



The story

In 1931, Boss Bingham, the head cashier of Hardin County Bank in Saltillo, Tennessee, faked his death and fled west to escape allegations of fraud and embezzlement. While his three children believed he was dead, Bingham reinvented himself as Marvin Lester Brooks, a rancher in Sherwood, Texas, where he married and raised a second family. Upon his death four decades later, he became a man with two tombstones.

In *Boss Brooks*, Bingham's granddaughter Kathy Bingham Turner and journalist Leon Alligood uncover the truth about Boss's deception and explore the impacts on both of his families. Through meticulous research and personal reflections, the authors delve into the history of rural Tennessee and Texas, revealing the complex legacy of a man whose final confession came only after suffering a stroke in 1972.

Authors

Praise for Boss Brooks

"*Boss Brooks* is a stunning story, beautifully told, of a family's search for the truth in a web of crimes from nearly a century ago. It is one of the finest true crime stories I have ever read and shows the courage it takes to seek redemption for the acts of our ancestors. This story will haunt you. And it will give you hope." - Philip Lee Williams, author of 21 books and member of the Georgia Writers Hall of Fame.

"Told like a true crime novel, the suspense in *Boss Brooks* builds with every page. Equal parts intriguing and infuriating, *Boss Brooks* ultimately leaves the reader not only satisfied with its message of forgiveness but thirsting for more." - Lisa Patton, bestselling author of *Whistlin' Dixie in a Nor'easter*

Published November 2025 by the University of Tennessee Press, *Boss Brooks* is available from Amazon, utpress.org/title/boss-brooks, or your favorite independent bookstore.



Kathy Bingham Turner is a former corporate director of human resources for newspapers in ten states. Uncovering the complicated truth about her grandfather became a passion after her retirement. She resides in Franklin, Tennessee, and is pleased to share the Boss Brooks story.



Leon Alligood, a professor emeritus of journalism at Middle Tennessee State University, was previously a reporter for three decades, mostly in Nashville at *The Tennessean*. He holds an MFA in creative non-fiction from Goucher College and is a member of the Tennessee Journalism Hall of Fame.