

...on, John B. Connally was a household word.

The son of a prominent family of Texas where he attended law school and married one of the prettiest girls on campus.

From there came a career mostly in politics, as a trusted aide to Lyndon B. Johnson during his career as senator, presidential candidate and vice president.

Between his political chores, Connally gained a modest fortune working for Fort Worth oilman Sid Richardson as a lawyer and lobbyist.

At the 1960 Democratic Convention in Los Angeles it was Connally who placed Johnson's name in nomination for the presidency. When Johnson took the vice presidential nomination and was elected, Connally was named Secretary of the Navy, a post he held for less than a year before coming home to campaign for his first public office—governor of Texas.

He almost didn't make it. In a run-off for the Democratic nomination, Connally managed to squeak by a young populist named Don Yarborough by only 26,250 votes in a turnout of 1.1 million votes. In the general election he beat Republican Jack Cox by 132,011 votes but ran behind every Democratic U.S. House candidate in the state.

A poll in May, 1963 showed 54 per cent of Texas voters thought Connally was doing a good job.

But then came Dallas, where Connally suffered wounds in the chest,

...three terms as Texas governor and once out

Many political observers feel it was Connally's personal campaigning for Hubert Humphrey that put Texas in the Democratic column in 1968 when Richard Nixon was seemingly a shoo-in in the state.

Connally's critics—and there are probably as many in Texas as anywhere—say he helped Humphrey only after privately helping Nixon raise money earlier in the campaign—a claim Connally denies.

In 1971 Connally, still a Democrat, joined Richard Nixon's cabinet as Secretary of the Treasury. In 1972 he was out of the official Nixon family but heading Democrats for Nixon which helped lure voters into the Nixon landslide election effort.

In early 1973, Connally made it official by formally declaring he was a Republican—and doing it at a time when Nixon and the GOP was suffering battering over Watergate.

Whenever possible GOP candidates for the presidency in 1976 are mentioned, Connally's name is always in the forefront. But actually another Nixon favorite, the Rev. Billy Graham, might have been the first to boom Connally for the presidency, saying in 1963, "I think the Democratic Party should consider Connally for 1968."

Connally, when he's not out on a busy schedule of speeches across the country, lives in Houston in a quietly-modern home in the city's plush development.

...wants to get acquainted with John

thing for reporters here, refused to be interviewed about the Dallas assassination or how it affected his career.

He said he had received 35 such requests and didn't have time to honor all of them. "I really don't want to talk about the whole thing, anyway," he added.

A year after his wounding, he told a questioner "how much of my rise in political fortunes is attributable to this experience, I am unable to say."

Associates of Connally say they believe the experience in Dallas has definitely affected how he feels about public life.

Connally said several times after his wounding he seriously considered quitting public life.

A close political associate—a Democratic officeholder who still counts on Connally as a confidant despite the switch in party—had this to say about the Dallas incident:

"A lot of people think John Connally is really being coy with the public. When there was so much speculation about John being named to replace Agnew, most people thought he was just playing games when he said he wasn't interested in the job.

"But I believe that while John—like anybody else—wants to be where the power is, I really think this terrible experience still lingers in his mind and he would be equally happy never to be a potential target again."

...for certain of her husband's effects

and \$10,000 more as a down payment for the rifle whose \$12.78 original value was enhanced by her first husband's use of it. There were other sources of income: magazine articles, advances for a book, movie—and friends said she learned to spend as well as receive.

"She is very patriotic," said a neighbor. "She always compares the way they did things in Russia unfavorably with the way we do things in America."

Life had looked so bleak for Marina before the ill-fated presidential motorcade. Lee was yearning to return either to the Soviet Union, or, as Marina told the Warren Commission, preferably to Cuba.

MARINA WAS NONE too eager for that. She had met Oswald in her native Russia, after he had renounced his U.S. citizenship. A forgiving U.S. government allowed him to return, and to join the "Fair Play for Cuba" movement and appear on television in New Orleans on Castro's behalf.

And Marina had met Mrs. Ruth Payne, an elementary school teacher from Irving, who befriended her and Lee and the two babies, June Lee and Marina Rachel.

Oswald took a menial job in the Texas School Book Depository, rented a closet-sized room on Beckley Avenue in Dallas; friends said life was not

## Secret Service agent became LBJ's shield

By MIKE KELLY  
Times Herald Bureau

WASHINGTON—Even now, 10 years later, it's painful for the lanky, soft-spoken Georgian to talk about the most unforgettable day in his life.

"It's the most tragic thing that happened in my lifetime," Rufus Youngblood said. "I hope it will never happen again."

The Secret Service agent was riding in the front seat of Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson's car, two cars behind the limousine carrying President Kennedy, when the first of the three shots rang out across Dealey Plaza.

"It was an explosive noise. It wasn't the backfire of a motorcycle," Youngblood recalled.

Both President Johnson and the Warren Commission were to praise Youngblood for what he did next.

"I SPUN AROUND in the seat. With my arm I hit him (Johnson) on the shoulder and told him to get down. Then I proceeded to climb into the back seat. There were two more

remain.

The car, the big house, the money, the 17 acres of prime land—objects of crass capitalism which her first husband rejected—don't appear to bother Marina at all.

shots," Youngblood said.

President Johnson used to claim that Youngblood was shielding him with his body before Lee Harvey Oswald had fired a second time. Youngblood isn't so sure about that.

"Johnson says I jumped on him before the second shot," Youngblood said. "I never said it. I wouldn't say it now."

But whether it was before, during, or immediately after the second shot, Johnson was convinced that Youngblood's swift action would have saved his life, had there been a second assassination.

The Secret Service agent's actions were "in the finest traditions of government service," the Warren Commission said.

Youngblood said there is "absolutely no evidence" to indicate anyone besides Oswald took part in the assassination.

"In my book, I say flat out that I agree with the Warren Commission," he said.

# The setting for last bitter dregs of a tragic story

In the mind's eye, the second floor courtroom of the old Criminal Courts Building where Jack Ruby went on trial for his life is still etched there as if it were 10 years ago.

The faded Victorian picture of plump ladies representing Freedom and Justice on the faded green walls, the crossed flags of Texas and the U.S., the church-like pews filled with spectators and representatives of the world press following the last bitter dregs of a tragic story; the dozen old ceiling fans spinning lazily; the robed Judge Joe B. Brown peering down with gentle reserve from the massive dark oak bench; and the marble stairway and the corridor leading to the courtroom aswarm with weary cameramen enduring the long dragged-out proceedings.

The courtroom that Judge Brown borrowed from Judge J. Frank Wilson to accommodate the event rings no more with the threatening and bombastic courtroom oratory, nor the cagy wiles of Dist. Atty. Henry Wade play-

ing the role of country boy and Melvin Belli cast in the role as Mr. Wonderful.

THE BOOM TODAY is not a courtroom at all. It is relegated to storage room status, a kind of warehouse for the county's office supplies.

The gentle bear of a man who wore the judge's robes—Joe B. Brown—died of a heart attack in 1967. He lived long enough to see the death verdict on Jack Ruby overturned by a higher court.

In the conflict of the time, when, with so many people to characterize, everyone was drawn in caricature: Brown came off as the bumpkin in robes, a man who would pose with a stripper Candy Barr on his lap. (There was a photo, in fact, that was the basis of the story: Candy, fully dressed, posing like a daughter-home-from-college with the judge.)

Not that the story that unfolded was dull; it simply failed to measure up to the drama that might have been had not Ruby disposed of Oswald rather

than have him linger in prison to write books about his deeds.

HOW COULD THE Ruby trial be dull when a pregnant stripper named Little Lynn could electrify the crowd by coming to court with a pistol in her purse? Even a pistol with no firing pin.

And, who would have thought that, of all times, five prisoners could choose that occasion to break from the County Jail, in the same building, to add a dangerous hilarity to the entire proceedings?

What failed to come out in the spate of stories at the time—amid the more raucous yarns of Brown, who would pose with a comic book if he was asked—was Brown's gentle demeanor. He owned 40 gavels and never, he said, was "impolite enough to gavel someone down when they had something to say."

In retrospect, this may have been the trial's undoing; it may have contributed to the name the famed defense lawyer Melvin Belli stuck on him: "Necessity" Brown. It was elbow-in-

kind of put-down at its pinnacle. Necessity, of course, knows no law.

BILL ALEXANDER, the lean fire-and-brimstone courtroom prosecutor, finally took the show away from the players listed on the billing. He got the name "Tarantula Eyes" from Belli's rotund and jolly partner Joe Tonahill from Jasper, Texas.

Like a shaven and lean John Brown leading a fiery-eyed charge, Alexander prosecuted with an intensity, boring in on the big-name medical experts brought in by the defense. Alexander had, in fact, an even bigger arsenal of expert witnesses himself. How did it happen?

Alexander remembered that Belli telegraphed his punch: "He said on television that his defense would be 'psychomotor epilepsy'. I was on the plane to Detroit, to New York, just about every place where anyone had written a scientific paper on the subject."

In the courtroom sparring that ensued, the questions and answers apparently failed to elicit testimony that

Ruby was-or-wasn't legally insane.

"I wanted to know if Ruby was nuts or not," Judge Brown said.

IF THE JURY WAS assailed as unsophisticated—not able to distinguish the finer points of psychomotor epilepsy—then whose fault was it?

Alexander recalls: "Belli lost the case simply because he was grandstanding during jury selection. Belli was a helluva good lawyer but he misjudged the situation entirely. He was so much a libertine himself that he just couldn't read local people—something that is very important in jury selection wherever you are."

The story has been told before, of course, but Alexander was away for a time accumulating a most complete "library" on psychomotor epilepsy and getting five top specialists to beat his back and call. "We leaked a story that Wade had fired me and I was off somewhere sulking. Yes, those were exciting times. And nobody is happier than I am that it is in the past. Today I am staying out of everyone's way."

IN THE END, the death penalty

was assessed; the 24th time in 25 tries in a string of strong prosecution successes for Wade, Alexander, Jim Bowie, and Company. When the verdict was, finally, overturned, Ruby was a broken man.

The acclaim that friends of Ruby said he "really expected" did not come at all. The pudgy and balding nightclub operator became gaunt and lean in his cell; he wrote and received letters but apparently he felt he was never heard, really heard, in court. Or understood at all.

He believed at the start he had performed a worthwhile deed in killing Lee Harvey Oswald—something he believed police would like to have done but, you know, couldn't. So he did what he did, "to spare sweet Jackie" (Kennedy) the agony of a trial that would have made her re-live those awful moments again.

Ruby died, of cancer, the official report said.

And there still are those who will say that his feeling of personal failure—the shame and despair—contributed to his death.