

## WHERE THE SHOTS CAME FROM

known to have given statements or affidavits on November 22 and November 23 about the origin of the shots. Twenty-two said they believed that the shots came from the knoll.<sup>23</sup>

Ninety-two out of 124 witnesses affirmed, either explicitly or by the direction in which they ran or looked, that the knoll, and not the Book Depository Building, was where the shots came from. Fifty-eight witnesses in all stated that the shots came from the knoll, while 34 others are known to have run toward the knoll or directed their attention there at the moment the shots rang out. The Commission and its investigative agents failed to ask 21 of these where they thought the shots came from. By the time the remaining 13 were questioned, each said he was unsure of or could not tell the direction of the shots.<sup>24</sup>

Except for Lee Bowers, who surveyed the scene from a tower behind the wooden fence, the witnesses with the best view of the fenced-in area were those standing above Elm Street on the railroad overpass. As the motorcade approached, 13 railroad employees and two Dallas policemen were on the railroad bridge;<sup>25</sup> the knoll was just to their left. Not one of the railroad men was called before the Warren Commission.<sup>26</sup> However, four were questioned by counsel for the Commission<sup>27</sup> and nine by agents of the FBI.<sup>28\*</sup> Five of them said that shots came from the knoll<sup>31</sup> and six others said that when the shots were fired their attention was immediately attracted to the knoll.<sup>32</sup> It is worth noting that not one of the 13 men, who were among the witnesses closest to the grassy knoll, said that he thought that the shots came from the Book Depository,<sup>33</sup> while 11 of them indicated either explicitly or implicitly that the fenced-in area above the knoll was where they thought the sniper was.<sup>34</sup>

Many rifles emit a small amount of smoke when discharged.<sup>35</sup> The presence of trees and bushes on the knoll, grouped around the fence, virtually precluded the possibility that a spectator not on the overpass could have observed smoke if a sniper fired from behind the fence. Most of the railroad workers standing on the overpass turned to their left—toward the knoll—when the shots were fired. Thus, of all those in Dealey Plaza when the assassina-

\* The first such interview took place almost four months after the assassination, on March 17, 1964.<sup>29</sup> The FBI did not give verbatim transcripts to the Commission, merely its agents' summaries of the interviews<sup>30</sup>—which are, of course, hearsay.