

Telephone Interview with
John Jellison

Telephone number 218/233-4915

Hello. Is Mrs. Jellison there?

She's not here right now.

Is Mr. Jellison there?

No, he's not here either.

You're the son?

Yes.

Right. Okay. My name's Jack Bachman from Orlando, Florida. I believe your mother talked to my boss, Mr. Eagan yesterday.

Yes, yes, she did.

Were you down here then?

Yes, yes, I was.

Well, that's what I want to talk to you about. My boss probably wants me to go up and talk to all of you.

Laugh.

But I understand its kind of cool up there.

Well, it is starting to warm up now, but it is a little bit cool right now.

I'll bring my top coat.

The weather was good when you were here Christmas wasn't it?

Oh, yeah, yeah.

Well, it was cool Christmas Eve.

Yeah, yeah. It was cool then but a lot warmer then here.

Did you read that letter we sent you?

Yeah, yeah, I did.

Well, what can you tell us about it?

Uh

What is your name - John?

John, right. Really, we didn't observe very much or we can't really add much more than you've got there already. We ate supper - my Mom told Mr. Eagan all about this - ate supper at the motel, came back to our room at, I suppose, between 8:15 and 8:30 and sat around looking at post cards and I, uh, I was going to go to the office at the motel there and mail them at the _____ there...

Right.

...so I went to the door, I cracked the door and I was just going to walk out and there was a policeman out in the parking lot aiming his pistol over the hood of his police car at the back of the building...

Right.

...at the furniture store. That was the first time that we had known anything funny was going on at all. So rather than go to the office there we just stayed inside our room there and looked out through the window and the door.

Were you on the back side of the motel?

Right. We just stood there and watched for quite some time and then we heard what we figured were probably shots, maybe about 9:00 or so - that would be about the right time. We didn't really know what time it was but, of course, we can figure that must be what time it was.

Now, when you heard the shots was after you saw the police cars?

Right, right, it was. We saw the police car and that was the first time we knew anything was going on at all.

But you didn't hear any shots -- in other words, as you were leaving the restaurant or something you didn't hear any shots.

No, nothing at all. Nothing was going on whatsoever.

So then you didn't hear the shots then until after the police had arrived.

Right, right. So I am sure they have already filled you in on that.

Well, we were under the opinion that you heard the shots possibly when you were leaving the restaurant.

No, no we didn't. Huh-uh. We didn't know a thing then or we knew nothing was going on then.

See, well it was all over then.

Yeah, right everything - well then the police got there and, of course, it was all taken care of.

Yeah.

So that's why I say we really have nothing to add to anything.

Where was your room, like on the back of the motel?

Yeah, yeah. I don't remember the number any more, but it was right on the back of the motel area.

Was it upstairs or downstairs?

Yeah, it was downstairs.

Downstairs?

Yep.

I've got that master sheet, you know, of where everyone stayed but I don't have it in my office with me. It is in the other office.

Uh-huh.

Well, when your mother talked to Mr. Eagan, he was apparently -- he is under the opinion that you heard the shots prior to the time the police arrived.

No, huh-uh. No, that was -- we first saw the police car and then we heard the shots some time afterwards.

Oh. Did you see more than one police car?

Well, that was the first thing I saw, one police car and then after awhile then others showed up, you know.

Shortly?

Yeah, yeah - I don't know -- I saw them in the _____ . Yeah - shortly _____ came. They were going all around, you know, and they had search lights and one thing and another.

You didn't go over to that shopping center by any chance, did you -- over across the street?

Uh, no we didn't. Not that night. No. We were eating supper and, like I say, most of that evening we were in the restaurant and at the motel at supper.

Well, I was almost on my way up to talk to -- but if you heard the shots after you saw the police cars...

Yeah, I know.

Yeah, it was all over with at that time.

Yeah. What -- is there any new leads or anything -- do you have anything -- do you have any information on what...

Well, we have a man charged. We have got the owner of the furniture store charged.

You do?

Oh, yeah.

I see. I didn't know that.

See, he had his wife insured for \$500,000.

Oh, I see.

And the policies were only about 30 days old when he killed her.

Oh.

He killed her, his mother-in-law, his father-in-law and a customer in the store.

Oh, I see. You have him charged. Oh, I see.

He was shot himself. But it was a self-inflicted gun shot.

Uh-huh. What were the...in the letter it mentioned something about other people - a white man and a black man. Was it all something -- I've forgotten.

Well, we thought he did. See this guy is a landlord and he treats these blacks like, you know, they are blacks...

Uh-huh.

...and if he tells them to do something they'll do it. So what happens was he told these blacks to meet him there at the store at 7:30. So, you know, they work for the guy so they shows

up and he was going to set them up to make it look like a robbery say...

Oh, I see.

...In fact, he had one of them go around the side of the building and pull the power switch...

Oh.

...and he had them jump the fence in the back. This is what we are really trying to find, is somebody that saw them jump the fence back there.

Oh, not me.

But -- nope, as long as you heard the gun shots after you saw the police car then that wouldn't help us a bit.

Yeah.

How old are you, John?

I'm 19.

And then you had your sister with you, too. Right.

Uh-huh.

Right. Okay, you tell you mother I called.

Okay. You won't need to talk to her or something will you?

Not unless you all get together and decide you heard those gun shots...

No.

...before you saw the police car and in that case we'd give you a free trip back to Florida.

Laugh. No, Ever since we got the letter here, about last Thursday I guess it was, we've been talking and that's as close as we can come up with whatever, you know...

Yeah.

...we heard or saw or anything.

Okay, John.

I appreciate it.

What was your name?

Jack Bachman, B-A-C-H-M-A-N.

Okay. Thank you for calling.

Yes sir.

Goodbye.

Goodbye.

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