

ARRB Interview of William A. McKinney  
conducted May 1, 1997  
ARRB Staff present: Barger, Horne

*Barger:* All right. I do have one more colleague with me here, Doug Horne, who is also a member of the military team.

*McKinney:* All right.

*Barger:* And I would like to begin this interview. Today is May 1, 1997. I am Christopher Barger with the Assassination Records Review Board, and I'm speaking with William McKinney; and the first thing I'd like to do is, Mr. McKinney, confirm that you do know that you're being taped.

*McKinney:* Yes.

*Barger:* Okay, great. Thank you. Let me explain, please, Mr. McKinney, the reason that we are calling you. Our primary mandate is to declassify government records relating to the assassination of President Kennedy. Another of our purposes, however, is to add material to the collection at the National Archives, and-- where we can-- enhance the historical understanding of the assassination. A man named Fletcher Prouty has supported some theories regarding the assassination, and we have tried to document them as much as possible in hopes of finding documents or other historical records that we can add to the collection. You have been named by Col. Prouty as the source of some of his information, so to the extent that you can help illuminate or clarify this story, in either a positive or a negative way, we've called you. We're officially neutral on this subject, so feel free to speak as freely as you wish on this matter, and tell us anything you think is important. Have you any questions before we begin?

*McKinney:* Only one. Where did he use me as a source?

*Barger:* It's on an Internet Website, and I can give you the address that we downloaded it from.

*McKinney:* Yeah, I'd like that.

*Barger:* Okay. I will give that site to you as soon as we've concluded the interview.

*McKinney:* All right.

*Barger:* The first question is just for clarification. Did you serve in the 112th Intelligence Group or the 316th?

*McKinney:* The 316th.

*Barger:* Okay. Now, some of this may be confirmation of what Dave Montague asked you during his contact with you; I'm just restating it for the record here. Could you tell me what your rank was in November of 1963, and what your duties were with the 316th?

*McKinney:* I think I was a PFC at the time--

*Barger:* Yeah?

*McKinney:* -- I was just a clerk. The official title is 'intelligence coordinator,' but it was a fancy title for 'clerk-typist.' And, basically, we were a STRAC outfit-- Strategic Army Command, I think that's what the... *(trails off)* We painted rocks when we weren't on maneuvers. It was totally unglamorous; it was.. We were just a battle-ready outfit, a military intelligence detachment of the 112th.

*Barger:* Can you, first of all, tell me your recollection of the events of November 22, 1963?

*McKinney:* Well, I wasn't with that outfit then. I was at Fort Holabird getting my training.

*Barger:* Okay.

*McKinney:* I remember... I think it was a month before that [the assassination], going to Washington to watch the President lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. And then-- 'cause I was like everybody else, I was fascinated with the guy [Kennedy]. Then, I was on K.P. or something-- I believe it was K.P.-- when he was assassinated. And I totally wiped out, like everybody else that day. And I went the next day --two days, whenever he was buried-- I went to Washington, and was standing across the street from the White House when they brought a casket out, and it was just around that time, by coincidence, that... they had a radio, or somebody had a radio in the crowd, and yelled that somebody had killed... that somebody had shot Oswald. But what I... the only thing I remember, when I got back down, when I got to Texas-- that was January of '64, a couple of months later-- there were people that were upset, angry... were... I'm not exactly sure... they were just unhappy that the 112th-- which provided intelligence and security for that Fourth Army area-- had been told that they didn't... that perimeter security wasn't needed by

them. Because basically, we just... at that time... visiting dignitaries, things like that...we would provide, like, a third layer level of security, [an] outer ring type of thing; just helping out checking things. And basically, that's all I ever knew about the thing. I knew we had a file on Oswald... I don't know what was in it, because I never saw it. I was just told that the file on Oswald was there, and I was told that our services hadn't been needed, and there were some hard feelings. But that was all in retrospect; I mean, these were people who... I guess they were... There was a lot of, I suppose, jealousy between intelligence groups at the time, or security groups at the time.

*Barger:* Okay. I'm going to come back to a few of the things you just mentioned in a moment, but I want to continue on with the list of questions that I had. Do you remember Colonel Reich or Lt. Colonel Cabaza?

*McKinney:* I remember Lieutenant Colonel Rudolph Maximillian Reich as my commander and Major Jose Cabaza as my exec [Executive Officer]. They were both over the 316th. To my knowledge, they had nothing to do with the 112th, other than the fact that they were under the 112th.

*Barger:* Okay. How closely did you work with them? Or did you work with them closely at all?

*McKinney:* I was in the outer office; they were in the inner office. I mean, we were only an office away. I didn't know too much about 'em. Lieutenant Colonel Reich, I remembered... somebody saying that he had... during World War II, he had taken part in helping to bring Werner Von Braun over to our side; either as an interpreter, or something to that effect. I was never sure what-- that was his claim to fame at the time. But... and Cabaza, I rode out to DESERT STRIKE with him. That was one of the maneuvers we did, out in the Mojave Desert. And the only thing I remember about him is that he ate my hard boiled egg. (*Barger laughs*) We had these little lunches or something that... I was pissed off at him. (*Barger laughs*)

*Barger:* But as a private, you weren't gonna say anything?

*McKinney:* No, of course not.

*Barger:* Okay. You mentioned that on the day of the assassination, you were receiving training at Fort Holabird. Had you ever been there before?

*McKinney:* No.

*Barger:* Okay; do you remember what kind of training you were receiving? Specifically--

*McKinney:* Yeah, it was... I think 9-7-4 was the MOS designation; Intelligence Coordinator training. I went right from