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Cancer

RUBY IS

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Conquers

DEAD

Oswald Slayer's Death Peaceful

Jack Ruby is dead.

The stubby little man, who but for one fleeting moment might forever have remained one of the world's unknown citizens, died of cancer at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday at Parkland Hospital.

He had been ill about four weeks.

No details of the death were revealed as the official announcement came Tuesday morning. However, Peter Geilich, assistant administrator at Parkland, said a press conference would be held at 2 p.m. at the Dallas City-County Health Unit.

It was later learned, however, that Ruby's sister, Mrs. Eva Grant, was with him from 9 a.m. until his death an hour and a half later.

Mrs. Grant, quiet and composed, talked with reporters briefly at Parkland Hospital.

"HE DIED very peacefully," she said.

She did not elaborate as to whether Ruby was still in a coma when death came. Unof-

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official reports earlier in the day had stated that Ruby had slipped into the coma and his life was being counted in terms of "a matter of hours."

In addition to Mrs. Grant, several other persons were with Ruby when he died. These included a brother, Earl Ruby of Detroit, another sister, Mrs. Eileen Kaminsky of Detroit and attorney Phil Burleson of Dallas.

Hospital officials didn't inform Sheriff Bill Decker of Ruby's death until about 11:15 a.m.

AN AUTOPSY will be performed, according to a source in the sheriff's office.

The source said the consent of the family will not be required because Ruby had been a prisoner and was in custody at the time of his death.

Following the autopsy, the body will be released to Ruby's family.

Decker said the autopsy could be performed in a few hours.

Parkland officials explained the press conference on Ruby's

death was being delayed until 2 p.m. because that would be the earliest that a preliminary pathologist's report could be made.

FUNERAL SERVICES for Ruby will be held Friday in Chicago, according to attorney Burleson.

Burleson met with reporters at 12:15 p.m. Tuesday, shortly after he ushered Ruby's brother and two sisters into a blue sedan at the side entrance of Parkland Hospital.

"It's impossible to take death

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well under any circumstances," Burleson said, "but I thought they (the family) held up as well as possible."

Burleson said he talked with Ruby about 6:15 p.m. Monday and declared that Ruby looked weak and appeared to have lost a lot of weight. However, he said Ruby talked "fairly strong" as they discussed friends who had sent encouraging messages via Burleson.

IT WAS LAST December 9—shortly after 5 p.m.—that Ruby, charged and once convicted of slaying accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, was admitted to Parkland. At the time, doctors believed he was suffering from pneumonia but later tests soon revealed the

fatal malignancy.

In the tense days which followed, attending physicians issued only succinct statements about their patient.

"He's a very sick man," they said. "His condition is poor in terms of the underlying nature of the disease, but his condition is good as far as pain or the ability to eat is concerned. His outlook is reasonably cheerful."

THE DOCTORS also disclosed they removed an enlarged lymph node from Ruby's neck — the malignancy was discovered in a microscopic examination of that tissue — and more than four quarts of fluid were pumped from Ruby's chest. However, almost from the first, doctors had held little hope for his recovery and within days announced that two possible treatments, radiation therapy and surgery, would be useless.

"We had no idea it (the cancer) would be so massive and widespread," one source stated shortly after the diagnosis was made.

For Ruby, death came in peaceful serenity — a direct contrast to his brawling, aggressive life. He had been under heavy sedation during the final days of his illness.

Even so, Jack Ruby may have accomplished his life-long ambition to become "important." Described by many as "a glad-handed publicity hound," Ruby, in shooting Oswald, virtually has assured himself a place in history along with Oswald and John Wilkes Booth.

"It was," as some have said, "a hard way to make the history books."

RUBY'S DEATH, coming only scant weeks after the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals reversed his prior conviction, leaves to future generations his final judgment. The controversy as to whether he was sane or insane, a grief-stricken patriot or a headline-hungry would-be hero still rages and is overshadowed only by the tragedy which surrounds the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The death also ends a long legal battle which has consumed hundreds of hours, more than 20 attorneys, and thousands of taxpayer dollars.

Oddly enough, Ruby died an

"innocent" man despite a national television audience which "witnessed" the Oswald shooting. The Texas court's reversal had returned the case to the "innocent until proven guilty" status and officials were only beginning to make arrangements for a second trial when they learned of the fatal illness.

IT WAS perhaps the final irony in a life and death filled with strange quirks.

It was on a Sunday morning — shortly after 11 a.m. on November 24, 1963 — that Jack Ruby fired the single shot which forever obscured intimate details of the assassination. The scene was the Dallas City Hall basement, and the area was jammed with newsmen and photographers waiting for Oswald to be transferred to county jail.

At 11:20 a.m., there was a shout:

"Here he comes."

Suddenly, a short man, wearing a brown suit and hat, dashed from the crowd straight toward the slender prisoner. He crouched slightly, shoved a pistol against Oswald's black sweater, and pulled the trigger.

THERE WAS a flash and the muffled sound of a gun. Oswald's face contorted in pain.

"Oh no," someone yelled.

"Jack, you son of a —," shouted a detective.

Policemen— leaping, clawing, shoving, and scrambling — surged toward the man in the brown hat and suit. Oswald crumpled in the arms of the horrified detectives who had been at his side. In just more than an hour, he would be dead.

In the weeks and months which followed, many tried to understand or explain the enigma which was Jack Ruby. None succeeded.

And now Jack Ruby is dead.

JACK RUBY—a pudgy, balding, vain, complex little man. Yet, in many respects, he was a product of his environment.

His real name was Jacob Rubenstein. He was born in Chicago sometime during 1911, but the exact date has never been determined. At various times, Ruby listed it as June 23, April 25, March 13, March 3, April 21,

April 26, March 25 and March 19.

From the Warren Commission, this much is known:

Jack Ruby's father, Joseph Rubenstein, was born in Poland (at that time under Czarist Russia) during 1871 and entered the Russian army in 1893. There he learned the carpentry trade, which had been practiced by his father and at least one brother, and apparently picked up the habit of excessive drinking which was to plague him the rest of his life.

HIS MOTHER, Fannie Turek Rutkowski, also was born in Poland and the marriage was arranged — as was customary — by a professional matchmaker. It came while Joseph Rubenstein was still in the Russian army.

According to the family, Joseph Rubenstein saw service in China, Korea, and Siberia, but detested both these places and army life. Eventually, in 1898, he simply "walked away" and about four years later turned up first in England and then in Canada. He entered the United States in 1903 and was followed by his wife and two children about a year later.

The family settled in Chicago.

In the first five years of Jack Ruby's life, the family moved at least four times. And a brother, as stated in Warren Commission testimony, still recalls the neighborhood as a "ghetto" with "pushcarts on the streets."

THE HOME was marked by constant strife. Then, in the spring of 1921, the parents separated. By this time, Jack Ruby had three brothers and four sisters.

Less than a year later—when he was only 11 years old—Jack Ruby was referred to the Institute for Juvenile Research by the Jewish Social Service Bureau. The reasons were "truancy" and "incorrigible at home."

He was placed in a foster home and remained about a year.

When he returned home, Jack Ruby suddenly found himself on

Chicago streets attempting to provide for himself and other members of his family. He was an avid sports fan and, together with many of his friends, "scalped" tickets to various sporting events. He also sold numerous novelty items and knick-knacks, particularly those connected with professional and collegiate athletics.

IN 1933, Ruby and several of his Chicago friends moved to California. He sold a "tip sheet" on horseraces, worked for a time as a singing waiter, and eventually became a door-to-door subscription salesman for a San Francisco newspaper.

Four years later his mother was committed to the Elgin State Hospital in Cook County (Chicago) Illinois. Reportedly, she was suffering from psychoneurosis with marked anxiety state.

Jack Ruby returned to Chicago. He was unemployed for a time, then became a traveling salesman with his so-called "hustler" activities continuing on the side. He became active in Scrap Iron and Junk Handlers Union Local 20467 about 1937 but left its employe in 1940 after his close friend, union financial secretary Leon Cooke, died of gunshot wounds inflicted by the local president.

In 1941, Ruby was active in organization of the Spartan Novelty Co., a small firm which sold miniature cedar chests containing candy and gambling devices. Then, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, he and several friends decided to design and sell plaques commemorating the Day of Infamy.

THE PROJECT was slowed by Ruby's perfectionist approach to details of the design. By the time his copyrighted plaque finally was ready for sale, the market was flooded with similar items.

Ruby was employed by Globe Auto Glass Co. and Universal Sales Co. in late 1942. Then in 1943, after an unsuccessful appearance before an appeals board, he was inducted into the U.S. Army Air Corps. He was discharged from service in 1946 and returned to Chicago.

For a year—from 1946 to 1947—Ruby and his three brothers



A Recent Photograph of Ruby in Jail