

Girlfriend Tells Sensational Story

MIDNIGHT

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The Secret Love Life Of J. Edgar Hoover

By MALCOLM ABRAMS

J. Edgar Hoover was not all business. He had a secret lover — an FBI woman with whom he carried on a clandestine love affair for years.

That woman, Mrs. Blonde Fowler, has now come forward to talk about the J. Edgar Hoover she knew. A man who was warm and sensitive, who could, at times, display all the spontaneous emotions of a small boy.

And a man, who despite his persistent statements before the Warren Commission, never believed for a minute that Lee Harvey Oswald, alone, was responsible for the murder of President John F. Kennedy.

MIDNIGHT spoke at length with Mrs. Fowler, a 68-year-old divorcee, who had worked in the 1940s as a clerk and codebreaker at FBI headquarters in Washington. She now lives in Jacksonville, Fla. Upset by rumors that Hoover was a homosexual, Mrs. Fowler agreed to discuss their relationship.

"He was a gentle man and a gentleman," she began. "But he had a tough, hard exterior which had to have as head of the FBI. With me, he dropped that.

"I remember our first date well. It was an impulsive sort of thing. I had gone to see him about a raise—



BLONDE FOWLER decided to tell of her relationship with Hoover to snipe at rumors circulating about him.

elevator and we went shopping for a couple of hours.

"He was tremendous fun. He was a marvelous person to be with and a good conversationalist.

"He just made me so happy. And, of course, I was excited to pieces to be with him.

"Before we left the department store, we had tea and cookies. He was like a little boy out of school.

"He was not at all the way I had expected him to be, and in truth, I had adored him for years.

"That was the beginning of our relationship. The next morning, one of the gifts I had selected; and which I thought was for someone else, was delivered to my apartment. It was an inexpensive silver bracelet."

Mrs. Fowler paused, and then sadly, looking back on a happy time, she told MIDNIGHT:

"I think that's my best memory of John Edgar. This was a joyous time and I've never forgotten it. It was a wonderful time for me and for him too.

"He was so relaxed then. He was just like a child."

No one at FBI headquarters suspected that the stern, aloof director was having a gentle love affair with a file clerk, working only yards away from his office door. And that's the way Hoover insisted it be.

After the relationship had lasted a year and a half, however, Hoover proposed to Blonde Fowler.

"He made an occasion out of that," she reminisced. "I had gotten a raise and splurged on some really nice clothes — which was a change for me.

"He seemed terribly impressed by the clothes and took me out for dinner. It was snowing very hard, I remember that.

"Afterwards, we came back to my apartment and were sitting in the living room. He asked me to marry

I needed more money to put my daughter through college.

"It was Christmas, 1945, and the office was fairly empty, as many people were out of town. In his private office, he served me cake and coffee.

"For most of our conversation, he talked about the pleasures of Christmas, but then quite unexpectedly, he asked me to have dinner and help him pick out presents.

"At 6 o'clock, I met him at the

him in sort of a formal way.

"He gave me a ring, a very beautiful solitaire.

"I said of course I'd marry him. He loved me and I loved him.

"He wanted to marry me right away, but I asked him to wait until June. He was disappointed, but he said it would give me time to get my hope chest together.

"I remember thinking that was wonderful. I hadn't heard that expression in a long, long time.

"Until the wedding, he asked me not to wear the ring or the new clothes to work.

"Not long after this, I began hav-



J. EDGAR HOOVER together with his long-time bodyguard Clyde Tolson outside FBI headquarters in Washington.

ing troubles with my co-workers. I had gone over everybody's head to get my raise and they didn't like it. That, and the strain of leading a double life, finally made me decide to resign from the FBI.

"I lost touch with John Edgar after that. I tried to contact him at the office and at his home, but he was gone from me. I returned the ring to his house."

Hoover didn't trust anybody, and Mrs. Fowler's explanation for his strange behavior at the time, is that he didn't trust her, either. He interpreted her resignation as an act of disloyalty and an indication that she loved him only because he was an important man.

Still, Hoover couldn't stay away from Blonde indefinitely.

"Two or three months later, he called and said he wanted to come back. We discussed marriage many times after that, but I stalled and we never got around to it.

"The real reason I didn't marry John Edgar Hoover is that during my first marriage after the birth of my daughter, I had had two mastectomies, two years apart. I thought he would not marry me if he knew

that.

"I kept him at some distance, although we made love. I knew he was not a homosexual — we were that close."

Mrs. Fowler, who has recently written a book entitled "FBI Woman," the story of her relationship with Hoover, is adamant about this point. In fact, it's the reason that four years after his death, she decided to reveal their secret affair.

In the book, which is available only in Florida, she refrained from any mention of FBI business being

discussed during her relationship with Hoover.

"But," she told MIDNIGHT, "sometimes he had to talk about FBI affairs because it was on his mind. And in the end, he told me that he was terribly distressed because his own men had lost respect for him."

Hoover, who was head of the FBI for 48 years, served under eight presidents, from Coolidge to Nixon.

What troubled him more than anything else in all that time was JFK's assassination. Questioned about it by MIDNIGHT, Mrs. Fowler had this to say:

"It really grieved John Edgar. He thought the FBI hadn't done a good

job — that his men hadn't done what he wanted them to do. And he blamed himself for the FBI's performance. He always blamed himself.

"He didn't believe Oswald was the lone assassin. He knew there was something... but he didn't know what.

"He kept talking to himself about what he could have done to solve the case. As far as I know, he was still talking about the assassination right to the time of his death. It really was a sore spot with him."

Even after their romance was over, Hoover kept in touch with Mrs. Fowler. In 1972, he visited her in Jacksonville.

"He called me urgently and asked if I would see him. We went out for dinner and later we parked somewhere.

"I knew he was sick. He looked awful. But I thought it was just from all the troubles he was having with President Nixon.

"Then he told me he was dying. It really scared me."

"I decided to tell him then the real reason that I had never married him.

"He told me it wouldn't have mattered. 'I'm a leg man anyway,' he said.

"We left the subject at that. It

was too late for us.

"John Edgar told me he was leaving his estate to Clyde Tolson, his friend and bodyguard. He said he had thought about leaving it to me, but he felt it would hurt my reputation, since we were not married. He had a special consideration for women.

"After that meeting, he did something he had never done before. He sent me money — \$500, several times, before he died."

Blonde Fowler saw J. Edgar Hoover one more time before his death. She described that last farewell this way: "Ignoring the agent's presence, I hugged John Edgar and said, 'Goodbye dear. Take care of yourself.'

"He kissed me and replied, 'Goodbye Blonde, I'll see you soon.'"

A few weeks later, while visiting her mother, Blonde Fowler opened a newspaper and saw that J. Edgar Hoover was dead..