

Ruby Called Tough and Emotional, A Chiseler Who Was Often in Trouble

From Post-Dispatch Wire Services
DALLAS, Nov. 25—Jack Ruby, who killed the man charged with assassinating President John F. Kennedy, was characterized variously by acquaintances as a tough guy, a loner, a fancy dresser, a ticket scalper, chiseler, an emotional man who carried a gun to protect himself.

After it had happened, his friends could look back and understand his bravado in bursting through police security and shooting Lee Harvey Oswald before television cameras and the eyes of America.

Ruby, 52 years old, was always one to grab the microphone and take over the show, to get with the act and display himself as the colorful character that everybody ought to know.

Born In Chicago

He came here from Chicago, where he was born Rubinstein, the son of a contractor, and grew up in the West Side ghetto. Apparently at times he was well off financially, at other times he reportedly lived hand to mouth.

He shortened his name legally to Jack Ruby when he came to Dallas in 1948, but he expanded his old ways.

There, as well as in Dallas, he was known to police as a promoter who favored gimmicks to turn a quick dollar. The records reflect his temper that kept him in trouble. He lived high, and he talked about class. His "class" brought him to courts to face such charges as assault and curfew violation.

Those who knew him in Chicago said he learned quickly to handle his fists among the ruthless youngsters of the West Side streets.

Some of his friends moved high in the entertainment world. They included Jack E. Leonard, the night club comic, and Avrom Goldbogen, who became Mike Todd.

His friends called him Sparky because he was soft-spoken but his temper was quick and hot. He tried most of the dodges to make a dollar.

He came to Dallas to help a sister, Mrs. Eva L. Grant, run her bar here. He was a bouncer-bartender.

Later he opened a strip-tease joint, a second-floor walk-up.

Ruby turned his Carousel club into a money-maker. He held crowd catching amateur nights and strip-tease schools.

Wore Flashy Clothes

Often, he took the girls out after the show and invited his friends along. He wore flashy

clothes and jewelry. He left liquor to the customers.

Police work fascinated him. He like policemen. He liked police reporters. He like to be with them, to go where normally only they were allowed.

Ruby handed out calling cards that read: "I'm Jack Ruby—Carousel."

Last Saturday, he handed such a card to Justice of the Peace David L. Johnston and said, "Come by and see me some time." That was when he got into the crowd of reporters gathered to see Oswald.

He slipped a card to District Attorney Henry Wade, too.

Ruby was a gatecrasher from way back. He almost made the Tunney-Dempsey fight that way. This time he was making history. How he got into the basement of the Dallas City Hall, police say they do not know.

Rolling Status

He always talked about ways to better his status in society.

Rough with men, arrogant with women, he loved animals and kept four dogs in the apartment he shared with George Senator, an employe of his Carousel club.

He once weighed more than 200 pounds. He dieted off 200 pounds, and it gave his face a gaunt look. He wore snap-brim hats to hide increasing baldness.

Ruby had a reputation as a strong admirer of Franklin D. Roosevelt, ready to fight anyone who disparaged that President. He was also said to admire President Kennedy.

Patrolman P. T. Dean quoted Ruby as saying he was motivated in shooting Oswald primarily by concern for the President's widow. Dean said Ruby told him he wanted to save Mrs. Kennedy the ordeal of returning to Dallas and testifying at Oswald's trial.

Ruby has been known in Dallas as a police character. One of the officers who knew him said his friendship was helpful to them by providing contact with underworld elements that went to his two establishments, the Carousel and the Vegas.

The Carousel is four blocks from the police station. The Vegas is a cheap night club where the customers have their wrists stamped to show they have paid admission.

'Friend of the Police'

Police records show that Ruby has been arrested several times, twice for carrying a concealed weapon. Officers who know him say he kept a .38-caliber, snub-nose revolver but deny having seen him carry the weapon in a holster on his hip, as has been

related by other acquaintances.

"I would describe him as a friend of the Police Department," a sergeant on duty outside the homicide department told the Post-Dispatch. He said he had known Ruby for some time.

Tony Zoppi, the night club reporter of the Dallas News, emphasized Ruby's "yearning for social acceptance" and admiration for President Kennedy. Zoppi said Ruby sometimes asked his advice as to whether a certain night club act would raise the tone of the Carousel.

Others recalled with disapproval that Ruby had featured an occasional "amateur night" at the Carousel, hiring housewives and school teachers to strip before audiences for \$10 a night.

Other acquaintances of Ruby recalled seeing him often entering police officers in his two establishments and riding in police cars with them. On one occasion, he was said to have driven up to the Vegas alone in a police car, using it to haul cases of beer.

Brooding Moods

Besides his love for the theatrical, Ruby is a highly emotional man, mercurial, quick to fall into brooding moods.

He was a bachelor and lived in a \$125-a-month, four-room apartment in a place called the Marsala apartments. About two months ago, his friend Senator came to share the apartment with him.

Despite his temper and record, he was not regarded as a type capable of Sunday's crime. Most policemen regarded Ruby as a "character" rather than a law breaker.

Record of Arrests

Police records show the following arrests in Dallas for Ruby:

August 1960, violation of a dance hall ordinance; June 1959, violation of a dance hall ordinance; December 1954, violation of state labor laws; May 1954, carrying concealed weapon; July 1953, carrying a concealed weapon; February 1949, disturbing the peace.

The dispositions of these charges were not indicated on police records. There was nothing to show that any of them resulted in convictions.

In Chicago, he had been linked to the West Side mob that tried to take over the Dallas racket in the postwar years. He was also identified as a government informer against some of the gang. A Chicago attorney represented Ruby before the old Kefauver crime committee.

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