

Subject: Re: Tina Towner - best witness?

From: "Gary Mack" <GMack@jfk.org>

Date: 3/1/2007, 12:34 PM

To: <a.mason@dufourlaw.com>

CC: "Gary Mack" <GMack@jfk.org>

Andrew,

I've known Tina Towner since 1978 and my memory has been that she said the first shot came just a second or two after she stopped filming. However, in a March 30, 1996 oral history, Tina said it was four to six seconds. So either I have misremembered, which is possible, or her memory has changed.

What's important is that she stopped filming some seconds before the shots were fired. That eliminates the early shot theory held by Max and Johann.

As for Croft's blank photo, I can explain that, for my father had the exact same camera model, an Argus C-3. Dad used to get blank pictures all the time and he always got so made when it happened!

To advance the film in that camera, one had to depress a button on the top right and turn a knob on the top left. If you held the button down too long, which Dad often did, you'd roll past the next position on the roll of film. The skipped area would be blank - and that's what Croft received when his pictures were processed.

Gary Mack

"Andrew Mason" <a.mason@dufourlaw.com> wrote in message
news:<12uco5qo1o4bk3d@corp.supernews.com>...

As a followup to this post, I checked Trask's Pictures of the Pain which

has a chapter on the Towners (Ch. 8, p 215-221). It contains references

to an article in Teen Magazine in June, 1968 and also a copy of Life Magazine from Nov. 24, 1967 which featured an article on various films

and photographs. I found the Life article but my library's collection of

Teen didn't go back to 1968. Trask quotes from the Teen and Life articles. Much to my surprise, I find no reference to the first shot being "a second or two after she stopped filming" as Gary Mack

contends

that Tina "has always been specific" about. Rather, Trask says, citing

as his source the Teen article:

"Just after she stopped filming, Tina would later relate "now I was beginning to leave when I heard the sky fall in - the loudest crack of

a

rifle that I had ever heard"

Also, a source for Croft is set out in Trask's POTP Ch. 9, p.221-229. Croft's third photo (later shown to have been snapped at z162). Trask

interviewed Croft and also obtained documents on FBI files relating to

Croft's photos. Croft's third photograph was taken before the first shot. In fact, Croft wound his camera and may have twiddled the shutter

speed or fstop before taking another photograph which, he said, he took

just as the first shot sounded. He thought this photo #4 was taken simultaneously with the first shot. Unfortunately, the shot was underexposed and there was a blank negative (I am not sure how it could

have been completely blank). The point is that not only was #3 taken before the first shot, it was taken enough before that he was able to quickly wind the camera and take another.

Andrew Mason

Andrew Mason

In reviewing Gary Mack's objections to the Holland first shot before

Zapruder started filming, he says:

"One of the best witnesses is photographer Tina Towner. Tina has always

been specific that the first shot came just a second or two AFTER she

stopped filming; she actually stopped only a second or two before Z133.

Your hypotheses, that the first shot came while the limo was in the middle of the first pair of road stripes (or earlier), requires the first

shot to have been fired one or two seconds BEFORE Towner stopped filming. That just can't be true. Take a look at the full frame

Towner

film we used in the Discovery Channel show "Death In Dealey Plaza" and

watch for the road stripes. Towner could not possibly have been confused

about when the first shot was fired in relation to when her film ended."

I put the end of the Towner film less than one second (it is less than

one limo length - about 15 feet I'd say) before the beginning of Zapruder's film of the motorcade (frame 133). If the car was moving at

about 1 foot per second, that puts the car at about 15 frames periods

before z133. If she was right that the first shot was 1 or 2 seconds

after that, that puts the first shot between about z136 and z155.

I agree with Gary Mack that it is difficult to believe that she could

have been mistaken that the the first shot was actually before she stopped filming. Whether the shot was before or after is a clear distinction that should be easily recalled.

However, we can't just assume that anyone, let alone a 13 year old, is

accurate in estimating time. We have to compare her estimate of time to

the events that others recalled as also being before the first shot and

see.

I think we know that Croft said his z162 photo was taken before the first shot (does anyone have a cite to evidence from Croft?).

We know that Hugh Betzner said his z186 photo was taken before the first

shot.

We know that Lady Bird Johnson, SA Rufus Youngblood and Senator Yarborough in the VP car said their car had turned the corner and

was

going down Elm Street before the first shot occurred. Hurchel Jacks,

the

driver, said he was just straightening up after making the turn immediately before the first shot occurred. The VP car is still in

its

turn at the corner when last seen in the zfilm at frame 180.

We know that Joe Rich, driver of the VP followup car said he had just

made the turn onto Elm St. before the first shot occurred. SA Warren

Taylor in the back seat of that car said they had just turned as well.

Clifton Carter in the front middle of the same car said they were "right

along side the TSBD" when the first shot occurred. The VP followup car

can be seen still turning in frame z191.

We know that Mrs. Cabell said that her car had begun the turn onto Elm

before the shot was heard. When it rang out she looked up and saw the

rifle in the window directly in front of her. It cannot be seen in the

intersection behind the VP followup car even by z192.

We know that Robert Jackson in the press car next behind the Cabell the

car had almost to the intersection of Houston and Elm, well past the

midpoint between Main and Elm, before the first shot rang out.

We also know that Mary Woodward said that as the car approached them

(her group was standing just west of the second lamp post in front of

the Thornton Freeway sign - opposite the President at about z197 or so),

they shouted and the President and Jackie both turned, smiled and waved

at them (and that this was before the first shot as well.

We also know that Jane Berry and Karen Westbrook recalled car passing by

them and recalled the same wave and smiles just before the first shot.

They were standing a few feet west of Woodward.

So my question is, what makes Tina Towner a better witness than all these others?

Andrew Mason

BTW, would like to know where this evidence of Tina Towner may be found. Does anyone know what kind of lens she was using and how

many

frames per second her camera was taking? I get roughly 12 frames per

second and it looks like a wide angle lens.