

Oswald's mother dies at 73

From Staff and Wire Reports

FORT WORTH — Marguerite Claverie Oswald, 73, who was steadfast in her contention that her son Lee Harvey Oswald did not kill President John F. Kennedy, died Saturday after several weeks of secret treatment for cancer in Harris Hospital-Methodist.

She once said her son, who was shot to death two days after Kennedy's assassination in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963, should be buried beside the slain president because "Lee Harvey

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1964 revealed no new information, panel members said.

A year after Oswald was shot to death by Dallas nightclub owner Jack Ruby, Mrs. Oswald said:

"Nothing in my investigation shows any involvement of Lee at all. I have devoted my life to my investigation and expect to as long as I have a nickel to buy a loaf of bread."

In December 1978, when the U.S. House Assassinations Committee ended its 2-year investigation of the Warren Report with conclusions that Oswald killed the president but may not have acted alone, Mrs. Oswald made one of her last public statements:

Saying she was "pleased and delighted" with the report, Mrs. Oswald said:

"I know my son was framed. Since he died he was used as a pacifier for the nation. He was blamed, rather

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has become a part of history. In death, he should take his place alongside the man they say he murdered."

A spokesman for Harris Hospital-Methodist said Mrs. Oswald was admitted Nov. 21, and her presence was kept secret from even hospital personnel. She died at 6:10 a.m. Saturday.

"She was alone and estranged from her family and had to make all the decisions concerning her own care and welfare," said Dr. John

Johnson, one of Mrs. Oswald's physicians.

From the time she made her first public statements after the assassination until her death, Mrs. Oswald maintained her son's innocence.

She said she had conducted her own investigation into the president's slaying and confirmed her son's innocence, but her testimony before the Warren Commission in

than causing an uproar. Now Lee is not alone in taking the blame. If a government agency can admit 15 years later that it was wrong, history will have a way of correcting things."

When British author Michael Ed-dowes alleged in 1975 that the body of a Soviet spy was buried in Oswald's grave in Rose Hill Cemetery in east Fort Worth, Mrs. Oswald said she had wanted her son's body exhumed in 1967 to check reports of scars on his left arm, but she refused comment on efforts to exhume Oswald's body in 1979 and 1980.

Another son, Robert, who lives in Denton, requested Mrs. Oswald's testimony in opposing the exhumation last year, but Mrs. Oswald refused. The request broke 17 years of silence between the mother and her son.

Until that conversation, she said she had had no contact with her two surviving sons — Robert Oswald and

John E. Pic — and Lee's wife, Marina Oswald Porter, since 1963.

Neighbors said Mrs. Oswald spent the last six years in near isolation in her home at 4029 Byers Ave. in Fort Worth.

In earlier interviews with news reporters, she frequently complained of money problems, saying she could not afford the exhumation she spoke of in 1967.

In 1979, she offered for sale a letter written by Oswald while he was in the Soviet Union, along with her library of books about the Kennedy assassination. She said she needed the money to pay for a major operation she had undergone.

Mrs. Oswald was sued in 1968 by the Internal Revenue Service for \$681.91 she owed in 1964 taxes. She had received at least \$5,000 in 1964 from one speaking engagement about her son, and within two weeks after

Oswald was shot to death by Ruby, she received \$863 from an insurance policy she had purchased for her son.

In January 1969, Mrs. Oswald asked for \$25 million in damages in five libel suits she filed against authors of several books about the assassination, including U.S. Rep. Gerald R. Ford, who had served on the Warren Commission and wrote a book based on the investigation.

A Fort Worth federal judge dismissed part of the lawsuits in October 1969, and he dismissed the remainder in August 1976.

Lee Harvey Oswald was Mrs. Oswald's third son by her first husband. She and Lee moved to Fort Worth in 1954 with her second husband, leaving her two other sons in a New York church boarding school.

Funeral arrangements are pending at Baumgardner Funeral Home, 212 Tarrant St., in Fort Worth.



Marguerite Oswald maintained her son's innocence.