

examination of the entry showed no sign of erasure marks. The FBI took the page to Washington and after analyzing the signature concluded that it was not written by Oswald.

9. Richard Stovall's testimony printed in the Warren Commission Hearings and Exhibits, Vol. 10, p. 171. Hereinafter cited in the format 10H171 (Stovall).
10. 23H529-625 CE1850 of JCS timecards.
11. 10H206 (Ofstein).
12. 10H192. Graef said, "It was very, very seldom that we ever brought him in [for Saturday work] unless we were in a real bad—had urgent work that absolutely had to go."
13. 7H295 (Holmes).
14. 10H168-169 (Stovall); 10H191 (Graef).
15. 10H203, 209-210 (Ofstein); 10H189 (Graef).
16. 21H674-677.
17. Priscilla McMillan, Marina and Lee (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), p. 604.
18. See author's article, "The Transplantation of the Texas School Book Depository," The Third Decade, Sept. 1993, pp. 27-28.
19. Albert H. Newman, The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: The Reasons Why (Clarkson N. Potter: New York, 1970), pp. 310, 317-318.
20. Reprinted in 20H745-746.
21. 20H511.
22. 22H796.
23. See author's article "The Furniture Mart," The Fourth Decade, Jan. 1994, 13-19.



## RICHARD E. SPRAGUE (1921-1996)

by  
Christopher Sharrett

I was very saddened to hear that Dick Sprague died on Jan. 27 after a long period of declining health. Dick was a good friend and mentor to me through the 1970s, during my period of active research into the JFK assassination. Much more important, he was among the most pioneering of the first generation of assassination researchers.

Beginning in 1965, Dick undertook an intensive investigation of the assassination, concentrating primarily on photographic evidence. Dick contacted virtually all of the professional and amateur photographers and filmmakers who witnessed the events of Dealey Plaza and their aftermath. He also interacted with all the major news organizations of the country as he pursued the photographic record of the assassination. Dick's investigation produced some previously unknown photos taken by bystanders; some of these pictures he offered to Life, which published them without crediting Dick's research. By the late 60s, Dick Sprague was the foremost authority in the research community on the photographic evidence.

Dick served as a consultant to Jim Garrison during the late D.A.'s 1967-69 New Orleans investigation. Although Dick criticized him on a number of issues, he remained a loyal friend and colleague to Garrison, always believing in the essential honesty and importance of Garrison's effort.

Through the 1970s, Dick published a series of pivotal articles on the assassination in a pioneer computer journal called Computers and Automation (later Computers and People). Edmund Berkeley, founder of the magazine, became interested in Dick's effort, giving him a free hand (and also writing articles of his own on the domestic political assassinations of the 1960s). When subscribers complained of the magazine's increasing political content, Dick and Ed Berkeley started a separate newsletter called People and the Pursuit of Truth, which played an important role in informing a new grassroots movement demanding the truth about the JFK and other assassinations in the post-Watergate climate. Dick assisted the efforts of the Assassination Information Bureau, and Mark Lane's Citizens Commission of Inquiry, providing photographic evidence and

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lecturing at conferences sponsored by the organizations. In the mid-to-late-70s, I was the impresario to a series of lectures featuring Dick and Bob Cutler; Dick offered a photographic overview of the case, while Bob focused on the trajectory evidence. This event, offered to various schools and universities on the east coast, was eventually presented to a much-impressed staff of the House Select Committee on Assassinations. The HSCA lawyers were particularly taken with Dick's comprehensive knowledge of the evidence.

Dick was an ardent lobbyist on behalf of the HSCA, worked to preserve it during its time of crisis, and was bitterly disappointed by its disingenuous conclusions. He was close to Henry Gonzalez, Richard A. Sprague, Bob Tanenbaum, and other key players of the pre-Blakey period. Dick was ardent in his belief that the assassination was a high-level coup, and so describes it in his privately-published book *The Taking of America 1, 2,3*. Dick was widely known within the research community for his calm, even-tempered character, his gentility and generosity. Dick was the archetype of the midwesterner, born in Indianapolis, a Naval officer in World War II, a 1942 Purdue graduate with a degree in electrical engineering. He was involved almost from its inception in the field of computer technology, writing monographs on the subject as early as the late 1940s. He served as a computer consultant to a variety of firms, and was an advisor in the 70s to a federal commission on electronic funds transfer, which made possible the direct bank deposit of paychecks via computer.

Dick suffered a number of tragedies in his life, including the slow and painful death of his beloved wife Gloria, a truly wonderful person. Dick ceased active research into the assassination in the mid-80s, although he never lost interest in the case. He was interviewed for the syndicated program *The JFK Conspiracy* (hosted by James Earl Jones) in 1992 (Dick appears briefly only in the videocassette version). He also managed to attend the 1994 ASK conference despite rapidly deteriorating health. In a conversation I had with him last year, he was optimistic about recovering fully from two rather serious strokes.

Dick donated his photo collection to the JFK research center at Western New England College in Massachusetts. Certain of his personal papers along with the photographic archive from the Garrison case were given by Dick and one-time colleague Bernard Fensterwald to the Special Collections department of Georgetown University library. Dick and Fensterwald briefly headed a group called Committee To Investigate Assassinations, organized shortly

after the Garrison case.

Dick Sprague was one of the kindest, most considerate people I have known. His particular passion for truth and justice rubbed off on me more than a little, and I learned much not just from his enormously industrious research, but from his presentational style. The research community has lost one of its finest people. I will miss him dearly.

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