

Cokie Roberts

Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas and Future President Lyndon Baines Johnson

Description of the relationship between U.S. Representatives Hale and Lindy Boggs of Louisiana and Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas and future President Lyndon Baines Johnson.

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ROBERTS: Sam Rayburn really adopted my father as a project. He met him as a young man—a very young man—Daddy was first elected at age 26. And then came back after being defeated in 1942, came back to Congress in 1946 so at that point he would have been 32. And, Mr. Sam decided that he was a bright young man from the South and he took him under his wing. And really taught him and mentored him and then created the position of Deputy Whip for him. At that point it didn't exist and then when it was created it was just one. And, Mr. Sam did that really to give—to put my father on the leadership ladder and it worked.

JOHNSON: What about Lyndon Johnson? Was he also someone that came to your house frequently and then what was the relationship like with your father?

ROBETS: Lyndon Johnson and my father were also very close. Nowhere near as close as Lady Bird Johnson and my mother were, but Lyndon Johnson was not an easy person to be friendly with because he had a... a really volcanic temper but he also has a tremendous sweetness. And, he, he appreciated the friendship of his friends and his friends' friendship with his children which he talked about. We, my parents had a wedding dinner for Linda and Chuck Robb a couple of nights before their wedding. And, the President did at that point talk about how he, his father's friends had mentored him and been so important in his life and he was so grateful that his friends were friends with his children. And so it was a, there was a closeness and familial relationship there even though it could be a tense political relationship because these men were both men of great ego and they were politicians and sometimes they clashed. But the women were the best of friends. And, my mother and Mrs. Johnson stayed very close friends until Mrs. Johnson's death.