

One-eyed jack

'Man, I bought some of my own junk back' from police

BY ZARKO FRANKS
CHRONICLE STAFF
TUE OCT 18 1957

Reflections

on White's 22 1957

THE CHRONICLE this week published a series of stories by investigative reporter Zarko Franks based on the diaries of the late George White, a flamboyant federal narcotics agent and Central Intelligence Agency operative.

The Chronicle's Stan Redding was one of the reporters who covered White when he was here investigating the so-called "police narcotics scandals" of 1954. Here are some of Redding's reflections on White:

"He was entertaining and a fascinating conversationalist, and I had no real animosity concerning him, but in my opinion he wasn't much of a cop.

"He was arrogant. He had clout and used it.

"George White was short and obese, but he obviously loved fine attire. He affected black silk shirts, raw silk ties and expensive hats and shoes."

During two trials, Redding says, "White would greet me each morning with the comment: 'Got your running shoes on, reporter? I'm gonna get you next.'

George Seber (then assistant police chief) later several days, told White: 'Leave the kid alone, George.'

"White grinned. 'You have any running shoes, Seber? You might need them, too, you know.' Neither of us ever needed them."

—Bob Tuttle

Last of three

back from Sidney Smith. One deal was for \$5,000." Voice told W. C. Pool, the narc.

Pool had just arrested Voice on a drug charge.

Now Voice, a high-rolling, flashy dresser, was blowing the whistle on old connections.

This potato was too hot for Pool. He took Voice to Capt. Joe Clark. Clark listened. How high up did the corruption go? Clark played it safe. He didn't tell his superiors or Chief L. D. Morrison. He took Voice to the county district attorney, Ewing Trolen.

That was the prelude to perhaps the most infamous scandal within the Houston Police Department. **ST 18 1957**

The time: Summer, 1954.

Enter George H. White, U.S. narcotics agent, a one-eyed jack, who kept the other side of his face hidden from public view. Only after his death did it become known he had been an OSS spy and CIA operative.

Few people here knew anything about George White that summer 23 years ago.

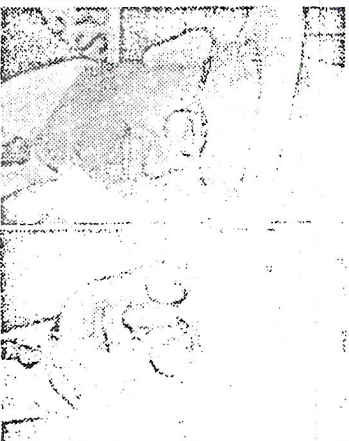
White quietly checked into the William Penn Hotel with two other Treasury agents, Fred Douglas and Harry Giardina.

White, balding and moon-faced, was assembled in a bulldozer factory. At the time he carried 250 pounds on a 5-foot-7 frame. He wore a black sports shirt over his formidable stomach. He was a menac-



Smith

Morrison



Melton

Bilintzner

ing figure. He was to become a hate object in Houston that summer.

Especially after undercover agent M. A. Bilintzner, 45, was found shot to death with two bullet holes near his heart in a vice squad office of the Police Station at 61 Riessler. Bilintzner's snub-nosed, 38 Smith and Wesson was near his body.

The night before Bilintzner had made a 45-minute statement (taken on a tape recorder) to White in which he changed

an earlier statement he had made as to the amount of narcotics seized the previous year at 3366 1/2 Bacchus here. The narcotics, it was learned later, had belonged to Earl Voice.

In his latest story Bilintzner said more than four ounces of heroin were seized along with a variety of pills. Earlier, he had said about one ounce was taken.

One jar, containing about one ounce, was still in a police captain's desk. Bilintzner and Voice said two jars had been seized. Where was the missing heroin?

Voice, the peddler, had said Sidney Smith had sold him back some of the heroin taken from Bacchus Street the previous year.

For some unexplained reason, police had never made that narcotics seizure public.

Voice claimed more than \$500,000 worth of dope was taken.

Capt. Foy "Junior" Melton was head of the vice squad then. He was to face a lot of heat along with Sidney Smith, a good-looking blond undercover man.

Chief Morrison suspended Smith and Melton. City Council screamed for Morrison's head. Mayor Roy Hofheinz, father of the present mayor, held out until Aug. 31. Then Morrison quit as chief but stayed on as an inspector.

In the George White diaries, now in the archives of Foothills College, Los Altos, Calif., White wrote:

June 3, 1954: 10:30 a.m. Masterson Albert Bilintzner commits suicide in morals squad office.— possible murder.

White was to say later:

"I found it incredible to believe that a man with a bullet in his heart and a heavy blow on back of his head, could lie on the

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