'He didn’t seem to miss having friends'  

OSWALD

continued

exert himself particularly in class. In the fifth grade he made two Bs—a failing grade in Fort Worth at that time—in arithmetic and spelling, two Cs in the real BAs. Another schoolmate, William Leverich, was struck by Lee's backwardness in class. "I remember that he'd scoot his desk chair across the floor to the pencil sharpener—just to get away from one of the kids. The kids would stickler and the teacher would get mad."

Lee was not altogether unnoticed by the fifth- and sixth-grade girls. One recalled that "he had muscles—he was strong." Another had such a crush on him that once, walking home with Lee and another girl, she asked him to kiss her. Lee said he wouldn't unless he could also kiss the other girl, whom he was sweet on at the time. Lee kissed them both.

Mrs. Pat Davenport Baum of Fort Worth, a former classmate of Lee's, said he once wrote her a love note and was bitter when she returned him. "Oh, how he hated me for that," she didn't speak to her at all for a long time," Mrs. Baum also recalled that Lee "walked real proud. But he never was a one of the kids. He was a sort of other type of jen, which looked cheaper."

Lee was not a candidate of defending himself in those years. Classmate Monroe Davis recalled how Lee beat him one day after school. "He fought dirty, pinching and biting," Davis said, "but he would have licked me anyway." Davis said that as the fight was breaking up, Lee's mother appeared and "she was laughing. She was not ashamed of him."

Lee finished the grade at Ridges West in June 1952. He was approaching his 13th birthday—fully tall for his age, well built and athletic. But he appeared tense and wore an increasingly noticeable spool on his shoulder. At this time his mother decided to go to New York, a move that was to have a great impact on Lee. She said she wanted to be closer to her own JohnPic, her first marriage, who was stationed in New York with the Coast Guard. She was thought she could do better financially in New York.

They arrived in New York in September, moved into an apartment in the Bronx, and Lee entered the seventh grade at Trinity Lutheran School, switching after three weeks to Junior High School 117. His public school attendance record was abysmal. Between October 1952 and January 1953, he missed 47 school days. His grades were barely passing. On the report card where teachers rate a child's personality factor, Lee was judged satisfactory in courtesy and effort, dependable and self-control.

His truancy resulted in Lee's first brush with legal authority—in his case the New York Children's Court. Mrs. Oswald had moved again in March 1953, and Lee had been transferred to Junior High School 44 in his third school in seven months. When he failed to report to the school, John Carro, a young probation officer assigned to the Children's Court in the Bronx, got in touch with him.

Carro, a soft-spoken, 36-year-old Probation Officer, was sent to New York by Major Robert Wagner, said, "We talked at my office. My job was to find out as much background, his attitude toward school, the attitude of his parents, whether there were any illnesses or externalizing circumstances and so on. I found him to be a small, bright and likable boy. I asked him why he was staying out of school, and said, he thought school was a waste of time, that he wasn't learning anything there anyway."

He also told Carro that the other children in school made fun of him because of his Texas drawl and his blue jeans.

"I asked him what his hobbies were, and he said he used to collect stamps but didn't do that any more. He said he liked horseback riding [there is no evidence that he ever did any] and said he wanted to go into the Marines. But he said most of all he just liked to be by himself and do things by himself. He would get up in the morning and watch television all day. There was no one else at home. The mother worked. He didn't have any friends, and he didn't seem to miss having any friends. He never said anything to me about reading. It didn't seem abnormal to him to stay home and do nothing, but it was."

"In my report I indicated this was a potentially dangerous situation—dangerous to his personality. When you get a 13-year-old kid who withdraws into his own world, whose only company is fantasy, who has no father figure, whose mother doesn't seem to relate either—then you've got trouble. I recommended placement for Oswald. I thought of a place like Berkshire Farm in Massachusetts, or Children's Village at Ogdens Ferry. They have cottages for the kids there, and psychiatric treatment, as well as follow-up therapy. I definitely thought that would be satisfactory in cooperation, dependability and self-control."

Lee had the feeling that his mother was completely inept, that she was detached and not involved. She kept saying that Lee wasn't any problem, and she didn't understand what the fuss was all about. She wanted to go back to Texas or Louisiana, but said she didn't have the money.

"Finally I remember telling Lee it was either school or commitment. He said, in that case, I'd give him a break and he refused to take it. I'll be talking to a court-attached psychiatric case. She said that she was attending school by that time and there was no reason for going to the clinic."

"In January 1954, I wrote to Mrs. Oswald, giving the address. I have moved into my office and bring this. The letter came back. Moved. Left No Forward."

For Mosley's memories of the 16 months she and Lee spent in New York are bitter. Perhaps even more so by a suspicion that had been a mistake to move there. It was a very, very sad story," she said of Lee's truancy trouble. "Mr. John Carro told him. 'Lee, you'll have to report to me every week. I said, 'Mr. Carro, my son is not going to report to you. He's no criminal. He's gave his word that he's not going to dugs again. The first time he doesn't keep his word, his father will have to come to court.'"

The most penetrating personal and psychiatric studies ever made on Lee Oswald were done by Dr. Renato Habegger, chief psychiatrist at New York's Youth House for Boys. Habegger examined him at the recommendation of the Bronx Children's Court. His confidential report is in the hands of the federal commission now investigating the