

over the place, well then I told him I thought that something had happened over there.

I wasn't expecting anything like that until I just, of course, seen the policemen all out there running back. They came out the back door and the side door with guns.

Mr. BELIN. Who did you tell that to that you thought something happened there?

Mr. RACKLEY. Gail George.

Mr. BELIN. Is that your foreman?

Mr. RACKLEY. Yes.

Mr. BELIN. After you said you kept your eyes on this looking south for 5 or 10 minutes, what did you do after that?

Mr. RACKLEY. Well, I went back to the office.

Mr. BELIN. Then what did you do after that?

Mr. RACKLEY. Well, I don't remember.

Mr. BELIN. During this period of 5 or 10 minutes, did you walk close to the building at all, or just stand there?

Mr. RACKLEY. Just stood out there.

Mr. BELIN. What about Romack? Did he stand with you, or did he walk closer?

Mr. RACKLEY. He walked closer.

Mr. BELIN. Anything else you can think of, whether I have asked it or not, that in any way might be relevant to this inquiry?

Mr. RACKLEY. It wasn't a thing that I knew. I didn't really know or expect what was taking place.

Mr. BELIN. Other than the pigeons?

Mr. RACKLEY. Yes.

Mr. BELIN. Sir, we thank you for your cooperation. You have a right, if you want, to come back down and read your testimony and sign it, or you can just waive doing that and have the court reporter send it directly to us without your taking another trip down here. You can do it either way.

Mr. RACKLEY. I can sign it now.

Mr. BELIN. You can either waive signing it or else you can come down again and read it and sign it. By waiving, I mean you just let it go, assuming that the court reporter will accurately transcribe it, or you have a right to come in and read it.

Mr. RACKLEY. I will just let it go.

Mr. BELIN. You waive signing it?

Mr. RACKLEY. Yes.

Mr. BELIN. That is all for now.

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## TESTIMONY OF JAMES ELBERT ROMACK

The testimony of James Elbert Romack was taken at 11:30 a.m., on April 8, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. David W. Belin, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. BELIN. You want to stand and raise your right hand.

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. ROMACK. I do.

Mr. BELIN. My name is David Belin. I am actually a practicing attorney from Des Moines, Iowa. I have been with the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy for several months here, and we asked you to come down to have your deposition taken.

Mr. BELIN. Would you please state your name for the record?

Mr. ROMACK. James Elbert Romack.

Mr. BELIN. R-o-m-a-c-k?

Mr. ROMACK. Right.

Mr. BELIN. Where do you live, Mr. Romack?

Mr. ROMACK. 10825 Benbrook Drive, Dallas, Tex.

Mr. BELIN. How old a man are you?

Mr. ROMACK. I am 39 years of age.

Mr. BELIN. Were you born in Texas?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Go to school here?

Mr. ROMACK. I went to school in Texas, yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. How far did you get through school?

Mr. ROMACK. I got a couple of years of college.

Mr. BELIN. A couple of years of college?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes.

Mr. BELIN. What college?

Mr. ROMACK. East Texas State Teachers College and Technological College.

Mr. BELIN. Did you go to college right after high school?

Mr. ROMACK. It was right after the war.

Mr. BELIN. You went right after the war?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes.

Mr. BELIN. Did you go—

Mr. ROMACK. I take it back, I was going to Tech when the war broke out, and went to East Texas State after the war.

Mr. BELIN. When the war broke out, what did you do?

Mr. ROMACK. I went into the Navy.

Mr. BELIN. What did you do in the Navy?

Mr. ROMACK. I was in the Amphibious, on the Aleutian Islands, and took boot training in San Diego.

I went to the Aleutian Islands and came back and went to Pearl Harbor and stayed out there for 9 months, and boarded an LST and went through the campaigns of the Philippines and Okinawa and Japan and then returned back home.

Mr. BELIN. When did you get back to the States?

Mr. ROMACK. March 1946.

Mr. BELIN. I was stationed in Japan right after the last war. Where were you stationed?

Mr. ROMACK. I was on this LST in Pearl Harbor.

Mr. BELIN. Were you in Japan after the war?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, I was there during the time the Treaty was signed. We were in the, I forget the name, we were riding typhoons. We rode out eight of them, and our ship came back without the two side doors. All we had was the big ramp.

Mr. BELIN. That must have been quite a voyage back?

Mr. ROMACK. They were taking water in the port and bailing it over in the back.

Mr. BELIN. When you got back to the States, what did you do?

Mr. ROMACK. Went to St. Louis and bought me an automobile, and just I was a boy. I was the boy about 6 months, I would say.

Mr. BELIN. Then what did you do?

Mr. ROMACK. Then I entered school, East Texas State Teachers College.

Mr. BELIN. You went there about a year?

Mr. ROMACK. Approximately a year, I would say, yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Then what did you do after that?

Mr. ROMACK. I got married once along the route, and I was married about 30 days.

Then I came to Dallas in 1947. I guess it was 1947, or 1948, I forget just when I did come to Dallas. It was along in there.

Mr. BELIN. And you have been in Dallas ever since?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. By the way, were you honorably discharged?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes; I surely was.

Mr. BELIN. What did you do when you got to Dallas?

Mr. ROMACK. I went to work with a motor freight carrier. They are known as ICX today. They were Miller & Miller Motor Freight at the time.

Mr. BELIN. What did you do for them?

Mr. ROMACK. Drove a truck.

Mr. BELIN. How long did you do that?

Mr. ROMACK. Approximately a year.

Mr. BELIN. Then what did you do?

Mr. ROMACK. Went back to East Texas, and my home, and piddled around for a short while.

Then I came back to Dallas. And what did I do along in there? In 1949, I went to work for the Cotton Belt Railroad.

Mr. BELIN. How long did you stay with them?

Mr. ROMACK. Until April, I believe, of 1955. I know it was in 1955.

Mr. BELIN. What did you generally do when you were with the Cotton Belt?

Mr. ROMACK. I did all the railroad work during that time. I mean, I have been a billing clerk, and I have been a foreman, and I have been checker, and assistant foreman, warehouse foreman, and I worked out in the yards, and did quite a few jobs.

Mr. BELIN. You left them in 1955, and then what did you do?

Mr. ROMACK. Went to work with—a friend wanted me to go to work with him in a service station, Conoco Service Station.

Mr. BELIN. How long did you stay there?

Mr. ROMACK. Stayed there a year, approximately.

Mr. BELIN. Then what did you do?

Mr. ROMACK. Then I went to work with Strickland Transportation Co. as a dock foreman.

Mr. BELIN. How long were you with them?

Mr. ROMACK. Oh, I would say 6 or 7 months.

Mr. BELIN. Then what?

Mr. ROMACK. Then I went to work with an air freight concern out here at Love Field Drive, driving a truck, delivering air freight and picking up air freight for, I would say, 7 or 8 months there, maybe.

Mr. BELIN. Then what?

Mr. ROMACK. Then I hired out with the Coordinating Transportation Co.

Mr. BELIN. Coordinating Transportation Co.?

Mr. ROMACK. Right, which that is where I am at today.

Mr. BELIN. What have you been doing for them?

Mr. ROMACK. Driving mostly your big van trailer-truck and bobtail trucks and pickup and delivery service.

Mr. BELIN. Where were you around the noon hour of November 22, 1963?

Mr. ROMACK. I was on lunch period, just piddling around out north by east, I would say, from the Texas School Book Depository Building.

Mr. BELIN. You were standing around Houston Street?

Mr. ROMACK. It would be just about where Houston would intersect, but the street was under construction at the time. They didn't have it, which they still don't have it opened up for through traffic.

Mr. BELIN. Were you standing with anyone?

Mr. ROMACK. Well, Lee and Mr. Rackley, we walked out there together originally to start with. We were kind of piddling around, and I kind of walked off ahead of him.

Mr. BELIN. Was that George W. Rackley you were referring to?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Is he also known as "Pop" Rackley?

Mr. ROMACK. Right.

Mr. BELIN. You said you started walking away. Where did you walk?

Mr. ROMACK. Toward the School Book Depository Building.

Mr. BELIN. Along what street did you walk?

Mr. ROMACK. Well, it wouldn't be no street at the time.

Mr. BELIN. Well, if there would be a street?

Mr. ROMACK. I guess it would be just about, I don't know whether they are going to split Ross and Houston Street up.

Mr. BELIN. Would you be looking straight at Houston Street?

Mr. ROMACK. More or less. I would be looking at Houston Street; yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. All right, and what happened as you were walking?

Mr. ROMACK. I heard these three rifle shots sound out.

Mr. BELIN. Did you know they were rifle shots?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir; I did. I go elk hunting in Colorado every year in October, and I just came back from this trip, and I am pretty familiar with a rifle shot.

Mr. BELIN. How many did you hear?

Mr. ROMACK. Three.

Mr. BELIN. Where did they sound like they came from?

Mr. ROMACK. It sounded, I guess, like it came from that building, but it wasn't on my side of the building.

Mr. BELIN. Did it sound like it was up high or low?

Mr. ROMACK. I would say they were high., I have never been asked that question, but it did sound like they were running out high, I would say, and the wind was blowing a little bit from the south that day, I can remember.

Mr. BELIN. The wind was blowing into your face as you walked, or was it blowing from your back, sir?

Mr. ROMACK. It was blowing into my face.

Mr. BELIN. Into your face.

How far were you from the School Book Depository Building when you heard the shots?

Mr. ROMACK. Oh, I probably was 125 yards. 100 to 125 yards, I would say.

Mr. BELIN. Would that be from the nearest corner of the building or from the front of Elm Street?

Mr. ROMACK. From the nearest corner of the building.

Mr. BELIN. From the northeast corner of the building?

Mr. ROMACK. Right.

Mr. BELIN. How close did the shots sound like they came together?

Mr. ROMACK. Oh, they happened pretty fast. I would say maybe 3 or 4 seconds apart.

Mr. BELIN. Were they equally spaced, or did one sound like it was closer than another one in time?

Mr. ROMACK. It sounded like to me that they were evenly spaced. They rang out pretty fast.

Mr. BELIN. Have you ever operated a bolt action rifle?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Do you own one?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Did it sound like the shots were faster than it could be operated with a bolt action rifle?

Mr. ROMACK. No, sir.

Mr. BELIN. What kind of rifle do you have now, by the way?

Mr. ROMACK. I have a—it is a—I can't answer that really.

Mr. BELIN. What caliber?

Mr. ROMACK. It is a 30-06.

Mr. BELIN. 30-06 rifle?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, it is. And it is an old World War I mechanism. It is either an Enfield or a Springfield.

Mr. BELIN. Bolt action?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. You heard those rifle shots, and you think you could shoot your rifle accurately as fast as you heard those shots?

Mr. ROMACK. I don't, wouldn't think that I would be that good a shot; no, sir; because I shot at an elk four times and I hit him everywhere and missed him one time out of four.

Mr. BELIN. How far was it?

Mr. ROMACK. He was, I would say, 350 to 500 yards away. He was quite a distance.

Mr. BELIN. Maybe I should have asked the question this way. Suppose he was 100 yards away or else 50 yards?

Mr. ROMACK. I would be more accurate with my shooting, I sure would.

Mr. BELIN. If he were, say, from 40 to 75 yards away, or not an elk, a person,

do you think you could shoot 40 to 75 yards away accurately as quickly as you heard those rifle sounds?

Mr. ROMACK. I wouldn't say I could; no, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Do you think an accurate rifleman could?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Well, you heard the shots, and then what did you do?

Mr. ROMACK. Well, I knew something was wrong. I mean, I could sense that within my own self.

Mr. BELIN. All right.

Mr. ROMACK. And I looked up and I felt kind of chilly looking down towards the—which I am facing the Houston entrance, and I looked down toward where all the people were standing along, the motorcade was passing by, and just immediately after I heard the shots, I saw a policeman running north towards me. He was running to look to see if somebody was running out of the back of this building.

Mr. BELIN. What building?

Mr. ROMACK. Texas School Book Depository Building. And he didn't stay but just, oh, he was just there to check and he runs back.

Well, sensing that something is wrong, I automatically take over watching the building for the man.

Mr. BELIN. What part of the building were you watching?

Mr. ROMACK. The back part.

Mr. BELIN. Could you see that back dock in the back part?

Mr. ROMACK. Well, I mean, they got it sealed off. I could see as much as anyone could see.

Mr. BELIN. Could you see—there are some stairs that go up to the back dock, aren't there?

Mr. ROMACK. Right here.

Mr. BELIN. You are pointing to a first floor plan of the Texas School Book Depository?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes.

Mr. BELIN. Did you watch those stairs?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. How long did you watch them after you saw the policeman leave?

Mr. ROMACK. Well, I watched them all the time until someone arrived, and the only time I did take my back off, turn my back to the building was Sam Pate with his KBOX news, he arrived before any of the police or anyone.

Mr. BELIN. Is that KBOX?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes.

Mr. BELIN. Is that a radio or television station?

Mr. ROMACK. It is a radio station.

Mr. BELIN. How long did you take your eyes off then?

Mr. ROMACK. He was driving up and they were having a little high—the city has a piece of wood that they use to stop traffic coming through, and I'd taken that so he could come through, drive his truck.

Mr. BELIN. How long did you leave your post?

Mr. ROMACK. I didn't leave. That was right there, even closer than what we were. But all I did was let that down for him, and then we—

Mr. BELIN. Would that have taken less than a minute?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes.

Mr. BELIN. Less than 30 seconds, do you know?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes.

Mr. BELIN. How long did you stay after that watching that back door?

Mr. ROMACK. Well, we were all there watching it then.

Mr. BELIN. How long a period of time?

Mr. ROMACK. Pardon?

Mr. BELIN. Did you see a policeman go up there?

Mr. ROMACK. I saw policemen up in there. I didn't see anyone come up the back. They came in the front, all—most of them.

Mr. BELIN. Did you see any employees walk up the back way?

Mr. ROMACK. There was two other gentlemen which I never said anything

about, that taken over. They were FBI or something standing right here at the very entrance, and just stood there.

Mr. BELIN. You are pointing again to the back stairway that leads up from the street to the dock on the north side of the building?

Mr. ROMACK. Right.

Mr. BELIN. See anyone else?

Mr. ROMACK. No, sir; other than all the motorcycle officers and squad cars. They started coming in, I would say, in 4 minutes from the time that this happened. They were swarming the building, which naturally I quit watching anything particular.

Mr. BELIN. In other words, about 4 minutes after the shots came you quit watching it? Would that be accurate, or not?

Mr. ROMACK. Well, I would say somewhere in the neighborhood of 5 minutes, 4 or 5 minutes. That would probably be true. I stayed there, but I wasn't particularly watching.

Mr. BELIN. In other words, then as I understand your testimony, you said that from about the time of the shots until about 5 minutes after the shots, you watched the back door of the building?

Mr. ROMACK. Right.

Mr. BELIN. What is the fact as to whether or not you saw anyone leave the building?

Mr. ROMACK. They wasn't anyone left the building.

Mr. BELIN. What is the fact as to whether or not you saw anyone enter the building other than a police officer?

Mr. ROMACK. No one entered while I was standing there.

Mr. BELIN. Did you see anybody running down the street near you at all?

Mr. ROMACK. No, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Where were you standing? How far were you from this stairway going to this Houston Street dock?

Mr. ROMACK. Well, after this KBOX—you are asking prior to before he got there?

Mr. BELIN. Before KBOX got there first?

Mr. ROMACK. I would say I moved between 75 yards.

Mr. BELIN. 75 yards of the northeast corner of the building?

Mr. ROMACK. 75 yards of the northeast corner of the building.

Mr. BELIN. After KBOX got there?

Mr. ROMACK. He got to about, I would say, maybe 35 yards to the building, or 40. That is where he parked his car.

Mr. BELIN. How long did he stay, KBOX?

Mr. ROMACK. Oh, I would say 35 or 40 minutes. Then I went and called my wife and was telling her the sad news, and then I went back and stayed again. I ended up laying off work. I didn't even work that afternoon.

Mr. BELIN. Did you ever contact the FBI?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. When did you do that?

Mr. ROMACK. It was on a Saturday night after I got in from work.

Mr. BELIN. What month was it?

Mr. ROMACK. It was this past month.

Mr. BELIN. You mean March?

Mr. ROMACK. Right.

Mr. BELIN. What caused you to contact the FBI in March?

Mr. ROMACK. I was trying to pinpoint the day that I must have come in from work. It was on the weekend that I'd come home, and there was a paper up in the left-hand corner.

Mr. BELIN. You mean the newspaper?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Dallas newspaper?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes.

Mr. BELIN. Which one, do you know, offhand?

Mr. ROMACK. Herald, the paper that I take.

Mr. BELIN. What did you see in the paper?

Mr. ROMACK. I saw an article that was written by a guy, which I have been

concerned about this thing all the way through, the assassination, and I got to reading it, and it is a story that just don't jibe with about me sitting there and watching the building. It just kind of upset me to know there is some monkey just hatched up such a story.

Mr. BELIN. What is the story that you read that you got concerned about?

Mr. ROMACK. About a guy seeing a rifle drawn in from the building above him, and he also seen the people as the shots were being fired, and he also seen some character running toward me with an overcoat on which was brown or gray or blue, and he heard 4 shots.

Mr. BELIN. Let me ask you this. Do you remember what page of the paper this was on?

Mr. ROMACK. It was on the headlines. I don't mean the headlines. It was on the front page in the left corner of the page.

Mr. BELIN. Now you say something concerned you about the article. Was it the fact that he said he saw a rifle there that concerned you?

Mr. ROMACK. No, sir; the fact that he was running somebody over me, and that is what I was out there doing. That is what I was doing. I was watching.

Mr. BELIN. You mean the portion of the article that concerned you was that someone said that someone else was running?

Mr. ROMACK. Towards Pacific Street.

Mr. BELIN. Towards Pacific Street from the direction of the School Book Depository?

Mr. ROMACK. That is the way the article read, sir.

Mr. BELIN. What did you tell the FBI when you called them?

Mr. ROMACK. I told them, tried to tell them about the same thing that I am telling you right now today.

Mr. BELIN. Have I ever mentioned before, by the way, or talked to you before this morning?

Mr. ROMACK. No, sir.

Mr. BELIN. What is the fact as to whether or not as soon as we met, you came in here and we started taking your deposition immediately?

Mr. ROMACK. Right. Unless you called me last Saturday. I don't remember who called me.

Mr. BELIN. Well, on Saturday, what did someone do, call you and tell you to come down here?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Did that person talk to you about the facts that we were talking about now?

Mr. ROMACK. No, sir.

Mr. BELIN. It wasn't I, just for the record. I believe it was the Secret Service that called you, but I am not sure.

Mr. ROMACK. It was.

Mr. BELIN. Now, I understand your testimony correctly, what you are stating is that you don't believe anyone ran out of the building towards you, at least within the first 5 minutes after the shots?

Mr. ROMACK. Right.

Mr. BELIN. You don't think anyone went out of the building during the first 5 minutes after the shots?

Mr. ROMACK. That is true.

Mr. BELIN. Is there anything else, any other information you have that you feel might be helpful to the investigation of the assassination?

Mr. ROMACK. I can't think of anything, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Well, we want to thank you very much for taking the time to come down here. We appreciate your cooperation, and certainly your cooperation particularly in volunteering to call the FBI to contact them for this information.

Mr. ROMACK. Well, I felt that—I called an attorney that I know and talked to him about the deal before I called the FBI, and I told him I wasn't doing this for a publicity thing. It was something I just didn't, after reading that article, it kind of upset me, and he said he felt it was my duty to call the FBI and let them know.

And that is when I went ahead and made my statement.

Mr. BELIN. Now, Mr. Romack, you have the right, if you want, to come back down here after these notes of the court reporter are typed, to read the type-written transcript and sign it, or you can waive reading it and signing it and just have her send it directly to Washington, whatever you want to do. It makes no difference with us.

Mr. ROMACK. I will waive.

Mr. BELIN. You want to waive it then?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Again we want to thank you very much.

Mr. ROMACK. You are quite welcome.

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### TESTIMONY OF LEE E. BOWERS, JR.

The testimony of Lee E. Bowers, Jr. was taken at 2 p.m., on April 2, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Joseph A. Ball, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. BALL. Will you stand and be sworn, Mr. Bowers?

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give for this Commission will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. Will you state your name, please.

Mr. BOWERS. Lee E. Bowers, Jr.

Mr. BALL. And what is your residence address?

Mr. BOWERS. 10508 Maplegrove Lane.

Mr. BALL. Dallas, Tex.

Mr. BOWERS. Dallas.

Mr. BALL. And would you tell me something about yourself, where you were born, raised, and what has been your business, generally, or occupation?

Mr. BOWERS. I was born right here in Dallas, and lived here most of my life except when I was in the Navy, at the age of 17 to 21, and I was away 2 years going to Hardin Simmons University, also, attended Southern Methodist University 2 years, majoring in religion. I worked for the railroad 15 years and was a self-employed builder, as well as—on the side. And the first of this year when I went to work as business manager for Dr. Tim Green who operates this hospital and convalescent home and rent properties.

Mr. BALL. What railroad did you work for?

Mr. BOWERS. Worked for the Union Terminal Co. with the 8 participating railroads.

Mr. BALL. And on November 22, 1963, were you working for the Union Terminal Co.?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes.

Mr. BALL. What kind of work were you doing for them?

Mr. BOWERS. I was tower man in the north tower, Union Terminal, operating the switches and signals controlling the movement of trains.

Mr. BALL. Through railroad yards?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes.

Mr. BALL. What were your hours of work?

Mr. BOWERS. 7 to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Mr. BALL. Now, do you remember what is the height of—above the ground at which you worked in the tower?

Mr. BOWERS. It is second story, it is 14 feet, 12 or 14 feet.

Mr. BALL. You worked about 14 feet above the ground?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes.

Mr. BALL. And the tower was arranged so that you could see out?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; it is windows except for posts that—posts on each corner. It is windows on all four sides.