

# JOHN NANCE GARNER—"SUPERB DEMOCRAT"

**N**OW enters a vitally different type of Vice President, John Nance Garner of Uvalde, Tex. He personifies 64 years of development under the laws of Nature, and 35 years of devotion to politics—public service.

He is of the people and for the people, and by the people made Vice President. He thinks with the people, speaks the common language of the people, and has no inclination to grow away from them. Social activity with him is an unpleasant duty, avoided as much as possible. He prefers to cut his own wood, haul his own water, do his own cooking—and his own thinking.

His patron political saint is Andrew Jackson, who worked in a saddler's shop, defeated the British at New Orleans and captured Florida two years later.

He is the first Vice President from the South since Andrew Johnson, who hadn't a day's schooling, was a tailor and succeeded the Martyred Lincoln in the White House.

Vice President Garner had scant education in his youth but has a heap of common sense, knowledge of life, and human sympathies.

His political philosophy is "take the people into your confidence" about the people's affairs. He religiously considers himself their agent in self-government.

His attitude toward his fellow man is to meet him with a smile and reassure him that we live in a mighty good world, with mighty fine people.

He brings to his new job the world's largest collection of the most varied kinds of gavels—presented by admirers—but he controls by his smile and sincerity.

He establishes a precedent by being on one day both Speaker and Vice President—presiding over both houses of Congress—and with far-flung vision over the self-governing people in 48 States of the greatest Nation the world ever knew.

## WHO is this man—Garner?

He is a sturdy and stout-hearted, clear-headed American. He is a superb Democrat, a militant leader, a man of the people. But more than all else—he is a great human being.

Of pioneer stock stretching back to the American Revolution, he has spent his life among people of his own country. To be able to say of any man in national political life that he is all-American is tribute superb. With John Garner, America always comes first.

It has been said of him that he is "a thorough American, race of the soil—the robust sort that has lived with the common people and does not have to put his ear to the ground to learn what people think. He knows by instinct because he is of the people. He has never risen from them. He never will. Fair play is part of his philosophy of life. He believes in the people and has confidence in their ultimate judgment if they are put in possession of the facts."

He accepted the Democratic leadership of the House of Representatives as a sacred responsibility, not as a "distinguished service decoration." He will carry the honors and responsibilities of the Vice Presidency with the same air of simple, rugged integrity.

Asked once what was his secret of handling men, he replied somewhat tersely: "Being honest with them. Telling them the truth. Using common sense in discussing every subject."

This "common sense" is his most characteristic endowment as well as a superior sort of sagacity, both of which enable him to make decisions swiftly and wisely and he has the God-given power to choose the right word to drive his point home and convince the skeptical.

The statistics of John Nance Garner, from the Biographical Directory of American Congress, read as follows: "John Nance Garner, a Representative from Texas; born near Detroit, Red River County, Texas, November 22, 1868; received a limited education; studied law; was admitted to the bar in 1890 and commenced practice in Uvalde, Uvalde County, Texas. Member of the State House of Representatives 1898-1902; delegate to the Democratic National Convention at Kansas City in 1900 and at St. Louis in 1904 and 1916; elected as a Democrat to the Fifty-eighth Congress; served from the Fifty-eighth through the Seventy-first Congresses. Democratic floor leader and ranking Democratic member of the Ways and Means Committee when elected Speaker, December 7, 1931; nominated by the Democratic party for Vice President, July 2, 1932."

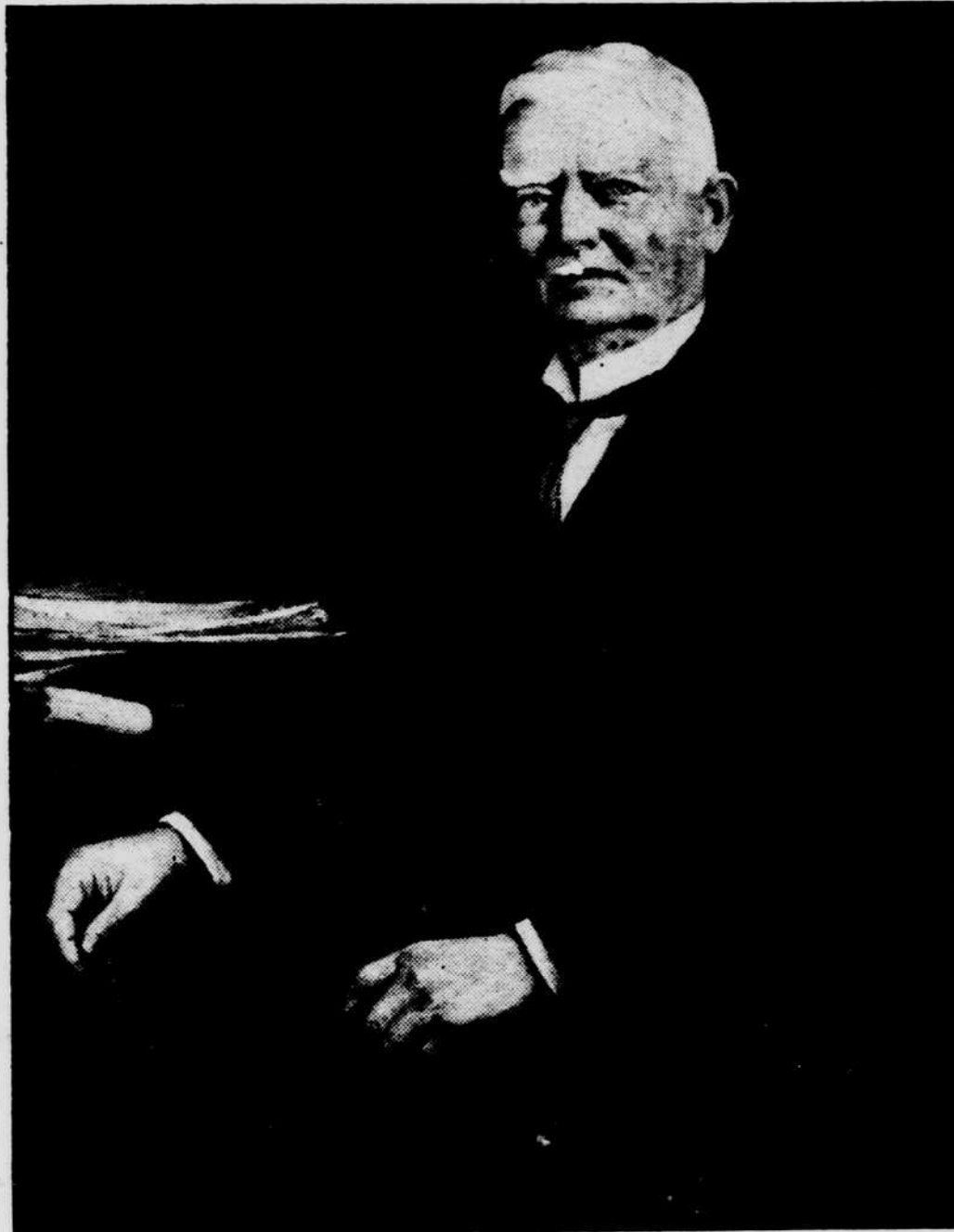
For almost 30 years he has sat under the dome of the Capitol. His grasp of tariffs and taxations, of Federal powers and their limitations, of the proper functions of Government activity and of sound public policies, both domestic and foreign, is not surpassed by that of any man in public life.

Both theory and reality were his teachers. Political philosophy is one thing. Its actual application is another. For almost a generation American traditions and Government have been his life—he knows every stone in the foundation, every beam and girder in the vast complex and intricate structure of American Government.

Men of lasting fibre do not become great figures in a day. Back of wisdom lies a hinterland of experience and service. Far beneath the applause and acclaim of public place lie toil and achievement upon which is builded the structure of greatness.

From a humble place on an obscure committee in the House of Representatives he has

*"His Patron Saint Is Andrew Jackson—and He Is a Man of the People and for the People and by the People Made Vice President."*



John N. Garner, from a recent portrait by Boris B. Gordon.

## By Senator Tom Connally of Texas Who Nominated Garner for President at Chicago

went his way by candor, friendliness and wisdom to "the seats of the mighty." This is chiefly because he has never lost the common touch. He has never been nor has he desired to be other than one of the host of plain citizens of America.

Neither by inheritance nor by the patronage of powerful personages was his rise aided or promoted. By his own industry, his own character and his own ability he made his way from obscurity to eminence.

When the Seventy-second Congress convened he became Speaker of the House. He was the first to note the imperative need of a balanced budget. The duty to raise revenue rests in the House. He boldly assumed the responsibility that goes with leadership. Revenues had shrunk to unheard-of proportions. Business and industry and agriculture were at the lowest ebb. New sources of revenue were hard to find. Earnings had shriveled. Demands upon the Treasury were greater than ever before in time of peace. Such was the challenge. Undaunted, John Garner faced the issue. In one of the most dramatic demonstrations in the political history of the country, the Speaker, taking the floor, stirred both sides of the aisle to a frenzy of enthusiasm and secured a pledge that partisanship would be submerged and the national credit preserved.

In face of national danger he served his country before his party. With the Speaker's triumph in the House public confidence returned.

It is often said of eminent men that they sprang from the plain people. John Garner did not spring from the plain people. He is still of the plain people. Though he played a highly confidential and important part as an adviser of Woodrow Wilson during the World War, he maintained the same quiet strength and individualistic poise from first to last. As secretary to President Wilson, Joseph P.

Tumulty has said so aptly, "He is one man who, though having risen to the highest distinction, has grown, not swelled."

**H**AVING lived amidst those who toil in the field, and on the ranch and in busy villages; having been in contact at the Nation's Capital with public characters from every section of the Union, financial leaders and great masters of commerce, he knows America as no other public figure among men now living. His home is in the Southwest, but his statesmanship is bigger than his geography. He owes allegiance to no political organization save the Democratic party; he has no constituency save his countrymen!

Among notable press comments on "plain Jack Garner," here is one with a pungent tang to it worthy of the piquant quality of his own delightful brand of humor: "Garner is a genuine man-of-the-people. His speech crackles. When he says his say neither Cape Cod fishermen, nor New Mexican sheep-herders have to have it explained. He sounds like folks—and folks understand."

The following comments gleaned from the press throughout the country, the radio and, last but not least, his "neighbors" in Uvalde, build up a picture of the man that in perfection of detail makes the result of a lifelike portrait.

"John N. Garner, commonly called 'Jack' because he is that kind of a human being, is a two-fisted fighting man, who harbors no personal grudges and fights a clean, sportsman-like battle. . . . There is nothing of the stuffed-shirt about him. . . . He is just a plain, blunt man who speaks right out whatever is in his mind or heart."

"Cactus Jack, as he is sometimes called, likes to boast of the important part his wife has played in his rise to political power. . . . She tries to minimize it. Yet she can't very well.

This combination of husband and wife is probably the greatest in official Washington."

And yet it was not always thus—they first became interested in each other when Miss Mariette Rheiner, of fighting stock, mistress of a 30,000-acre ranch, vigorously opposed young "Jack" Garner for his first political job—judge of the Uvalde County Court—because she had heard that he had the reputation of being the best poker player in the State, which she thought incompatible with the dignity of the bench. A short time after it had been shown that Garner's rising political star could not be thus blighted, they met on a train enroute to San Antonio. A mutual friend said: "Miss Rheiner, may I have the pleasure of introducing Judge Garner, you know, the one you tried to defeat." A few months later the 26-year-old poker-playing jurist had so successfully pressed his suit that his erstwhile adversary became his most devoted ally for life.

"Politics with Garner is a passion. For the social whirl he has an indifference amounting to unconcealed contempt. When he has to dip into it his only recourse is to treat stepping out in full-dress regalia as a joke on himself, but laughs with the obvious air of a man who wishes some one else was the victim."

"Fishing is one of his keenest delights. Friends who have been with him on fishing trips say he is a good cook and 'no shirker around the camp.' Walt Whittington, a carpenter-friend of his, says that he has no equal cooking fish and squirrels. Fetching wood and water is fun for this thorough sportsman and not beneath his dignity."

"Fair Oaks, his home, is a heavily wooded tract of seven acres in the heart of Uvalde. There he reads much and studies the details of important legislation. Although not a member of any church, he is tolerant of the religious affiliations of others. In a political race, he is calm and of the opinion, 'let the best man win.'"

"Some have classed him as a rough and ready politician. This is not accurate. He is ready but not rough. Ruggedness there is in his speech and manner but with it the unmistakable kindness of inner culture."

"John Garner is not a captain of industry; a giant of finance; but a statesman and also a man of the people, with grasp and grain to deal with any great crisis."

"Garner is one of the most popular men in Washington, a witty debater and a man with a knack of handling men."

"His friendship with Nicholas Longworth has become one of the traditions of Washington's political life. The man he loved most in Congress was his most vigorous political opponent. Longworth, wealthy, traveled, immaculately groomed, was the very antithesis of the rugged, homespun, genial Texan. It was a deep and abiding friendship and understanding."

Mrs. Garner says, "He never prepares his speeches beforehand. Just gets a bit quiet and thinks."

## AMONG his own notable sayings are these:

"I appreciate the support of my friends and am willing to serve my country and my party to the limit of my capacity."

"It is as true now as in Jefferson's day that 'the best-governed people is the least-governed.'"

He answered when asked what he got out of fishing: "The pleasure of association with one man. Isolation from legislative shop talk."

When offered the chairmanship of foreign affairs, his reply proved him the honest, whole-hearted, everyday American upon whom a Nation can rely, "I don't want the chairmanship of foreign affairs—I am going to a place where I can make a chairmanship for myself! I want to deal with domestic affairs affecting the American people, and not with foreign affairs." He has made those words come true.

Addressing Congress, he said on one occasion these almost historic words, "We may have differences among ourselves, but in our hearts we are patriotic. We want to serve this Republic."

When congratulations were deluging him from all over the country upon his nomination as Speaker of the House, he gave the press of the Nation "only one of these messages."

It was from his mother and read, "Am listening in with love and pride. You have made your mother's heart glad."

Her comment, regarding his honor, to the home folks, was, "It won't hurt John any—he's a good boy."

When his mother was interviewed after her son's nomination as Vice President on the Democratic ticket, she said, smiling, "It won't make him a bit better and it won't change him one bit—he is still John."

Mr. Garner's life in the National Capital is as simple and plain as when he is at home. Less comfortable, if anything. The Garners do everything with moderation. Their apartment is small and unpretentious. They have never owned a car in Washington and see no reason why they should. They enjoy walking and it is one of their greatest diversions. They like movies and attend the best shows.

Mrs. Garner is a retiring, gentle-voiced, sweet-natured woman and her husband never hesitates to say that he would be lost without her. Behind Mrs. Garner's serenity of manner lies an astute and brilliant mind. She is a prolific reader and has a deep appreciation of the really fine in literature. Mr. Garner in that field of culture has three great favorites, Scott, Dickens and Macaulay.