

December 2, 1996

Mr. Dale K. Myers
508 John Road
Milford, MI 48381-1847

Dear Mr. Myers:

David Marwell asked me to respond to the recent letter you sent him inquiring about the status of J.D. Tippett's military records. I am the ARRB's Chief Analyst for Military Records and have extensive experience not only with military personnel records in general but also with records stored at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis. Along with other members of the ARRB staff, I recently visited there to review several files pursuant to our work of locating records related to the assassination of President Kennedy.

We have been able to determine that the Tippett military records are not "sealed" and have, in fact, long been open to the public. The misunderstanding may have arisen from the fact that Tippett's records are part of a separate "VIP" collection recently slated for transfer to the National Archives rather than permanent retention in St. Louis. Portions of that collection may be temporarily unavailable while they are processed for transfer to the Archives, but they are not generally "under seal in a vault" or otherwise inaccessible to researchers.

As a separate matter, "N/A" entries on the information sheet sent to you means that the records contain nothing relating to that topic or category. In the case of courts martial, an N/A entry means that there is no record of any court martial rather than that there had been a court martial for which the records were otherwise withheld. In order to confirm that there was no such court martial, our staff contacted the appropriate officials and confirmed that Tippett's records contain neither any court martial data nor any entries to suggest that he had ever been court martialed.

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If you have further questions concerning the status of Tippett's files, I suggest that you contact Mr. Bill Siebert, telephone 314-538-4216, at NPRC directly.

Sincerely yours,

Timothy A. Wray
Chief Analyst for Military Records

cc: Steve Tilley, NARA