

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# The Road That Ruby Took

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.*

The Road Not Taken, by Robert Frost

The poet was lucky, perhaps, or perhaps more perceptive than most. He knew he was making a choice. When Jack Rubenstein—later Jack Ruby—moved from Chicago to Dallas in 1947, he no doubt chose as most people do, without conscious choice, perhaps unaware that other roads were open too, certainly unaware where the road chosen would lead him.

Once in Dallas, he chose to remain—perhaps believing he had no other choice—and so Lee Harvey Oswald never lived to stand trial for the murder of President Kennedy, and Ruby died, the other day, not alone and in obscurity but with the world waiting, listening for his last breath.

And yet the thing is even more chancy than that. Last month Ruby's brother Earl recorded a conversation with Jack Ruby. "Curiosity had aroused me," said the now stilled voice, "because it flashed in my mind, seeing the people there before I went to it, as I drove by on Main Street—on the south side of Main Street. I walked toward the ramp . . . All I did is walk down there

—down to the bottom of the ramp and that's when the incident happened."

The incident was his killing of Oswald in the basement of the Dallas jail. Ruby may have realized, at the end, the accidental driftings of his life, for he said now to his brother, "The ironic part of this business (is) that I made an illegal turn behind a bus at the parking lot. Had I gone the way I was supposed to go—straight on down Main Street—I would never—I would never have met this fate because the difference of meeting this fate was 30 seconds one way or the other."

He died two weeks later, and now—though many thousands of television watchers saw him kill Oswald—we'll have to settle for a Scotch verdict. Not proved. Finally—chance still at work—disease destroyed him before he could be tried a second time for Oswald's murder. We're all gamblers and in the end, perhaps, never know whether we're winners or losers.

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