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Lead Brown Death a CSDN no pickup

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DALLAS, Tex. AP - Judge Joe B. Brown, the big affable Texan who presided over the stormy murder trial of Jack Ruby, died in Baylor Hospital Tuesday night. He was 60 years old.

Brown, who had laughed off several heart attacks even before the tempestuous trial of Ruby, was stricken again about 2 a.m. at his home in Dallas' University Park area and was taken to Baylor in an ambulance.

He had been in critical condition all day with his wife of a few months at his side. Physicians attending the judge said he died at 6:10 p.m.

The iron-gray, wavy-haired Brown became a lawyer almost by accident and had lived nearly all of his life in Dallas, leaving only to get a high school diploma from a now defunct military academy at Gulfport and to attend Jefferson School of Law in Tennessee.

After graduating from high school in 1924, he worked "here and there," he once said, and in 1926 went to work for Texas & Pacific Railroad. "I was a carbon boy," the soft-spoken judge said. "All I did was straighten up carbon papers-for \$12 a week."

"One evening after work in 1931, I was standing around near the T&P station when a friend came by and said he was going to law school.

"I said that was a pretty good thing and went with him."

He graduated from Jefferson in 1934, held a family council with his mother, two brothers and a sister and decided to run for justice of the peace.

The persuasive Brown won easily and took office on Jan. 1, 1935. He became a fixture around the Dallas County Court House.

He served as a justice of the peace until 1944 and then ran for county criminal judge. He was elected, easily again, and held that post until 1957 when he was elected to the criminal district court.

As a criminal district judge, he tried-including the Jack Ruby case-more than 34,000 cases.

Another case he called "outstanding" was the 1959 Candy Barr case in which the blonde, shapely stripper received a 15-year prison sentence for possession of marijuana.

The Candy Barr trial received wide publicity, not the least revolving around the judge's stepping down from the bench and snapping a candid picture of the sinuous blonde who returned to the Dallas show-circuit only last weekend for the first time since her conviction.

Brown always liked a relaxed atmosphere in his court. Seeing a friend in the courtroom, he might call a recess for a chat. He has called friends back of the bench while a trial continued, and he was accused by some defense lawyers of reading magazines while a trial was in progress.

He permitted attorneys for both sides in the Ruby case much leeway. But when the lawyers became too relaxed in their comments, they heard the judge's rare bark.

"Gentlemen," he warned more than one angry lawyer, "we will conduct this hearing with courtesy."

"The attorneys will act better this afternoon," he told a newsman once during the Ruby trial. After a stern, unsmiling talk from the judge, they did.

"I do strive to maintain dignity," he said. He numbered hundreds of Dallas area lawyers among his friends. He never had many kind words, however, for Melvin Belli, the San Francisco lawyer who conducted the Jack Ruby defense.

"I don't like his book," he said after Belli's "Dallas Justice" was published. "And I don't like that Belli, either." The Belli book was critical of Dallas and-at least to Brown's way of thinking-to the judge.

After the Ruby case was moved from Dallas and the Texas Supreme Court reversed the verdict of murder which the Lee Harvey Oswald killer received, Brown told friends he "doubted that Jack Ruby could get a fair trial anywhere."

"I think his trial here was as fair as any man could have gotten under the circumstances," he told a friend, but publicly he would never comment.

The judge, collaborating with a Dallas newsman, wrote a book about the Ruby trial, but it has never reached the book stalls.

Brown and his first wife were divorced. Last year, he married Joy Carles, a widow.

And a few hours before Brown was stricken, a friend-Dallas portrait artist Dmitri Vail-commented: "Joe was at the party the other night. He sure looks good."

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