

Mrs. Eva Grant, Ruby's sister, moans, "He looked terrible, like a corpse."

—Dallas News Staff Photo by Fred Coston.

Serious Condition

Ruby Admitted to Hospital

By JOHN GEDDIE and BILL HUNTER

Jack Ruby was admitted to Parkland Hospital in serious condition Friday afternoon for treatment of pneumonia.

The preliminary diagnosis was made shortly after Ruby was admitted at 5:15 p.m.

A hospital spokesman said the next release on his condition will be at 9 a.m. Saturday.

Sheriff Bill Decker said he sent Ruby to Parkland after conferring with Dr. J. M. Pickard, county health officer.

Sheriff Decker said he called for Dr. Pickard after he saw Ruby in his jail cell.

"Dr. Pickard said he thought Jack had chest congestion and should go to the hospital," Sheriff Decker said. "We loaded him in an ambulance and he was sent directly to X-ray."

"He had been complaining of a cold," the sheriff said, "and I think he had had a shot of penicillin from the jail doctor."

"Jack said he had felt pains in his chest, but not severe pains."

His attorney, Phil Burleson, said he was notified at 5 p.m. by Sheriff Decker. Burleson talked with Ruby's Dallas sister, Mrs. Eva Grant, who planned to call other relatives.

Ruby, 35, arrived at Parkland at 4:47 p.m. and was officially admitted 28 minutes later. Parkland is the hospital where President John F. Kennedy was taken after being shot by Lee Harvey Oswald and where Oswald died two days later after being shot by Ruby.

Mrs. Grant arrived just before 6 p.m. and was escorted to the hospital administrator's office where she demanded to see her brother. "I'm not leaving. . . I'll be here all night. . ." she said. "I don't even trust the hospital. . . I don't care about due process of the law, that guy's dying." She said she had seen her brother earlier

in the day and that "he looked terrible, like a corpse. For three weeks he's been deathly sick."

Telling reporters that Ruby had not been properly treated, she was whisked away by hospital officials.

Dr. John W. Callahan, assistant county health officer, said that he had been treating Ruby for about two weeks for "a non-productive dry cough" and had been giving the prisoner "antibiotics since Monday."

"He hasn't had any symptoms of deep respiratory conditions, though," the physician added. "I examined him at 10 a.m. (Friday) and his cough seemed to be better than it was yesterday."

He said he would "feel less concerned if I had some good chest X-rays and lab studies to go on" and that he was "entirely in favor" of Ruby's entering Parkland.

Dr. Callahan said he did not order Ruby to the hospital, however. "I think it was the sheriff who decided that he should go."

Beyond Mrs. Grant's arrival at the hospital, there were no signs of excitement.

Burleson said he did not know that Ruby had a serious illness, but said he "looked bad" during recent visits.

At a change of venue hearing Tuesday,

Eva Grant and brother Earl Ruby of Detroit said Ruby appeared ill and had lost weight in recent months.

Sheriff Decker was conferring with Wichita Falls lawmen when he went by Ruby's corridor cell area. Dist. Judge Louis Holland had announced Tuesday that Ruby's second murder trial would be held in Wichita Falls.

"I talked to him for a while and he said 'I just feel tight in the chest,'" Sheriff Decker recalled.

Ruby was freed from his death sentence Oct. 5 when the State Court of Criminal Appeals reversed his conviction for killing Oswald.

Decker, himself just released from the hospital, held a press conference Friday night and said the Parkland staff was "becoming certain" Ruby's condition was "probable pneumonia."

He said that Ruby's room in the hospital — "a patient's room without bars" — would have a guard inside and a guard outside. He would not disclose which floor in the hospital Ruby's room was on.

Asked about Mrs. Grant's charges of improper care, the sheriff replied, "That's Eva."

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