that location on Nov 22. Here is the weapon-conveyance story as the FBI traced it back to its origin.

- *Evelyn Harris*, interviewed Nov 30, 1963 (link given above). She said her source was Mrs. Lucy Lopez. She understood Mrs. Lopez to have said she had a daughter who worked in “a sewing room across from the Texas School Book Depository.” Mrs. Lopez told her her daughter “and some of the other girls knew Lee Harvey Oswald who apparently spoke Spanish well and ate with them at a nearby restaurant.” Evelyn Harris said Mrs. Lopez told of a Ruby-Oswald pistol conveyance on Nov 22.
- *Mrs. Lucy Lopez*, interviewed Nov 30, 1963 (link given above). Mrs. Lopez alludes to two daughters (Mrs. Rojas and Mrs. Velez) and tells the FBI that one of them, Mrs. Velez, had not known Oswald. Mrs. Lopez says her source for the pistol-conveyance story was Conrad Galvan. Mrs. Lopez is not asked if she had told Evelyn Harris she had a daughter who was part of seamstresses eating lunches with Oswald.
- *Conrad Galvan*, interviewed Dec 3, 1963 (link given above). He said his source was David Torres who told him of the Tue Nov 19 rifle conveyance incident. The interview report of

Galvan makes clear no pistol conveyance to Oswald on Nov 22 was claimed to have been seen by any witness. One possibility not ruled out in the FBI interview report however: Galvan could have originally misunderstood the story of the three McKell's women and told the mistaken version to Mrs. Lopez that Mrs. Lopez remembered and retold, then Galvan upon further consultation with Torres got the story straight and corrected in his mind. Another possibility is Mrs. Lopez did not actually hear Galvan's story from Galvan directly but filtered through her daughter Mrs. Velez who attributed it to Galvan (though Mrs. Lopez did not describe that, and Mrs. Velez denied she had told anyone).

- *David Torres*, interviewed Dec 4, 1963 (<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=95643#relPageld=283>). He was said to have a sister who worked at McKell's who knew the three McKell's seamstresses of the Tue Nov 19 parking lot incident, and that sister told Torres of the Tue Nov 19 parking lot incident, and that was at a time when the three had not talked to the FBI and were fearful of doing so, according to Mrs. Conrad Galvan (FBI, Jan 8, 1964, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10730#relPageld=131>). However, Torres said his source was the three McKell's seamstresses themselves (no mention of a sister) after, Torres said, the three *had* talked to the FBI. Torres told the FBI the three McKell's seamstresses of the parking-lot incident "do not know Lee Oswald to his knowledge, at least they did not state they saw Oswald with the gun."
- *Sister of David Torres*, said to be employed at McKell's and to know the three seamstresses of the Tue Nov 19 incident. Not even her name is known. Was she the source for the claim that seamstresses at McKell's knew Oswald and ate lunch with him? Not interviewed by the FBI.
- *The three McKell's seamstresses interviewed by the FBI who witnessed the Tue Nov 19 parking-lot weapon conveyance*. They were interviewed both before and after the FBI received the Evelyn Harris report—see below. None were asked by the FBI whether they had known Oswald, before or after the Evelyn Harris report.
- *Mrs. Ralph Rojas* (her first name not known), daughter of Mrs. Lopez, married to a coworker of Conrad Galvan. No report of being interviewed by the FBI.

Long story short, the FBI never investigated and never established whether or not the three McKell's Sportswear seamstresses it interviewed, or any other McKell's or Dal-Tex seamstresses, knew Oswald before the assassination.

The red flag calling this matter into question is: any report that women working in a building across from Oswald's workplace were meeting Oswald for lunch in the days or weeks before the assassination would be expected to be of high interest and priority to the FBI, especially if true. Here the FBI had such a report. And yet the FBI never asked any of the three McKell's seamstresses it interviewed that most basic question—*had they known Oswald?*—in an investigation supposedly following up a report in which that was named as an issue.

Remember, Evelyn Harris said Mrs. Lopez told her: "She [Mrs. Lopez] stated *her daughter and some of the other girls knew Lee Harvey Oswald who apparently spoke Spanish well and ate with them at a nearby restaurant.*" The FBI reports leave an impression, without saying directly, that Evelyn Harris's report on the lunches with Oswald was insubstantial by showing one of Mrs. Lopez's daughters did not know Oswald, without ruling that out for the other daughter. By not ruling out the other daughter, the FBI never actually established that Evelyn Harris misunderstood or misreported anything Mrs. Lopez had told her.

There may be other possibilities. An alternative reconstruction could have the source of the story of the Dal-Tex seamstresses eating lunches with Oswald be the sister of David Torres at McKells, who may have been a fourth McKell's seamstress, not one of the three of the parking-lot incident. The apparent contradiction between those at a Galvans dinner party hearing Torres saying the seamstresses had *not* talked to the FBI, when Torres when interviewed by the FBI said they *had* talked to the FBI when he first talked to them, might be explained in terms of Torres having violated a confidence in telling what they had told him, by telling it at the dinner party, and Torres for his self-image or for the record wanted to tell it as if he had only talked after confidentiality was no longer an issue. In this possibility, the sister of Torres would be the actual source for both the seamstresses' lunches with Oswald and the weapon-conveyance story. But the daughter of Mrs. Lopez, Mrs. Velez, told the story of Torres and Galvan to her mother, Mrs. Lopez, who was babysitting for the Velezes the evening of the Galvans' dinner party. Then, from the way Mrs. Lopez told it, Evelyn Harris

mistakenly thought David Torres' sister was Mrs. Lopez's daughter. This reconstruction would work like this:

*The three McKell's seamstresses* of the Tue Nov 19 rifle-transfer incident tell it in confidence to . . . → . . . the *sister of David Torres*, fellow seamstress at McKell's, who tells it in confidence to her brother . . . → . . . *David Torres* (told by his sister that she and seamstresses at McKell's ate lunches with Oswald, and an accurate version of the rifle-transfer incident of the three) who tells it to . . . → . . . *Conrad Galvan* at a dinner party at the Galvans' home, where . . . → . . . *Mrs. Velez* (daughter of Mrs. Lopez), present at the dinner party, overhears the Torres-Galvan conversation, and tells . . . → . . . her mother Mrs. Lopez, who was at the Velez home babysitting that night, of Oswald lunches with Dal-Tex seamstresses, and an inaccurate version of the weapon-conveyance story (despite denial by Mrs. Velez that she told anyone), who tells . . . → . . . *Evelyn Harris*, who reports to . . . → . . . the *FBI* what Mrs. Lopez told her except for confusing Mrs. Lopez's daughter Mrs. Velez with David Torres sister as the source for the Oswald/seamstresses lunches and the weapon-conveyance story.

It may be the original Evelyn Harris report should be considered two leads, not one. One was the claim that seamstresses knew Oswald and were eating lunches with him. The other was the weapon-conveyance story. The Dallas FBI office appears to have investigated only the second, while not investigating the first. In light of the way FBI offices were directed and almost micromanaged from headquarters in Washington, D.C., the question is raised whether the Dallas FBI failure to investigate whether seamstresses knew Oswald and ate lunches with him was by direction from headquarters, *not* to pursue that line of questioning.

There can certainly hardly be any confident assumption that the report that seamstresses at the Dal-Tex knew and ate lunches with Oswald was mistaken, when the FBI investigation generated to investigate that report made no inquiry designed to answer that question.

### **The three McKell's seamstresses interviewed by the FBI**

The three McKell's seamstresses of the Nov 19 parking-lot incident were interviewed not just once, but in three separate rounds: on Nov 25 (<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=57694#relPageld=54>) and Nov 26 (<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10672#relPageld=279>); again Dec 31 (<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10673#relPageld=109>); and again on Jan 8, 1964 (<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10730#relPageld=129>).

The three came to the attention of the FBI before Evelyn Harris's report was received. One of the three, Henrietta Vargas, with her attorney contacted the FBI and met with the FBI, with the attorney accompanying her, on Monday Nov 25. She told the FBI the parking-lot incident. She gave the names of two other McKell's employees in the car with her at the time, fellow seamstresses Frances Hernandez and Josephine Salinas, and the FBI interviewed them the next day, Tuesday Nov 26.

The question "did you know Oswald before the assassination?" is so *routine* of a question the FBI asked countless *other* witnesses. But the FBI agent, Pinkston, who did the first McKell's seamstress interviews, of Nov 25 and Nov 26, and William G. Brookhart, the FBI agent who did the later interviews of the McKell's women on Dec 31 and Jan 8 and other interviews following the Evelyn Harris information, never reported asking whether those McKell's seamstresses knew Oswald pre-assassination. Did it not occur to either of those FBI agents to *ask*?

The FBI asked nearly everyone else. The FBI asked that question of Mrs. Velez, David Torres, Conrad Galvan, and Mrs. Conrad Galvan in their interviews (all answered negatively). But the FBI never asked the McKell's seamstresses if they had known Oswald, or asked if they knew of any seamstresses in the Dal-Tex building who did.

When an obvious question is not asked, or if it is asked but there is no report of the answer, sometimes that is a signal of something going on.

The FBI interviews of these McKell's seamstresses occurred after the FBI and media all over America had fixed centrally, as a linchpin of an emergent narrative, on the package Oswald carried from Irving the morning of Nov 22, which Oswald told Buell Frazier was curtain rods. The emergent narrative was

that Lee Oswald *made up* the curtain rods claim and *really* had brought a broken-down Mannlicher-Carcano rifle in a larger handmade paper bag made with Depository wrapping paper which was found on the 6th floor of the Book Depository, the rifle used to shoot and kill the president. In this narrative, which a few months later would be enshrined in the final Report of the Warren Commission, curtain rods of Oswald *never happened*. Oswald *made that up out of thin air* when he told Frazier that, so it was said.

In light of how much was at stake, could the FBI at that time be relied upon to disclose information to the Warren Commission and/or the public that might impeach that narrative, if such were to emerge?

What if the FBI had caught a whiff of information that Oswald's activity the week of the assassination included contacts with a seamstress at the Dal-Tex building—*where there were dozens of seamstresses employed in that building*—with whom he might have received assistance with respect to an inoperable draperies issue in his Oak Cliff room? One way an agency such as the FBI might avoid learning and/or possibly acquiring a duty to report unwelcome information could be by not pursuing certain lines of inquiry.

The second and third interviews of the three McKell's seamstresses essentially only repeated the information of the first interviews which preceded the Evelyn Harris report. All interviews of the three seamstresses dealt solely with the parking-lot incident, with no FBI questions asking whether the seamstresses knew Oswald and had eaten lunches with him. The three McKell's seamstresses interviewed by the FBI were:

*Henrietta A. Vargas* was about age 34 in 1963 based on listed as 11 years old in a 1940 census. A 1967 Dallas Polk's city directory gives her occupation as, "Smstrs McKell's Sports Wear". I could find no obituary for her but a 2021 obituary of her husband, Carlos M. Vargas, Jr., refers to her death before his (<https://www.theangelusfuneralhome.com/obituary/carlos-vargas-jr>).

*Josephine G. Salinas* aka Delfina G Salinas, born Nov 2, 1926, was age 37 in Nov 1963, was married for a second time in 1966, unknown date of beginning and end of her first marriage. She passed away Jan 12, 2013 at age 86 (her gravestone: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/236035623/josephine-salinas>).

*Frances M. Hernandez* was about age 37 in 1963. She is listed in the 1963 Dallas Polk's as a "Indry wkr BUMC", laundry worker, Baylor University Medical Center (thank you E.L.). She is not listed as working at McKell's, where she clearly was employed in late Nov-Dec 1963, meaning she may have recently started at McKell's. The FBI interview of her of Dec 31, 1963 gives a different street address for her than the city directory, and oddly the street address given in the FBI interview report does not exist according to the 1963 Dallas Polk's directory. She appears in a 1950 census as age 24, occupation "sewing machine operator, drs. mfg.", married to Albert Hernandez, with a 2-year old son George. Husband Albert disappears from Dallas records whereas Frances remained in Dallas. Albert turns up in a 1998-2002 city directory in Hibbs, New Mexico, and he died in 2017. Based on the 1963 Dallas Polk's with Frances living alone, the breakup of the marriage in the sense of Frances living separately seems to have occurred prior to Nov 1963. That Frances is named "Mrs." in her FBI interviews probably means she was still legally married, not yet divorced, even though she appears to be living separately by that point. Frances Hernandez passed away in 2010 at age 84. In her obituary there is no mention of a past or surviving husband; perhaps she never remarried ([https://obits.dallasnews.com/us/obituaries/dallasmorningnews/name/frances-hernandez-obituary?id=10199367&\\_gl=1\\*rv9qnq\\*\\_gcl\\_au\\*MTk3MzM2NTAuMTcwNDQzNzAzNg](https://obits.dallasnews.com/us/obituaries/dallasmorningnews/name/frances-hernandez-obituary?id=10199367&_gl=1*rv9qnq*_gcl_au*MTk3MzM2NTAuMTcwNDQzNzAzNg)).

These three McKell's Sportswear women were all mid-30s, none "young women" (as in early 20s), even though some of the FBI reports speak of the three as "girls", "girls, all of Spanish descent" (Evelyn Harris), "two or three Mexican girls" (Mrs. Lucy Lopez), "the discussion came up between the girls and myself" (Torres), etc. Other FBI documents refer to the three McKell's seamstresses as "women", not "girls", suggesting variance in language may reflect individual FBI authors of reports. All three were married, though one, Frances Hernandez, appears to have been living independently at this point even though still legally "Mrs." because not yet divorced.

### **The date of the McKell's seamstresses parking lot incident—case study of how witnesses can mistakenly remember wrong dates for true events**

A minor point, which the FBI did not resolve but which we can, for whatever it is worth, is the date of the parking lot rifle sighting incident: it can be confirmed with 100 percent certainty to have occurred on Tuesday Nov 19, not any other day, in agreement with the earliest accounts of the three women. In the earliest reports of Nov 25 and Nov 26, all three women remembered the date as Tuesday Nov 19. But by the time of their Dec 31 interviews the witnesses' memories have *changed* concerning the date! Two of the three women now say they remember the date was *Thursday* Nov 21! And the third thinks it could have been! These women *now* said for the date:

- Hernandez: it was the day before JFK arrived (Thu Nov 21) and **it was raining**
- Vargas: cannot recall whether it was Tuesday or Thursday but does recall that **it was raining**
- Salinas: it was the day before JFK arrived (Thu Nov 21), **it was raining**, she remembers thinking of JFK arriving the next day

That is not correct. It was certainly Tuesday Nov 19 as originally reported, and here is the proof: all three of the women remember it was raining. Weather history for Dallas shows it was raining on Tuesday Nov 19, but did not rain at all on Wednesday Nov 20 or Thursday Nov 21. And on Tuesday Nov 19 it rained 3-5 pm at Dallas Love Field, the time of the 4:10 or 5:10 pm parking lot sighting incident when all three women remembered it was raining. Weather history in Dallas in 1963 can be consulted at these links:

[https://weatherspark.com/h/m/8813/1963/11/Historical-Weather-in-November-1963-in-Dallas-Texas-United-States#google\\_vignette](https://weatherspark.com/h/m/8813/1963/11/Historical-Weather-in-November-1963-in-Dallas-Texas-United-States#google_vignette)

<https://weatherspark.com/h/d/8813/1963/11/19/Historical-Weather-on-Tuesday-November-19-1963-in-Dallas-Texas-United-States#Figures-PrecipitationProbability>

This example shows how easily witnesses can err in memories of dates of events in which the events themselves are no less true. It is not that incidents cannot have happened because they cannot have

happened on a date said by a witness. Many events happen which are well remembered by witnesses even though misdated.

**A witness reported Oswald speaking of bringing curtains-related material to his workplace which suggests seamstress activity. Why did the FBI not check with the dozens of seamstresses in the Dal-Tex building immediately adjoining Oswald's workplace, to find out whether any of those dozens of seamstress might have known Oswald or assisted him?**

Again, the FBI never asked the three seamstresses at McKell's that it interviewed, or any other of the dozens of seamstresses employed in the Dal-Tex building, if they knew Oswald, had eaten lunch with him, or knew of fellow seamstresses who did.

The FBI never resolved or rebutted the specific claim it received that Oswald was known to some Spanish-speaking seamstresses at the Dal-Tex building and ate lunches with them.

The FBI failure to ask the three McKell's seamstresses whether they knew Oswald, or to report the answer to that question if it was asked, through three rounds of interviews, is so astonishing that it raises the question whether that was something headquarters did not wish pursued.

To put it another way, the FBI receives an allegation that some nearby seamstresses knew Oswald. That prompts the FBI to find some nearby seamstresses. They interview the seamstresses. In their interviews they don't ask if the seamstresses knew Oswald. Does that make sense?

There may have been a dozen or two dozen or more seamstresses employed at McKell's alone, not to mention the other clothing manufacturing businesses on other floors in the Dal-Tex building, *dozens* of seamstresses immediately adjoining the building of Oswald's workplace. Of all those seamstresses, the FBI interviewed only three, a tiny sampling. But seamstresses would know each other, there would have been talk, gossip, word gets around—any random seamstresses from the Dal-Tex building, such as the three of the Nov 19 parking lot incident, potentially could have opened up further leads if asked—but there is no record they were asked. It is as if the FBI was not interested in *finding out* if there was any contact between one or more Dal-Tex seamstresses and Oswald.

Imagine that report, that *"some of the other girls knew Lee Harvey Oswald who apparently spoke Spanish well and ate with them at a nearby restaurant,"* was partly true.

### **Putting it together**

Imagine that Lee, hardworking family man that he was, living in Oak Cliff apart from his wife and children on weekdays, enjoyed some banter or low-level flirting in a lunch place with Spanish-speaking seamstresses employed in the building across the street. It would not have been initiated by Lee. Yes, they are married, and so is he, but they are nice to him and he enjoys the attention, and out of that a friendship develops with one of them.

Oswald did not know Spanish well but he knew a little and had an interest in learning more. (And how better to learn Spanish than to sit with Spanish-speaking seamstresses at lunch?) As recently as the summer of 1963 Oswald had visited a Berlitz school in New Orleans inquiring about Spanish instruction (CE 2121, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=1140#relPageId=677>). From the Warren Commission testimony of a friend of Oswald in the same Marines unit in Santa Ana, California, in 1959, Nelson Delgado:

Mr. DELGADO . . . He started applying himself to Spanish, he started studying. He bought himself a dictionary, a Spanish-American dictionary. He would come to me and we would speak in Spanish. You know, not great sentences but enough. After a while he got to talk to me, you know, in Spanish.

Mr. LIEBELER - How much of a fluency did Oswald develop in Spanish?

Mr. DELGADO - He didn't acquire too much. He could speak a common Spanish, like "How are you? I am doing fine. Where are you going? Which way is this?" Common stuff, you know, everyday stuff. As far as getting in involved political argument, say, or like debate of some sort, he couldn't hold his own.

Mr. LIEBELER - He couldn't speak Spanish well enough to do something like that?

Mr. DELGADO - No. But as far as meeting the people out in public and asking for things and telling them something.

Mr. LIEBELER - But as far as ordinary, simple ideas, you think that Oswald could make himself understood in Spanish.

Mr. DELGADO - Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER - But you wouldn't, would you, say that he was highly proficient in the Spanish language, but at least he knew some Spanish phrases and he could speak some sentences and make his basic ideas known?

Mr. DELGADO - If there is a word, you know, like semiproficient, he wasn't necessarily low, or was he as high Spanish like I speak, you know; he was right in the middle. Of course, there would be words, if you taught him, he may not understand, but basically he understood and made himself understood.

Mr. LIEBELER - You mentioned one time that you and Oswald and a couple of other fellows went to Tijuana.

Mr. DELGADO - Right.

Mr. LIEBELER - Had Oswald learned the Spanish language at that time?

Mr. DELGADO - He knew the Spanish language at that time, because when we went to the bar, the girls would come along, and I was Spanish—they knew that right off the bat, and they would tell me something in Spanish that was funny, and him and I would laugh, and he would laugh understandingly, and he would be talking small talk with the girls, you know, which was in my—you know, I had taught him just what he knew, and he was very fast learning.

Mr. LIEBELER - And Oswald was able to ask questions like this and understand them; is that right?

Mr. DELGADO - Right. Now, we had Mexican fellows in our outfit, and Oswald could understand their Spanish, and made it known to me that he could understand their Spanish, but in return those Mexicans could not understand my Spanish because the Puerto Ricans, Cubans, the Dominican Republics, they all speak real fast. Your Mexican is your Southern equivalent to your Southern drawl, you know, "You all," and real slow. Well, that is the Mexicans, you know. And when we speak Spanish to them, Puerto Rican, rather, or Spanish,

they have a hard time understanding you. But he could understand what was going on, and sometimes he would tell me, "Well, these guys here are planning a beer bust tonight," he said. "Are you going?" He'd overhear and tell me, you know.

Now imagine when Oswald has his emergency with the inoperable drapes at his Oak Cliff room, he tells one of the seamstresses near his workplace, and she offers the solution of making him curtains for the four windows.

We don't need to imagine, it is fact, that he had an urgent curtains need. The four windows lining the north wall of Lee's room look to the outside world. Lee's bed is next to those windows such that without drapes he has no privacy. There are still louvres or slats in the windows, in photos of his room from that weekend, but they do not ensure the privacy of pulled drapes. When the super-long traverse curtain rod had been operable, drapes could be drawn each evening covering all four of the windows of that wall. Suppose the west end of that traverse rod came crashing down either Tuesday night Nov 19 or early morning Wednesday Nov 20. Or maybe the traverse rod had not yet come off the wall, but the rod was so bent it was unusable and looked like it would crash soon. Imagine Lee was able to keep the damaged traverse rod in place so long as the drapes were not pulled, such that it had not yet come to the attention of the Johnsons (who would not necessarily have gone into his room those days), while Oswald at work on Wednesday sought advice from the seamstress—and he got an offer of assistance.

When the police searched Oswald's room on the afternoon of Fri Nov 22 following the assassination, there would be no reason for officers to try to pull drapes shut, so nothing happened. That no crash of the drapes happened when the police were there seems confirmed by the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* photograph after the police had left, showing the western end of the traverse rod bent and damaged, but still in place looking like it is holding up (barely) the side-drapes bunched at that end. However, it looks like the least tug on those drapes would bring them crashing down. At some point late that afternoon or early evening that happened. Perhaps it was as the day was ending and Mrs. Johnson attempted to draw the drapes herself for the first time since Oswald had rented the room 5-1/2 weeks earlier, and the west end of the traverse rod crashed to the floor, drapes and all. It is not surprising that she might assume the reporters or the police earlier that day had caused that, since

they had just been there. In a 1970 letter to Howard Roffmann, photographer Gene Daniels explained:

"I went to the rooming house the following morning [Sat Nov 23, 1963] and requested permission to make the photograph from the landlady . . . We went into the room and she told me she preferred not to have me take any pictures until she put '**the curtain back up.**' She said that newsmen the evening before had disturbed the room and she didn't want anyone to see it messed up. I agreed and stood back in the room as she and her husband stood on the bed and **hammered the curtain rods back into position.** While she did this, I photographed them or possibly just her I forget right now, up on the bed with the curtain rods etc." (Daniels quoted in Howard Roffman, *Presumed Guilty* [1976], 160)

(Rare additional photographs taken by Gene Daniels of the Johnsons examining the damaged traverse curtain rod in Oswald's room on Nov 23, 1963 may be seen at <https://gil-jesus.com/the-curtain-rod-debacle/>.)

A crashing of the drapes is indicated in the Saturday morning language of Mrs. Johnson to Gene Daniels that she needed to put the curtains "back up", and by the photo of her husband hammering the west end of the traverse rod while Mrs. Johnson held it in place. That end of the traverse curtain rod had come off from the wall, and had crashed to the floor, requiring the Johnsons to put it "back up". But even after Mr. Johnson's hammering, the traverse rod was still badly bent near that end as the photos show; hammering it back up would not restore satisfactory use of the draperies. It is impossible to imagine from the photographs that those drapes could ever be operable again with that traverse rod bent the way it was, even if its end was hammered back into place on the wall.

Significant in this narrative: it is known that Oswald spent Wednesday night Nov 20 in a nearby laundromat, Sleight's Speed Wash at 1101 N. Beckley, reading until midnight when it closed, away from his room (FBI, July 28, 1964, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=11759#relPageld=7> [the witness said it was either Nov 20 or 21 but the 21<sup>st</sup> is excluded since Oswald was in Irving]). That was unusual and uncharacteristic, the only known time Oswald did that (spent that extent of time in a laundromat).

That appears to be Oswald avoiding being in his room. It suggests the drapes had become inoperable by that point—a *terminus ad quem* of Wednesday of that week for when Oswald had lost the use of the drapes in his room—because there is no other known reason why Oswald would prefer reading in a laundromat until midnight, to being in his own room.

And there is also this: another roomer at the N. Beckley rooming house, named Jack Cody (he rented a room in the basement), said that on "Wednesday or Thursday, the week Kennedy was assassinated," at about 7 am when he took a bus to work, he had seen Oswald come out of the rooming house and get on the same bus, "carrying a package, a newspaper-wrapped package. It was about six inches thick and a foot wide and about two foot long" (Gus Russo, *Live by the Sword* [1998], 268, quoting from a 1993 interview of Cody). We don't know what was in that package, but from the timing it might be related to Oswald's curtains issue.

On Thursday night Lee goes out to Irving and tries unsuccessfully to persuade Marina to get an apartment with him that weekend (which would solve the drapes issue in his room at the rooming house immediately). But she says no.

He returns to Dallas the next morning with curtain rods, which the seamstress needs to have before making curtains.

### **Why did Lee leave his wedding ring?**

There has been much mystery surrounding why Lee left his wedding ring inside the teacup of Marina's on a dresser in Marina's room the morning of Nov 22, 1963. According to Marina, this was something Lee had never done before for a non-utilitarian reason. Was it a symbol of a marital breakup? But Ruth Paine said she saw no sign of distress or serious argument or a fight or sobbing or tears that evening. Nor did Marina tell of that level of drama happening.

The common interpretation is he left the wedding ring because he was planning to assassinate JFK.

In the narrative we are imagining, Lee was not involved in assassinating JFK that day, even though, unknown to him, the rifle he with Marina's assistance had removed from the blanket in which it had

been wrapped in the garage in Irving, and had taken to a gunsmith to have a scope base mount repaired consistent with preparing the firearm for sale, on Mon Nov 11, eleven days earlier ("The Oswald rifle scope installation at the Irving Sport Shop of Monday, November 11, 1963" [2023], <https://www.scrollery.com/?p=1485>), was even then on the 6th floor of the Book Depository building, ready to be found and to implicate him in the assassination.

Here is a more mundane reason for his leaving the wedding ring: it is because Lee was planning to see the seamstress at the Dal-Tex building that Friday *and he preferred not to be wearing a wedding ring when he saw her that day.*

And that also becomes the reason he did not tell Marina about the curtains themselves. He told Buell Frazier (or let Buell think) that it was Marina making him some curtains for his room in Oak Cliff. But while the curtains part was true, the part about *Marina* involved was not. That was just what Lee told Frazier or let Frazier think. Lee did not tell Frazier he was having that work done by a seamstress at the Dal-Tex building, and he did not tell Marina that either.

One of the seamstresses at the Dal-Tex had begun to mean something to Lee.

Some men take off wedding rings when they do not want to present themselves to women as married. Imagine that was the reason Lee took off his ring that morning.

As for why he would leave it in the teacup in Marina's room, on one level that is logical on practical grounds. Lee kept the family's money with Marina in Irving, all in cash, not with himself or in his unlocked room in Oak Cliff where it would be more vulnerable to loss or theft. About the only safe place to have his wedding ring if he was not wearing it would be in the Ruth Paine house in Irving, just as with the money.

And yet Lee could have hidden the ring somewhere among his things in the garage, but he did not. He left that ring where Marina would see it, after she declined to move back together with him that weekend.

### **Did Oswald have in mind a possible date the weekend of Nov 22-24, 1963?**

Suspend disbelief please until hearing this out.

David Wood III, "JFK Assassination Chronology":

*7:30 AM (Nov. 22, 1963) J.W. "Dub" Stark, owner of the Top Ten Record Shop at 338 W. Jefferson Blvd. in Oak Cliff says that LHO is waiting at his store when Stark arrives at about this time. Stark says that **LHO buys a ticket to the Dick Clark Show** and leaves by bus. (<http://www.assassinationresearch.com/v2n1/chrono2.pdf>)*

The date of Nov 22 above cannot be correct. At 7:30 am on Nov 22 Oswald was in Irving getting his ride with Buell Frazier back to Dallas. Therefore, imagine Dub Stark has the date wrong by one day and it was the morning of Thursday Nov 21.

From the information in the following articles by Bill Drenas the *fact* that Oswald bought that Dick Clark Show ticket—a show of live Top 40s, popular music—need not seriously be doubted, provided the date is corrected: "J D Tippit and the Top Ten Record Shop, Part II," *Dealey Plaza Echo* 2/3 (1998): 1-4, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=16238#relPageId=5>, and "The Top Ten Record Shop" (1999), <https://www.jfk-assassination.net/top10.htm>. This Dick Clark Show ticket story of Oswald has long been known but few have paid attention to it, yet it has a good claim to be true. The two main points in its favor are the credibility of the store owner telling it, and that he knew Lee and Marina before that ticket purchase, meaning it will not have been a case of a mistaken identification. (If someone already knows someone, then it is not going to be a mistaken identification.)

Owner Dub Stark knew Lee and Marina from having been in his store when they both lived in Oak Cliff. An Earl Golz interview in 1981 of Dub Stark has Dub tell this from a Top Ten Record Shop employee at the time, Louis Cortinas:

"Stark had young employee 11/22/63 'curious story' that employee left store to go to theatre and said same guy earlier that morning purchased ticket to Dick Clark Show, cancelled after assassination."

Louis Cortinas, the employee, confirmed he had walked down the street to the growing crowd and police gathered in front of the nearby Texas Theatre and had seen Oswald brought out through the crowd under arrest. Dub Stark told reporter Golz that the same Oswald had purchased a Dick Clark Show ticket from him. The ticket was sold by Dub Stark personally. From Golz's interview notes of Dub Stark:

"Stark claims he sold Oswald a ticket to Dick Clark Show at 7:30 A.M. November 22. Still had the stub after the assassination."

In 1997, Dub Stark told the same to Dale Myers. Oswald "was waiting at the store when Stark arrived at about 7:30 a.m." the morning of the assassination (*sic*). "Oswald bought a ticket to the Dick Clark Show and left by bus, headed west" (Myers, *With Malice* [2013 edn of 1998 original], 105, citing interview of Sept 1997).

Dub Stark's niece, Wanda Barnard, confirmed Dub had spoken of the Oswald ticket purchase from the beginning. Drenas:

"Dub has told this same story to Wanda and others since the day that it happened. Wanda tells me that she is certain that Dub knew who Oswald was and that he is being honest in his identifying him."

There was even local hearsay at the time, according to a neighboring merchant, that Oswald had left, then *returned* to the Top Ten Record Store a *second* time, to consider buying a *second* ticket. The date of this report is significant in confirming the Oswald Dick Clark Show ticket purchase was not some story that emerged years later. It was being talked about within days following the assassination. From a Dallas FBI office memo to headquarters:

"On 12/3/63, Mr. John D. Whitten telephonically advised that he heard Lee Harvey Oswald was in the Top Ten Record Shop on Jefferson, on the morning of 11/22/63. **Oswald bought a ticket of some kind** and left. Then some time later, Oswald returned to the record shop and wanted to buy another ticket. At this same time, officer J.D. Tippit was in this store, but it apparently was a coincidence. Oswald then left the record shop for the second time. It is not known whether or not Oswald bought another ticket." (FBI, Dec 3, 1963, <https://www.jfk-assassination.net/lho-top10.gif>)

John Whitten, the source of this tip phoned in to the FBI, is identified by Myers as the manager of Gordon's Quality Jewelers, 330 W. Jefferson, only two or three storefronts removed from Top Ten Records on the same side of the street at 338 W. Jefferson. However, Drenas reports that "Wanda had never heard about Oswald returning at the same time that Tippit was in the store and that Dub had never told this story." There is no confirmation that either Dub Stark or Louis Cortinas spoke of Oswald returning a second time or that Oswald considered buying a second ticket. If there was something to an early variant detail speaking of Oswald returning to the Top Ten to consider buying a second ticket, it could only have been, say, within minutes of buying the first one, with a frugal Oswald, outside the store and with a date in mind, perhaps debating within himself whether to spring for a *nonrefundable* second advance ticket to a show of music that was not his personal taste, in order to avoid paying the higher price at the door if he didn't. One could imagine that. However, Stark spoke of having only a single stub of a ticket Oswald bought, not two stubs.

More interesting is the curiosity that on either Wednesday or Thursday morning, Nov 20 or 21—possibly the same morning of the Oswald music ticket purchase (because the ticket purchase cannot have happened Fri Nov 22)—there was another report of Oswald being in an Oak Cliff business establishment at the same time officer Tippit was there, without—to all outward appearances—any recognition between the two, just coincidence. This was at the Dobbs House restaurant on N. Beckley, near Oswald's rooming house, where it was reported Oswald ate breakfast either Wednesday morning Nov 20, according to the waitress who served Oswald and said Tippit was in the restaurant at the same time though without sign of recognition between the two, Mary Dowling (FBI, Dec 6, 1963, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=57742#relPageId=34>), or Thursday

morning Nov 21 according to another Dobbs House waitress who remembered the same incident, Dolores Harrison (FBI, July 29, 1964, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=57076#relPagelD=69>). Is it possible the report of Oswald and Tippit in a business establishment at the same time had cross-fertilized from the one local Oak Cliff story to the other?

Again, Oswald could not have bought that Dick Clark Show ticket on the morning of Fri Nov 22, because he was in Irving that morning riding to work with Buell Frazier. Some cite that as a fatal objection to the Dub Stark story. It is not. Dub Stark could simply have the date wrong, in keeping with a common phenomenon in which people can remember true events but mislocate them chronologically. We have already seen the case of the McKell's seamstresses in which in only one month's time two of the three women had changed the date of the parking lot incident in their memory from the true date, Tuesday Nov 19, to now believing it had happened Thursday Nov 21, the day before the assassination, which was not when it happened. Compare how, as just noted, two witnesses of Oswald at the Dobbs House restaurant, remembering the same incident, differed on whether it had occurred on Wednesday or Thursday. Being mistaken on a date does not mean the event the witness remembers did not happen—those are distinct issues. Since Friday morning Nov 22 is ruled out for the Oswald ticket purchase yet Dub Stark knew it happened, a reasonable conclusion is it may have happened Thursday morning Nov 21.

The Dick Clark Show, Caravan of Stars, was advertised to open Friday night, Nov 22, 1963, at the Dallas Memorial Auditorium, 717 So. Akard, downtown Dallas, within walking distance of Oswald's workplace. There may have been additional Dick Clark Shows scheduled in Dallas that weekend, I do not have that information. But the date of Friday night, the first night, was advertised in the *Dallas Times Herald*, and the Top Ten Record Shop was named in that advertisement as where advance tickets could be bought, \$1.50 advance, \$2.00 at the door.

It was *highly unlike* Oswald to buy a ticket or tickets to an event like that. The Dick Clark Show's music—Top 40s; popular—was not the kind of music Oswald is known to have liked. Oswald's known music taste was classical and opera.\* Oswald never had a history of patronizing any music event in

Dallas, and if he would it is difficult to imagine it would be a Dick Clark Show. It *makes no sense* that Oswald would buy that ticket *for his own use*.

(\* Mr. LIEBELER - You told the FBI that Oswald enjoyed classical music; is that right? Mr. DELGADO - Yes. Mr. LIEBELER - And that he would often talk at length about the opera; is that correct? Mr. DELGADO - Right.)

It follows that it appears Oswald was buying that ticket for someone *else*—and who *else* but a lady. Was he leaving his option open to buy a ticket for himself at the door accompanying the lady? Oswald was not going to Irving that weekend as was his usual practice. He told Buell Frazier that. His Thursday night visit to Irving cleared the weekend to be on his own in Dallas and Oak Cliff—when that Dick Clark Show would be happening.

How is this to be interpreted? There is little other way to interpret this than that Lee's uncharacteristic ticket purchase involves someone else—a lady—who was not Marina. And the timing is when he was having curtains made by a seamstress. Who else would that someone else, the lady who is not Marina, *be* except the seamstress making his curtains?

And maybe, just maybe, he hoped to say to her, he had tickets to the Dick Clark Show that he knew she liked, and, you know, would you maybe be interested in seeing that show with me?

He buys a ticket to a Dick Clark Show to occur on a weekend when he is not going to be in Irving. And he is undertaking activity concerning his curtains situation *centered around his workplace in location* which makes sense as involving one of the seamstresses in the Dal-Tex building, where there is an *uninvestigated and unrebutted* early FBI report that "*some of the . . . girls knew Lee Harvey Oswald who apparently spoke Spanish well and ate with them.*"

And this ticket purchase occurs only a day before the next morning when he decided extraordinarily not to wear his wedding ring, the day he will be seeing the seamstress making his curtains, with a ticket in hand for the Dick Clark Show which opens that night in Dallas, Friday night Nov 22.

There's a lot here that hangs together narratively.

### **Oswald's lunch hours**

A lack of knowledge of Oswald's whereabouts at lunch times at the Book Depository is not new; that has been noticed in the past. It is not that Oswald was missing entirely; he was seen around, but he was not eating lunch with his coworkers and apparently was not often seen eating alone by himself in the building either, although he did sometimes. It has been speculated he could have taken walks by himself out behind the building, or walked to eat lunch at some sit-down cafe nearby, but it is not really clear how he spent his time or where he went during most lunch hours. As Buell Frazier put it:

"Lee never ate with us. I'm not really sure what he did, to tell you the truth, because people had free rein to go and do as they pleased during their break." (Buell Frazier, *Steering Truth* [2021], 37)

And in his Warren Commission testimony:

Mr. BALL - Did you ever eat lunch with Oswald?

Mr. FRAZIER - No, sir; I never have.

Mr. BALL - Did you ever see him eating lunch?

Mr. FRAZIER - No, sir; I never have seen him eat lunch . . . I see some of the guys, they go out for lunch [at 12:00] and they come back 12:45 so I didn't know whether he had went out to lunch or not.

In simple logistics, if a woman was to become acquainted with Oswald, these lunchtimes would be about the only window of time possible to have a chance to do so.

### **The wedding ring again**

*"'Alka [Lee],' Marina said, 'I think it's better if I stay here. I'll stay till Christmas and you'll go on living alone. We'll save money that way. I can talk to Ruth and she's a help to me. I'm lonesome by myself with no one to talk to all day.'" -- McMillan, Marina and Lee*

Assume Lee knows a seamstress. He knows her well enough to ask about his curtains problem.

Suppose it was Wednesday of that week when he told that seamstress what had happened with his drapes. Imagine her saying that while they don't do that kind of work at her manufacturing company for the public, she can solve his problem. She will make four individual sets of curtains for the four windows. She will do this either using a work sewing machine after work hours, or else at home overnight on her own sewing machine.

The seamstress explains what she will need from Lee: fabric of the color and kind he wants (maybe she offers suggestions), measurements of the windows, and the physical curtain rods that will be used. She needs all of those before beginning cutting and sewing. Perhaps she tells him, if he can provide those items by Friday morning she can make some nice curtains for him that will be his to keep, and she could do that in the Dal-Tex building after work on Friday and he could have them by Friday night. Or, she could make them at home overnight and meet him on Saturday to hand over the finished work, however it was arranged.

A note here: the curtains could not have been made *during* the seamstress's work hours. A tailor I know has told me she worked as a seamstress in sweatshops when she was younger, and told me how they work. Her description could be similar to the clothing manufacturing companies located on the various floors of the Dal-Tex building. She explained the seamstresses at their sewing machines are in a large open floor area and each do the same thing, over and over, on the items of clothing as they are passed back from the front of the room through the rows of women and sewing machines working back. There is usually a backlog of work. It is efficient and rushed and assembly-line like. All the women at their sewing machines work in the open visible to everyone else and the supervisors as they work. She explained there is no possibility for a seamstress to do some personal job on the sly during work hours in that situation. She suggested if a seamstress was doing a personal job she might do it at home and arrange to meet the person on a weekend to hand it over and be paid. If that was the case with Oswald, that might have occurred Sat Nov 23 if the assassination had not intruded.

To return to the Dealey Plaza seamstress . . . Oswald is touched by her kindness. This is the solution to his nonworking-drapes problem in his room. Maybe she takes pity on him because he is poor and tells him he can pay her by buying her a ticket to the Dick Clark Show. Or maybe she quotes him a

low rate and says he can pay her when he is able, it need not be immediate. Or maybe she tells him she will do the job for him at no charge for her labor, explaining it is because he has done some kindness for her and she wants to do something for him, who knows, doesn't matter. That she is going to sew and make curtains for him, is what matters here.

If Oswald did meet any seamstresses in a lunch place they would have noticed his wedding ring. Therefore, Oswald coming in to work to the Book Depository on Fri Nov 22 without wearing a wedding ring could hardly be for a purpose of actual concealment to the seamstress that he was married, but it could signal something had changed.

We only have Marina's version of her turndown of Oswald Thursday night Nov 21 to what she described as his three times earnest appeals that they find an apartment together that weekend.

Marina's objection, "no, maybe after the holidays" . . . could be Marina's other language for "no", she was happy in Irving being with another woman for support with a small child and baby and shared childrearing, she had no intention of moving into another apartment poverty situation with Lee in isolation . . . even though rejoining Lee was the supposed game-plan when finances permitted, the supposed denouement of their temporary living apart for financial reasons and for Marina to have support in having her recent baby. According to Marina, Lee really tried that evening—really made an effort that night, tried hard—to persuade her to move into an apartment with him that very weekend (which would be the most direct immediate solution to his crashed-drapes/lack of privacy issue at N. Beckley—*just move out that weekend!*). But Marina was irritated with Lee—(nothing new there, common in that relationship)—and as she later told it, she was in effect punishing him for his most recent offense, with temporary silent treatment and rejection of his overtures. Lee had been through that a hundred times before; that should not be expected to throw him seriously off-kilter.

But imagine this time there *was* something different—that Lee realized, possibly accurately, that Marina's reasons given for *postponing* moving back together with him might just be because, just maybe, it was not a sure thing that she was going to reunite with him *at all*, in the sense of a shared household.

There was no explosive argument Thursday night. Ruth told of seeing nothing unusual that evening, just an ordinary visit of Lee to see Marina and his kids, like always (apart from the timing a day earlier than expected). Ruth did tell of Lee going into the garage for an unknown purpose that Thursday evening. The Warren Commission interpreted that as Lee getting the rifle. But that was simply their imagination and was not correct, according to the evidence set forth in a 2023 study indicating Lee had removed the rifle from the garage on Nov 11 and the rifle was not there since (“The Oswald rifle scope installation at the Irving Sport Shop of Monday, November 11, 1963” [2023], <https://www.scrollery.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Irving-Sport-Shop-109-pdf.pdf>). *On Nov 21 there was no rifle in the blanket in the garage.* Therefore Lee was in that garage on that Thursday evening of the 21st for some *different* purpose, which is consistent with getting curtain rods to take the next morning.

Ruth Paine saw no argument between Lee and Marina outwardly. But maybe Marina’s turndown to Lee’s no-notice urging of an immediate move to an apartment that weekend did represent some internal tipping point for Lee, and he had forced the issue—and gotten her “no” to that—for a reason.

In this narrative Oswald leaving his wedding ring is unrelated to the assassination. That his leaving of the wedding ring and the assassination of JFK occurred the same day was an accident. There was no relationship of one of those events on the other.

But Lee’s intended meeting on Friday with the seamstress making him curtains, and not wearing his wedding ring, *that was not* accident or coincidence. There was *causation*.

And possibly may be added here a still further detail. There is an argument that Oswald wore a button-down light maroon-colored designer-label dress shirt, a nice dress shirt, CE 151, to work at the Book Depository that Friday Nov 22 (the point is contested but the weight of evidence favors it; for the argument, <https://www.patspeer.com/chapter-4b-threads-of-evidence>). But why would anyone wear a dress shirt to do manual labor at the Book Depository? Yet coworkers and Oswald himself *said* he wore *that shirt that Friday morning!* Coworker James Jarman, for example, when

asked what kind of shirt he saw Oswald wear Friday morning Nov 22, the day of the assassination, answered: "*Ivy Leagues, I believe*". Why would Oswald wear a dress shirt *that day*?

Dressing up for an assassination? Or dressing up for a lady? Which makes better sense?

On that Friday Oswald was having curtains made for him by a seamstress and he removed his wedding ring. It could be he had in mind to join the seamstress in seeing the Dick Clark Show that night after after she finished making his curtains. Perhaps Oswald had in mind buying his own ticket at the door to avoid the risk of paying in advance for a discounted but non-refundable ticket in case it wasn't used.

On Thursday Lee had asked Buell Frazier for the ride to Irving that evening, and told Frazier he would not be going to Irving that weekend. Departing from his usual practice, he did not call Ruth Paine and Marina in advance to tell them he was coming out on Thursday night. Once he was there, he told Marina he would not be returning that weekend. He also told Frazier the Thursday trip was to get curtain rods. Then he did bring Friday morning what looked to Buell Frazier to be in agreement with the size of curtain rods in a paper sack, from Irving to work on Friday morning. These are all facts, not imagined. Both the damaged traverse curtain rod in Lee's N. Beckley room and his telling Frazier he was going to Irving related to curtains are facts. The purchase of a Dick Clark Show ticket and not wearing his wedding ring—unexpected and unusual—are two more facts. The Thursday night unexpected visit to Irving and clearing of his weekend to *not* be in Irving, are facts. His appeal Thursday night to Marina to move into an apartment with him that weekend, another fact, can be understood as prompted in its timing as an even more direct solution to his N. Beckley room curtains situation, if Marina would go for it (she didn't).

These things have been interpreted around the JFK assassination, without consideration of mundane explanations for these facts.

A weekend date with a seamstress may have been what Lee hoped for on Friday Nov 22, 1963, if an assassination of a president had not intruded. And Marina had *no* idea.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your husband give any reason for coming home on Thursday?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said that he was lonely because he hadn't come the preceding weekend, and he wanted to make his peace with me.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say anything to him then?

Mrs. OSWALD. He tried to talk to me but I would not answer him, and he was very upset.

Mr. RANKIN. Were you upset with him?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was angry, of course. He was not angry—he was upset. I was angry. He tried very hard to please me. He spent quite a bit of time putting away diapers and played with the children on the street.

Mr. RANKIN. How did you indicate to him that you were angry with him?

Mrs. OSWALD. By not talking to him.

Mr. RANKIN. And how did he show that he was upset?

Mrs. OSWALD. He was upset over the fact that I would not answer him. He tried to start a conversation with me several times, but I would not answer. And he said that he didn't want me to be angry at him because this upsets him. On that day, he suggested that we rent an apartment in Dallas. He said that he was tired of living alone and perhaps the reason for my being so angry was the fact that we were not living together. That if I want to he would rent an apartment in Dallas tomorrow—that he didn't want me to remain with Ruth any longer, but wanted me to live with him in Dallas. He repeated this not once but several times, but I refused. And he said that once again I was preferring my friends to him, and that I didn't need him.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say to that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I said it would be better if I remained with Ruth until the holidays, he would come, and we would all meet together. That this was better because while he was living alone and I stayed with Ruth, we were spending less money. And I told him to buy me a washing machine, because two children it became too difficult to wash by hand.

Mr. RANKIN. What did he say to that?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said he would buy me a washing machine.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say to that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Thank you. That it would be better if he bought something for himself—that I

would manage.

Mr. RANKIN. Did this seem to make him more upset, when you suggested that he wait about getting an apartment for you to live in?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. He then stopped talking and sat down and watched television and then went to bed. I went to bed later. It was about 9 o'clock when he went to sleep. I went to sleep about 11:30. But it seemed to me that he was not really asleep. But I didn't talk to him. In the morning he got up, said goodbye, and left, and that I shouldn't get up—as always, I did not get up to prepare breakfast. This was quite usual. And then after I fed Rachel, I took a look to see whether Lee was here, but he had already gone.

(...)

Mr. RANKIN. On the evening of the 21st, was anything said about curtain rods or his taking curtain rods to town the following day?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I didn't have any.

Mr. RANKIN. He didn't say anything like that?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you discuss the weekend that was coming up?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said that he probably would not come on Friday, and he didn't come he was in jail.

Mr. RANKIN. Did the quarrel that you had at that time seem to cause him to be more disturbed than usual?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, not particularly. At least he didn't talk about that quarrel when he came. Usually he would remember about what happened. This time he didn't blame me for anything, didn't ask me any questions, just wanted to make up.

Mr. RANKIN. I understood that when you didn't make up he was quite disturbed and you were still angry, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. I wasn't really very angry. I, of course, wanted to make up with him. But I gave the appearance of being very angry. I was smiling inside, but I had a serious expression on my face.

Mr. RANKIN. And as a result of that, did he seem to be more disturbed than usual?

Mrs. OSWALD. As always, as usual. Perhaps a little more. At least when he went to bed he was very upset.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you think that had anything to do with the assassination the next day?

Mrs. OSWALD. Perhaps he was thinking about all of that. I don't think that he was asleep.

Because, in the morning when the alarm clock went off he hadn't woken up as usual before the alarm went off, and I thought that he probably had fallen asleep very late. At least then I didn't think about it. Now I think so.

Mr. RANKIN. When he said he would not be home that Friday evening, did you ask him why?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. What did he say?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said that since he was home on Thursday, that it wouldn't make any sense to come again on Friday, that he would come for the weekend.

Mr. RANKIN. Did that cause you to think that he had any special plans to do anything?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Here is what Lee did *not* tell Marina:

- that he had an inoperable window drapes situation in his room in Oak Cliff
- that in direct response to that situation in his room in Oak Cliff, a seamstress near his workplace was going to make curtains for four individual windows for him
- that the seamstress may be doing this for Lee *gratis* without charge for her skill and labor
- that he had bought a ticket to a Dick Clark Show to occur on the upcoming weekend which he had arranged so that he would not be in Irving—and the ticket was not for Marina or himself
- that he took curtain rods belonging to the Paines from the Paines' garage, without asking or receiving permission, which would be objectionable to Marina if she had known since it was the Paines' property

What does that look like? If Marina had known Lee was keeping these things secret from her, what would any woman think? Especially if combined with what Marina *could* see:

- that he had taken off his wedding ring

This occurred following the turndown by Marina to an unexpected request by Lee that Marina move to an apartment with him that weekend, perhaps interpreted by Lee as refusing to reunite as a family. Some men will provoke an argument or a breakup precipitously with one woman in order to be able to tell the new woman of interest that the first woman is history, so that the second woman may be less reluctant to go out with him. Some women will require that of the man as a condition before she will go out with him. Was something like that occurring there?

And the secrecy of Lee with Marina concerning the seamstress—if it was *only* business, would there be the secrecy? If it was not at least *potentially* romantic, from Lee's point of view, why would Lee *not* tell Marina about his curtains and a seamstress? Ruth Paine likely would have given Lee her unused curtain rods in her garage if she was aware it could be helpful to him. Of course, if Marina learned the seamstress was making complete new curtains, that might be surprising, it might seem a bit much, and she would ask Lee how he could afford it. If Lee answered the seamstress was making the curtains at no charge for her labor, Marina's antennae might go up even more at that. Lee avoided that awkwardness by not telling Marina at all.

Buell Frazier knew nothing of any of this taking place behind the scenes of what he saw and heard, driving Lee to and from Irving.

Mr. BALL - When you talked to him on Thursday and he told you he wouldn't be going home on Friday, did he tell you what he was going to do, why he wasn't going to go home?

Mr. FRAZIER - No, sir; he didn't.

### **More on the Dick Clark Show possible date**

Frugal and impoverished Lee Oswald did not have a track record of giving gratuities. Cab driver Whaley didn't think too highly of Oswald's stingy tip of only a nickel on a \$0.95 fare. There is no known gift Lee ever gave Ruth Paine for her hospitality in hosting him in his visits on weekends, or for space for his belongings in her garage. He never put gas in Buell Frazier's tank for the rides Frazier gave him.

Therefore the notion of Lee on his own initiative spontaneously giving the seamstress a ticket to a music show as a gift or gratuity does not quite work in terms of Oswald's track record. (Not to mention a more expected gift to a lady would be two tickets, not one.) But the Dick Clark ticket purchase works as part of a planned or hoped-for date.

Oswald also was unlikely to be able to afford or want to afford the cost of a seamstress's labor in making curtains, which is not cheap, especially in a rooming house situation. (But note that since the curtains and curtain rods would not be a fixture, they would by rights remain Lee's property to take with him whenever he would leave the N. Beckley rooming house.) The curtains-making really only makes sense with Lee Oswald if the seamstress offered to make the curtains at no charge for her labor, and the four-windows new curtains plan was her suggestion to begin with. Why would she do that for him? Probably it would be if she hoped to get to know Lee better, perhaps saw something in him that interested her. Was it that he spoke a little Spanish, which could have prompted asking how many languages he knew, and being impressed when she learned he was fluent in Russian and had travelled? That he had been in the Soviet Union and Japan? Was her interest sparked by something he said, some comment or view expressed? A book in common? Could be anything.

The seamstress would know Lee was married, because up to that point Lee had worn his wedding ring. We might imagine Lee anticipating possible resistance from the seamstress of his suggesting a date: "Oh Lee, that's very sweet of you but you're married and I don't go out with married men."

(Or alternatively, "Lee, you know we've talked about this before. You know I don't go out with married men.")

To which we might imagine Lee, anticipating that objection to a hoped-for date that was not to happen, *not wearing his wedding ring*, planned to tell her that his wife had broken up with him (a certain spin of Lee's on Marina's refusing to reunite with him in getting the apartment). And hoping she might reconsider . . .

And if the chemistry was right, and she saw a heart that she liked, she might have listened as he at first hesitantly and haltingly, and then it might come pouring out, his telling her of his frustrating marriage, his hopes and dreams and sorrows . . .

And who knows.

But an assassination of a president got in the way of that narrative.

### **The money in Oswald's pocket**

When Oswald was arrested on Friday he had \$13.87 in his pocket, and no money was found in the search of his room at N. Beckley. \$170 in cash was with Marina in her room in Irving (= \$1,800 in 2025 dollars according to an online inflation calculator). That was their bank. I have speculated that Oswald's practice may have been to give the cash from his bimonthly cash payments at the Book Depository to Marina, and leave each weekend with a refill to \$15.00 in bills to carry on his person for himself back to Oak Cliff, for the several days until his next return to Irving and next topup.

(Oswald's pay was \$1.25/hour minus taxes and withholding, "paid in cash" twice a month [FBI, interview of O.V. Campbell, March 18, 1964, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=1139#relPageld=724>]. Oswald received \$104.41 on Fri Nov 15, 1963, which would have been carried in Oswald's wallet on his person until his first opportunity—that would be Thu night Nov 21— to add the unspent portion of that to the amount in Marina's room, to become part of the \$170 found there [FBI, Nov 27, 1963, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=57675#relPageld=12>].)

Lee had to pay \$8.00 cash for his weekly room rent each Monday, plus food and bus fares and any other expenses until he would return to Irving and replenish. The \$13.87 found on Oswald's person at the time of his arrest would fit this reconstruction of leaving Irving with \$15.00, which on Nov 22 may or may not have been supplemented by an additional torn and marked \$1.00 bill picked up at his rooming house perhaps out of his address book to take to the theater, minus bus fare, cab and possible spending mid-Friday morning for food from a food cart, cokes and maybe a phone call (on

the torn and marked dollar bill, FBI, Dec 10, 1963,

<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=1317#relPageld=209>).

Since Lee was keeping his curtains and the seamstress concealed from Marina, if Marina was used to a normal topup to \$15.00 in bills from their cash each time, he might keep that same routine unchanged rather than raise questions from Marina if he were to take more. This could account for his leaving Irving Friday morning for the return to Dallas having relatively little money on his person despite a possible weekend meeting with the seamstress and any unexpected expenses.

### **Why did Lee deny the curtain rods to Captain Fritz?**

Buell Frazier and Linnie Mae Randle told the Dallas Police Friday afternoon that Lee had brought something in a paper bag from Irving to work with him that morning. Buell told the police what he had already told his sister Linnie Mae the previous evening, that Lee had told him his purpose in going to Irving was to obtain curtain rods, and then Lee had brought a paper sack and told Buell again that morning in the car that it was curtain rods.

With rare exceptions, *almost no one*—in the more than six decades since November 1963 when President Kennedy was assassinated—has *believed Lee brought curtain rods*.

Imagine the unseen truth, wide open in front of our collective eyes all along with respect to Oswald and the assassination, so stunningly simple in retrospect, so missed—that what Oswald brought that Friday morning was . . . *curtain rods!*

He was bringing those curtain rods because a seamstress required them prior to cutting and sewing fabric to make curtains. A seamstress near his workplace was making curtains for him.

Imagine Lee had no idea going to work that morning of Fri Nov 22 that there would be an assassination that day. No idea that his former (as of Nov 11) rifle and handmade rifle paper bag he had made to carry it, unknown to him were even then, that morning, *in the Texas School Book Depository on the 6th floor*, and before the day was out he would be arrested and on national and world news charged with the assassination of President Kennedy.

Imagine at the time of the assassination Lee was on the front steps of the Book Depository, off to the side and in the rear unnoticed where he had stepped out at the last minute from behind the glass doors to see the parade. He hears the shots (but from where he is standing cannot see what happened). Within a few tens of seconds, standing there as the stunned crowds react, screams in the air, women screaming Kennedy had been hit, he realized something was very, very wrong, hair standing up on the back of his neck wrong, danger, that his life that very moment could be at risk from those who had just carried out an assassination attempt on President Kennedy.

Imagine that, characteristically controlled under pressure, Oswald goes into evasive mode, up the nearby southeast stairs to the second floor, back to the rear, intent on going down the northwest stairs and out the rear of the building. After a surprise interruption from being confronted momentarily on the second floor at gunpoint by a police officer coming up those stairs who—after Truly told the officer he's OK he works here—lets him go, he feints moving southeast on the second floor to be seen headed toward the front, but, out of sight circles back again to go down the rear stairwell and out the rear of the Book Depository as originally planned and as unobtrusively as possible. He slips out of the building at the rear just before it is sealed by arriving police. His objective is *at all costs* to avoid being *tailed*. He makes his way on foot to a pay phone some blocks east of the Book Depository. He phones for an emergency extrication from the Texas Theatre in Oak Cliff. He moves by bus and cab to Oak Cliff, takes the risk of dashing in and out of his rooming house quickly where he rapidly changes clothes, picks up his revolver and rushes back out the door. He feints, standing at a northbound bus stop as if waiting for a bus going north, for housekeeper Earlene's benefit who he knows will look out the window and see (so she will tell a wrong direction for him if asked). Then unknown to Earlene he moves in the opposite direction, south on foot to the Texas Theatre. He makes it to the Theatre and opportunistically enters the theater when Julia Postal at the ticket booth is accidentally away from the booth for a moment (he would have bought a ticket going in if she was there but did not wait for her to return). He thought he had entered unseen, but he was seen. Before a contact could arrive or he could make further phone calls, he is arrested within minutes by police swarming the theater and taken into custody. At the Dallas Police station he is questioned without a lawyer by Dallas Police Captain Fritz and batteries of FBI and Secret Service agents in a series of interrogation sessions, none recorded or transcribed.

At some point in the questioning Fritz asks Lee what he brought to work. Lee says his lunch, which was not true. (He told Buell Frazier he brought no lunch that morning, according to Frazier.) Did he bring a package, Fritz asks. (By this point Fritz has Frazier's information.) No, Lee lies again. What about curtain rods that Frazier said Lee had said he was bringing? Oswald denies he brought curtain rods, denies he told Frazier he was going to Irving to get curtain rods, says Frazier must have been mistaken and thinking of some other time.

*(No! No! No!—the Greek chorus says to the audience: Frazier was not thinking of some other time! Frazier is a truthful witness! Frazier tells the truth!)*

What Oswald answered Fritz was not true on three counts: Oswald *had* brought a package. He *did* tell Frazier it was curtain rods. And last but not least, it *was* curtain rods.

People have not been able to *imagine* why Lee would lie to Fritz about that, if the curtain rods were true.

The present narrative renders that comprehensible. Quite simply, he was protecting the lady. He never intended or had any idea his taking curtain rods from Ruth Paine's garage that morning was going to be exposed in this way. When he found himself under arrest and in the glare of the spotlight, he denied the curtain rods to avoid directing trouble onto the innocent seamstress.

If he were to tell the truth of the curtain rods to Fritz, one question would lead to another and that would go to that seamstress, and that was why he was not telling that to begin with, so as not to bring her into it. Oswald otherwise seems to have sought—with both Ruth Paine and Marina being cases in point—not to draw innocent other people into trouble on his account if he could help it. That becomes why he denied the curtain rods, because he did not want harm to come to that seamstress.

And yet it seems the seriousness of the charges Oswald was facing—of killing a president—should have overridden that, and surely would have in the hands of a good lawyer. But there is also this: did Oswald *realize* they suspected he *had brought the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle to work that morning in the 38" handmade paper bag made from Book Depository wrapping paper found on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor?* It

matters whether he was told that. If he did not know that, then there might go any perceived need to embrace the curtain rods as an alibi.

Was Oswald told that his former rifle, the Mannlicher-Carcano, had been found on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor, along with a 38" rifle paper bag he had made for that rifle? There is no record Oswald was shown either of those items. The question then is: was he even *told* those two items had been recovered from the 6<sup>th</sup> floor? Is there any evidence he ever was told?

The world heard a lot about Oswald then and in the days and weeks that followed in the news, and we unconsciously assume Oswald must have known everything the world was seeing on television, or which we now know, but did he? There is no information Oswald had access to television or newspapers while he was in custody that weekend. Was Oswald informed that a rifle had been found on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor and traced to him?

Is it possible (as unbelievable as this sounds) that Oswald did not know fully the specifics of what he was being accused, even though the rest of the world did—such that he might not necessarily have a calculus in his mind or reasoning that he had need of the curtain rods as an alibi?

Lest that sound outlandish, here it is—Dallas County District Attorney Henry Wade saying it straight-up on Saturday night, Nov 23, 1963, speaking to the press at the Dallas Police station, which can be seen at 4:24:25f at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0uQriCNMIw&t=15865s>:

DISTRICT ATTORNEY WADE. He's been charged with both killing officer Tippit and John F. Kennedy.

REPORTER: **Did you tell him any of the evidence against him so far?**

DISTRICT ATTORNEY WADE: **No**, we're still working on the evidence.

"No"—Oswald had not been told "*any of the evidence against him so far.*" He had been informed what he was *charged* with, but not the *evidence* relied upon to *support* those charges. That evidence in the case of the JFK assassination was, above all, the twin items of the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, and the 38" handmade rifle paper bag associated with the rifle, both traceable to Oswald, both found on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor and implicated in the assassination. That would be the heart of the case brought

forward in court against Oswald. Imagine Oswald never knew that. During all of Oswald's questioning, he was kept in the dark concerning some of the most basic matters of evidence being accumulated and interpreted against him. And the statement from District Attorney Wade (who would be trying the case and seeking the death penalty on Oswald for the assassination of President Kennedy under Texas state law) was spoken as late as Saturday night Nov 23. By noon the next day Oswald was dead.

Had he ever been informed of the finds of the rifle and the 38" rifle paper bag on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor? *It does not seem so. There is no evidence or indication he was.*

Is it possible Lee—whose mail-order purchase of the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle in March 1963 may all along have been part of a government "sting" operation as part of a Dodd Congressional subcommittee investigation of mail-order firearms sales—gave his Dallas Police interrogators false answers on some things not because he was guilty, but because he had been signaled or told that intervention on his behalf was imminent, and he should stall and not reveal his relationship with a government agency?\*

(\* Gary Mack, at the time an announcer and producer for KXAS-TV, Fort Worth, later curator of the Sixth Floor Museum of Dallas, reported in May 1984: "The wife of one of [Dallas Police Captain Will] Fritz's best friends recently told researchers that Fritz had secretly recorded his Oswald interrogations. Only one other DPD employee even knew about the recording equipment, which was in a small room or closet adjoining Fritz' office. The tapes are supposedly safe. She added that Fritz was afraid for the safety of his family and relatives, and that Oswald had admitted being a member of the intelligence community. There is no known reason to doubt the credibility of the woman or her husband" [p. 3 of *Coverups!* No. 16, May 1984, Fort Worth, Texas, Gary Mack, editor, <http://jfk.hood.edu/Collection/Weisberg%20Subject%20Index%20Files/M%20Disk/Mack%20Gary%20Cover-up/Item%2019.pdf>]. *There has never been either confirmation or disconfirmation of this story to my knowledge—gd.*)

### **Further reflections on not telling Fritz**

As will become clear in this study, the actual witness and physical evidence argues that, no matter what Lee may have *told* Fritz, he *did* bring curtain rods Friday morning in agreement with what he told Buell Frazier.

And it makes sense that he would have brought any curtains-related materials to his workplace, because near his workplace is where seamstresses were, one of whom was helping him, in the Dal-Tex building.

His coverup of that with Fritz is of a piece with his secrecy to Marina and Ruth—not because the curtains were untrue, but because of the sensitivity of Lee regarding disclosure of his relationship with the seamstress, in the case of Marina, and to shield that seamstress from hostile police questioning, in Lee's answers to Fritz.

And I think of this. When I was a kid I was riding with my father in a car near the University of Akron when my father accidentally rear-ended a car in front of him. My father was the driver at fault, the driver in front was innocent. No one was injured. Immediately the passenger door of the car in front flew open and I and my father saw two young women run out of the car and disappear. After a few minutes the police arrived to make a report. We all overheard, I did too, I was standing there, the officer ask the driver of the car in front, a man, if there had been any passengers in the car with him at the time of the collision. The man said no, he had been alone in the car. My father did not contradict him, answered the questions the officer asked him, and the report was resolved otherwise routinely, with my father's insurance covering the claim for the damage.

That driver of the car in front, innocent in the collision, lied to that officer in his answer about being alone in the car. He denied and did not tell of the two young women passengers who were in the car with him, who would have been named and gone into that police report if he had answered truthfully. No one knows why he did not want that disclosed, but there probably was a reason. His false answer to the officer was not indicative of guilt in the auto collision. It had nothing to do with the collision. It was for some unrelated reason.

I wonder if that is a possible analogy to Lee denying to Captain Fritz that he brought curtain rods from Irving to his workplace the morning of Nov 22. In each case, each were keeping a woman's name out of a police record for reasons unrelated to the subject of the police inquiry.

The possibility of a seamstress in the background of Oswald's actions in his final week, the week of the JFK assassination, was never considered in any of the investigations, from the Warren Commission through to HSCA and authors Posner and Bugliosi—an amazing oversight in retrospect. The seamstress factor opens up another way to look at Oswald's answers regarding the curtain rods in his interrogations, compared to what has been commonly assumed.

And here is another point which has received little consideration. Landlady Mrs. Johnson at the N. Beckley rooming house had no idea when the traverse curtain rod in Oswald's room had become inoperable. Her statements variously that it was reporters or the police who had damaged it were simply guesses, nothing more. But if for the sake of argument it is assumed that it was, say, the police search on Friday afternoon when the traverse curtain rod damage first happened, an interesting problem is raised. For if it is also accepted that Lee did tell Buell Frazier *on Thursday* the reason for his trip to Irving was to pick up *curtain rods*, is it not an extraordinary coincidence that Oswald would pick *that particular* allegedly *imaginary* reason out of thin air, *one day before* the traverse curtain rod in his room was damaged *creating a need for a repair involving curtains and curtain rods*?

*Why* would Oswald pick *that* particular free-floating imaginary or bogus reason (as supposed) on *Thursday*, which has direct relevance for a problem that police or reporters would not be newly creating until *the next day, Friday*? An amazing coincidence indeed!!!

Obviously and more sensibly, Oswald's comments to Frazier and actions related to curtains on Thursday Nov 21 *followed* Oswald's knowledge of the damaged traverse curtain rod in his room, and represent a response to it. That is the only sequence that works here.

### **What Oswald told Buell Frazier on Thursday November 21, 1963**

Buell Frazier lived a few houses down the street from Ruth Paine in Irving and commuted to work at the Texas School Book Depository at Dealey Plaza in Dallas. In October, at a time when Lee with a pregnant wife was out of work, at the suggestion of his sister, Linnie Mae Randle, Buell Frazier had inquired of his supervisor, Bill Shelley, whether there was any job opening, which helped Oswald get his job in the Book Depository, as an act of neighborly kindness (*Steering Truth*, 35). Frazier then gave Oswald rides to and from Irving on weekends. Buell Frazier, who is still living, has been a good and honorable man. Here are Frazier's statements from that first day until today. Some of the quotations which follow are adapted from Pat Speer's compilation at <https://www.patspeer.com/chapter-4h-the-curtain-rod-story>.

Nov 22, 1963, Buell Frazier, affidavit to the Dallas County Sheriff's Department:

"About a month ago, I met Lee Harvey Oswald at work . . . I asked him if he would like to ride back and forth with me as I knew his wife lived with Ruth Paine near my house, and he said he would, but only on week ends as he had an apartment of his own in Oak Cliff . . . He told me that he was going home to get some curtain rods . . . This morning, Friday, November 22, 1963 . . . I parked the car and sit there awhile and ran the motor to charge the battery, and while I was doing that, Lee got out and opened the back door and got the package out of the back seat and walked behind the car, then I got out of the car and started walking toward the building where I work. I noticed that Lee had the package in his right hand under his arm, and the package was straight up and down, and he had his arm down, and you could not see much of the package. When we started walking, Lee was just a few feet ahead of me, but he kept walking faster than me, and finally got way ahead of me. I saw him go in the back door at the Loading Dock of the building that we work in, and he still had the package under his arm. I did not see him anymore for about 30 minutes, and then we were both working."

<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=1140#relPageId=227>

FBI, Nov 22, 1963:

"He advised during the day of November 21, 1963, Oswald had approached him at work and requested that he be able to ride with Frazier to Irving as he wanted to obtain some curtain rods for his residence, in Dallas."

Dec 1, 1963, article in the *Philadelphia Bulletin* for which Frazier was interviewed:

"As a matter of fact, said Frazier, Oswald had told him the day before that he would be bringing some rods to exchange them for other rods he wanted for his room at Mrs. Johnson's."

FBI, Dec 1, 1963;

"Oswald replied that he wanted to get some curtain rods in Irving and take them to his room in Oak Cliff."

Dec 5, 1963, affidavit to the Secret Service:

"On Thursday morning, November 21, 1963 Lee asked me if he could ride home with me that night. Lee had never gone home in the middle of the week before, so I asked him why and he stated he was going home to get some curtain rods for his apartment."

Warren Commission testimony, March 11, 1964:

Mr. BALL – It was on a Thursday.

Mr. FRAZIER – Right.

Mr. BALL – Was that the 21<sup>st</sup> of November?

Mr. FRAZIER – Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL – Well, tell us about that.

Mr. FRAZIER – Well, I say, we were standing like I said at the four-headed table about half as large as this, not, quite half as large, but anyway I was standing there getting the orders in and he said, "Could I ride home with you this afternoon?" And I said, "Sure. You know, like I

told you, you can go home with me any time you want to, like I say anytime you want to go see your wife that is all right with me." So automatically I knew it wasn't Friday, I come to think it wasn't Friday and I said, "Why are you going home today?" And he says, "I am going home to get some curtain rods." He said, "You know, put in an apartment." He wanted to hang up some curtains and I said, "Very well." And I never thought more about it and I had some invoices in my hands for some orders and I walked on off and started filling the orders.

June 19, 2002, oral history, Sixth Floor Museum:

"He said but I need to go out to Irving. He said that Marina had made him some curtains for his apartment. He stayed over in an apartment in Dallas during the week and would go home with me like on Friday. So he was going out to pick up the curtain rods where he could hang the curtains in his apartment. (*Gary Mack asks if Oswald said these curtains were ready or whether he was just going to pick up some curtain rods.*) The way he explained it, they were ready and he was gonna get the curtain rods to hang the curtains."

2021, Buell Frazier, *Steering Truth*:

"Thursday morning, November 21, just before my break, I was standing at the table, getting the orders out of the box, and Lee walked over to me and asked, 'Can I ride home with you this afternoon?' 'Sure,' I said. 'You can go home with me anytime you want to.' A few minutes later, I was looking at an invoice and noticed it was Thursday. I ran into him about thirty minutes later, and I asked him, 'Why are you going home today? It's not Friday.' 'I am going to get some curtain rods to put in my room,' replied Lee. 'Marina has made me some curtains.'" (*Steering Truth* [2021], 39)

Buell Frazier has explained many times that he did not know anything about Oswald's room in Oak Cliff or its curtains situation. He was never there. He never saw the room. He just told what he saw and heard from Oswald at work and on their drives out to Irving and back. It is clear that Lee told Buell the curtain rods were for *curtains*, that the curtains were for *Lee's room at N. Beckley* in Oak Cliff, and that the curtains were being *made*, i.e. there was a seamstress, though Lee did not tell Buell

that last detail. About the seamstress, Lee does not tell Buell on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> any more than he will tell Fritz on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup>, which is to say nothing. *There was a seamstress*. But Lee concealed her and his relationship with her from Marina and Buell Frazier, no less than he did from Fritz in his interrogation.

### **The Warren Commission and subsequent investigations' dismissals of witness testimony concerning what Oswald brought Friday morning Nov 22**

*"How did the rifle get there? I have no idea. But, Lee did not take a rifle with him that morning."* -- Buell Frazier, Sept 26, 2014, Bethesda, Maryland (<https://aarclibrary.org/buell-wesley-frazier-recollections-and-reflections-lee-harvey-oswald/>)

The bald, blatant fact is that the Warren Commission and the House Select Committee on Assassinations investigations, followed by the books of Posner and Bugliosi, rejected and dismissed foundational evidence—the sworn testimonies of witnesses, Buell Frazier and his sister Linnie Mae Randle, concerning the length and description of the paper sack Oswald brought on Friday Nov 22, for what, as will become clear, were no valid or legitimate reasons whatsoever.

But before rejecting that evidence—the witness testimonies of Buell Frazier and his sister—the Warren Commission tried to shape that testimony toward what was wanted, according to Frazier. Below is from a presentation of Frazier in 2013. Viewing this video is recommended to appreciate the sincerity of Frazier. One can see in Frazier's lined face, and hear in his words, the understated pain under which Buell Frazier has held up for a lifetime, going against the current with his testimony, steadfast all these years despite his testimony being dismissed. In this presentation Frazier is introduced by journalist Hugh Aynesworth as "one of the most honest people I've ever met." Frazier:

"My sister and I, we went—when I say my sister, Mrs. Linnie Mae Randle—they arranged for us to come to Washington, D.C. to testify before the Warren Commission. And we both testified, and during my testimony, they would ask me things, **and they would try to get me to change my testimony, to what they wanted**. And when I would not do that—now here's the catch, now listen to this real well—they said, 'Oh he doesn't know. He's just mistaken.'

“Well that to me is you’d just as soon punched me in the face. Because I’ve never forgotten that. And I read some of their comments. How can someone who wasn’t even there know all the answers? I don’t know all the answers. And I don’t know anybody who does. But when you testify before somebody, and you tell them the truth, and they don’t like your answers— ‘oh, he’s mistaken’, ‘he just doesn’t know’—(*Aynesworth: but they were trying to get you to explain why you didn’t notice the gun in the back seat of the car*)—Because there was no gun! That’s what they wouldn’t buy. The Police Department here in Dallas didn’t do it, and neither did they.

“And while we were there testifying before the Warren Commission, my sister and I both had to make bags of what we saw that day from only just a glance, from our memories. We didn’t have a—the only thing we had was a pair of scissors, and tape and paper, and we had to make—I can’t tell you how many bags I made, and what they couldn’t understand, how they could come so close to what I’d said. (*Frazier holding his hands about two feet apart.*) Because it’s entirely different from what they wanted me to say

“To be quite frank with you, I don’t know how the rifle got into the building, and I don’t think they do either, because if they did they wouldn’t be asking me. They’d already know. But then again they might ask me to see what I would tell them. So I really didn’t think too much about going up to Washington to testify before the Warren Commission . . . (*Questioner asks Frazier if it is possible he could have made an honest mistake on the length of the bag.*) Well I can understand your question there, but the thing is again, in the way he carried the package after he left the car, you would have seen the barrel sticking up above his shoulders . . .

“There’s no way that rifle, you could break it down, that it would fit in that bag. So what some people think is I’m lying about it. But I’m not. My eyesight was 20-20 then and 20-20 now with glasses on. And I guarantee you for a boy growing up in the country, that used to hunt, I know a rifle when I see one.” (“Buell Wesley Frazier & Hugh Aynesworth 2013 JFK Assassination,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nBHUwfCHN4c>)

So he said. Buell Frazier—quiet, sober, unassuming, as credible as it gets for any civilian witness called to testify by the Warren Commission—has never publicly offered a theory to try to explain what he saw. He simply has stuck to saying *what he saw*, the *fact*, resisting pressure to testify differently than the *fact, what he saw*. The Warren Commission testimonies of Buell Frazier and Linnie Mae Randle, of how they remembered Oswald holding his paper sack and their insistence under oath that the length was shorter than the length necessary for Oswald to have carried a broken-down Mannlicher-Carcano rifle that morning—with no witness saying differently—were rejected for no legitimate reason.

**The paper sack Oswald brought from Irving the morning of Nov 22 was not the handmade 38" rifle paper bag, made with Book Depository wrapping paper, found on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor**

A handmade 38-inch rifle paper bag, CE 142, was found on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Book Depository on Nov 22, at the window where the rifle had been fired. It had been constructed out of Book Depository wrapping paper and tape, bore an Oswald fingerprint and palm print, and had what looked like a fiber association to the blanket in which the rifle had been kept in Ruth Paine's garage in Irving prior to Nov 11.

The following is very important: there is no evidence that was the same paper sack Oswald brought from Irving on Friday morning, and there is evidence they were not the same. They were not the same paper bag according to the Dallas Police Department crime lab, and a first-day polygraph of Buell Frazier. The head of the crime lab, Capt. Doughty, and Lt. Carl Day of the crime lab, and Det. Lewis "state as far as they know, the paper sack of the kind described by Frazier was not recovered by the Police Department" (FBI, Nov 29, 1963 [reported Dec 1, 1963], <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=10408#relPagelD=298>).

That was the Dallas Police Department's conclusion. No witness or physical evidence has ever controverted that negative conclusion.

But the Warren Commission decided differently—that those two paper bags *were* the same—not on the basis of any physical evidence, of which there was none, or of any witness testimony, of which

there was none, but rather by assertion combined with an argument from logic that it must be true because it was necessary for its theory of the case to be true (that theory of the case being that the Mannlicher-Carcano entered the building as late as the morning of Nov 22).

**A Dallas Police polygraph within hours of the event showed Buell Frazier was telling the truth when he would not identify the two paper bags as the same**

A written Dallas Police polygraph report of Frazier, administered late the night of Fri Nov 22, which would have specified the questions asked and the examiner's finding that Frazier was telling the truth, is missing from known records. Frazier in that polygraph exam was exonerating Oswald from the claim that Oswald brought a rifle the morning of Nov 22. Frazier in his book, *Steering Truth*, published in 2021, page 51, tells of that polygraph.

Before the polygraph, Dallas Police Captain Fritz, renowned and legendary for getting suspects to confess, tried to *intimidate* and *browbeat* Frazier into signing a written confession. Frazier, alone, without counsel, scared, 19 years old, newly arrived to the big city from rural southern Texas, started reading what Fritz told him to sign. He was shocked at what he read and told Fritz he wasn't going to sign it, whereupon Frazier says Fritz was so furious that Fritz, standing over him, made a motion as if he was going to hit Frazier in the face.

"He come in the door very abruptly, and he put this down in front of me. He says, "Here, sign this." I started reading it, and it was saying I was a part of the assassination of John F. Kennedy,' Frazier said. 'I looked at him and said, "That's totally absurd. I'm not signing that." He got very angry and raised his hands,' Frazier said. 'I thought he was going to hit me.'"\*  
(NBCDFW Channel 5 News, Fort Worth, Texas, Nov 15, 2013,  
<https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/questions-still-haunt-co-worker-who-drove-oswald-to-work/1933199/>)

Frazier:

"I met Captain Fritz that night, November the twenty-second. I never had seen or heard of the man, didn't know anything about him. He's a little short man, red face. Uh, Captain Will

Fritz, I'm sure in all the time he worked for the Dallas Police Department, I'm sure he did a lot of good things for them. But the way he treated me was totally uncalled-for. Because I'd never been in any type of trouble of any type. Well he come in, and when he came in to the room where I was, he had a piece of paper, standard size typing paper, and he gave me a pen and he said sign this. Well I started to read that. And he wanted me to confess to being part of the JFK assassination. And I told him, I said, I'm not going to sign that. I said this is ridiculous. Well he drew his hand back to hit me.\* And I did my arm up like this, because he was about over here where Mr. Aynesworth is, and blocked, and I told him, I said, You know there's some policemen outside that door there, but I said, before they get in there we're going to have one hell of a fight. And I said I'm going to get some licks in on you. I said I'm not signing that. Well then he reached over and snatched it up, and kind of wadded it up as he snatched it up, and stomped out of the room. And I never did see the man any more after that." ("Buell Wesley Frazier & Hugh Aynesworth 2013 JFK Assassination," 10:50f, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nBHUwfCHN4c>)

(\* Compare David Lifton, writing in 2022, telling an eerily similar account from Michael Paine of Fritz *from that same night* at the Dallas Police station: "In 1995, I was briefly in the Boston area—specifically, in Boxborough, Mass. At that time, arranged to interview Michael Paine, who I had learned lived nearby. The interview lasted for about two hours and was audiotaped. I'm writing here from recollection . . . As our interview proceeded, Michael—who passed in March 2018—became more and more upset, and finally ended up bursting into tears, and crying. Really sobbing . . . Michael told me that DPD Captain Will Fritz was very intimidating, and struck him—yes, hit him, or slapped him, real hard, right across the face—because Fritz was not happy with whatever it was that Paine was telling him, about Oswald" [Lifton, "My 1995 interview of Michael Paine," Education Forum, May 8, 2022, <https://educationforum.ipbhost.com/topic/27755-my-1995-interview-of-michael-paine/>].)

After failing to get a confession out of Frazier—Fritz's objective with all suspects brought to him—Fritz decided to have Frazier polygraphed. Among other questions, Frazier was shown the handmade 38" rifle paper bag found on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor, CE 142, which was not the ca. 24-27" lighter-weight paper

sack that Frazier described seeing Oswald carrying. Frazer was repeatedly asked to identify the rifle paper bag, CE 142, as what he had seen Oswald carry from Irving that morning. The Dallas Police *badly wanted* that identification from Frazier which would have *nailed* Oswald on the assassination. But Frazier *would not* give that identification wanted, *would not* identify it as the *same bag*, and the polygraph *backed him up*—*Frazier was telling the truth*. After the polygraph, Frazier was released, considered clean, and the police never bothered Frazier again concerning the JFK assassination. It was the polygraph that did it, on analogy with Dallas Police behavior with other suspects who passed a polygraph. From Frazier's Warren Commission testimony:

Mr. BALL - Commission Exhibit No. 142. When you were shown this bag, do you recall whether or not you told the officers who showed you the bag—did you tell them whether you thought it was or was not about the same length as the bag you saw on the back seat?  
Mr. FRAZIER - I told them that as far as the length there, I told them that was entirely too long.

From Dallas Police officers Rose, Stovall, and Adamcik, two of whom had originally taken Frazier in on Nov 22 for questioning, then came to realize Frazier was innocent and advocated for Frazier's good character:

"After finishing the affidavit [of Buell Frazier], we (Dets. Rose and Stovall) started back to Irving, Texas, with the above witnesses. About midway we received a radio call to return to the office with the witnesses. We turned around at Irving Boulevard and Stemmon's Expressway and drove back to City Hall, and Det. Rose called Capt. Fritz by telephone and Capt. Fritz asked that we run Wesley Frazier on the Polygraph machine. We took Frazier to the ID Bureau, and Capt. Dowdy called Det. R.D. Lewis at home. R.D. Lewis arrived on the fourth floor about 11:20 PM and conducted the Polygraph examination until approximately 12:10 AM, 11-23-63. This examination was witnessed by Dets. Stovall and Rose. **The examination showed conclusively that Wesley Frazier was truthful**, and that the facts stated by Frazier in his affidavit were true . . ." (Dallas Police, Report to Chief Curry of Rose, Stovall, and Adamcik, CE 2003,

<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=1140#relPageId=311>)

Date December 1, 19631

Detective R. D. LEWIS, polygraph operator, Dallas, Texas, Police Department, stated that he ran a polygraph of BUELL WESLEY FRAZIER, and while he was running the polygraph, FRAZIER was shown what appeared to be a homemade brown heavy paper gun case. He stated that FRAZIER said that it was possible that this was the case, but he did not think that it resembled it. He stated that the crinkly brown paper sack that OSWALD had when he rode to work with him that morning was about two feet long. (LEWIS refers to the brown, heavy paper gun case. LEWIS refers to the paper in this manner because of the fact that the Dallas Police Department is of the opinion the brown, heavy paper was used by OSWALD to carry the rifle into the building where he was working. The paper referred to by LEWIS is not a gun case at all.)

Detective LEWIS stated that if this was not identical with the sack that was turned over to the Bureau, it is possible that OSWALD may have thrown it away. The police have turned over everything that they have in the Crime Laboratory to SA DRAIN. This has been stated by Captain GEORGE DOUGHTY, Head of the Crime Laboratory, Lieutenant CARL DAY of the Crime Laboratory, and R. D. LEWIS, polygraph operator in the Crime Laboratory. These individuals state that as far as they know, the paper sack of the type described by FRAZIER was not recovered by the Police Department. It is possible, but improbable, that it was recovered by the Homicide Bureau. If so, they do not know anything about it in the Crime Laboratory of the Dallas Police Department.

on 11/29/63 at Dallas, Texas File # DL 89-43  
by Special Agent VINCENT E. J. DRAIN:BL/gm Date dictated 12/1/63

Let us take a moment to address something else. In the Clay Shaw trial in New Orleans in 1969, Buell Frazier, who had been drafted and served in the U.S. Army 1965-1967, was asked the length of his service rifle, an M-14. Frazier answered, "thirty-some odd inches long", that is ca. thirties inches, not specific. The M-14 in fact is 44 inches long. This has been cited as an argument that Frazier could have mistaken a 35" length broken-down rifle, in a paper bag carried by Oswald, as only ca. 24-27" in length. Similarly, Ruth Paine's first estimate, in her testimony, of the length of two curtain rods she had wrapped and stored away on a shelf in her garage over a year earlier, collapsed at their shortest, was 36", which actually measured 27-1/2" (although when asked to illustrate her memory of the length with her hands the length with her hands was measured at a more accurate 27"). Both the Frazier M-14 and Ruth Paine curtain rod length estimates concerned memories after a lengthy delay of time. Buell Frazier's estimated length of the paper sack Oswald brought on Nov 22 was the same day. The estimates are not comparable in weight and strength. "As with any memory, recall drops off as time passes" (Roesch et al, n.d., *Forensic Psychology and Law: A Canadian Perspective*, chapter 8, <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/psyc268/chapter/chapter-8/>). Frazier knew the length on Nov 22. He saw how Lee carried it. He knew how it looked on the back seat of his car and that was measured, and it agreed with the length Fritz said. There is no evidence Buell Frazier was mistaken to that degree, and it is not likely he was. Why assume he was mistaken in the first place?

### **The coverup of Buell Frazier's polygraph**

As noted, Buell Frazier not only would not identify what Oswald brought the morning of Nov 22 as the hand-made rifle paper bag, CE 142, but Frazier's denial was supported by a polygraph showing he was telling the truth. This presented a major problem. If what Frazier said was correct, that would mean Oswald did not bring the rifle Friday morning. But that would be fatal to the narrative the Commission had decided to make their hill to die on, that the rifle came into the Book Depository on the morning of Fri Nov 22. Hence, the problem, from the Commission's point of view.

An early FBI document shows the internal disarray caused by this "Frazier problem"—the problem of the truthful witness who *would not* make an evidence identification *badly needed* to have the suspect put away for the crime the authorities were certain the suspect had done, according to their theory of the case. From a memo of FBI agent Handley to FBI headquarters, Nov 29, 1963:

"Lieutenant Carl Day, Dallas Texas, Police Department Crime Laboratory, advised that on November 22, 1963, he recovered a heavy, brown sack appearing to be homemade and appearing to have been folded together at one time. This sack when laid out was about four feet long but when doubled was about two feet long. Lt. Day recalls that on the evening of 11-22-63, about 11:30 p.m., one of Captain Fritz' officers requested that he show this thick, brown sack to a man named Frazier.

"Lt. Day stated that **Frazier was unable to identify this sack and told him that a sack he observed in possession of Oswald early that morning was definitely a thin flimsy sack like one purchased in a dime store.** Lt. Day stated that he and other officers have surmised that Oswald by dismantling the rifle could have placed it in the thick, brown sack folded over and then placed the entire package in the flimsy paper sack, however, the entire package would have been longer than two feet since the stock of the rifle alone was over two feet long.

"Lt. Day advised the heavy, brown sack has been returned from the FBI laboratory. Detective R.D. Lewis, polygraph operator of Dallas PD states that he ran a polygraph of Buell Wesley Frazier and **while he was running the polygraph** Frazier was shown what appeared to be a homemade brown heavy paper gun case. He stated that Frazier said that it was possible that it was the case but **he didn't think that it resembled it. Frazier stated that the flimsy brown paper sack that Oswald had when he rode to work with him was about two feet long . . .**

"Lewis stated that if this was not identical with the sack that was turned over to the Bureau it is possible that Oswald may have thrown it away. The Dallas PD has stated they have turned over everything that they had in the Dallas PD Crime Laboratory. This has been stated by Captain George Doughty, Head of the Crime Laboratory, Lt. Carl Day of the Crime Laboratory, and R.D. Lewis, polygraph operator in the Crime Laboratory. These individuals stated that as far as they know the paper sack of the type described by Frazier was not recovered by the police department . . .

"Linnie Mae Randle, 2439 West Fifth Street, Irving, Texas, sister of Buell Wesley Frazier, was interviewed at the Dallas PD. Randle advised that she met Lee Harvey Oswald through her brother and has known Oswald and his wife for about six weeks. On the night of November 21, 1963, she observed Frazier letting Lee Harvey Oswald out of Frazier's car at 2515 West Fifth Street, Irving, Texas. Subsequently, she asked Frazier why Oswald was visiting his wife on Thursday evening as he usually did not visit her until Friday evening of each week. Frazier told her that Oswald claimed he was visiting his wife on the night of November 21, 1963, because he was fixing up his apartment and Mrs. Ruth Paine with whom his wife lived with at 2515 West Fifth street was going to give him some curtain rods." (FBI, Nov 29, 1963, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=62264#relPagelD=123>)

The Warren Commission dealt with the Frazier polygraph this way: by saying nothing about it in the Commission's final report. And when the Warren Commission testimony of Dallas Police officer Gus Rose was later published in the 26-volume "Hearings and Exhibits," note these words at the end of Rose's interview:

Mr. BALL. I believe those are all the questions I have to ask you, Mr. Rose, and this will be written up and submitted to you for your signature, if you want to read it and sign it, or if you want to, you can waive your signature—just as you wish. What do you prefer?

Mr. ROSE. Well, I don't know—will it be later?

Mr. BALL. A couple of weeks.

Mr. ROSE. Well, if she will just call me, I will drop by anytime.

Mr. BALL. Okay, that will be fine. We will do this. Thanks very much.

Mr. ROSE. **Let's see, there was something else I was going to tell you now, I wanted to mention—we did run Wesley Frazier on the polygraph, did you know that?**

Mr. BALL. **I know you did—we know about that.**

Mr. ROSE. Yes.

Mr. BALL. **Thanks. [END]**

And that was the end of that. Officer Rose was inviting being questioned about that Frazier polygraph, appeared that he might have something he wanted to say about it. But the Warren

Commission, in the person of senior counsel Ball, with prosecutor's logic was not *interested* in having that on the record. The Warren Commission's policy on Buell Frazier's testimony *which, if correct, exonerated Oswald from having brought the rifle Friday morning, backed up by a polygraph showing Frazier was telling the truth*, was to say nothing about that polygraph.

The question today is: knowing what is now known—including the 2023 study bringing out the removal of the rifle from the garage in Irving on Nov 11, and taking into consideration the rest of the present study—does valid justification survive for rejection of the testimony of Buell Frazier?

**When was the handmade 38-inch rifle paper bag made and how did it get to the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Texas School Book Depository?**

It is known that CE 142, the 38" rifle paper bag, was handmade from TSBD wrapping paper and tape located on a bench on the first floor of the Book Depository. And because of the way the wetted tape dispenser at that bench worked, it is known that that 38" handmade paper bag was constructed at that bench. (It is excluded, on the level of fact, that that handmade 38" rifle paper bag could have been made from paper taken from that bench and cut and taped up somewhere else.) The issue is when at that workbench was that handmade rifle paper bag (CE 142) made, who made it, and how did it become associated with the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle.

The fact just named which is a starting-point—that that handmade paper bag, CE 142, was made at the TSBD first-floor workbench—raises an immediate question. If, as has long been asserted, the paper bag Oswald brought from Irving Friday morning was the rifle paper bag, CE 142, handmade at the Book Depository, *how did that large handmade 38" paper bag get out to Irving the night before it was brought back in from Irving the next morning?* The Warren Commission answered this question with a handwave: Oswald "could have concealed it in the jacket or shirt which he was wearing" on his ride out with Frazier; similarly Posner (*Case Closed* [2003 edn of 1993 original], 220).

But viewing the bulk of that handmade rifle paper bag, the weight of the Book Depository wrapping paper and how crinkly it would have been, combined with Buell Frazier's denial that Oswald had such a thing with him on Thursday night, Nov 21, that idea of CE 142 being carried out to Irving Thursday

night or any other time concealed under Oswald's clothes seems a little far-fetched. The only realistic way CE 142 could be conveyed to Irving would rather seem to be if it was folded up and carried inside another package, perhaps combined with other things such as, say, among clothes Lee would sometimes take out to Irving for Marina to launder.

But Frazier said Lee did not take anything with him out to Irving Thursday night Nov 21 when Lee rode out with Frazier that night. Pat Speer noted that the Warren Commission never asked Buell Frazier specifically if he saw Oswald carrying brown wrapping paper to Irving Thursday night, and wondered why. Pat Speer asked Buell Frazier himself:

"I report that on September 25, 2014, at the AARC [Assassination Archives and Research Center] conference in Bethesda, Maryland, I asked [Buell] Frazier the question the commission failed to ask . . . I asked him if the paper used in the depository was crinkly and stiff when folded over, as I had assumed. And he said yes. I then asked him if there was any way Oswald could have smuggled more than 7 square feet of industrial wrapping paper out to Irving, within his clothes or otherwise, on 11-21-63. And Frazier's face hardened. He thought for a moment, and looked down at the floor. I read his face as saying 'Wow, it's even worse than I thought.' He then looked me in the eyes and responded as firmly and clearly as anyone has ever responded to a question . . . He said '**That did not happen.**'" (Pat Speer, "The Curtain Rod Story," <https://www.patspeer.com/chapter-4h-the-curtain-rod-story>)

In June 2025, recordings of FBI wiretaps of Marina Oswald on her phone and in her living quarters from Feb 29 to March 12, 1964, became available for the first time. The fact that the FBI had wiretapped Marina was first reported by the *New York Times* on Oct 30, 1975, but the recordings of those wiretaps only first became available in 2025. In one phone call, called Tape 9 from March 8, 1964, Marina discussed some of her private back-and-forth uncertainties concerning Lee's guilt with her friend Katya Ford, and said this, translated from their Russian (*JFK Facts*, June 19, 2025, Eng. trans. source unidentified, <https://jfkfacts.substack.com/p/not-oswalds-bag-fbi-recordings-of>).

Marina: Yeah. But the thing is ... for example, the guy says that Lee had some kind of bag with him.

Katya: He says he took something long ... He said...

Marina: **Yes, but I didn't see any package that Lee had with him when he arrived. There was nothing in his hands. And he was in view the whole time. He couldn't have made that bag while he was there at the Paines' house. You get what I'm saying?**

Katya: It wasn't ... It was ... I don't know ...

Marina: They showed me some kind of bag that I had never seen before.

### **The 38" rifle paper bag constructed from Book Depository wrapping paper was made by Oswald two weeks earlier**

On the basis of the evidence and information for the movement of the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle out of the garage in Irving by Oswald on Nov 11, it follows that the 38" rifle paper bag will have been made by Oswald prior to Nov 11, in order to have a way to carry the rifle when it was removed from the blanket in the garage, which happened on Nov 11 ("The Oswald rifle scope installation at the Irving Sport Shop of Monday, November 11, 1963" [2023], <https://www.scrollery.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Irving-Sport-Shop-109-pdf.pdf>).

This means the 38" paper bag will have been made by Oswald at the Book Depository either during or after work hours at some point before Friday evening Nov 8. He will then have taken that 38" rifle paper bag with him in his ride with Frazier Friday evening, Nov 8, for the long weekend in Irving of Nov 9-11. Oswald could have done so with it folded and brought along with clothes he would sometimes bring to Marina to launder.

The intention Oswald would have in making the 38" bag would be to fully enclose what Oswald thought was a 36" Mannlicher-Carcano in his possession. In March 1963 Oswald in the name of a fictitious person had mail-ordered a 36" Mannlicher-Carcano rifle from Klein's of Chicago, but a 40" Mannlicher-Carcano is what was actually shipped to Oswald's Post Office box in Dallas and received in fulfillment of that order. (Evidence the rifle Klein's shipped was received by Oswald is witness testimonies of Jeanne de Mohrenschildt, Gary Taylor, and Marina, each of whom saw the rifle in the

Oswalds' Neely St. apartment, as well as George de Mohrenschildt who said he was told at the time by Marina, and that in April 1963 he had been given by Marina a photograph of Lee with the rifle shortly after Lee received it, as brought out in Edward Epstein, *The Assassination Chronicles* [1992], 555-69.)

Oswald had proved by that mail-order rifle purchase—which may have been the point—that a literally non-existent person could order and receive by U.S. mail a lethal weapon, followed by that weapon photographed brandished while holding copies of the two leading domestic Communist newspapers in the U.S. In the Cold War climate, what a stunning visual! That would have made a picture-perfect compelling argument for gun control reform wanted by federal authorities, if testimony from Oswald outed as an informant had been brought forth.

Oswald had not noticed the rifle he received was 4 inches longer than what he had ordered (the evidence that Oswald had not noticed being: the error in the length of the rifle paper bag). *Whoever* made up that rifle paper bag, CE 142, using TSBD wrapping paper, *thought the rifle was 36" in length, not 40"*, and *did not have the rifle physically present to check* when the bag was being made (otherwise the bag would have been made 42", not 38", in length). These two factors both fit Oswald as the maker of that rifle paper bag, which is not surprising given that it was his rifle and his palm print and fingerprint were found on that rifle paper bag. Who would mistakenly think the 40" Mannlicher-Carcano was only 36" in length other than Oswald who had ordered it at 36" and assumed—as anyone would who did not know better—that he had received what he had ordered?

Therefore the reconstruction is that Oswald made that rifle paper bag sometime in the week ending Fri Nov 8, and did so in the *mistaken* belief that his rifle was only 36". That the 38" length could not fully enclose his 40" Mannlicher-Carcano was a *mistake*.

The FBI lab found that the paper used in the construction of the handmade 38" rifle paper bag, CE 142, matched to a sample of paper taken on Nov 22 from the TSBD wrapping paper workbench. But the FBI lab also found that TSBD paper used in making a replica bag which the FBI made on Dec 1—only four business days' use later—did *not* match to the paper of either the 38" rifle bag or the TSBD paper sample on Nov 22.

It happens that the paper sample of Nov 22, and the paper of the replica paper bag made Dec 1, were both taken from a roll at the northeast corner of the work table, of four rolls at that table. The non-match of paper from rolls in the same position on the workbench indicates that roll had been replaced sometime between Nov 22 and Dec 1, but does not indicate the lifespan of either of those paper rolls. To attempt to get at that information—lifespan of an individual roll of wrapping paper used at that workbench—the FBI found that Book Depository records showed it went through an order of 58 rolls of Kraft wrapping paper between March 19, 1963 and a reorder in January 1964 (<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=58973#relPageld=12>). That is roughly 210 business workdays for 58 rolls which works out to an average of one roll of wrapping paper about every 3.7 business days. However there were 4 rolls in active use simultaneously at that bench at the Book Depository, and the person at the bench could draw from any of the rolls. That means each individual roll at the workbench would have an average lifespan of 4 times that, that is  $3.7 \times 4 = 14.8$  or rounded to 15 average, with some rolls lasting less than 15 and other rolls lasting more than 15 workdays.

Between Nov 6-8 and Nov 22 is 10-12 business workdays. It can be seen from this calculation that the week of Nov 4-8 is reasonably possible for a rifle paper bag to have been made using TSBD wrapping paper from a roll that was also in use on Nov 22. Furthermore, the Warren Report noted that even paper from different rolls could show the match found by the FBI lab of CE 142 to the Nov 22 paper sample, if both came from the same originally manufactured batch of paper, and therefore "one cannot estimate when, prior to November 22, Oswald made the paper bag" (<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=946#relPageld=160>). An FBI lab analysis of microscopic characteristics of the tape used in CE 142 found it was "similar" to a Nov 22 tape sample, but without claim of identification of a match to that particular roll of tape (see the FBI statement at the end of the testimony of FBI analyst James Cadigan, [https://aarclibrary.org/publib/jfk/wc/wcvols/wh4/pdf/WH4\\_Cadigan.pdf](https://aarclibrary.org/publib/jfk/wc/wcvols/wh4/pdf/WH4_Cadigan.pdf)).

In short, there is no positive evidence or indication CE 142, the rifle paper bag, was made later than Nov 8, 1963, and the evidence for the removal of the rifle from the garage by Oswald on Nov 11, suggests it was not made later than Fri Nov 8.

Oswald's first use of that rifle paper bag will have been when he removed the rifle from the blanket in the Irving garage on the morning of Mon Nov 11 when Ruth Paine was gone that day. Only then would Oswald have discovered (to his surprise), as he took the 40" rifle out of the blanket and loaded it into the paper bag, that the 38" bag did not fully enclose the 40" rifle. Since it is a fact that frugal Oswald went to considerable effort to spend money that day, Nov 11, for a gunsmith's reinstallation on that rifle of a scope that he did not like or use, and since a second fact is he never used or practiced shooting with that rifle after spending money for that repair work on Nov 11, the appearance is Oswald was preparing the rifle for a conveyance or sale, not his own use. But knowledge stops at that point, at Nov 11, for there is a black hole of information between Nov 11 and Nov 22 concerning whereabouts and custody of the rifle, *after* Oswald removed it from the Ruth Paine garage on the morning of Nov 11 and had a repair done of the scope base mount and the scope reinstalled.

A sale or conveyance of the rifle by Oswald after its removal from the Paine garage on Nov 11 could also account for the absence of rifle cleaning supplies and ammunition found in the searches of Oswald's belongings after the assassination. Those items may have gone with the rifle to a buyer, or in some other way have been disposed of after the rifle was gone and he no longer had use for them.

There is no indication the rifle was returned to Ruth Paine's garage after Oswald's removal of it the morning of Nov 11, nor does it make any sense that it would have been. The 38" rifle paper bag will have gone with the rifle wherever the rifle went after Nov 11. That is, the 38" rifle paper bag will have entered the Book Depository building at the same time the rifle entered the building, whenever that was.

There were 11 days of unknown whereabouts and possession of that Mannlicher-Carcano rifle between Oswald's removal of it from the garage on Nov 11 to repair it, and the day of the assassination on Nov 22 when it was found on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Book Depository.

In fact it seems far-fetched to imagine Oswald bringing the rifle into the building in broken-down form on Friday morning—that he would walk in the door with it around 8:00 am, into a building

already filled with people and set the package down somewhere, without a single employee inside the building to be found to testify they saw him with any such package that morning—then assembling the broken-down rifle somewhere unseen in the building using a coin for a screwdriver as the Warren Report assumed. Larry Hancock and David Boylan comment in *The Oswald Puzzle*:

“The Warren Commission . . . [described] how the rifle was carried into the Texas School Book Depository on November 22, 1963. That scenario required the disassembled rifle to have been placed inside a large paper sack, carried to the book depository, and covertly reassembled at work by Oswald. Researchers have pointed out several problems with that assertion, beginning with the reassembly of the weapon. The Warren Commission stated that the assembly work had been done with a small coin. Yet at four different locations where screws would have to be inserted and tightened (including on metal surfaces) there is not a single indication of the scratching that would have occurred if a coin had indeed been used . . . Entering the Book Depository (itself left open into the evening so that the various book company personnel had access to their offices) would have been no challenge . . . simply planting his rifle would certainly have led to charges as accessory . . .” (Hancock and Boylan, *The Oswald Puzzle: Reconsidering Lee Harvey Oswald* [2025], 345-47)

A more reasonable conclusion—that seems to make the best sense—is that the 40” Mannlicher-Carcano, already sighted-in, was infiltrated into the building intact (not broken down) at some time before business hours on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. The rifle could have been infiltrated into the building any of the eleven days after that rifle left the blanket in the garage in Irving, the last known time Oswald had that rifle, on Nov 11.

It should be realized that Oswald on the morning of Fri Nov 21 was not the only possible mechanism for infiltration of that rifle into the Book Depository after Nov 11, and there is no actual known evidence or verification Oswald had the rifle after Nov 11 at all.

And not to belabor the obvious, but what is not known, is not known.

The evidence and argument for this analysis of the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle in the Book Depository is so strong that it should be realized, including by many of those who until now have supported the Warren Commission interpretation: if the rifle *did* enter the building as late as the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> during business hours, it did not do so by means of Oswald, and if it *did* come in the building by means of Oswald, it did not do so as late as business hours on the morning of Nov 22. That is what the evidence indicates. One can argue for one or the other but not both.

### **Where did Oswald's curtain rods go the morning of Nov 22?**

The best reconstruction seems to be that Oswald on Friday morning Nov 22, after arriving to the Book Depository with curtain rods obtained from Ruth Paine's garage, momentarily set them down somewhere inside the covered dock area after entering the door Buell Frazier saw him enter at the rear, which was outside a second door that entered into the building's first floor area proper. Lee set them to one side and may have gone inside to visit a restroom, before returning outside and taking the curtain rods over to the Dal-Tex.

Mr. BALL - Where is the door that you entered or that he entered?

Mr. FRAZIER - Right here.

Mr. BALL - That is the door. Is that covered, is that area covered with a ceiling roof?

Mr. FRAZIER - Yes, sir; it is.

Mr. BALL - And this is also walled in, is it?

Mr. FRAZIER - Right. The railroad track runs along here.

Mr. BALL - After you get into this outside shed how did you get into the first floor of the Texas School Book Depository?

Mr. FRAZIER - Through that door.

Mr. BALL - Through the door there, into the interior door?

Mr. FRAZIER - Right.

Could a call of nature be why Oswald walked faster and ahead of Frazier that morning without waiting? (Remember Lee started out with coffee only in Irving that morning which has a diuretic effect.) But Lee's walking ahead of Frazier that morning may have been because Lee was conscious of

the time and this particular morning he had a task to accomplish before starting work: dropping off the curtain rods in the neighboring building, the Dal-Tex.

With mission accomplished inside the Book Depository, he went out the rear door again, retrieved the curtain rods, walked them over to the Dal-Tex building, and gave them to or left them there for the seamstress who was going to make the curtains using the curtain rods to sew around. Lee then returned to the Book Depository and started his workday.

This becomes the answer to the question: if Lee brought curtain rods to the Texas School Book Depository, why were they not found there?

And the answer is: although he brought them to the Book Depository, he never took them inside the Book Depository. He took them to the Dal-Tex building.

A coworker at the Book Depository, Charles Givens, seems to describe Oswald as typically using a few minutes before starting work at 8:00 am to read a newspaper in the domino room—a break room on the ground floor for the manual-labor employees. But Givens said that on Friday Nov 22 Oswald did not do that, which is consistent with on that morning he used those few minutes to instead go over to the Dal-Tex building.

Mr. BELIN. Did you see him reading the newspaper [on Fri Nov 22]?

Mr. GIVENS. No; not that day. I did—he generally sit in there every morning. He would come to work and sit in there and read the paper, the next day paper, like if the day was Tuesday, he would read Monday's paper in the morning when he would come to work, but he didn't that morning because he didn't go in the domino room that morning. I didn't see him in the domino room that morning.

Buell Frazier did not consider he and Lee as having arrived later on Fri Nov 22 than usual, meaning their arrival likely would have allowed Lee a small number of minutes to spare before starting work at 8:00. And there was no time clock to punch and supervisors Shelley and Truly seem to have practiced a certain degree of trust or latitude in the employees without trying to micromanage knowledge of where every one of them were every minute. If an employee started a few minutes later than 8:00

and it was not habitual it is unlikely it would have been any big deal or necessarily noticed. (In the order-filling crew in which Oswald worked, they had ways of counting orders filled per day per employee, measuring productivity. Oswald was considered a good worker and productive in his numbers of orders filled, according to both Truly's and Shelley's testimony.)

Mr. BALL - Were you later than usual that morning [Fri Nov 22]?

Mr. FRAZIER - No, sir; I don't believe we were.

### **A more reasonable analysis**

No longer can an argument be pressed that no curtain rods turned up inside the Book Depository (therefore what Oswald brought can only have been the 38" rifle paper bag found on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor with the rifle, so the reasoning has been). For there is no reason to assume either the curtain rods or the paper sack in which they were carried must have been brought inside the Book Depository, even though Oswald brought them there. This is because the curtain rods were for the purpose of making curtains, and seamstresses with expertise to make curtains were in the Dal-Tex building, not the Book Depository. The curtain rods would have been taken by Oswald to the Dal-Tex building on the morning of Friday Nov 22 because that is where the seamstress was who was going to use those curtain rods in the making of the curtains. After parking his car, Frazier walking from some distance behind saw Oswald ahead of him enter the first door to the enclosed rear dock area with the brown paper sack containing the curtain rods, but did not see Oswald enter the second door inside that dock area, the rear door of the building proper. A Book Depository employee, Jack Dougherty, testified that, from inside the building, he saw Oswald enter that door with nothing in his hands.

It is worth a moment's attention to the significance of this. Warren Commission senior counsel Joseph Ball was not too pleased with Book Depository employee Dougherty's testimony that he saw Oswald *enter the building Friday morning with nothing in his hands*—because the narrative that the Warren Commission had decided to make their hill to die on was that Oswald entered that morning carrying a broken-down 40-inch rifle. Observe below experienced trial attorney Ball circling around Dougherty every which way trying to shake or trip up Dougherty's testimony on this point. Let the reader note that long-term employee Dougherty, forty years old, was considered a little odd in

psychological makeup, easier to become confused than the average person, something of a special needs case. Keep that in mind in this exchange.

Mr. BALL - Did you see Oswald come to work that morning?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes—when he first come into the door.

Mr. BALL - When he came in the door?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes.

Mr. BALL - Did you see him come in the door?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes; I saw him when he first come in the door—yes.

Mr. BALL - Did he have anything in his hands or arms?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Well, not that I could see of.

Mr. BALL - About what time of day was that?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - That was 8 o'clock.

Mr. BALL - That was about 8 o'clock?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL - What door did he come in?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Well, he came in the back door.

Mr. BALL - Where were you then?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - I was—sitting on top of the wrapping table.

Mr. BALL - Now, do you remember that you gave a statement to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and to a man by the name of Ellington, or a Mr. Anderton, the day after—the 23d of November?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes—I talked to so many of them—it is kind of hard to remember.

Mr. BALL - And there is a statement that they took when they talked to you and in it you said, "I recall vaguely, having seen Lee Oswald when he came to work at about 8 a.m. today."

Mr. DOUGHERTY - I did—that morning.

Mr. BALL - That seems to be dated the 22d day of November 1963.

Mr. DOUGHERTY - That's right.

Mr. BALL - The full statement is, "I am employed by the Texas School Book Depository, 411 Elm Street, Dallas, as an order filler, and reside at 1827 South Marsalis Street, Dallas, Tex." Did

you tell them that?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL - "I started to work today, 11-22-63, at about 7 a.m. o'clock". Did you tell them that?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes.

Mr. BALL - The statement says, "I recall vaguely having seen Lee Oswald, when he came to work at about 8 a.m. today."

Mr. DOUGHERTY - That's right.

Mr. BALL - Now, is that a very definite impression that you saw him that morning when he came to work?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Well, oh—it's like this—I'll try to explain it to you this way—you see, I was sitting on the wrapping table and when he came in the door, I just caught him out of the corner of my eye—that's the reason why I said it that way.

Mr. BALL - Did he come in with anybody?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - No.

Mr. BALL - He was alone?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes; he was alone.

Mr. BALL - Do you recall him having anything in his hand?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Well, I didn't see anything, if he did.

Mr. BALL - Did you pay enough attention to him, you think, that you would remember whether he did or didn't?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Well, I believe I can—yes, sir—I'll put it this way; I didn't see anything in his hands at the time.

Mr. BALL - In other words, your memory is definite on that is it?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL - In other words, you would say positively he had nothing in his hands?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - I would say that—yes, sir.

Mr. BALL - Or, are you guessing?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - I don't think so.

Mr. BALL - You saw him come in the door?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes.

Mr. BALL - The back door on the first floor?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - It was in the back door.

Mr. BALL - Now, that back door is the door that opens onto what? That back door would be the first floor?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes.

Mr. BALL - And it opens where?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - On the back deck—on the back dock side over there.

Mr. BALL - That would be what direction from the first floor—what wall of the first floor—north?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Well, let's see, to be frank with you—I don't know which one it would be.

Mr. BALL - Is there only one back door?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Yes; there is only one back door.

Against the testimony of Dougherty, the FBI and Warren Commission could not produce one single witness who saw Oswald inside the building that morning with a package that could have been a rifle or a package of any kind. The Commission decided to reject Dougherty's testimony and say Oswald brought a rifle inside the building anyway, without any witness to cite.

Dougherty did volunteer to Ball, after the exchange above, a claim that his supervisor, Bill Shelley, had told him—according to Dougherty—that he had seen Oswald with a package. The problem with that being true for Friday Nov 22 is why would Shelley not say so himself. Shelley denied he saw Oswald with any package on Friday Nov 22 (FBI, Dec 9, 1963, <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=95672#relPageld=150>). Yet what Dougherty said may be amenable to resolution when paying attention to the wording:

Mr. BALL - Did you ever see Lee Oswald carry any sort of large package?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Well, I didn't, but some of the fellows said they did.

Mr. BALL - Who said that?

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Well, Bill Shelley, he told me that he thought he saw him carrying a fairly good-sized package.

Mr. BALL - **When did Shelley tell you that?**

Mr. DOUGHERTY - Well, it was—**the day after it happened.**

Mr. BALL - Are you sure you were on the fifth floor when you heard the shots? . . .

Shelley telling Dougherty “the day after it happened” would mean Shelley saw Oswald carrying a package on a day before Friday Nov 22. Not only would Dougherty not be working Saturdays normally, but that particular Saturday, Nov 23, 1963, certainly was not a workday because of the assassination.

Remember the Jack Cody account referred to earlier. Jack Cody was the fellow roomer at the N. Beckley rooming house who said he saw Oswald carry a package out of the rooming house and get on a city bus about 7 am on “Wednesday or Thursday, the week Kennedy was assassinated.” Jack Cody described the package he saw Oswald carrying as ca. 2' x 1' x 6", wrapped in newspaper. The time of morning and the city bus are consistent with Oswald taking that package to work with him that morning. Perhaps Oswald could have been seen inside the Book Depository with that package, before Friday, before walking it over to the seamstress at the Dal-Tex on that earlier morning.

To be clear, none of this discussion exculpates (proof of innocence) Oswald from participation in the assassination. But the points discussed do *exculpate Oswald from having brought the rifle on Friday morning*. To repeat, one can have the rifle brought into the building on Friday morning, or one can have Oswald be the one who brought the rifle in, but one cannot *have both*.

One of the most foundational reasons Oswald could not have brought the rifle from Irving to the Book Depository on Friday morning, Nov 22, 1963, was missed by the Warren Commission, the HSCA, and practically every book or article since favorable to the narrative of the Warren Commission, which is the information brought forth in the 2023 study showing the rifle was no longer in the Paine garage in Irving after Oswald removed it on Nov 11 (“The Oswald rifle scope installation at the Irving Sport Shop of Monday, November 11, 1963,” <https://www.scrollery.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Irving-Sport-Shop-109-pdf.pdf>).

### **A seamstress and the accused assassin who could have loved her**

Imagine the seamstress received the curtain rods from Lee the morning of Nov 22, then a few hours later there was the total shock of the assassination of the president, and by the afternoon Oswald was in the news arrested and accused of it. She would have no way of knowing whether he was innocent or guilty. But in the news the authorities were all saying it looked like Oswald had done it. One can only imagine how terrifying that would be to the hypothesized seamstress.

At that point no curtains had been made, but she would have Oswald's curtain rods. Suppose that seamstress wanted to hand over the curtain rods to the police or FBI. If she was smart, she might get a lawyer to assist in the disclosure. In this scenario it might be the FBI (hypothetically) receiving and then disappearing the curtain rods. Following an FBI practice reported anecdotally by many witnesses, the FBI might advise or recommend she not talk about it other than to them. If a lawyer was involved, the lawyer might assure that his client would maintain discretion, then emphasize privately to her the importance of keeping to the commitment the lawyer had made on her behalf. Alternatively, the terrified seamstress might outwardly disclaim knowledge of the curtain rods and abandon them to be found, then or later, in the Dal-Tex by some other employee or cleaning crew, and attempt to avoid involvement to begin with. Pat Speer has suggested a third possibility, in which someone who had Oswald's curtain rods could have taken the opportunity to hand them to the Secret Service when the Secret Service was at the Texas School Book Depository on Dec 5, 1963 filming a reenactment (<https://www.patspeer.com/chapter-4h-the-curtain-rod-story>).

If curtain rods *had* been turned in after the assassination following some find in the Dal-Tex, there is no certainty either the Warren Commission or the public would have learned of it. Consider the case of the Dallas man who, in the early morning hours of Saturday Nov 23, 1963, turned in to the Dallas Police a find of a paper bag tossed on a downtown street, whose contents contained a certain kick of the unexpected: an apple, an orange, and a snub-nosed .38 Special Smith & Wesson revolver. This was found near a street curb at Ross and Lamar in downtown Dallas at 7:30 am Sat Nov 23, 1963. The finder, an early-morning delivery man, turned it in to the Dallas Police. That revolver's find in such a peculiar manner, so evocative of a disposal of a murder weapon, so resistant to any conceivable innocent explanation, would have been of interest with respect to the only known recent murder by

handgun in Dallas, that of officer J.D. Tippit, killed with a .38 Special revolver hours earlier, if the Tippit case had not already been determined definitively closed around Oswald, with two good candidates for the Tippit murder weapon being considered one more than necessary or helpful.

The Dallas Police turned that paper-bag revolver over to the FBI. Perhaps for the worthy purpose of not introducing unnecessary confusion into the Tippit case, the FBI helpfully did not inform the Warren Commission of that paper-bag revolver's existence, nor was the later House Select Committee on Assassinations ever aware of it either, nor was it known to the press or the public at large. No one knew of that revolver's find until it came to light decades later by accidental discovery in the 1990s following a document dump of declassified FBI documents. The Dallas resident who found that paper-bag revolver that morning, who may have been one Willis Earl Flatt (1921-2003)—misspelled "Willie Flat" in the FBI report of the Dallas Police paperwork—never talked publicly about it in his life, and the physical revolver itself, plus any records of forensic examination of it, plus any Dallas Police paperwork associated with it, all disappeared without a trace

(<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=237755#relPageId=2>; compare <https://jfkconspiracyforum.freeforums.net/thread/983/gun-bag> and <https://www.maryferrell.org/php/marysdb.php?id=3815>).

As with that paper-bag revolver found and turned in on Sat Nov 23, so might it have been if curtain rods from the Dal-Tex building had been turned in, after the narrative had been put forth to the world that Oswald brought a rifle to work the morning of the assassination.

### **How serious was Lee about the seamstress?**

There is sufficient indication from his curtains activity to suppose a relationship of Oswald with a seamstress in the Dal-Tex building across from his workplace, even if there had been no report to the FBI of hearsay claiming that.

We know Oswald was not personally making curtains himself, and we know Marina wasn't. Therefore there had to be a seamstress. But at this point, after this much time has passed, there is little reason for optimism that her name may ever be known.

The suspected profile of her would be: she was a seamstress, employed in the Dal-Tex building. If she was proactive in establishing a friendship with Oswald, she might be a little older than Oswald. (In Russia, the woman Oswald considered the real love of his life, but who would not marry him, Ella Germain, was two years older than Lee. That was before Marina whom he appears to have married on the rebound.)

Several things argue that, for Lee, this seamstress was serious, not frivolous or only about the curtains. First, the general statement that Lee was not a frivolous person in temperament.

He was committed to Marina and his children, and so far as is known, had no known history of womanizing while married to Marina. At the same time, the marriage with Marina was troubled and mercurial, having involved many arguments, even mutual physical assaults, and one past serious separation with everyone surprised that she returned to him. Lee cared about politics and injustice in the world, and was also close to dead broke most of the time after their return to the U.S., not appealing to Marina on either count. Marina cared little for Lee's political ideas and basically mocked him for his dreams and idealism, and was discontented with his low money-earning capability. Lee was a hard worker, but earned at the low end of the wage scale being barely employable above unskilled labor level. Yet he had seen the world, lived in Russia, married and returned to the U.S. with a beautiful woman, had two children by her, learned to speak Russian fluently, wanted to better himself, continually read books checked out of libraries—books of ideas, history, biographies. He was above average intelligence. All of this is to say one would not predict Lee to consider involvement with a woman other than Marina if he was not serious about it. That is who he was, and that is the first point.

Second, there is his rearranging his schedule to free up the weekend of Nov 23-24 which may make possible a meeting with her. He already missed one weekend in Irving (the previous weekend), now he arranges to remain a second weekend in a row in Oak Cliff and not go to Irving.

Third, the secrecy about the curtains from Marina. If there was not at least potential romantic interest in the seamstress, from Lee's point of view, it is difficult to imagine why he would keep his curtains situation secret from Marina. If it was *only* about curtains, there should have been no problem in

telling Marina that. The secrecy about both the curtains and the seamstress signals it was more than just curtains.

Fourth, the wedding ring has come off, for the first time ever for Lee for a non-utilitarian reason, according to Marina.

Fifth, Lee's forcing the issue on Thursday night whether Marina will reunite in a household with him that weekend, without further delay, has an aura about it almost of an ultimatum. It could be Lee was not surprised that Marina was not willing to uproot that weekend with a small child and baby on 48 hours notice, abruptly ending her functioning life with Ruth and shared childrearing and companionship between the two women, to return to an isolating and impoverished apartment situation with Lee again. But Lee's forcing of the issue and obtaining Marina's negative answer could, from Lee's point of view, have represented a closure (even if Marina may not have been aware of it).

And sixth, despite being in very deep trouble after his arrest, Lee did not budge in not admitting to the Dallas Police anything curtains-related that, if he told it, would go to her. He appears to be willing to fall on his sword for her. At minimum he is stalling for time until he can have a lawyer advise on what to do that will not put her in jeopardy. This is not behavior for a merely business relationship or a casual acquaintance. His behavior in denying the curtain rods to Fritz is because she mattered to him, and he was not willing to see harm come to her.

If obtaining curtains was his only relationship with the seamstress, he should have had no hesitation in telling Ruth Paine, who surely would have given him the unused curtain rods that he took. It seems out of character for Lee to take Ruth's property without asking—relatively minor and unused though the items may have been. Oswald was not otherwise a thief (he did help himself to some TSBD wrapping paper for a private purpose). Lee may have regarded taking the curtain rods of Ruth as an emergency from timing and logistics considerations and intended to return or replace them after buying others, intending Ruth not to ever be aware they had been gone. Because of his untimely death that cannot be known, but it is very possible that could have been Lee's intention—not to take Ruth's curtain rods to be used in the curtains in windows, but rather to be used by the seamstress in the *making* of the curtains, prior to buying four new curtain rods of the same kind which would go in

the curtains in actual use. Whatever the specifics, it is the factor of the seamstress which renders these behaviors explicable.

To this analysis may be added two further ways in which this lady may be in the background of actions of Oswald in November 1963, which may provide elegant resolution to two longstanding puzzles in JFK assassination scholarship. These involve a book and a driver's license.

### **The lady and the book**

There was a library book Lee checked out of the Dallas Public Library—the last known book of Lee in his life—on Nov 6, 1963, due back Nov 13. Very unusually, it was neither returned to the library nor found among his possessions. Oswald was an active user of public libraries and always returned his other library books on time as a responsible borrower. But *this* one was different. The book was *The Shark and the Sardines*, by Juan Jose Arevalo, translated from Spanish into English by June Cobb.

The book was overdue at the time of Oswald's arrest and death. But the book also was not found in his possessions, which raised the obvious question at the time: *where was the book?*

([https://www.maryferrell.org/archive/docs/001/1141/images/img\\_1141\\_931\\_300.png](https://www.maryferrell.org/archive/docs/001/1141/images/img_1141_931_300.png)). The reasonable conclusion at the time to investigators: it looked like he had given the book to someone else who had not returned it. The question then becomes: who was the mystery person to whom Oswald might have lent that book in November 1963—and that was a question which never was answered.

The book, *The Shark and the Sardines*, is of interest in terms of Oswald's political interests concerning issues of colonialism and Latin America. George de Mohrenschildt in his posthumously published manuscript about Oswald, "*I'm a Patsy!*", tells of many conversations he had with Lee in late 1962 and early 1963 concerning Latin American politics, how informed Lee was and how de Mohrenschildt admired Lee's values. (See the outstanding critical edition by Rinella of that de Mohrenschildt manuscript: George de Mohrenschildt, ed. and annotated by Michael Rinella, *Lee Harvey Oswald as I Knew Him* [Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2014].)

*The Shark and the Sardines* was critical of U.S. policies toward the smaller countries of Latin America. It was an effective book at the time which took traction with readers. Here is how its dust jacket read then:

"[The author, former president of Guatemala 1945-1951] Dr. Arevalo's program so infuriated the United Fruit Company (which considers Guatemala its private plantation) and the other lords and masters of Central America that they tried thirty-one times to overthrow him. All the conspiracies—one of which employed tanks and heavy ammunition to shell the Presidential Palace—were defeated by the Guatemalan people's overwhelming defense of their government. Time after time the civilian population rallied to the defense of the pacifist educator who was their chosen President. In 1951, having completed his term of office, Arevalo stepped down and was replaced by young Jacopo Arbenz. Arevalo became a voluntary exile and resumed his service to Latin America as a university professor and writer. He was not in Guatemala when the Guatemalan revolution's enemies—armed, financed, and directed by the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States Government—attacked the lawful authority, invaded and bombed Ciudad Guatemala, and ousted the elected government. There followed shortly a series of reprisals, suspension of civil liberties, political persecution and assassination."

Here is this book's description on Amazon today:

"*The Shark and the Sardines* is a political essay written by Juan Jose Arevalo, a former president of Guatemala. The book explores the concept of democracy and the challenges it faces in Latin America. Arevalo argues that democracy is often undermined by the power of oligarchies and foreign interests, leading to inequality and poverty. He uses the metaphor of a shark and sardines to illustrate this dynamic, with the shark representing the powerful few and the sardines representing the masses. Arevalo suggests that true democracy requires the empowerment of the sardines, and that this can only be achieved through education, social justice, and economic reform. The book is a call to action for Latin American countries to embrace true democracy and work towards a more equitable and just society."

This description of this book goes to the heart of Oswald's own beliefs and politics according to his personal writings, with the above description coming close to words Oswald could have written himself (see Gary O'Brien, *Oswald's Politics* [2010]; Ernst Titovets, *Oswald: Russian Episode* [2020]; and Larry Hancock and David Boylan, *The Oswald Puzzle: Reconsidering Lee Harvey Oswald* [2025]).

Is it possible the seamstress was the mystery person in November 1963 to whom Oswald lent that book? There is no one else known to whom Oswald would have lent this book in November 1963—researchers came up with essentially a total blank on that question. If the answer to this mystery may be the seamstress, this would underscore other indications of a relationship which had developed at least to the point of lending a book—and not just any book, but a book with ideas that mattered to Lee, and if he lent it to her, perhaps to her as well. And since that book would have been lent some time between November 6 and 13, it would mean he knew her by at least that time, if it was her.

Bugliosi comments:

"An insoluble mystery attaches to this book. *The Shark and the Sardines* is the only book Oswald failed to return to the Dallas library on time—it was due on November 13. It was not found among his possessions either in Ruth Paine's house or at his North Beckley rooming house after the assassination. Three months after the assassination, the book had not been returned. Years later, author Albert H. Newman checked with the library and found to his astonishment that the book had indeed been returned . . . but the library kept no records of when and by whom . . . [If] someone returned it after Oswald's death, [this] opens **the possibility that Oswald himself passed the book on to an ideologically like-mind acquaintance** who . . . was sufficiently civic-minded to return the book discreetly to the library long after the assassination. The question is unlikely to ever be answered." (Vincent Bugliosi, *Reclaiming History* [2007], 777-78)

And author Albert Newman writing earlier in 1970:

"*The Shark and the Sardines* is hardly the sort of thing that the average reader—in Dallas or anywhere else—would want to keep for himself. Left on a bus or at the Depository, it would probably have been returned to the library by the finder in short order. What happens to

library books borrowed and not returned? It is possible that a large proportion are reloaned by original borrowers to forgetful friends with whom they wish to share the volumes' ideas. But the FBI's researches into Oswald's activities during the seven weeks between his return from Mexico and the assassination uncovered no trace of any friendly association: **the disappearance of *The Shark and the Sardines* is almost the only hint of any such thing.** Before arriving in Dallas [in 1966], I assumed that whoever possessed the book had destroyed it because of its association with Oswald. Therefore, my telephone call [mid-1966] to Mrs. Bradshaw's office in the main library downtown on Commerce Street was in the nature of a routine check: had the book by any chance been returned? After half an hour an assistant to Mrs. Bradshaw called back: *the book had been returned.* But when, and by whom? I asked. The library kept no such records. I then drove to the Oak Cliff branch library situated at the base of a small triangle of green known as Turner Plaza formed by the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Marsalis Avenue and Jefferson Boulevard . . . There was little difficulty in locating *The Shark*, for the branch library's Latin American section is limited. I leafed through the book page by page and discovered no telltale marks to indicate who had read it or where it had been. Yet what a story it might tell, and how unfortunate it is at times that books can speak only with the voices of their authors . . . Its disappearance and mysterious return months later certainly **hint at the existence of an ideologically compatible association of Oswald unknown to the Commission and its investigators."** (Albert Newman, *The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: The Reasons Why* [1970], 107-9)

*Comment:* Might it be questioned whether the same book Oswald checked out was returned to the Dallas Public Library system even though author Albert Newman thought he was told it was? That book was popular and the Dallas Public Library system may have had more than one copy of it, or had replaced the lost copy. One wonders whether the librarian who called him back, trying to be helpful, might have reported that a copy of the book was available to be checked out thinking that was the reason for the caller's inquiry. Intuitively one thinks if there was a decision by the possessor of the book Oswald had borrowed to return it, it would have happened more timely—if after three months there had been no return (as the FBI found), more likely would be no return at all. A librarian over the phone misunderstanding the purpose of the question might seem more likely than an

actual months-later or years-later return of the book, though presumably Newman would have considered that at the time. If the person to whom Oswald lent it regarded it, after the assassination, as a memento or keepsake, that could account for it never being returned. On the other hand, a scenario which might account for a late return could be if she died before 1966 and people going through her things came across the book without realizing the Oswald connection or its significance, and returned it to the library system. An early death scenario for the seamstress could also be one way of accounting for nothing having been heard from her in later years. Or, she could have lived to an advanced age in Dallas, perhaps taking her memory of her brief interaction with Oswald so long ago to her grave with her.

All we can say is it appears this book, this last book of Oswald's life, was lent by Oswald to someone and that person may have been the seamstress. But of why that book was not returned to the Dallas Public Library before Nov 22, and then not after Nov 22 for a long time, nothing further seems knowable.

Now let us look at a surprising breakthrough on the subject of a driver's license of Oswald, reported here for the first time.

### **The lady and the driver's license of Oswald**

It is part of the standard narrative that Lee Oswald never had a driver's license. At first sight the basis for this seems so secure as to be unassailable, beyond conceivable dispute. Both Marina and Ruth Paine said Lee never had a driver's license. It is known that in November 1963 he was trying to apply for one, and no driver's license was found on his person or in his belongings after his arrest. The Warren Report stated as an assertion of fact that "Oswald did not have a driver's license" (p. 665), and considered the matter so settled that the Commission did not bother to take the precaution of checking with the Texas Department of Public Safety to verify that detail.

If they had done so, they might have been in for a surprise. For in 1968 a woman who had been employed in 1963 at the Department of Public Safety (DPS) in Austin, Texas, where all drivers' license records for the state of Texas were kept, Aletha Frair, in a signed affidavit stated from personal

knowledge that Lee Harvey Oswald did have a driver's license, and that she and other employees had personally seen a physical driver's license of Oswald in Austin the week after the assassination.

Lest it be assumed Aletha Frair surely was mistaken, in 1982, on the second known occasion in history when the Texas Department of Public Safety was asked, and the first and only time the agency is reported to have answered, the question of an Oswald driver's license, officials of that agency *confirmed* a Texas driver's license *had* been issued to Lee Harvey Oswald! (Documents cited below on this.) Aletha Frair had *not* been mistaken.

Puzzled by this information, wondering how could this be, wanting to run down this story and if possible solve it, I researched driver's license practices and procedures operable in Texas in 1963, since not all rules were the same then as today. I found that obtaining a driver's license in 1963 required passing a written test, a vision test, and a driving test. It was not then legally required to first obtain a temporary learner's permit or take driving instruction to test for and obtain a driver's license, even though those were usual and customary for teenagers learning to drive. It was possible in Texas in 1963 for an adult resident of Texas to show up at a local DPS office without an appointment, take and pass all three of those tests, and receive the physical driver's license and walk away with it in hand the same day, printed out by a machine on the spot in the local office, without needing to wait for it in the mail.

The driver's licenses in 1963 were on firm card stock but not laminated or credit-card firmness like today. They did not have a photo of the person. For the driving test part, the applicant had to provide the car, meaning a friend or family member was needed to drive with the applicant there, then loan the car for the test.

That Lee in November was intent on getting a driver's license is clear. Ruth Paine worked with Lee on practicing parallel parking on Sundays, with Ruth taking Lee in her station wagon to a nearby grocery store parking lot in Irving to practice. On Sat Nov 9 Ruth had driven Lee—along with Marina and the children—to an Oak Cliff DPS office with intent (in Ruth's understanding) for Lee to apply for and receive a learner's permit. In 1963 the learner's permit in Texas required passing the written and vision tests only. When issued it allowed legal driving on public roads provided another licensed

driver 18 or older was in the car. No prior driver's instruction or passing of a driving test was required in 1963 to obtain the learner's permit.

But when Ruth with Lee and Marina arrived on Nov 9, they found the DPS office closed that Saturday due to voting for a special election. If they had found that office open on Nov 9, Ruth understood Lee was only going to take the written (and vision) test and apply for the learner's permit, not take the driver's test for the full driver's license

(<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=45#relPagelD=163>). A written driver's license application form, filled out in Lee's handwriting but unsigned, was found among Lee's belongings (CE 426, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth346898/>).

The next weekend, Nov 16-17, the weekend before the assassination, Oswald unusually stayed in Oak Cliff rather than going out to Irving, which he had not done before. A birthday party planned by Ruth Paine for her child that weekend involving neighbor children invited over is said to have been the reason Lee did not go out that weekend to see his wife and children. But according to Buell Frazier, Lee told him a different reason: because he planned to get a driver's license.

Mr. BALL - From that time until November 22, did he ride home with you every weekend?

Mr. FRAZIER - No, sir; he did every weekend but one.

Mr. BALL - Do you remember that date?

Mr. FRAZIER - No, sir; I don't.

Mr. BALL - In the statement you made I believe you said it was the 16th and 17th of November. I am just reminding you of that. Does it refresh your memory any?

Mr. FRAZIER - I remember one weekend, I say, right now I can't recall because just to be frank with you I couldn't tell you roughly; I say I might have at that time but I say it slipped my mind but the thing is I do know he rode home with me every weekend up to that but one.

Mr. BALL - And why did—did he tell you why he wasn't going to ride home that weekend?

Mr. FRAZIER - Yes, he did. **He said he was working on his driving license and he was going to go take a driving test.**

What happened then? Lee told Marina on Sat Nov 16 in a phone call that he had gone to the location, but that although he had gotten there in time before it closed at 12 noon on Saturday, he saw the line was too long and had turned away for that reason. In other words, he told Marina he had *tried* but had been *unsuccessful*, and had *not* submitted an application for a driver's license that morning.

Mrs. PAINE - Just prior to the assassination. The 16th I was having a birthday party for my little girl and said I couldn't possibly take him again to this place so he could take a test. But that he didn't need a car. This was news to him. He thought he needed a car for his initial test, learner's permit. I said he could go himself from Dallas.

Mr. JENNER - This was a conversation between you and Lee Oswald?

Mrs. PAINE - Yes.

Mr. JENNER - How did it take place?

Mrs. PAINE - It must have been by phone.

Mr. JENNER - Did he call you or did you call him?

Mrs. PAINE - He called to the house nearly every night around 5:30 to talk to Marina. And Marina suggested to him that he wouldn't, shouldn't come out that weekend because I was having a birthday party and it had been a long weekend, the prior weekend. She didn't want him to wear out his welcome, and then I said to him he could still try to get—

Mr. JENNER - You did talk with him on the telephone?

Mrs. PAINE - That is my recollection. I am certain that I talked with him, that he was surprised that he didn't need a car. I had to tell him that he didn't need a car to take with him to take his test.

Mr. JENNER - Take his initial test?

Mrs. PAINE - Take his test, and suggested that he go from Dallas himself to take this test. Then he called us Saturday afternoon of the 16th to say he had been and tried to get his driver's permit but that he had arrived before closing time but still too late to get in because there was a long line ahead of him, the place having been closed both the previous Saturday for election day and the following Monday, the 11th, Veterans Day. There were a lot of people who wanted to get permits and he was advised that it wouldn't pay him to wait in

line. He didn't have time to be tested.

Mr. JENNER - Could you help us fix, can you recall as closely as possible the day of the week, this is the weekend of the assassination, was it not?

Mrs. PAINE - The weekend before.

Mr. JENNER - The weekend before, and this conversation you are now relating that you had with him in which he said that he had gone to the driver's license station, when did that conversation with you take place?

Mrs. PAINE - That conversation was with Marina, and she told me about it.

Mr. JENNER - When did she tell you about it?

Mrs. PAINE - He called her, it must have been Saturday afternoon, soon after he had been, he went Saturday morning and they closed at noon.

Mr. JENNER - I see. This was the weekend he did not come out to Irving?

Mrs. PAINE - This was the weekend he did not come out.

Mr. JENNER - The weekend in which you had your birthday party for your son was it?

Mrs. PAINE - It was either that same afternoon or it was possibly Sunday, I don't recall. It is important though. I wish I could recall when his call to her was. Since it relates to the problem of when I dialed his number.

Mr. JENNER - Mr. Chairman, I have marked as Commission Exhibit No. 426 a form or document which purports to be a driver's permit or driver's license permit application by Lee Harvey Oswald. It is a one-page form document on heavy board, or at least heavy paper. Are you familiar sufficiently with the handwriting or handprinting of Lee Harvey Oswald to be able to tell us whether the writing and handprinting on that document is or is not Lee Harvey Oswald's?

Mrs. PAINE - I am not sufficiently familiar. I can simply compare it with my only other thing I have seen in his printing which is what he wrote down in my diary.

Mr. JENNER - Refreshing your recollection in that respect and looking at the exhibit, if you are able to do so, would you give us your opinion as to whether the exhibit is in the handwriting or handprinting of Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mrs. PAINE - I think it very likely is.

Mr. JENNER - In your short talk with Lee Harvey Oswald on the subject of his having gone to

the license application department in Dallas, was anything said about his actually having filled out a driver's license or a learner's permit application?

Mrs. PAINE - No; nothing.

Mr. DULLES - Could we have the date of this document?

Mr. JENNER - If it is dated. My recollection is it is not.

Mrs. PAINE - His birthday is on it only. Picked up at his room on the date of the assassination. I guess it was picked up, I don't know.

Mr. JENNER - Could I review this with you a little bit? Did Lee Harvey Oswald on this occasion tell you in the course of what limited telephone conversation you had with him, that he had gone to the driver's license application bureau?

Mrs. PAINE - No; he told Marina.

Mr. JENNER - And did—he told Marina and then Marina in turn told you?

Mrs. PAINE - Yes.

Mr. JENNER - How near the time of the telephone conversation?

Mrs. PAINE - She told me immediately.

Mr. JENNER - Did Marina tell you?

Mrs. PAINE - Yes.

Mr. JENNER - She just turned from the phone and told you at once?

Mrs. PAINE - That is correct.

Mr. JENNER - This was spontaneous?

Mrs. PAINE - Yes. It may have been while she was still on the phone, I don't recall, but it certainly was immediate.

And Marina's answer was unequivocal:

Mr. JENNER – Did he have a driver's license that you know of?

Mrs. PAINE – No.

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The Oswald driver's license witnessed at the Department of Public Safety (DPS) office in Austin came to light from investigator Gary Sanders, told in a memo to New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison of Feb 15, 1968, which read:

"On Monday February 12, 1968 at a luncheon held at the Press Club on Chartres St. a man named John Frair approached Assistant District Attorney Jim Alcock and Andrew Sciambra and myself. Frair told Sciambra that his wife, Aletha Frair, had worked at the Department of Public Safety in Austin, Texas. While at the DPS Mrs. Frair had seen a drivers license issued to Lee Harvey Oswald. The occasion in which she saw the license was during the week following the Kennedy assassination when the license turned up at the DPS records department to be removed from the active files.

"On Wednesday, February 14, 1968, I went to the Frair house at 8001 Benson St. and spoke with both Mrs. Frair and her husband. I had prepared a statement in advance of my visit and she read and signed this statement in the presence of Miss Judy Duek and myself. A copy of the statement is attached to this memo.

"During the course of the conversation Mrs. Frair began to elaborate on the incident that occurred at the DPS saying that one of the girls working in the file cabinets pulling drivers licenses to be renewed or because of change of name or because of death ran across a license to which in the words of Mrs. Frair she commented, 'I have his license.' Someone else working near asked, 'you have whose license?' The woman working the files answered, 'I have Lee Harvey Oswald's drivers license, right here.' At this point Mrs. Frair said all of the employees within earshot rushed to see the license. Mrs. Frair said she never held the license but that she had stood right next to the woman who was holding it and that it was in fact a pink Texas Drivers License issued to Lee Harvey Oswald. Mrs. Frair did not remember if the license was signed or what the address on the license was, but she did elaborate as to the physical condition of the license (worn and discolored with a brown liquid).

"On the afternoon before my visit to Mrs. Frair I called the Records Department of the Texas Dept. of Public Safety and talked with a Mrs. Seay. I asked Mrs. Seay what would happen to

the records of a person who had died. She indicated that the records are kept for five years after the date of issue and then destroyed. Mrs. Seay asked me whom I was interested in finding and I said I would like to know if Lee Harvey Oswald had ever had a Texas license. Mrs. Seay replied 'Oh yes, that one—just a minute I'll look and see.' At this point Mrs. Seay left the phone and was gone for about three minutes and when she returned the tone of her voice had changed from very friendly to very curt. Mrs. Seay said that she could not give out any information and that she could not talk to me and that I would have to talk to her supervisor, Mr. Elliott. I thanked her and hung up. I[t] is very obvious to me that if there are any records at the DPS pertaining to Lee Harvey Oswald they are not going to release them. Mrs. Frair has given me a list of other persons who may be able to verify her statement and I am in the process of contacting these people." (<https://harveyandlee.net/Driving/Frair.htm>)

The signed statement of Aletha Frair read:

"I worked for the Department of Public Safety in Austin, Texas from the early part of October 1963, through the early part of December 1963. While I was employed at the Department of Public Safety I worked in the License Records Department. This Dept. was responsible for the IBM computer records of all drivers licenses issued in the state of Texas . . . During the week following the murder of Lee Harvey Oswald, on either Wednesday the 27<sup>th</sup>, or Thursday the 28<sup>th</sup> of November, 1963 the **Texas driver's license issued to Lee Harvey Oswald** came into my division. This record (the card) on Oswald was pulled from the files. Several other employees (3 or 4) of the Department saw the Driver's license which was dirty and worn as though it had been carried in a billfold. The license was the talk of the office that day since everyone knew who Oswald was, and the reason his driver's license records were being pulled from the active file was the fact that he had been killed . . . Signed February 14, 1968.  
Aletha Frair."

Added to the typed signed statement, in Aletha Frair's handwriting, was this addition:

**"I saw with my own eyes** the pink Texas Drivers License. (About 2-1/2 inches by 3-1/2 inches.) The license had the name 'Lee Harvey Oswald' printed on the card as the licensee. The license was stained with some sort of brownish discoloration."

Aletha Frair's story was corroborated by Texas Department of Public Safety officials in 1982. This is a memo written by Portland, Oregon political activist Ace Hayes, publisher of the *Portland Free Press*:

"4 November 1982. Ace R. Hayes. Subject: Telephone interview with Chief George Griffen, chief of drivers and vehicle records DPS 1 November 1982 concerning Lee Harvey Oswald's drivers license.

"I called DPS 'media assistance only' number 452-3047 at 9:25 A.M., 1 November 1982. I was given the name of Chief Griffen at 465-2004. I called the chief's office. He was not in but I was assured he would call back shortly. I explained to the person with whom I talked the purpose of my call: to try to determine whether the Garrison memo of 1968 indicating that Lee Harvey Oswald had a Texas drivers license was correct or not.

"Chief Griffen called at 11:30 A.M. He indicated to me that he was not at DPS records in 1963 but that he had checked with other people who had been there and he was told that **Lee Harvey Oswald did have a Texas drivers license**. I asked if he could give me the name of the person or persons with whom he had talked who told him Lee Harvey Oswald did have a license. He said Mrs. Lee Bozarth was one person with whom he had talked. I asked if I could speak with her. He said yes.

"In a minute she came to the phone—I assume it was the phone in his office so that he could verify her end of the conversation—the following notes are from my conversation with Mrs. Bozarth. She told me that requests had come into DPS for quite a few people's records shortly after the events in Dallas 22 November 1963. Among the DPS files which were requested was one for Lee Harvey Oswald. **Mrs. Bozarth stated categorically** that she knew from direct personal experience that there was a DPS drivers license file for Lee Harvey Oswald and that it was pulled to supply the requested information to the requesting agency.

"I asked whether the existence of a DPS file necessarily meant that a person had been issued a Texas drivers license. She explained that that file was automatically created when one made application for the license; that the first item placed in the file was the license and related material from the application, i.e. vital statistics, address, etc. The file would subsequently be the repository for all driving and vehicle records pertaining to the holder of the drivers license.

"Mrs. Bozarth further indicated that none of this evidence would any longer exist due to normal purging procedures of the agency. This procedure was confirmed by Chief Griffen when he came back on the phone. I asked who had been the manager of the DPS drivers license division 22 November 1963. I was told it was Mr. T.G. Ferguson who retired six years ago and who now lives in Waco, Texas." (<https://harveyandlee.net/Driving/Drive.htm>)

There was no opportunity for Oswald to apply for a driver's license or take a driving test later than Sat Nov 16. The assassination and his arrest occurred only six days later, on Fri Nov 22.

This information from the Department of Public Safety in Austin is in irreconcilable conflict with what Lee told Marina on the phone on Sat Nov 16.

As surprising as it may be, there appears to be no other conclusion—this conclusion is forced by the facts—than that Lee lied to Marina on Sat Nov 16 about not applying for a driver's license. Contrary to what he told Marina, he did apply for a driver's license in that DPS office on Sat Nov 16. And on the strength of the Aletha Frair statement, he took the driving test that day, passed it along with the written and the vision, got a drivers license and walked away with it in his wallet that day, Sat Nov 16.

The reason we can know this happened specifically on Sat Nov 16 is that is the only day it can have happened—it cannot have been either earlier or later. The reason for knowing that he did apply for a driver's license in that DPS office that day, contrary to what he told Marina, is because the Department of Public Safety had a file which existed for him in Austin according to Mrs. Bozarth of that office cited above, which according to Mrs. Bozarth existed only if an application had been made, not to mention the separate report of the physical license of Oswald witnessed in that office.

But this raises questions to us, no less than would have been raised to Marina at the time if she had known: who made available to Lee the use of a car for his driving test? Why would Lee lie and conceal it from Marina? And if he did obtain a physical driver's license on Nov 16, why was it not found by police on his person or in his belongings after his arrest on Nov 22?

In light of the information developed in the present study, answers to the first two of these three questions may be readily proposed. The person who assisted Lee by loaning her car to Lee for the driver's exam will have been the woman who was not Marina, the seamstress. The argument for this is:

- There is no other known good candidate for a person who would offer Lee the use of her car for the driver's test that day.
- The proximity in time to Lee's other interactions with the seamstress.
- The secrecy of the Nov 16 driver's license with respect to Marina is in keeping with Lee's secrecy otherwise concerning his relationship with the seamstress.

The secrecy is because if Lee did tell Marina he had gotten a driver's license, Marina would ask whose car did he use for the driving exam and Lee is not disclosing the seamstress to Marina. The lady in the background who is not Marina accounts for what otherwise would be inexplicable: why he would conceal from Marina that he had gotten a driver's license.

The secrecy also confirms Lee tested for and received the full driver's license—written, visual, and driving exams passed—on Nov 16, and not *simply* the learner's permit (written and visual exams only). The reason for that is if Lee had received *only* the learner's permit there would be no reason he would not openly tell Marina and Ruth. It would have been the loaned car—from the seamstress—for the driver's exam which necessitated, from Lee's point of view, the concealment from Marina concerning getting the driver's license that day.

Up to this point this reconstruction makes total sense of the facts. But now we confront a question which is not so easy: what happened with the physical driver's license, in between the time when

Oswald would have received it, put it in his wallet, and left the Texas DPS office on Sat Nov 16, to when it was seen a couple of weeks later in Austin, Texas as part of a file being pulled from records?

~ ~ ~

That Aletha Frair in Austin saw the physical license was worn, not in new condition, indicates Lee had it in his wallet starting from Sat Nov 16, and there may or may not have been post-Oswald handling or manhandling of it. The brownish discoloration described by Aletha Frair sounds like the effect of silver nitrate used to lift latent fingerprints on paper or cardboard material, which leaves a permanent brown discoloration. That indicates there had been a law enforcement or federal agency interest in that physical item before it was sent to Austin.

We might note here that although Aletha Frair in 1968 said her witnessing of the Oswald license occurred the next week after the assassination, her memory could be off by a week or so on the timing. She stated that the sighting in the Austin office of the physical Oswald driver's license occurred Wed Nov 27 or Thu Nov 28, but Thursday November 28 was Thanksgiving!—it cannot have been that day since state offices would be closed on Thanksgiving, suggesting possible error in her memory on the date. (Compare earlier comments of the present study on date errors in memories of real incidents of witnesses.)

Since there is no report of a physical driver's license found on Oswald's person or in his belongings by the Dallas Police on Nov 22, he must have removed it from his wallet at some point between Nov 16 and 22. Since he was in deceptive mode to Marina concerning the driver's license, could it be Lee removed the driver's license from his wallet before he went out to Irving Thursday night as a precaution, in case she were to look through his wallet?

If Lee did take the driver's license out of his wallet in advance of visiting Marina on Thursday night, where would he have left it? Logically there are only about two possibilities: either his N. Beckley room in Oak Cliff, or with the seamstress temporarily for safekeeping.

But it was not in his room at N. Beckley, because the Dallas Police would have reported it along with the other items found there if that were the case (no reason why they would not). By elimination, this

focuses on the seamstress as who possibly had the physical driver's license of Oswald on Nov 22. But if that was the case, the testimony that the physical license was seen in the office in Austin after the assassination means the seamstress would have turned that driver's license in to authorities soon after the assassination, and that in turn would seem to suggest there had been a police or federal agency contact with the seamstress soon after the assassination.

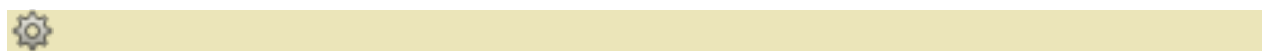
Logically, if she turned in an Oswald driver's license after the assassination, she might have turned in the curtain rods or told of them at the same time. But if that happened, any role of a seamstress in a conveyance of those items to, say, the FBI or Secret Service, will have been kept from records that have become known to the public, and the existence of both the Oswald driver's license and Oswald curtain rods were concealed from the Warren Commission and the public, analogous to the paper-bag revolver earlier noted. It is also possible the seamstress could have gotten the driver's license returned in a way which did not reveal her identity (mailing it without a return address, for example).

There is no obvious institutional motive for covering up the existence of an Oswald driver's license in itself—but there could be if the existence and/or identity of the person who accompanied and loaned her car to Oswald for the driver's test was sensitive. That would be about the only realistic motive for an agency, whether the FBI or some other agency, to suppress knowledge of the existence of a Nov 16 driver's license of Oswald that comes to mind.

One possibility is a federal agency—presumably the FBI, though the Secret Service could also be a possibility—obtained the physical driver's license directly or indirectly from the seamstress, had it checked for fingerprints (the brown discoloration), then sent that physical license to Austin with a request to match it to and return the complete file associated with that physical driver's license, including return of the physical license. The pulling of the Lee Harvey Oswald records in Austin in response to that request would be what Aletha Frair witnessed along with her fellow employees. The file, along with the physical driver's license, might then have been sent to the unidentified federal agency, perhaps never to be returned, and that would be the end of the driver's license of Oswald.

While the logistics of what happened with the physical driver's license after Nov 16 are not entirely clear, the information we can establish allows us tentatively to propose three items of further information concerning a reconstructed profile of the seamstress:

- she will have had a car;
- her acquaintance with Oswald preceded the making of the curtains;
- the relationship had developed to the point where by Sat Nov 16 she offered Lee the use of her car for a driving test at a DPS office, accompanied him to that location, and was with him when he passed his tests and got his driver's license.



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
 STATE OF LOUISIANA  
 PARISH OF ORLEANS

DATE: February 14, 1968

STATEMENT OF: ALETHA FRAIR

RESIDING AT: 8001 Benson  
 New Orleans, La.  
 Phone - 242-2126

\*\*\*\*\*

STATEMENT

My name is ALETHA FRAIR (MRS. JOHN FRAIR). I live at:  
 8001 Benson  
 New Orleans, La.  
 Phone - 242-2126

I worked for the Department of Public Safety in Austin, Texas from the early part of October 1963, through the early part of December 1963. While I was employed at the Department of Public Safety I worked in the License Records Department. This Dept. was responsible for the 2nd computer records of all drivers licenses issued in the state of Texas.

My husband, JOHN, was working for the United Press International during November of 1963 and on November 22, 1963 he was in Dallas, Texas, covering the birthday of ex-Vice President JOHN F. KENNEDY.

I did not go to work on the 22 of November, 1963, but the following event occurred the week after the assassination of President KENNEDY.

During the week following the murder of LEE HARVEY OSWALD, on either Wednesday the 17th, or Thursday the 18th of November, 1963 the Texas driver's license issued to LEE HARVEY OSWALD came into my division.

*Aletha Frair*

STATEMENT OF: ALETHA FRAIR PAGE 2

The record (ID# card) on OSWALD was pulled from the files. Several other employees (5 or 6) of the Department saw the driver's license which was dirty and worn as though it had been carried in a billfold. The license was the talk of the office that day since everyone knew who OSWALD was, and the reason his driver's license records were being pulled from the active file was the fact that he had been killed.

In October of 1966 my husband and I moved to New Orleans and in June of 1967 my husband went to work for WOL-TV, Channel 4.

I, ALETHA FRAIR, hereby affirm that all of the above statement is true to the best of my knowledge.

Signed February 14, 1968.

*Aletha Frair*  
 ALETHA FRAIR

*Gary Sadlers*  
 WITNESS GARY SADDERS

*Judy Duck*  
 WITNESS JUDY DUCK

I SAW WITH MY OWN EYES THE PINK TEXAS DRIVERS LICENSE, (ABOUT 2 1/2 INCHES BY 3 1/2 INCHES) PRINTED ON THE CARD AS THE LICENSEE. THE LICENSE WAS STAINED WITH SOME SORT OF BROWNISH-DISCOLORATION.

### **Reflections on the history of scholarship of the JFK assassination with respect to Oswald's curtains activity in the final week of his life**

Until recent years *almost no one* studying the case considered that Oswald might have brought curtain rods to work on the morning of Nov 22, 1963, even though Buell Frazier, like a lone voice in the wilderness, wholly credible and with nothing impeaching or countering his testimony, *said* from day one that what he saw Lee bring to work was a paper sack which in length and appearance agreed with containing curtain rods, not a rifle.

When photographs became known which had been taken that Friday afternoon and evening, Nov 22, and again the next morning, Saturday Nov 23, 1963, showing Oswald's room at N. Beckley *visibly had a severely damaged traverse curtain rod* that held up draperies over all four north-facing windows in Oswald's room *a day after Oswald told Buell Frazier he was getting curtains made . . .* it was not put together by investigators or researchers, whether of the Warren Commission, the later House Select Committee (HSCA), or authors of books, because those investigations and authors did not consider the possible role of a seamstress located near Oswald's workplace. Astonishingly, the idea that a seamstress might have been involved in the making of curtains for Oswald appears not to have been on the radar of any of the secondary literature of the JFK assassination. The rare outlier researchers who entertained the possibility that Oswald might have brought curtain rods, evoked images of Oswald taking metal curtain rods into the Book Depository as if he was doing something with curtain rods on his own—it did not make sense. They too missed the seamstress.

It was not considered in this history of research that Oswald *could not* have been acting *alone* with his curtain rods—that physical curtain rods are a prerequisite in the making of curtains, and if curtains were being *made* and they weren't being made by Marina, that means *there was a seamstress!* And where else would a seamstress *be* for Oswald than in the Dal-Tex building, which had *dozens* of seamstresses! Right across the side street from Oswald's workplace were *dozens* of experienced working seamstresses, any one of whom would be capable, with skill and a sewing machine which Lee did not possess, of *making curtains* for him! Only with the proposition of a seamstress in proximity to his workplace do Oswald's curtain rods Friday morning become sensible, and yet this was not investigated and was missed in the history of JFK assassination scholarship.

To review once again, the north wall of Oswald's room in Oak Cliff was comprised of "four double-hung wooden sash windows, each approximately thirty-two inches in width and equally spaced along the wall" (FBI, March 28, 1964,

<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=11103#relPagelD=3>). The single bent long traverse curtain rod over all four of those windows is documented in the Nov 22 and 23 photos which show draperies that cannot be closed and would crash to the floor if pulled.

The solution, perhaps suggested to Lee by the seamstress at her initiative, was to create newly-made individual curtain sets for the four individual windows, each to have their own curtain rod. These four sets of window curtains would solve Lee's immediate problem while also remaining Lee's property and would go with him at such time as he left the rooming house. The seamstress might tell Lee he would need to supply the fabric which would involve his color choice; measurements of the windows; and also the curtain rods that would be used in the windows, for the seamstress to cut and sew the fabric around the curtain rods in making the curtains.

Oswald would know four curtain rods would be needed for the four individual windows, but on Thursday night Nov 21 he likely obtained only two, not four, loose ones from Ruth Paine's garage. However, two would be sufficient for the seamstress to make all four windows' curtains since they were all the same measurements and all would use the same kind and length of curtain rod (the four windows were the same size). It would still remain necessary for Lee to buy at least two more curtain rods, of the same kind as the first two, for the curtains of the third and fourth windows. However he might buy not two but four identical ones as his next step if the assassination had not intruded, to allow for a replacement to Ruth Paine's garage of the original two he had taken.

Another detail is that the drapes on that long traverse rod were pink.

"Mrs. Johnson advised that the room formerly occupied by Lee Harvey Oswald at that address had curtains over all the windows at the time Oswald occupied it. Mrs. Johnson said double doors opened into Oswald's room and directly across from these doors running the entire length of the room were a series of wooden double-hung windows. Above these windows, Mrs. Johnson stated, was one flat-type curtain rod composed of a number of

sections of the five and ten-cent store variety, which was fastened above the windows and extended the entire length of the room. At each end of the rod thirty-inch **pink side-drapes** were hung with white lace curtains in between. She advised that venetian blinds covered each window ... Mrs. Johnson said that because of all of the windows in this small room, it was very light and cheerful." (FBI, March 28, 1964 [to the Warren Commission April 2, 1964], <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=11103#relPageld=4>)

It is a generalization, but some men have less preference for pink for clothing or furnishings because of association with things feminine or gay. Having instead sharp-looking new curtains of a different and perhaps dark classier color that Lee preferred and belonged to him, could be an aesthetic fringe benefit.

The seamstress enters the picture because Oswald cannot make curtains himself. It takes a seamstress and a sewing machine to make curtains. In the ways Buell Frazier retold what Oswald told him, Oswald had spoken of curtains being made for him but *by Marina*, which was not true. Oswald told Buell Frazier part of the truth, about curtains being made, but not about the seamstress making them, in keeping with the secrecy in which he did not tell even Fritz about the curtain rods or the seamstress.

Since Oswald was bringing curtain rods *from Irving to* the location of his workplace, and having curtain rods in hand are prerequisite in making curtains, it was *not* Marina making the curtains, nor were the curtains yet made on Nov 22—and because the assassination interrupted, those planned curtains never were made. The curtains had not been made by Friday morning, because the seamstress did not yet have curtain rods from Lee before she could start. Once she got the curtain rods in addition to fabric which Lee may already have supplied or she otherwise had by that point, she could make the curtains either after-hours on a company sewing machine, which would be Friday after work at the earliest, or else overnight at her home on her own sewing machine, Friday night to be received by him on Saturday. In some ways, the seamstress is so obvious in retrospect as what was going on. Yet, the seamstress was missed. The present study is the first analysis in the history of JFK assassination scholarship, to my knowledge, to propose the role of the seamstress in Oswald's final week.

When Oswald was arrested he denied he had brought curtain rods or had told Buell Frazier anything about curtain rods, even though that was exactly what had happened. Without the seamstress in the picture, Oswald's denials make little sense. But the evidence indicates there was a seamstress and the only issue is the scope of the relationship, not whether there was one. Oswald's denials to Fritz are well understood as having been motivated, quite simply, by being honorable to the lady, because if he did admit he had carried curtain rods, one question would lead to another and it would end up going to unwanted and unpleasant attention on her.\* He shields that seamstress from police scrutiny, not because she has committed any crime or wrongdoing (no more than Buell Frazier or Joe Molina), but *shields* her from police attention comparable to the harrowing experience Buell Frazier underwent from Fritz, or that Joe Molina received.\*\*

(\* What if, for example, the seamstress had family members with immigration documentation issues, and feared police attention could result in some family member being uprooted or deported, and Oswald was aware of that? We don't know the circumstances.)

(\*\* Joe Molina was a long-time bookkeeper at the Texas School Book Depository. He was totally innocent but police raided his house in the middle of the night, searched his house, frightened his wife and children, and put out to the press that he was suspected. Molina was innocent, but could not get his name cleared publicly, and lost his job unjustly as a result [<https://www.jfk-assassination.net/russ/testimony/molina.htm>].)

No investigation was done of the Dal-Tex building or its seamstresses with respect to the Oswald curtain rods issue.

### **Did the curtain rods brought by Oswald ever turn up?**

For argument that two curtain rods of unknown origin or provenance said to bear physical markings "275" and "276" (= 27.5 and 27.6 decimal inch marked length measurements?), turned in by a Secret Service agent to the Dallas Police Identification Bureau Crime Scene Search Section **on March 15, 1964**, with a *specific request to check for the presence of Oswald fingerprints*, and with that fingerprint check *completed* those curtain rods were **returned to that same Secret Service agent at 7:57 am**

**on March 24, 1964**, could NOT be the same two curtain rods, according to the handwritten dates and signatures on the Dallas Police's paperwork, as two curtain rods *newly found* and taken by the Warren Commission out of Ruth Paine's garage **at 7:30 pm on March 23**, and newly and freshly assigned at that moment sigla Ruth Paine Exhibits 275 and 276 (which by coincidence were measured at exactly 27-1/2 inches in length), and which were then turned over to the National Archives, compare photos and discussions at <https://educationforum.ipbhost.com/topic/28071-buell-wesley-frazier-curtain-rods-and-the-lack-of-blaming-frazier-very-interesting/>, as well as <https://www.patspeer.com/chapter-4h-the-curtain-rod-story> and <https://www.jfkassassinationforum.com/index.php/topic,1753.656.html> and <https://gil-jesus.com/the-curtain-rod-debacle/>.

Sara Peterson and K.W. Zachry in their 2020 book, *The Lone Star Speaks*, report that Buell Frazier told of receiving a phone call "a few years after the assassination" from an anonymous woman who "quietly confided to Frazier that some curtain rods had indeed been found in the Depository after the assassination. She then hung up without revealing her identity" (Peterson and Zachry, *The Lone Star Speaks* [2020], 187, citing interviews of Buell Frazier in 2015 and 2019). There is of course no way to know whether that phone call was for real. If it was, it is unlikely Oswald curtain rods would actually have been found in the Book Depository, since it is unlikely Oswald ever took any curtain rods inside the Book Depository. One possibility that has been suggested is that Oswald curtain rods could have been given to the Secret Service when the Secret Service was at the Book Depository on Dec 5, 1963 filming a reenactment. If so, the location where the curtain rods were handed over to the Secret Service could have become mistakenly retold as "found in the Depository" through the effect of two layers of hearsay (Frazier, and authors Peterson & Zachry). That detail aside, if perchance that phone call to Buell Frazier was for real, the tantalizing question would be whether that could have been from the seamstress herself. But there is no way to know that.

### **The actions of Oswald over three days of the week of the assassination**

The actions of Oswald over three days, Wed, Thu, and Fri Nov 20-22, 1963, make sense interpreted as a response to draperies in his N. Beckley room in Oak Cliff becoming inoperable, such that it was no longer possible for Lee to close the drapes over his windows.

As previously noted, he spent Wednesday evening Nov 20 at a nearby laundromat until closing, reading until midnight. That fact has long been known but not a reason why. The inability to close the drapes in his room becomes the explanation for that uncharacteristic reading until midnight in a laundromat. It was preferable being in that laundromat until midnight, to being in his own room without ability to close the drapes. On Thursday morning Nov 21 he lined up the ride with Buell Frazier to Irving that evening. If Oswald's actions began following the draperies becoming inoperable, say, Tuesday night or Wednesday morning, the following timetable shows Oswald minimizing time spent in his room in evenings until he could get the curtains a seamstress was making for him.

- *Tuesday night/Wednesday morning, Nov 19-20*—a crash or threatened crash of draperies and one end of the traverse curtain rod. Oswald puts the drapes and traverse curtain rod back in place, or takes care not to have them crash a first time, whichever it was, such that the traverse rod stays up so long as the drapes are not pulled.
- *Wednesday night, Nov 20*—after coming home from work, Oswald spends the entire evening in a laundromat reading until midnight, when he is forced to leave because it was closing.
- *Thursday night, Nov 21*—Oswald is not in his room at N. Beckley this night, because he is in Irving.
- *Friday night, Nov 22*—if the assassination had not interrupted, Oswald may have anticipated receiving new curtains either by that night, after the seamstress's workday, or alternatively, he may have needed to wait one more night if the seamstress was going to do the work at home overnight and meet him the next day to give them to him.

And although the major objection to this outline will continue to be the momentum of the belief that Oswald brought the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle from Irving the morning of Fri Nov 22, and not curtain rods, the basis for that objection disappears in light of the already-cited study showing that Lee and Marina removed the rifle from the Ruth Paine garage on the morning of Mon Nov 11—eleven days before the assassination—not to return it there again. On that day, Nov 11, eleven days before the assassination, Lee had a gunsmith repair a damaged scope base and reinstall the scope on the Mannlicher-Carcano, consistent with preparing the rifle for a sale or conveyance. On Thursday night

Nov 21 and Friday morning Nov 22 there *was no rifle* in the blanket in the Ruth Paine garage for Lee to have brought (“The Oswald rifle scope installation at the Irving Sport Shop of Monday, November 11, 1963” [2023], <https://www.scrollery.com/?p=1485>, and its earlier companion article, “The mystery of the Furniture Mart sighting of Lee and Marina Oswald and their children and its solution” [2023], <https://www.scrollery.com/?p=1450>).

It follows that, since there *is* evidence Oswald took curtain rods from Irving to the location of his workplace on the morning of Fri Nov 22, and there is separate evidence Oswald did *not* bring the rifle from Irving on the morning of Fri Nov 22, the issue of *when and how* the Mannlicher-Carcano got to the 6th floor of the Book Depository, and whether Oswald was responsible for it getting there, *must be revisited*.

*Someone* or ones infiltrated Oswald’s rifle, or Oswald’s former rifle whichever it was, along with the rifle paper bag Oswald had made for it, into the building sometime between Nov 11 and Nov 22. But there is no longer any basis for certainty, in terms of presently-known information, that that mechanism can only have been Oswald, especially if he had sold that rifle eleven days earlier and no longer had it after that date.

And the proper question in response to the information brought out in the 2023 study should not be to ask whether there is proof the Mannlicher-Carcano was in the hands of others after Nov 11, but to invert that question, and ask if there is proof it was *not* in the hands of others after Nov 11. And the answer to that last question, clear as a bell, is: no.

To return to Nov 22, the belief that Oswald brought the rifle from Irving to work on Friday morning became deeply entrenched, even though Buell Frazier—vetted truthful by a Dallas Police polygraph the night of Nov 22 even as he was asked the questions at issue—and his sister too, that is, the total eyewitness testimony concerning size and description of what Oswald brought Friday morning, *told and told and told* that what Oswald brought was *too short to have held a rifle*, but *matched in length and appearance and description, curtain rods*.

The Warren Commission refused to accept the sworn testimony of witnesses on the description of what Oswald brought to work the morning of the assassination.

And a possibly innocent man went down on the charge of assassinating President Kennedy.

### **Epitaph**

Once the narrative was fixed in which the world was told Oswald brought the rifle into the Texas School Book Depository Friday morning Nov 22, that narrative became essential to uphold. Any risk that information might come forth that what Oswald brought that morning could have *been* curtain rods would have been fatal to that narrative. A motive to cover up—or not to find in the first place—curtains-making activity, or a relationship of Oswald with a seamstress in the Dal-Tex building, would have been enormous.

What happened on Friday, November 22, 1963 was apocalyptic for Americans at large and for Lee Oswald in particular. President Kennedy, who Lee admired from start to finish—*all* who knew Lee most closely, *without exception*, said he only spoke favorably of President Kennedy—was assassinated. Oswald was arrested and charged with it. The Dick Clark Show was cancelled. By Sunday morning Oswald was dead, shot dead in police custody by a Dallas nightclub owner with unsavory associations.

And after the Mannlicher-Carcano of Oswald, last known in Oswald's possession Nov 11, turned up on Nov 22 on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Book Depository at Dealey Plaza, and its mail-order history traced to him, government agencies told the world he had done it.

He was killed before he could come to trial. It was so easy, for the guardians of the interests of a traumatized nation, to pin all that needed to be pinned on the dead young man.

And somewhere in the Dal-Tex building was a terrified seamstress, who could not believe what had happened.

In what might be regarded as a final act of nobility, Lee died without giving up her name.