

Jack Ruby Is Dead-- Blood Clot

New York Times

Dallas

Jack L. Ruby, who shot President Kennedy's assassin before a nationwide television audience, died yesterday at Parkland Memorial Hospital at the age of 55.

It was the same hospital in which Mr. Kennedy and the assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, died, three years ago.

Dr. Earl Rose, the Dallas county medical examiner, said that Ruby, who had extensive cancer, was killed by a blood clot in the lungs.

Dr. Rose, who performed an autopsy, said the blood clot apparently formed in a leg yesterday morning and traveled through the heart to the lungs.

CAUSE

The examiner said it was a massive clot that probably would have killed Ruby even if he had not been weakened by cancer. But he said that cancer would be listed on the death certificate as a contributing cause of death.

Dr. Eugene P. Frenkel, head of the team of physicians who had treated Ruby for the cancer since December 9, said Ruby's death was not completely unexpected.

Frenkel said Ruby had begun showing signs about 11 p.m. Monday that he might have developed blood clots. He was given oxygen and appeared to respond "well," the physician said.

"This morning he was quite comfortable," Frenkel said. "He went through the normal hospital routine. He had his bath and ordered eggs for breakfast, and he was quite jovial."

SPASM

At about 9 a.m. he was seized with a spasm. Death came an hour and a half later despite emergency procedures, Frenkel said.

One of Ruby's sisters, Eva Grant, and a brother, Earl, were waiting in a hall outside the emergency room when Ruby died.

A funeral service will be held in Chicago on Friday morning, Mrs. Grant said.

Ruby was operating a night club with strip-tease dancers in Dallas when President

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Kennedy was assassinated on Nov. 22, 1963, during a political tour of Texas.

Two days later Ruby walked into the heavily guarded Dallas police station — apparently unnoticed — and shot Oswald in the stomach with a .38-caliber revolver as Oswald was about to be transferred to the Dallas county jail, a mile away.

Ruby said he shot the assassin to spare Mrs. Kennedy the pain of returning to Dallas to testify at his trial.

REVERSAL

During the following three years, all of which he spent in prison until his final hospital stay, Ruby steadfastly denied that he was part of any conspiracy to silence Oswald.

In March, 1964, Ruby was convicted of murder and was sentenced to die.

In October, 1966, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals reversed the conviction. The court said the trial judge, Joe B. Brown, has allowed illegal testimony. A new trial was set for Wichita Falls, about 100 miles west of Dallas. The case was pending when Ruby died.

Shortly after Ruby's conviction was reversed, he began to have a nagging dry cough, according to Dr. John W. Callahan, a physician at the Dallas county jail. "Jack also had trouble keeping food on his stomach," said Callahan. "I thought it was just his nerves."

TREATMENT

Callahan treated Ruby with penicillin, and also suggested cough syrup.

In early December, Ruby was taken to Parkland Hospital where doctors there diagnosed his ailment as pneumonia.

The next day, doctors discovered that Ruby had cancer, and during the following week they determined that it had begun to spread.



JACK RUBY
Victim of blood clot

Dr. Frenkel said the autopsy had not disclosed the primary site of the cancer. He listed the lungs as the "probable primary site."

Rose, the medical examiner, said a preliminary examination did not disclose any signs of epilepsy. Ruby's lawyers had asserted that the slaying of Oswald could be linked to the fact that Ruby had a form of epilepsy.

SPECIALISTS

Frenkel said about 20 specialists and nurses were working on Ruby when he died.

Frenkel said the autopsy disclosed that the cancer had just begun to respond to treatment by a new drug, 5-fluorouracil.

"An X-ray study carried out last Friday demonstrated a decrease in the size of the nodules in the left lung," he said.

But it was "a little unlikely" that Ruby would have recovered from the cancer, he added.

Ruby weighed 147 pounds at his death, about 30 pounds less than his weight when he was admitted to the hospital December 9.

LIFE

Bury was born Jacob Rubenstein in the Maxwell street ghetto district of Chicago. The year was 1911, but the precise date was never documented.

He was the sixth of nine children of a Polish immigrant and his wife. His father was frequently without a job and just as often drunk. His mother had delusions, including one that she had a fish-

bone stick in her throat.

The child, who was nicknamed Sparky, passed much of his time in street games and in brawling with the neighborhood boys. When his parents separated in 1923 he was placed in a foster home for a time. He dropped out of school at 16 with a reputation for being quick-tempered and disobedient.

He held a variety of jobs — scalping tickets for sports events, vending peanuts, selling horse-race tip sheets. He was on the fringe of the underworld.

In 1933, he and some friends went to San Francisco for a time, where he made a marginal living by selling newspaper subscriptions door-to-door.

Rubenstein (he changed his name to Ruby in Dallas in 1947) was drafted May 21, 1943. After service as a mechanic in air bases in the south, he was discharged in February, 1946, with a rating of "very satisfactory."

Shortly thereafter he went to Dallas at the invitation of his sister, Eva Grant, to operate two clubs, the Vegas and the Carousel.

'CLASS'

In Dallas Ruby began to acquire some of the "class" he yearned for. He dressed nattily, if not exactly soberly. He made friends. He formed a liaison with a blond divorcee that lasted for 11 years. "He wanted to be liked — and he was," a friend who knew him in those years said.

At the same time he built a reputation for toughness, and he seldom required police assistance in keeping order in the Carousel. He threw at least one drunken customer downstairs and was embroiled in fist fights from time to time.

He was arrested eight times between 1949 and 1963 on charges that ranged from disturbing the peace and carrying a concealed weapon to selling liquor after hours. He was never convicted of any of the charges.

The contrasts in Ruby's character — he was compassionate in some circumstances and brutal or truculent in others — were remarked on by a number of persons associated with him and by doctors who examined him.