

## MOLLY MARTENS TRIAL

# Blows 'went right

**Juror got so distressed by graphic image, she became physically ill**

By **Catherine Fegan**  
Chief Correspondent

JASON Corbett's sister Tracey was bent over sobbing in her seat in a North Carolina courtroom when jurors – one of whom got sick in a bin – were being shown pictures of her brother's fatal injuries.

These were the distressing and emotional scenes in the courtroom yesterday, where a pathologist told a court that pieces of Jason Corbett's scalp had become detached from his skull as a result of the injuries he received on the night he died.

Molly Martens, 34 and her father Tom Martens, 66, a retired FBI agent, are charged with the second-degree murder of Limerickman Jason Corbett, 39, in Wallburg, North Carolina on August 2,

### 'Injuries like those from car crash'

2015. Both deny the charges and allege they were acting in self-defence.

Tracey's husband David and her sister Marilyn comforted her. And next to them, four or five of Mr Corbett's friends bowed their heads and gently shook their heads in disbelief at the evidence. One by one, they wrapped their arms around each other until the whole row was linked.

Some of the injuries Jason Corbett suffered had been previously seen by the expert witness in instances where a person falls from a great height, or where the victim has been in a car crash. Dr Craig Nelson, a forensic pathologist at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in North Carolina, conducted an autopsy on Jason Corbett on August 3, 2015.

On day two of evidence in the trial in Davidson County, jurors were shown photos taken during his examination of Mr Corbett's body.

Prior to displaying the photographic evidence in court, Judge David Lee warned members of the public that the material may upset some.

The images were so graphic in nature that one juror had to be removed from court and was physically sick into a bin.

Mr Nelson told the court that he found two 'large complex lacerations' on Mr Corbett's head. One

## Officer describes shielding children from bloody scene

JASON Corbett's two children were told to close their eyes as they were carried, dressed in their pyjamas, from the bloodied home where their father had been killed.

Deputy CS Dagenhardt, the first officer to attend the scene, told jurors that he and a colleague had gone upstairs to find Jack and Sarah Corbett after he had been called to the scene of the crime.

Both were asleep and undisturbed when they opened the door to their bedrooms.

Officer Dagenhardt went into Sarah's room and his colleague went to get Jack. 'She [Sarah] was asleep,' he said. 'She was undisturbed and wasn't affected in any way.'

He said she was visibly startled when he woke her up and that he explained he was a police officer and that there had been an incident. He told her he needed to take her out of the house.

He said he took her into the landing and that she was apprehensive about going down the stairs so he lifted her into his arms and told her to close her eyes.

There was a trail of blood on the floor from where her father had been led out of the house in a gurney that he did not want her to see.

He said his colleague followed with her brother, who Sarah was looking back towards as she was led down the stairs. 'I told her he [her brother] was okay,' said the witness.

Tracey Lynch could be

heard weeping as the officer described the tragic scene.

He said that when he reached the basement area he saw Sharon Martens, Molly's mother, who he said appeared 'calm'. She asked him if 'everything was ok?'

He left both children with her. During Officer Dagenhardt's evidence, jurors were shown the bloodied scene where Mr Corbett was found.

Pictures showed his body on the floor, as well as a bloodied paving brick and a baseball bat. A large amount of blood had stained the carpet.

He said that both defendants were in the hall when he entered the property and that he found 'nothing remarkable' about their demeanour.

Molly Martens was wearing pyjamas and Tom Martens was dressed in a shirt and shorts or boxers.

Later, the officer went to his patrol car to start filling out an incident report.

He was asked by a colleague if Tom Martens could sit in his car. He said the defendant was 'calm'. At one point Mr Martens asked him to 'roll his window up' and his demeanour changed when he declined. 'He became agitated,' he said.

Officer Dagenhardt said he was asked to take Mr Martens to the Sheriff's Office to be interviewed by detectives.

'He was asking where we were going,' said the witness.

'He was asking if we were even in the same county.'

was on the right side and one was on the left.

Photos produced in court showed pieces of scalp that had become detached from the skull and connective tissue.

'It illustrates the depth and underscores that this was a laceration and therefore a blunt force injury rather than a sharp force injury.'

These pieces of scalp were 'sagging and drooping with gravity', said the witness.

Dr Nelson told the court that he had identified ten different impact sites. Two impact sites featured evidence of 'repeated blows.' He couldn't say how many.

He determined the cause of death to be blunt force trauma and the manner of death as homicide.

An image of Mr Corbett's face showed an area of laceration under the right eye with contusion and bruising underneath. His nose was

fractured. A round abrasion on the right side of his forehead showed an abrasion that was slightly raised, which indicated haemorrhaging, Mr Nelson said this was a manifestation of blunt force trauma.

In his evidence, Dr Nelson noted one post-mortem blow.

'The fact that there was very little bleeding suggests it was given after his heart had stopped,' he said.

The witness said that he had peeled back areas of skin around the head to examine the skull further. When he did this, 'pieces of bone fell out' in two areas.

This, he said, indicated that the bone had been severely fractured. Some of the 'full thickness lacerations' he noted showed the blows had 'gone all the way through the scalp to the depth of the skull bone.'

Photos shown to the jury showed

these two sections where 'radiating fracture lines' could be seen running away from the area of missing skull.

He noted that there were two areas of abrasion on Mr Corbett's back and that injuries on his right leg indicated blunt force trauma.

In relation to the two areas where

### Scalp fragments sagged heavily

'complex lacerations' were found, Dr Nelson said he would have expected these to result in loss of consciousness.

During his examination, Dr Nelson had taken a sample of Mr Corbett's hair and blood. He had also removed Mr Corbett's wedding ring.

Mr Nelson gave evidence in relation to the toxicology report on Mr

Corbett. An alcohol level of 0.02% was found as well as the presence of a drug called Trazadone in what was described as 'trace amounts'.

In cross-examination, Tom Martens' lawyer David Freedman asked Dr Nelson if he had taken any fingernail samples from Mr Corbett.

'No,' replied the witness. 'There was no request from law enforcement.'

Referring to the 'bloodied paving stone' that was found at the scene and examined by Dr Nelson, Mr Freedman asked him how it appeared.

The court heard yesterday that strands of Mr Corbett's hair were found on the stone.

The witness noted that the condition of the paver was consistent with the transfer of blood.

Mr Freedman asked him if the paver could have ended up that way because it was lying in a pool

Support: Molly Martens, left, leaving court with a friend yesterday



# ht through scalp'



of blood or because strands of hair were on the carpet. The witness said this was possible.

Meanwhile, the first officer who attended the scene on the night Jason Corbett died has told the court that blood on the walls and floor was already 'congealed' by the time he got there.

Deputy CS Dagenhardt said when he entered Mr Corbett's bedroom, he saw him naked on the ground, with 'extensive injuries to his head'.

In particular, he noted, Mr Corbett's left eye was covered in blood, which was also congealed.

'There was blood on the floor, fairly large amounts that appeared congealed...already hardened,' he said.

He added that he examined the blood with a flashlight and

that it had started to dry in parts. In earlier evidence, a nurse practitioner at Kernersville Family practice told the court that she had prescribed Molly Martens Trazadone on July 30, 2015.

She had visited the practice complaining of foot pain, something she had suffered from over the years due to a condition that affected the blood vessels in her left foot.

She had previously been prescribed medication for sleeplessness and depression.

Katie Wingate told the court that she prescribed Trazadone tablets and advised Molly to take one a day at bedtime.

The witness also told the court that two weeks before his death, Jason Corbett, who was also a patient at the practice, had reported feeling 'angry lately for no reason'.

He added that he told staff that he 'wasn't sure if he was depressed'.

During this July 16 visit, the last he made to the clinic, he had reported having issues with snoring.

During cross-examination, by David Freedman, the witness said that in 2013, 'depression evaluation' found him to be 'moderately depressed.'

On his last visit, on July 16, 2015, no depression evaluation was carried out.

In his testimony, a CVS supervisor told the court that records show that a prescription for Trazadone had been filed for Molly Martens on July 30, 2015.

During cross-examination, he agreed that sometimes medication is 'shared' between family members.

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## GASPS FROM THE GALLERY... AND THE MUFFLED SOBS OF JASON'S SISTER

**T**HE gagging and retching had started low, almost inaudible, but by now it was loud enough to distract the entire court.

Pathologist Craig Nelson was on the stand, mid-sentence, when the source of the uncomfortable sounds finally leapt out of her seat.

Juror number one couldn't stomach what she was seeing. As a bailiff rushed into the jury box with a black bin, she lowered her head into it and ran for the door.

Back in courtroom C, the sudden and disturbing outburst had left everyone stunned. The bailiff scurried to the judge, asking if she could go after her and make sure she was okay. 'Yes,' he answered, 'please do'.

The defence attorneys, fearing the reaction would taint her fellow jurors, called for her to be dismissed, a request that was denied.

At the top of the room, on a large wooden easel that had been turned towards the jury box, the contents of Jason Corbett's bloodied skull, the trigger of the upset, were on display for all to see.

It was one of several photographs, each more graphic than the one before, that had illustrated the brutal and gruesome injuries he suffered on the night he died.

There, blown up to poster size, was the mangled mess of blood, bone and flesh that remained after he was struck, blow after blow by the defendants.

While Dr Nelson huddled close to the easel pointed to various impact points, attorney's for both sides paced around the jury box.

As each picture was produced they were allowed to walk to where they could view it, scribbling notes as the evidence continued. The prosecution had been careful to position the easel in a way that would shield the Corbett's from what they showed, but often, as one poster was relaxed with another, the flashes of horror were unavoidable.

'The degree of skull fractures in this case are kinds we would see in falls from great heights or car crashes,' he said.

There were ten points of impact, two of which had been struck repeated times. He didn't know how many.

Parts of Mr Corbett's skull had spilled onto his examining table during the autopsy.

There were audible gasps in the public gallery, which by now had attracted a significant number of onlookers, including several young children. Judge David Lee had given an earlier warning about the graphic content of evidence, but no-one had left.

As the witness detailed Mr Corbett's extensive injuries, the muffled sobs of



by **Catherine Fegan**

CHIEF CORRESPONDENT  
IN NORTH CAROLINA

Tracey Lynch could be heard around the room.

Mrs Lynch was bent over in her seat, her husband David and her sister Marilyn comforting her. Next to them, four or five of Mr Corbett's friends bowed their heads and gently shook their heads in disbelief. One by one they wrapped their arms around each other until the whole row was linked. As the pictures continued, several jurors looked on as they wept and huddled close.

Molly Martens hadn't looked in the direction of the easel at all. Instead, she stared straight ahead, expressionless and unflinching.

**L**ATER, it was a picture of their idyllic former home in Panther Creek Court that saw her gaze finally move toward a projector that was being used to show some photos to the court.

The house, with its pretty grey shutters, immaculate lawns and decorative roof, stood as a haunting reminder of the life she once knew. After a day spent looking at pictures of gore and blood, the picture perfect frame of 160 Panther Creek Court seemed at odds with what had gone before.

The picture, with its sentiments of home, family and love, lingered on the projector for longer than the others.

As Molly Martens took it in once last time, prosecutor Ina Stanton asked for the lights to be put back on. With that, the snapshot was gone.

The last picture of the day, the one that caused one of Jason's male friends to break down, was of Mr Corbett in the back of an ambulance.

Alone, on a bloodied yellow stretcher with his skull smashed beyond repair, he lay dead.

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# MOLLY'S DAD: I HIT JASON UNTIL HE WENT DOWN

■ Tom Martens denies knowledge of any brick

■ Ex-FBI agent 'tried to outwit detectives'

■ Insurance policy leaves \$600k to Molly

From **Catherine Fegan**  
In North Carolina

**TOM Martens told jurors that he hit Jason Corbett with a baseball bat 'until he went down' in a bid to save himself and his co-accused daughter Molly.**

The 66-year-old gave dramatic testimony as he took the stand yesterday where he was accused of using his FBI training and legal qualifications to try and 'outwit' detectives investigating the murder of his son-in-law.

It was later heard that Mr Martens had 'no knowledge' of a brick found in the master bedroom where father-of-two Jason Corbett was killed, of it being used

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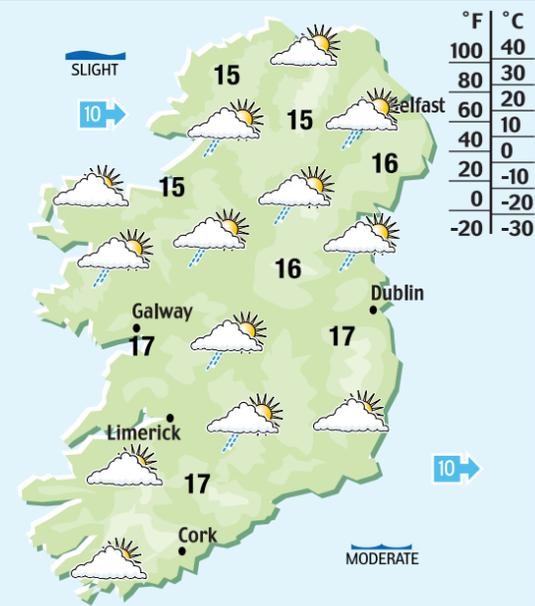
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

## How we finally took our Charlie home

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# Weather forecast



## Summary: Showery, cool

**IRELAND TODAY:** A bright day with sunny intervals and showers. The showers will be frequent across Leinster in the morning and later on they will develop more widely in the north-west. Light northwesterly winds but it will be a cool day in all areas. Max 17c.

### Today's weather

	9am	12noon	3pm	6pm	9pm
Belfast	☀ 13c	☀ 15c	☀ 16c	☀ 15c	☀ 13c
Cork	☀ 12c	☀ 15c	☀ 16c	☀ 15c	☀ 12c
Dublin	☀ 12c	☀ 15c	☀ 16c	☀ 16c	☀ 13c
Galway	☀ 14c	☀ 15c	☀ 15c	☀ 15c	☀ 14c
Limerick	☀ 13c	☀ 15c	☀ 16c	☀ 15c	☀ 14c
Derry	☀ 13c	☀ 16c	☀ 16c	☀ 15c	☀ 13c
Valentia	☀ 13c	☀ 15c	☀ 15c	☀ 15c	☀ 14c
Wexford	☀ 13c	☀ 15c	☀ 16c	☀ 16c	☀ 14c
Mullingar	☀ 12c	☀ 15c	☀ 15c	☀ 15c	☀ 13c
Belmullet	☀ 13c	☀ 15c	☀ 16c	☀ 15c	☀ 14c

### 5 day forecast

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
Belfast	☀ 15c	☀ 17c	☀ 16c	☀ 17c	☀ 17c
Cork	☀ 16c	☀ 17c	☀ 16c	☀ 18c	☀ 17c
Dublin	☀ 16c	☀ 17c	☀ 16c	☀ 17c	☀ 17c
Galway	☀ 14c	☀ 14c	☀ 13c	☀ 15c	☀ 15c
Limerick	☀ 16c	☀ 17c	☀ 16c	☀ 18c	☀ 17c

### Around the world yesterday

City	Weather	C	F	City	Weather	C	F	City	Weather	C	F
Algiers	Sunny	33	91	Florence	Sunny	37	99	New Delhi	Cloudy	32	90
Amsterdam	Sunny	21	70	Geneva	Fair	31	88	New York	Fair	29	84
Athens	Sunny	34	93	Gibraltar	Sunny	31	88	Nice	Sunny	28	82
Auckland	Fair	12	54	Guernsey	Fair	18	64	Oslo	Fair	20	68
Bahrain	Sunny	45	113	Helsinki	Showers	16	61	Palma	Fair	33	91
Barcelona	Sunny	33	91	Hong Kong	Thunder	29	84	Paris	Cloudy	24	75
Basra	Sunny	47	117	Innsbruck	Sunny	29	84	Perth	Cloudy	14	57
Beijing	Fair	35	95	Istanbul	Fair	30	86	Prague	Showers	26	79
Beirut	Fair	31	88	Jersey	Fair	18	64	Rhodes	Sunny	29	84
Belfast	Cloudy	16	61	Larnaca	Sunny	32	90	Riga	Fair	22	72
Belgrade	Sunny	37	99	Las Palmas	Sunny	27	81	Rome	Sunny	32	90
Berlin	Showers	24	75	Lisbon	Sunny	29	84	Singapore	Fair	31	88
Blarritz	Sunny	27	81	London	Fair	20	68	Stockholm	Showers	20	68
Brisbane	Sunny	21	70	Los Angeles	Fair	28	82	Strasbourg	Fair	25	77
Brussels	Cloudy	20	68	Luxor	Sunny	41	106	Sydney	Fair	16	61
Bucharest	Sunny	35	95	Madrid	Sunny	33	91	Tangier	Sunny	29	84
Budapest	Sunny	36	97	Malaga	Sunny	29	84	Tel Aviv	Sunny	31	88
C'hagen	Showers	19	66	Malta	Sunny	36	97	Tenerife	Sunny	26	79
Cairo	Sunny	35	95	Melbourne	Cloudy	10	50	Tokyo	Cloudy	28	82
Cape Town	Fair	18	64	Mexico City	Fair	23	73	Toronto	Fair	26	79
Casablanca	Sunny	27	81	Miami	Cloudy	33	91	Tunis	Sunny	40	104
Corfu	Sunny	35	95	Milan	Sunny	33	91	Vancouver	Fair	22	72
Dubai	Sunny	42	108	Montreal	Showers	27	81	Venice	Sunny	33	91
Dublin	Fair	16	61	Moscow	Fair	24	75	Vienna	Fair	31	88
Dubrovnik	Sunny	34	93	Mumbai	Showers	31	88	Warsaw	Fair	28	82
Faro	Sunny	31	88	Nairobi	Cloudy	19	66	Wellington	Cloudy	10	50

### Ireland yesterday

City	Sun	Rain	Temp	City	Sun	Rain	Temp
Belfast	4.2	0.02	13	Glenanne	6.9	0.00	10
Birr	7.7	0.02	11	Ballykelly	7.0	0.04	13
Castlederg	5.9	0.04	10	Lough Fea	5.6	0.02	11
Claremorris	6.7	0.05	9	Malin Head	5.4	0.03	13
Clones	7.5	0.00	10	Valentia	5.4	0.08	14
Mullingar	7.1	0.04	10	Cork	6.7	0.04	13
Rosslare	9.0	0.05	13	Kilkenny	8.6	0.02	12
Knock	6.3	0.20	10	Shannon	9.6	0.00	12
				Dublin	7.3	0.15	10
				Belmullet	6.3	0.00	12

Information supplied by MeteoGroup

### Moon and Sun

Moon rises: 7.46pm, sets: 3.30am  
 Sun rises Dublin: 5.47am, sets: 9.12pm  
 Cork rises: 6.02am, sets: 9.16pm  
 High tide: Dublin: 11.23pm  
 Cork: 5.11pm

### Extremes

(24 hrs to 6pm y'day) Warmest: Oak Park, Co Carlow, 21c (70f). Coldest: Claremorris, Co Mayo, 9c (48f). Wettest: Johnstown Castle, Co Wexford, 0.43 ins. Sunniest: Shannon, Co Clare, 9.6hrs.

# MOLLY MARTENS TRIAL

# We tussle, I

Continued from Page One

as a weapon and that he didn't see his daughter using any brick on the night Mr Corbett died.

The trial also heard that Jason's wife Molly is the sole beneficiary of a \$600,000 insurance policy in his name.

Before that, co-accused Tom Martens stepped into the dock and gave an account of an extraordinary struggle that ensued between him and Mr Corbett involving a baseball bat he had brought to Jason and Molly's house that day for Mr Corbett's son Jack.

He said he had been woken by a disturbance and heard screams coming from Molly and Jason's bedroom. Grabbing the bat he had brought, he went to investigate the commotion.

The man with over 31 years of service in the FBI sobbed as he recalled begging Mr Corbett to free his daughter from a 'chokehold' he said the Limerick man had her in on the night of August 1, 2015. The father of four from Knoxville, Tennessee, told the court in North Carolina that he had never witnessed Mr Corbett being physically violent toward his daughter before that night.

Mr Martens, 66, and his Molly, 34, are charged with second-degree murder of Jason Corbett, 39. Both deny the charges and allege they were acting in

## 'Really enjoyed outwitting' agencies

self-defence.

During cross-examination by the prosecution, Mr Martens said he had received training in the 'use of force' during his time as a field agent in the FBI. This included self-defence training and 'excessive force' training.

In relation to 'baton training' he had received, he was asked to identify which parts of the body should be struck to 'bring a man down'.

He said the ankle, the knees or the kidneys. The prosecution contended that a baseball bat is similar to a baton and should have been used in that way.

Mr Martens said that he chose to hit Mr Corbett in the head because that was the only area he could strike without hitting Molly.

Greg Brown, for the prosecution, told the court that during an interview conducted by two detectives investigating Mr Corbett's death, Mr Martens 'interrupted questioning and took charge'.

He had already told the two men that he had a long career in the FBI and that he 'really enjoyed outwitting' other spy agencies. In an earlier role, he liked

'kicking in doors and arresting people', the trial heard. Mr Brown said that at one point during interview, the defendant said: 'Perhaps it would be helpful if I just launched into a story that would account for

my state of mind.'

'Were you trying to match wits with the detectives?' asked Mr Brown.

'No,' replied Mr Martens.

Mr Brown told the court Mr

Martens tried to use his FBI training and legal qualifications to lead the interview to support his claim of self-defence. Turning to the night of the killing, Mr Martens

appeared calm and controlled as his attorney David Freedman led him through his evidence. 'What woke you on the night of August 1?' asked Mr Freedman.



Testimony: Tom Martens with wife Sharon at court yesterday

## Clarifications & corrections

If you feel any report in the Irish Daily Mail has been incomplete or inaccurate you can email Corrections and Clarifications at [corrections@dailymail.ie](mailto:corrections@dailymail.ie)



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# get the bat, I win



Co-accused: Molly Martens at court yesterday



Family: Jason Corbett's sister Tracey Lynch and her husband David at the trial

'I was awoken from a sound sleep,' said Mr Martens.

'I heard thumping, loud footfalls on the floor above me, I heard a scream and loud voices. There was an obvious disturbance going on above in the house. It sounded bad. It sounded like a matter of urgency. I got right out of bed and I grabbed that baseball bat.'

He was asked why he grabbed the baseball bat and replied: 'It seemed like a good idea.'

He added: 'I was going up to a situation that sounded confrontational. I would rather have a baseball bat in my hand than not.'

He said he did not know what was going on and that he 'reacted instinctively'. 'When I got upstairs I could determine they were coming (the noises) from Jason and Molly's bedroom. The door was closed. I opened it,' he said.

There was a long pause before Mr Martens continued. 'In front of me, I would say 7 or 8 feet, Jason had

his hands around Molly's neck... they were facing each other.'

Mr Martens said he closed the door but did not know why he did so. 'I said, "let her go," he told the court. 'He (Jason) said, "I'm going to kill her." I said, "let her go".'

'He (Jason) said, "I'm going to kill her." I said, "let her go".'

## 'He had Molly in a tight chokehold'

'He (Jason) said, "I'm going to kill her". I don't know how many times I said it.'

Mr Martens broke down at this point, sobbing momentarily.

Continuing, he said as soon as Mr Corbett saw him he took Molly's arm in the 'crook' of his arm. 'She was in front of me and between me and him,' he said. 'He was really angry and I was really scared.'

He said Mr Corbett took a step back towards the hallway that leads to the en suite in the master bedroom. 'I thought that would be the end of that because I would not be able to save her if he went behind that door. I hit him in the back of the head with the baseball bat. It seemed like the most effective place to hit him,' he said.

Mr Martens said that the blow 'didn't have any effect' and seemed to 'further enrage' Mr Corbett.

'He didn't waver,' he said. 'He didn't go down. He did as I feared, he continued to edge down into the hallway leading to the bathroom.' Mr Martens said he 'didn't have any room to manoeuvre' in the hallway. 'I tried to hit him as many times as I could,' he said.

'He had Molly in a very tight chokehold. She was no longer wriggling. She was just dead weight being dragged into the hallway. I don't know how effective those hits were. I tired.... I was determined

that he was not going to close that door between me and him.'

Mr Martens said he stepped to the right and hit Mr Corbett. 'I know of two times when I hit him in the back of the head and then whatever happened in the hallway,' he added.

He said that again, the blows did not have any effect and that Mr Corbett 'changed tactics'.

'He started to push back down the hallway,' the retired FBI agent said. 'I don't think I hit him in the return trip in the hallway... We merge from the hallways and we are back in the bedroom. I get what I think is a chance to hit him, only this time he is ready for me.'

Mr Martens said that Mr Corbett caught the bat as he swung it towards him. 'In the process Molly goes free,' he said. 'She escapes to his right. Now he has the bat but I'm still holding on to it. He cocks his head and he is punching out and shoves me across the entire

room. I'm on the floor with my back to him and my face down in the carpet. If I could get any more afraid... that was it.'

'I'm thinking, "the next thing he is going to [hit me with] a bat in the back of the head".'

Mr Martens said he heard his daughter screaming, 'Don't hit my dad!' and scrambled away, eventually getting himself back up.

'Now I see Jason essentially where we started, inside the doorway to the bedroom,' he said.

'He's got the bat. Molly is by the nightstand between the wall and the bed. Things look pretty bleak. He's got the bat... he's in a pretty good athletic position... He's looking between me and Molly. I decide to rush in and get the bat.'

'If I stay there, I figure he is going to kill one of us or both of us.'

A struggle ensued, during which Mr Martens gained control of the bat. 'I win,' he said. 'I get control of the bat. He loses his grip and I hit him. I didn't want him to take the bat away and kill me. This was far from over. I'm in shock. I'm not doing good so I hit him and I hit him until he goes down.'

He added: 'I hit him until I thought that he could not kill me.'

'He said he was going to kill Molly and I certainly felt he would kill me. I felt both of our lives were in danger. I did the best I could.'

Mr Martens said he asked his daughter to get a phone to call 911. He said they administered CPR.

Earlier, the trial, which Jason's sister Tracey Lynch attended with her husband David, heard that Mr

## 'He obviously had had a few beers'

Martens and his wife Sharon had arrived at Jason and Molly's home at Panther Creek Court at about 8.30pm on August 1, having made a five-hour journey from Knoxville. He packed a bat that belonged to his third son Stewart as a gift for Mr Corbett's son Jack.

Mr Martens said Jason was in a lawn chair drinking beer with his neighbour when they arrived.

Jason came over to greet them. 'He obviously had had a few beers,' he said. He said they 'made nice'.

Molly ordered pizza and everyone sat down to eat, except Jason's son Jack who was attending a birthday party nearby. 'I had a small glass of wine,' said Mr Martens.

Jack arrived home after 11pm and it was too late to give him the bat he had brought, Mr Martens said. They all retreated to bed, with plans set for Jason and Mr Martens to play golf the following morning, the trial heard.

Earlier, Mr Martens told jurors he did not like Jason. Mr Martens told the court that, in his view, Jason Corbett 'never measured up' to his expectations for his daughter and that he had advised her to seek legal advice about the marriage.

Mr Martens said Jason had told him he intended to make Molly the 'adoptive mother' of his children, Jack and Sarah. But this never happened, he said, and it was a source of strain. He said he was aware of the fact his daughter was the beneficiary of Mr Corbett's insurance policy, worth \$600,000.

'The money is being held in trust pending litigation,' he said.

The prosecution told the court a civil suit for wrongful death has been taken against both defendants and that the outcome of the criminal proceedings would have a bearing on this.

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# WE ALL STAYED SILENT DURING DEADLY FIGHT – WHAT MOLLY'S DAD TOLD JURY

By **Catherine Fegan**  
Chief Correspondent

TOM Martens and his daughter did not immediately attempt to resuscitate Jason Corbett despite their training in CPR, it has emerged in court.

In evidence, Mr Martens told the court he, Jason and Molly did not utter a word during the life and death struggle in the couple's bedroom.

## 'I'm trying to take responsibility'

The witness said all three remained 'silent' after he initially asked Jason to 'let her go' in the room. They did not speak at all while the fight continued into the hall, through the bathroom, back into the hall and again into the bedroom, Mr Martens said.

In relation to his wife, Sharon Martens, who was in a downstairs bedroom while the alleged battle between himself and Jason Corbett was occurring upstairs, he said that she did not 'come running up' to see what was going on. This was despite the loud noises created

## INADMISSIBLE: CLAIM THAT JASON WAS 'RESPONSIBLE' FOR FIRST WIFE'S DEATH

JUDGE David Lee ruled as inadmissible a statement from Mr Martens about comments he claimed were made by the father of Mr Corbett's first wife.

Mr Martens said he was approached by Michael Fitzpatrick who told him Jason was responsible for the tragic death of Margaret 'Mags' Fitzpatrick from an asthma attack in 2006.

'(Mr Martens was) approached by Michael Fitzpatrick (since deceased), the father of Jason Corbett's first wife... He believed that Jason had caused the death of his daughter, Margaret,' the statement read.

David Freedman, for Mr Martens, stressed they were not suggesting that this was what had actually occurred in 2006, but that it reflected on the state of mind Mr Martens was in in the early hours of August 2, 2015, when he claimed that he struck his son-in-law Mr Corbett in self-defence.

when Jason threw Mr Martens to the floor and when Mr Corbett himself fell to the ground due to blows.

During cross-examination by Greg Brown, prosecuting, Mr Martens said that despite his CPR training he did not try to resuscitate Jason until an emergency operator told him to.

'I have training,' Mr Martens told

the court. 'But I was never certified in CPR.' He confirmed that Molly was indeed certified in CPR.

'Prior to calling 911, neither you or your daughter started to perform CPR on Jason Corbett is that correct?', asked Greg Brown.

'That is correct,' Mr Martens replied. He was asked if he was 'trying to take the blame for his daughter,' to which he replied no.

Mr Martens had described Mr Fitzpatrick as 'uneducated' and claimed he also found him hard to understand.

However, Ina Stanton, for the prosecution, objected to the statement being allowed on the basis that it was both highly prejudicial and inflammatory.

Ms Stanton also pointed out that Mr Fitzpatrick, before his death, had made a sworn statement to an Irish solicitor denying that he had ever made such a remark to Mr Martens.

Furthermore, Margaret Fitzpatrick's mother, Marian Fitzpatrick, and her sister, Catherine, gave detailed interviews in which they attested to the 'loving and caring relationship' between Ms Fitzpatrick and Mr Corbett.

Judge Lee refused to allow the jury to hear the statement on the basis it was potentially prejudicial and misleading.

'I'm trying to take responsibility for what I did', he told the court. 'I'm trying to tell as truthfully as I can what I did.'

A court also heard that Mr Martens 'can't remember' if he washed his face and hands after killing Jason Corbett.

Mr Martens told the court that he suffered 'scrapes' to his knees when Jason Corbett pushed him to the

ground. He was asked if these injuries were visible in photographs taken of him at the Sheriff's office hours after the killing.

'I couldn't see,' said the witness. It also emerged that Molly had made 'multiple calls' to her parents during the four-hour journey they made from their home to theirs in the hours before Mr Corbett's killing.

Mr Martens was asked if he ever saw his daughter 'state her mind' to her husband. It was put to him that she had a 'strong, outgoing personality'.

## She had a 'strong, personality'

He replied: 'Maybe I'm used to it.'

Mr Brown asked the witness if he remembered his daughter 'calling multiple times' during the journey he and his wife took to North Carolina on August 1.

'I don't recall', said the witness. 'Was she calling because she was upset?' asked Mr Brown. 'I don't remember,' replied Mr Martens.

Finishing his cross-examination for the State, Greg Brown accused Mr Martens of 'murdering a naked, un-armed man by bludgeoning him to death' with his daughter. Mr Martens denied this.

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Parents: Jason Corbett with Mags his late first wife

## Children's statements can't be used: judge

STATEMENTS made by Jason Corbett's orphaned children Sarah and Jack in the days after their father's death were not admissible as evidence, Judge David Lee ruled at the Molly Martens trial.

Both children had given interviews to various agencies, including social workers, in August 2015. There were allegations that the children had been 'coached' prior to the interviews taking place.

In one interview, which took place at a facility called Dragonfly House, Jack was asked why he was there. He replied saying that his dad had died.

He added: 'My aunt and uncle from my dad's side came to try and take me away. That's why I'm here. My mom wants to get custody.'

He was asked if his mother was afraid of his father and he said he knew this because his

'mom told him'. Both children had been told their father had died by their mother. In Sarah's case, her step-grandmother Sharon Martens had also told her.

Judge Lee concluded that the statements did not meet the 'trustworthiness' requirement. He noted that both children had since recanted their statements.

He ruled that the statements were 'inadmissible for any purpose' in the trial.



Strong personality : Molly Martens, who is accused of killing husband Jason Corbett, waits outside the courtroom in the North Carolina court building yesterday



by **Catherine Fegan**

CHIEF CORRESPONDENT IN NORTH CAROLINA

# VERBAL VOLLEY OF CASE PROSECUTOR

**P**ROSECUTOR Greg Brown was not amused. ‘Do you think this is funny?’ he asked Tom Martens, who was on the stand, recovering from an unapologetic chuckle.

He had just been asked if stains on the boxers he had been wearing when he killed Jason Corbett had occurred prior to the attack. ‘I hope not,’ he said, looking mischievously at his lawyer David Freedman.

It was the latest lob in a verbal volley that had started some three hours before.

After a controlled and tear-filled testimony about the night he had desperately tried to save his daughter, Tom Martens was turned over to the prosecution for the skilled dissection he probably knew was coming. He was after all, a trained attorney,

he proudly told the court. Moreover, he had been called to the bar in Georgia.

His performance in Courtroom C, had started with ease. As the first witness for the defence, he’d told the courtroom that he was 67 years old. He’d joined the FBI after graduating law school. His career involved protecting the national interests, in particular thwarting the efforts of non-friendly states. ‘It’s basically spy virus spy,’ he said nonchalantly. Back at home, he had three sons and one daughter Molly. ‘I love my daughter,’ he said more than once.

In clinical detail, he talked the jury through the night he killed Jason Corbett.

‘I reacted instinctively,’ he said. ‘He was going to kill us both.’

It was only when Mr Brown set to work that the real Tom Martens began to emerge. He responded with ease. More than once, his tone was condescending. His stock of answers soon became repetitive – ‘I don’t know’, ‘I don’t recall’, ‘I don’t remember’, ‘If that’s what the record says.’

Mr Brown didn’t seem to like his tone. ‘Thanks for correcting me,’ he said at one point. The prosecutor asked Mr Martens if he liked to take control, if, after telling detectives that he ‘enjoyed outwitting’ spies, he had tried to outwit them. ‘No,’ he replied. ‘I was trying to tell the truth.’

Later, Mr Brown pressed him on what he saw when he opened the door to the bedroom. ‘Jason had your daughter by the

throat, that’s your story, correct?’ He asked. Martens’ reply was swift: ‘Are you asking me?’ he snapped.

Turning to the clothes Mr Martens wore on the night of the killing, he was asked if Jason tore his clothing in the struggle.

‘I haven’t had a chance to inspect my clothing,’ Mr Martens replied, seeming pleased with himself. Mr Brown wasn’t letting it go. Quickly, he produced the clothing. ‘Have a look,’ he asked the witness.

Tom Martens was unruffled. ‘They look essentially intact to me,’ he said in a cheery tone. The shirt he was wearing was next.

‘It hasn’t been torn, has it?’ asked Mr Brown. Tom Martens hesitated. ‘Well...’ he said. ‘It has... but I don’t know the cause.’

As the boxers and the polo top were taken away, Mr Brown asked him if the small tear was next to a marker placed there by a forensic expert who tested the satins.

‘Did you not hear testimony about those markers?’ Again, silence.

‘I guess I will have to look at it again,’ he said to Mr Brown. As Mr Brown set off to pull out the items again, Mr Martens eyeballed him. ‘Did you not hear the witness testify about the markers?’ asked Mr Brown. ‘I heard,’ said Mr Martens. ‘But I’m not an expert. I’ll leave that to them.’

# GUILTY: MOLLY TAKEN AWAY IN CHAINS

Jason Corbett's family break down  
in tears as Molly and Tom Martens  
are convicted of his murder



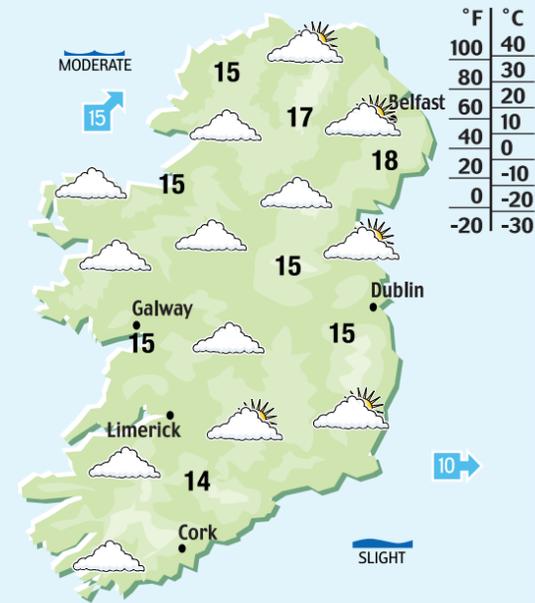
Victim: Limerick man Jason Corbett



Convicted: Killer Tom Martens

**HOW A TRANSATLANTIC LOVE AFFAIR ENDED IN MURDER SEE PAGES 4 - 13**

# Weather forecast



°F	°C
100	40
80	30
60	20
40	10
20	0
0	-10
-20	-20
-30	-30

## Summary: Largely cloudy

**IRELAND TODAY:** Rather cloudy but it will stay mainly dry. Brighter in the far east in the evening but a chance of a little drizzle in the north-west. Moderate westerly winds in general but it will become windy in far north-west later on in the day. Max 19c.

## Today's weather

	9am	12noon	3pm	6pm	9pm
Belfast	☁ 13c	☁ 15c	☁ 17c	☁ 17c	☁ 15c
Cork	☁ 12c	☁ 15c	☁ 17c	☁ 16c	☁ 13c
Dublin	☁ 12c	☁ 15c	☁ 17c	☁ 17c	☁ 14c
Galway	☁ 14c	☁ 15c	☁ 15c	☁ 15c	☁ 15c
Limerick	☁ 14c	☁ 16c	☁ 16c	☁ 16c	☁ 15c
Derry	☁ 14c	☁ 16c	☁ 17c	☁ 16c	☁ 15c
Valentia	☁ 13c	☁ 15c	☁ 15c	☁ 15c	☁ 14c
Wexford	☁ 13c	☁ 15c	☁ 16c	☁ 16c	☁ 14c
Mullingar	☁ 12c	☁ 15c	☁ 16c	☁ 16c	☁ 14c
Belmullet	☁ 14c	☁ 15c	☁ 16c	☁ 15c	☁ 15c

## 5 day forecast

	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
Belfast	☁ 18c	☁ 17c	☁ 17c	☁ 17c	☁ 17c
Cork	☁ 18c	☁ 18c	☁ 16c	☁ 17c	☁ 17c
Dublin	☁ 18c	☁ 17c	☁ 17c	☁ 17c	☁ 18c
Galway	☁ 15c				
Limerick	☁ 18c	☁ 18c	☁ 18c	☁ 17c	☁ 17c

## Around the world yesterday

City	Weather	C	F	City	Weather	C	F	City	Weather	C	F
Algiers	Sunny	34	93	Florence	Sunny	35	95	New Delhi	Thunder	29	84
Amsterdam	Sunny	20	68	Geneva	Fair	21	70	New York	Cloudy	24	75
Athens	Sunny	32	90	Gibraltar	Sunny	26	79	Nice	Sunny	27	81
Auckland	Showers	15	59	Guernsey	Showers	15	59	Oslo	Rain	15	59
Bahrain	Sunny	47	117	Helsinki	Sunny	22	72	Palma	Fair	30	86
Barcelona	Fair	26	79	Hong Kong	Thunder	31	88	Paris	Cloudy	19	66
Basra	Sunny	48	118	Innsbruck	Fair	22	72	Perth	Cloudy	11	52
Beijing	Cloudy	28	82	Istanbul	Cloudy	29	84	Prague	Cloudy	22	72
Beirut	Fair	32	90	Jersey	Showers	15	59	Rhodes	Sunny	30	86
Belfast	Sunny	18	64	Larnaca	Sunny	32	90	Riga	Fair	24	75
Belgrade	Sunny	36	97	Las Palmas	Sunny	29	84	Rome	Sunny	35	95
Berlin	Fair	25	77	Lisbon	Sunny	23	73	Singapore	Thunder	28	82
Biarritz	Showers	16	61	London	Showers	15	59	Stockholm	Cloudy	22	72
Brisbane	Sunny	21	70	Los Angeles	Sunny	24	75	Strasbourg	Sunny	23	73
Brussels	Fair	18	64	Luxor	Sunny	41	106	Sydney	Sunny	19	66
Bucharest	Sunny	27	81	Madrid	Sunny	25	77	Tangier	Sunny	24	75
Budapest	Sunny	30	86	Malaga	Sunny	30	86	Tel Aviv	Sunny	32	90
C'hagen	Sunny	20	68	Malta	Sunny	35	95	Tenerife	Sunny	32	90
Cairo	Sunny	34	93	Melbourne	Fair	16	61	Tokyo	Fair	36	97
Cape Town	Sunny	17	63	Mexico City	Fair	23	73	Toronto	Fair	24	75
Casablanca	Sunny	25	77	Miami	Cloudy	33	91	Tunis	Sunny	42	108
Corfu	Sunny	38	100	Milan	Showers	28	82	Vancouver	Fair	22	72
Dubai	Sunny	44	111	Montreal	Fair	22	72	Venice	Sunny	30	86
Dublin	Fair	18	64	Moscow	Cloudy	20	68	Vienna	Fair	26	79
Dubrovnik	Sunny	36	97	Mumbai	Sunny	31	88	Warsaw	Sunny	27	81
Faro	Sunny	29	84	Nairobi	Cloudy	19	66	Wellington	Drizzle	14	57

## Ireland yesterday

City	Sun (hrs)	Rain (ins)	Temp (min) (max)	City	Sun (hrs)	Rain (ins)	Temp (min) (max)
Belfast	10.0	0.00	10 18	Glenanne	9.8	0.00	10 18
Birr	8.7	0.00	8 20	Ballykelly	9.8	0.00	13 16
Castlederg	8.8	0.00	8 18	Lough Fea	9.5	0.00	11 16
Claremorris	8.7	0.00	8 19	Malin Head	9.3	0.00	14 16
Clones	8.6	0.00	10 18	Valentia	6.5	0.00	13 17
Mullingar	8.9	0.02	8 19	Cork	8.8	0.00	9 20
Rosslare	9.9	0.01	11 18	Kilkenny	8.6	0.00	9 19
Knock	8.6	0.00	9 17	Shannon	9.1	0.00	10 20
				Dublin	11.2	0.00	9 21
				Belmullet	8.8	0.00	12 18

Information supplied by Meteogroup

**Moon and Sun**  
 Moon rises: 10:18pm, sets: 8:52am  
 Sun rises: Dublin: 5:56am, sets: 9:02pm  
 Cork rises: 6:10am, sets: 9:07pm  
 High tide: Dublin: 2:08pm  
 Cork: 8:18pm

**Extremes**  
 (24 hrs to 6pm y'day) Warmest: Oakpark, Co Carlow, 21c (70f). Coldest: Gurteen, Co Tipperary, 6c (43f). Wettest: Katesbridge, Co Down, 0.08 ins. Sunniest: Belfast, Co Antrim, 12.0hrs.

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# MOLLY MARTENS TRIAL

# Corbett family

## Molly and father Tom found guilty of 'brutal' murder

From Catherine Fegan in North Carolina

JASON Corbett's family broke down in tears yesterday... on a dramatic day that saw his widow and her father found guilty of killing him, sentenced to up to 25 years in prison - and eventually led away in chains for his brutal killing.

Finally free to express themselves openly, the Corbetts told of the pain inflicted on them by Molly and Tom Martens.

In one powerful hand-written victim impact statement, Jason's ten-year-old son Jack said Molly 'would be remembered as a murderer'. He added that the burden she had put on him and his family

### 'Brutal, merciless killing'

would not be lifted until she was 'put away'. Jason was beaten to death inside his family home in Wallburg, North Carolina.

Molly, 33, collapsed into tears when the jury found her and her 67-year-old father, a former FBI agent, guilty of the second-degree murder of her Limerick husband on August 2, 2015. Sobbing, she turned

to her family in the public gallery and said: 'I'm really sorry Mom. I wish he'd [referring to Jason] have killed me.' She and her father were sentenced to a minimum of 20 years and a maximum of 25 years. But with good behaviour they could be out up to seven years earlier.

Under US criminal law, second-degree murder means intentional but unpremeditated killing. Two jurors had changed their view on Molly's guilt after 'having a night to sleep on it,' the foreman revealed, according to the Irish Times last night. Speaking

## Will they both be out in 13 years?



Guilty: Molly Martens led away in chains yesterday

MOLLY Martens and her father could be released in 13 to 15 years.

The pair were sentenced to 20 to 25 years in jail after being found guilty of the second-degree murder of Jason Corbett but they could be out years earlier.

A legal expert in North Carolina told the Irish Daily Mail: 'If prisoners sign up for different programmes in prison, they can earn time. If someone is sentenced to a minimum of 20 years and they are model inmates... it would be reasonable to expect that they would be released in 13 to 15 years.'

Both defendants were last night processed at Davidson County Courthouse and later transferred to the Department of Corrections in Raleigh. While there, they will undergo assessment and evaluation to decide which facility they will be transferred to for the remainder of their sentences.

Ms Martens is expected to be transferred to Raleigh Correctional Center for Women in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Her father is expected to be taken to Bertie Correctional Institution in Windsor, North Carolina.

Mr Martens has put in a request to be segregated from other inmates due to his FBI past. They will begin their sentences pending the outcome of an appeal. The appeal will focus on points of law raised during the trial.

after the sentencing, Tom Aamland said it was not an easy decision for two of the jurors. He said: 'We were confident in one of the defendants, but we had more [difficulty] with the other.'

Speaking outside court, Jason's sister Tracey Lynch said the Corbetts will do all they can to 'stick up for Jason's memory'. She thanked jurors for vindicating him.

The jury, three men and nine women, took just under four-and-a-half hours to deliver their verdicts, which were

unanimous, as is required under US law. Ms Lynch was joined by her husband, David, another sister, Marilyn, and brother Michael as well as a large group of Jason's friends.

'On the 2 of August, 2015, my niece and nephew were made orphans in a brutal, merciless killing,' she said. 'My parents lost their child and I lost the most wonderful brother and friend. Jason was unarmed, he was struck when he was lying down in the middle of the night. Two people battered him until he was dead and then

battered him even more. One of them swung a heavy metal baseball bat at Jason, one of them used a brick - a brick that had been on her nightstand. When we sat through the evidence, we found those details so unbelievable. Who keeps a brick on their nightstand?'

Earlier, there were tense scenes inside Courtroom C when a knock came from jurors at 11.30am local time. As news filtered through that jurors had reached a verdict, the Martens and Corbett families

## Clarifications & corrections

If you feel any report in the Irish Daily Mail has been incomplete or inaccurate you can email Corrections and Clarifications at [corrections@dailymail.ie](mailto:corrections@dailymail.ie)



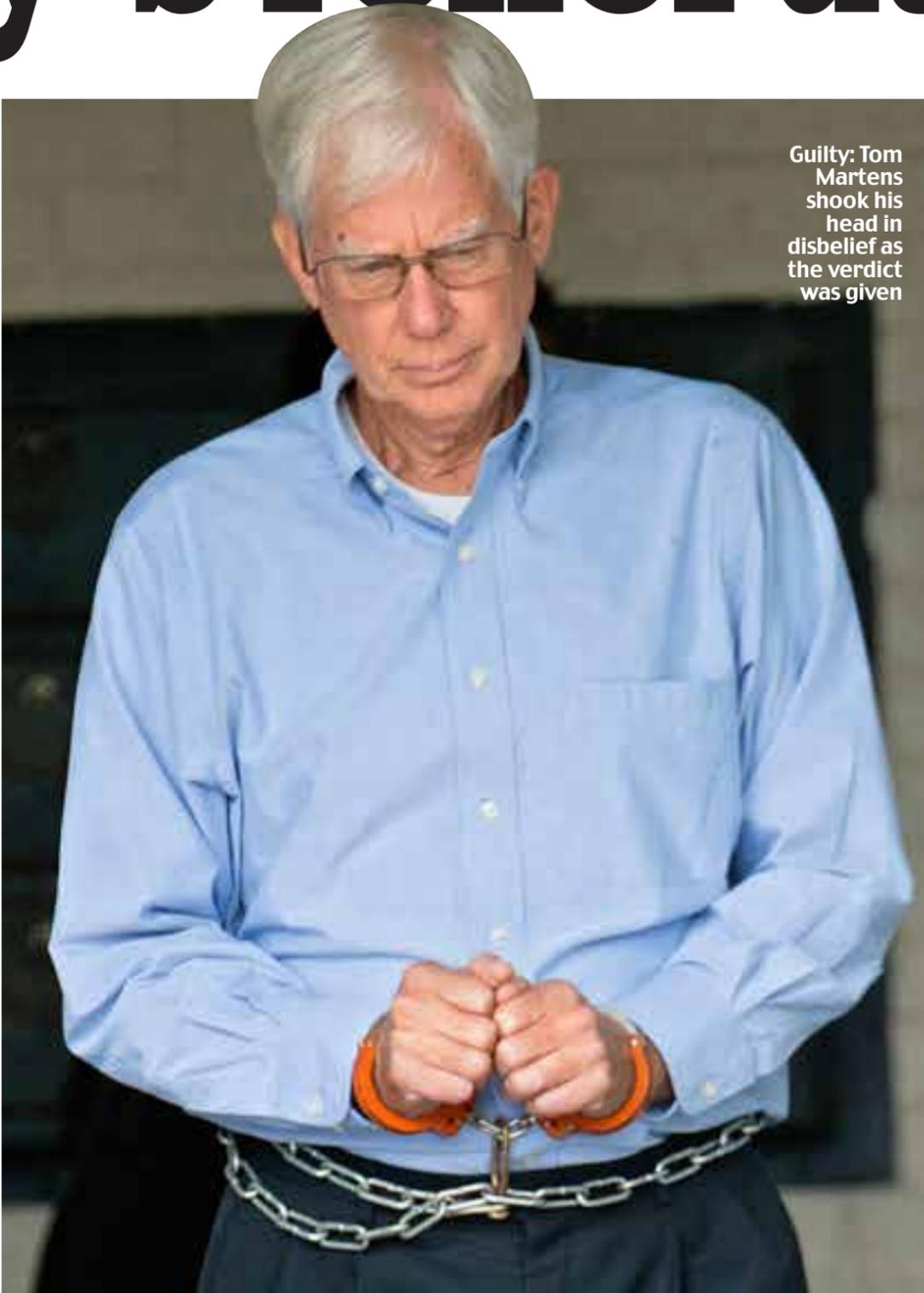
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IF YOU HAVE A STORY, CALL US ON 01-256 0820

# y's relief at verdicts



Guilty: Tom Martens shook his head in disbelief as the verdict was given

## YEARS OF TEARS FLOW AS DIGNITY GIVES WAY TO GRIEF

**A**S each verdict came, two years of tears finally began to flow. Tracey Lynch was bent over, quietly sobbing. Next to her, Jason's sister Marilyn began to break, and eventually his brother Michael. One by one their arms reached around each other, clinging tightly as quiet dignity eventually gave way to raw grief.

It had been more than two years since Jason was brutally taken from them. Two years of dignified silence. Two years comforting his orphaned children. Two years waiting for justice.

When it came, they embraced it with open arms.

They hugged each other, they hugged supporters, they hugged the prosecution team.

Over on the other side of the room, the stunned Martens family were reeling from what appeared to come as a shock result.

Sharon Martens, who was sitting a few rows back from the defence bench, was almost huddled into a ball. Her son Connor was beside her, ashen-faced and crying himself, willing her to calm down. Molly's uncle Mike, who spoke on Tom's behalf before he was sentenced, was shaking his head in disbelief.

The jurors, three men and nine women were crying too, watching on as the emotion of the day enveloped the loved ones in court.

Soon enough, Sheriff David Grice appeared from the wings with a set of handcuffs that he quickly placed on Molly. As she put her hands behind her back she sobbed and whimpered, looking back towards her mother.

Her father, who was cuffed minutes later, bore a look of disbelief, but still moved with an air of superiority.

He gestured to his lawyer as he was led away, briefly stopping to say something to his daughter.

The defence had requested a recess, one that would last over an hour. The prosecution was having none of it, urging Judge Lee to press ahead.

'I would insist that both are taken into immediate custody if we recess for that length of time,' said Assistant District Attorney Alan Martin.

In the end, Molly and Tom only got 15 minutes to gather themselves.

Soon enough, they were back before the court, listening to the heartwrenching words of Jack Corbett.

His dad's death had been life-changing, he said in a hand-written victim impact statement.

He would never again be there to cheer him on while playing sports, he would never see him or his sister get married, he would never be there to give either of them fatherly advice.

As she listened to her stepson's words, Molly Martens threw her head into her hands and began to cry out.



by **Catherine Fegan**

CHIEF CORRESPONDENT  
IN NORTH CAROLINA

'Molly Martens will always be remembered as the woman who killed her husband for no reason,' wrote Jack.

'She will be remembered as a murderer.'

There, in the voice of a ten-year-old, was the truth about Molly Martens.

She would never be a part of the Corbett family, he wrote.

She would never be forgiven for her crimes.

In the end, when Molly was finally taken out of Courtroom C, there were few tears.

**S**HE had worked her way through mountains of tissues and the theatrics were drawing to a close. She had opted not to take the stand in her defence, but now she had found a voice.

'I did not murder my husband,' she said when she was addressed by Judge Lee.

'My father did not murder my husband... the incidents that happened on that night happened on a somewhat regular basis only this time my father was there... maybe I shouldn't have screamed... now my children will lose both parents.'

Hushing her to be quiet, her lawyer Walter Holton described her as being in an 'emotional state'.

'I hope the court understands,' he pleaded.

In the end, her empty words no longer mattered. Her fate was sealed and there was no way anyone could protect her from what lay ahead.

As Molly disappeared through a door that led to a nearby courthouse jail, Tracey Lynch took a step out of the bench where she had been sitting to watch her go.

Soon enough, the pretty blonde with the killer instinct was gone.

She would reappear a few hours later, after processing, in shackles and handcuffs, like she had always been - stony-faced and ice cold.

rushed in. Members of the jury were asked to stand as the clerk read the guilty verdicts.

Molly Martens collapsed on the table in tears and started to sob. Her father, Tom, appeared stunned. In the front row, sitting behind the prosecution, the Corbett family embraced and began to cry.

On the other side of the room, Molly's mother, Sharon, burst into tears and was consoled by her son, Connor, also crying.

As defence lawyers requested a 15-minute recess before sentencing, Sheriff David Grice moved in to place handcuffs on both Molly and her dad.

During a brief sentencing hearing, Tracey Lynch read a statement on behalf of the Corbett family. She said Jason's death had changed the course of his children's lives forever.

A handwritten letter from ten-year-old Jack Corbett was read by tearful prosecutor Alan Martin. 'I will never be able give him [my dad] a hug or give him a present or a Father's Day card,' wrote Jack. 'He won't see me grow from a kid to a teenager and into my adult life.'

Before Judge David Lee handed down his sentences, both defendants offered evidence of 'prior character'.

Tom Martens's brother-in-law, Mike Earnest, described him as a 'wonderful husband' and great father. He said he had served his country for more than 30 years and had raised 'four outstanding children'.

Tom Martens said he had no comment to make.

Taking the stand to give evidence on behalf of Molly Martens, her friend Shannon Grubb described her as a great mother and friend. 'This is not

### 'Details were unbelievable'

who she is,' she said.

When Molly Martens was asked if she had any comment to make, she sobbed uncontrollably and said she was 'not a murderer.' She said: 'I did not murder my husband. My father did not murder my husband... the incidents that happened on that night happened on a somewhat regular basis only this time my father was there... maybe I shouldn't have screamed... now my children will lose both parents.'

Ms Martens cried out and collapsed in her attorney's arms as Judge Lee sentenced her to

20-to-25 years in prison. Immediate appeals were lodged by attorney's for both parties.

Both were later transferred to the Department of Corrections in Raleigh. They had pleaded not guilty at Davidson County Court in Lexington, North Carolina, claiming self-defence and the defence of another.

A voluntary manslaughter charge was included as a lesser charge for the jury to consider. Ms Martens decided not to testify while her father alleged he acted in self-defence, claiming he saw Jason with his hands around his daughter's neck. Ms Martens was the main beneficiary of a \$600,000 life insurance policy on her husband.

Jason, who had been working in his garden, had enjoyed about six or seven beers with a neighbour on his front lawn earlier that Saturday evening. His parents-in-law, Thomas and Sharon, arrived for an unexpected visit that evening.

The father and daughter claimed they killed Jason in self defence. However, Assistant District Attorneys Greg Brown, Alan Martin and Ina Stanton said Jason was first struck when he was in bed.

Comment - Page 20  
catherine.fegan@dailyMail.ie



by **Catherine Fegan**

CHIEF CORRESPONDENT  
IN NORTH CAROLINA

**T**HE pretty blonde with the cute dimples stared at the camera with a look of child-like innocence.

It was 2001. Molly Martens, dressed in a dark swimsuit emblazoned with an anchor, stood at the end of the fourth row of the bleachers and posed for a picture with her Farragut High School classmates.

She had made it onto the school swim team and although not as talented as her peers, in her own mind, she was a champ.

Like her brothers, having a 'winning' mentality was drilled into her from a very young age. Her mother Sharon was a doctor of mathematics who had attended the prestigious Emory University in Georgia and her father Tom, an FBI agent, was also a trained attorney.

In the barometer of success in life, everything was measured by achievement. Described as 'pillars of society' by those who knew them, the Martens aspired to a life of prestige and affluence, complete with children who fitted perfectly into that very same mould.

The only problem was that Molly didn't quite fit. And when she failed to live up to expectations, her parents were going to make sure nobody knew why.

Molly Paige Martens, the only daughter of Sharon and Tom, was born into a life of privilege on September 28, 1983.

The Martens family, the quintessential embodiment of the American success story - white, educated and rich - finally had a little princess.

They lived in the township of Farragut, a town in East Knoxville, Tennessee. It's less than an hour's drive away from the Great Smoky Mountains, a place steeped in Southern Appalachian history, mountain culture and hillbilly ways. But Farragut, by compassion, is a million miles away from the BBQ-finger lickin' county music lovin', trappings of the Smokies.

Ranked as one of the top ten richest places in Tennessee, the town is renowned for its swanky restaurants, lavish homes and seasonal festivals.

As a young girl, Molly's childhood home was in a sprawling residence on Lindenhall Circle, in a neighbourhood known as Andover place.

Tucked away in the rolling hills of Smith Road, just minutes away from central Farragut, residents have access to a pool staffed with trained lifeguards and a community clubhouse.

Former neighbours remember Molly as a 'shy' girl who was good at swimming but often missed a lot of school. 'She was just a normal girl,' said one neighbour.

'She was shy and quiet. There was nothing remarkable about her. She was very good at swimming but she had physical health problems and she missed a lot of school because of that.'

After about ten years in Andover

# The pretty and troubled femme fatale who could never match her parents' exalted expectations

place, the Martens made the 8-minute move to the Fox Run neighbourhood, another salubrious subdivision in west Farragut.

It was seen as a slightly more desired location to live, with easy access to nearby marinas and Concord yacht club. Residents enjoy the exclusive use of private community pools, a walking trail, a sports field, tennis court and a large modern club house.

Homes are nestled along beautiful tree-lined streets and some have breath-taking views over Tennessee's mountains. On average, the homes are about 10-years-old, ranging in price from about \$300,000 to \$700,000.

The Martens residence, a four-bed, five-bathroom house on Comblain Road, was set back from the road and had more privacy than the family's last home.

By now Molly was in Farragut High School, having started as a freshman in 1999, but was struggling to keep up with her peers. Her mental health, rather than her physical ailments, was disrupting her education.

In order to keep up appearances, Tom and Sharon decided to keep it in the family and few knew what was going on. Molly attended a weekly youth group attached to St John Newman Catholic school, where attendees remember her 'issues' being the subject of whispers among her peers.

'She started crying over something one day,' said Rita Stallard. 'When some asked what was going on her friends said she had some issues and that she didn't like to talk about it.'

After her junior year, Molly allegedly had more time off school.

'She never finished,' said one neighbour. 'Everyone was told it was because of her foot.'

However, Molly seems to have secured a place in Clemson, one of America's prestigious colleges, in 2003.

She was pictured in the Clemson University yearbook as a freshman, but there is no record of her after that.

Unlike her brothers, wildly successful in both academia and sport, Molly was floundering.

She had several jobs, all of the casual variety, but she never earned enough money independ-

## She floundered, had several jobs, all casual

ently to keep her in the lifestyle to which she was accustomed.

By 2004, she had a job as a receptionist in Visage hair salon in downtown Knoxville.

Her former boss Monty Howard remembers her as a 'good worker' who got along with staff.

'She worked for me for about a year and a half,' he said.

'She answered the phones, took bookings and greeted clients, that sort of thing. I always found her easy to deal with. There were no problems.'

Visage was where she met Jeremiah Taylor, a hair stylist who also worked at the salon. Mr Taylor, 36,

went out with Ms Martens for a year and a half from 2004 to 2005. He remembers her as a 'talented dancer' who had extensive ballet training.

'We just hit it off and eventually got together,' he told the Mail.

'She was pretty cool and easy-going. We hung out a lot, mainly with each other's families. She was a gifted dancer... really something else.'

'It was nice. I spent a lot of time in their home with her parents.'

'I even went to her brother Bobby's wedding in Puerto Rico. Her father was working for the FBI at the time.'

'I am very involved in my faith, my mother is a preacher, and I talked about this a lot with Molly.'

'She was starting to share the same views and her parents were not happy and made that clear,' he added.

The couple, who moved into an apartment in nearby Oakridge, haven't spoken since the split, despite parting on amicable terms.

'There was no real reason,' he said.

'We just went our separate ways. I was travelling and lived in Miami for a long time and I only recently got back.'

Mr Taylor - who appeared on a reality TV programme called The Dukes Of 2Square about two men who leave their jobs to become guerilla graffiti artists - said that, apart from the usual 'girl's stuff', Molly had no major issues.

'She did suffer a lot with health problems to do with her foot,' he said.

'She had some condition that

required a lot of surgery and it meant she was off work a lot.'

Sometime after her relationship with Jeremiah ended, Molly became romantically involved with Keith Maginn.

By then she had tried her hand at modelling, but steady work wasn't forthcoming as a result.

On February 22, 2007, almost a year before she met widowed father-of-two Jason Corbett, Keith and Molly went on their first date.

They had connected via a dating website and after a few introductory emails and several marathon phone sessions, he decided to meet Molly in person.

'I was floored when I met her in person,' he recalled in an interview with the Mail.

'She was absolutely drop dead. My first thought was, "Wow, she is way out of my league." I brought some presents for her beloved cat, which went over well with pet and owner. We drank wine and picked up our conversation again like we'd known each other for years. The two of us connected so fast that it seemed like something out of a movie. We eventually went out for a late Mexican dinner and everything went perfectly. The whole night seemed magical, surreal.'

Back then Molly was 25 and living in a two-bedroom condominium owned by her parents on Berlin Drive in West Knoxville, Tennessee. She was working as a nanny and teaching young children how to swim.

Keith, originally from Cincinnati in Ohio, had moved to Knoxville several years before and was working for non-profit organisation Habitat for Humanity. According



**Flawed:  
Molly  
Martens  
who was  
convicted  
yesterday**

to him, they hit it off immediately and were 'inseparable' after their first date. She had a unique 'zest for life', he recalls, and was happy and fun to be around.

'We fell in love fast and hard,' he said. 'She was happy, fun, beautiful and free-spirited. Molly had a zest for life I hadn't encountered before. She was unique, special.'

A serious relationship quickly developed, with Keith moving into Molly's apartment a month after they met. Soon afterwards, she confided in him about her mental health struggles.

At the time Keith was himself suffering from chronic fatigue and depression, which he says provided a common understanding for them as a couple.

'To her credit, Molly told me early on in the relationship that she is bipolar,' Keith told the Mail.

'I didn't think much about it because medications had her stabilised and everything was blissful and bright. A month or two into

our relationship, she got a staph infection. The infection medications she was given overrode her bipolar medications and knocked everything out of balance. Like someone flipped a light switch.

'Molly was the saddest person I had ever been around. She would cry in bed for hours. Seeing the person I loved suffering so much was a very trying situation. I did everything I could, but nothing seemed to help.'

Unable to continue her job as a nanny, Molly stayed at home while Keith earned rent money for them both. 'It was paid to her parents just like you would pay rent to any landlord,' he says.

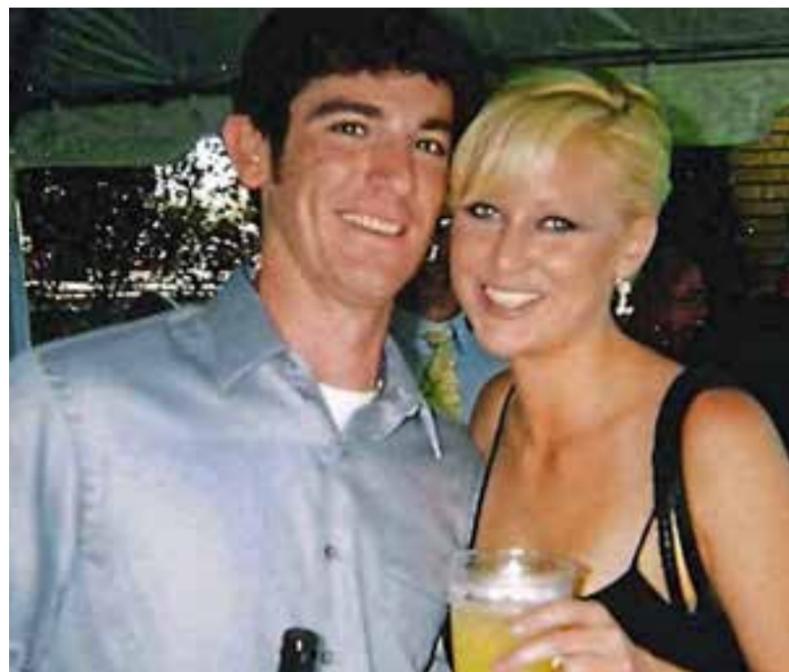
'Molly couldn't work any more so it was down to me. I was supporting us both. We were paying rent to her parents. I think if she was on her own they would have helped her more [financially].'

'But knowing that she was in a relationship they were kind of like, "You guys need to make this hap-

pen." They would have paid for anything major that came up, but for the most part she was financially dependent on me. I paid the rent, bought groceries, paid the bills. You don't make much money working for a non-profit. We were scraping by on my salary.'

At the beginning, the relationship was 'amazing'. According to Mr Maginn, they both genuinely cared about each other and because they were both struggling, had a mutual respect and tenderness.

'Once her depression took over, things were stressful,' he says. 'Heartbreaking, actually. I never knew what mood Molly would be in when I got home from work. I walked on eggshells much of the time, trying my best to keep things stable. But things were usually tense. We were both going down on a sinking ship. For better or worse, mental illness has such a negative stigma and Molly didn't want people to know the truth of the situa-



**Engaged: Molly Martens with her former partner Keith Maginn**

tion... I finally swallowed my pride and sought out a therapist.'

As the relationship came under increasing strain, Keith became concerned by the 'plethora' of drugs Molly was taking. At one point, he claims, she was taking 16 prescribed medications a day and another ten to be used 'as needed'.

'Most of the stuff she was taking was for bipolar or manic depression,' the self-help author says.

'So she was taking some serious drugs. They were prescribed, it wasn't like she was doing it on her own. She was insomniac, so she sometimes would be up all night. She was taking stuff for that. She had a tremendous amount of stuff on her plate.'

Against this turbulent background, Molly's relationship with her parents, Thomas and Sharon, became tense, according to Keith.

After years spent trying to deal with Molly's many problems, he says they too had become 'exasperated' by her behaviour.

'Her parents were very much aware of her mental health issues,' he says. 'They are well aware of the many doctors, the medications she was taking. They knew about it all. They did try to help. They lived relatively close and they would come over. I don't know how much

would make her happy,' says Keith. 'She ended up getting pregnant. I was terrified because I knew how many medications. I was terrified.'

On September 16, 2007, Molly suffered a miscarriage.

'She woke up one day and said she'd had a dream that she miscarried,' says Keith.

'She wasn't feeling good so we went to the hospital. Her parents came. They said that she had miscarried very early on in the pregnancy. She was heartbroken. I honestly was relieved.'

'I thought it was better for everybody that it did not work out.'

Five months later, in February 2008, with no improvement in her condition, Molly checked in to a 'medical rehabilitation centre' in Atlanta, Georgia. The hospital fees for her stay in the one-hall monitored ward of Emory Hospital were paid for by her parents.

'The psych ward in Atlanta was a last-ditch attempt to try and get her medications right,' Keith told the Mail.

'It was to try to get her off all the stuff she was on and get her on the one or two things that could make her stable. It was very heart-wrenching. The people that were in there... It was hard to recognise them as human sometimes. The sounds they were making, just staring at the walls. Having the person you love in that situation was terrible. I believe her doctor suggested she go there. It was very expensive and her parents paid for it. That's what I believe happened.'

After spending four days receiving treatment, Molly returned to Knoxville with Keith and the couple tried to continue their relationship.

Then one night, 'out of the blue', according to Keith, Molly said that she wanted to go to Ireland to nanny. 'It was very odd,' said Keith.

'She literally turned to me one night and said, "I want to go nanny somewhere in Europe." I was, like, "Oh, here we go."

She sometimes came up with these ideas and I was always like, "This is not the fix." So she was like, "I want to go to Europe," and I was like, "Okay, Molly... whatever." I went to bed, she stayed up, which was pretty normal.'

One morning soon after, Molly told Keith she had found a nanny position in Ireland.

'I was like, "How did this happen so fast?" She said, "I'm going to go very soon." So I was quite taken aback. I was used to her not following through on things that she was planning, so I didn't think it would happen.'

He felt if she wasn't well enough to go to the store to get groceries, how is she going to Ireland and nanny for a family?

According to Keith, his fiancée initially told him she was going for

## 'Her parents were aware of her mental issues'

they actually helped but they tried to. I felt that they were at times overwhelmed and frustrated about the whole thing.'

In a bid to preserve his girlfriend's delicate state, Keith surrendered to Molly's 'pleas' to get engaged.

On her birthday, he arranged for the couple to return to Pelancho's, the Mexican restaurant in downtown Knoxville where they had spent their first date. In his book he says he couldn't afford a decent ring, so picked out a 'for now' ring on Overstock.com for less than \$150.

'It was completely her idea to get engaged,' he told the Mail. 'She really thought being engaged would make her happy. She thought that was going to be the cure. I knew it was not but I thought it would help for a while. It worked for like one day. The next day she was back. She was super-happy for a day and then the next day she was crying. I had no intention of marrying her until she got better but I was okay with being engaged just because I thought it might help.'

When getting engaged failed to give Molly a lift, she turned to other ways of finding fulfilment.

'She was always saying that kids

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## FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

a week, then she said she would be away for 'several' weeks.

'I literally thought she was going to be gone for a few weeks,' he said.

'I heard her on the phone right in front of me talking to a friend and she told her friend and said she was going to be gone for a month.'

'Later she was on the phone to someone else saying two or three months, literally two or three months. When she got off the phone I was like, "What's going on? You told me you were going for a few weeks." She was like, "I am, I'm just..."'

Ultimately, she would squirm out of giving a definite answer, he said.

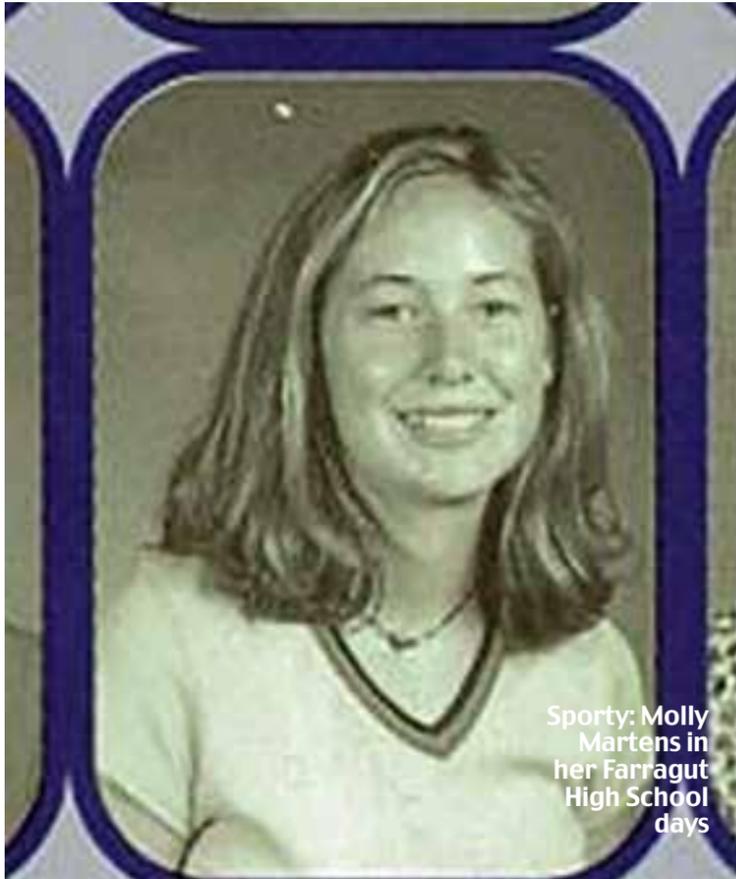
After she left to go to Ireland, Keith never saw Molly again.

Back in Limerick, Jason Corbett, who was 30 at the time, had been widowed by the death of his first wife Mags after she died suddenly from an asthma attack in 2006.

Sarah Corbett was two and her brother Jack was just 11 weeks old at the time of their mother's death. At the time Mr Corbett was working for packaging company Chesapeake and was also part-owner of a crèche run by Lynn Shanahan, also from Limerick.

'After Mags died, we had the two children with us in the crèche every day and got to know them so well,' said Ms Shanahan. Molly Martens came to Limerick in March 2008 to work as an au pair looking after Jack and Sarah.

Jason and Molly started a relationship and, according to



Sporty: Molly Martens in her Farragut High School days

## She killed her husband then went back to a life of privilege

### She became 'obsessed' with the children

Mr Corbett's friends, decided to move to the US with his children when she said she wanted to return home. The couple got engaged in 2010.

A year later Chesapeake arranged to transfer Mr Corbett to its Lexington plant in North Carolina. That same year the couple tied the knot in a lavish ceremony in Molly's home town of Knoxville, Tennessee, where both Jack and Sarah had starring roles in the bridal party.

The move saw Mr Corbett purchase a luxury house in the sought-after Meadowlands area. The development boasts an 18-hole Hale Irwin-designed golf course, clubhouse, pool, tennis courts, playgrounds and parks, as well as more than 40 acres of natural area.

The Corbetts' 2,545 sq ft house, set on 0.58 acres of land, was paid for in cash. Its estimated value is \$350,000.

Like their neighbours, Jack and Sarah were enrolled in nearby Walberg Elementary School, the yummy-mummy option of choice for the all-important pick-up and drop-off at the gates.

The couple had two cars - Molly drove a BMW SUV while Jason opted for a more practical Sedan. They quickly adapted to community life. Jason joined the local golf club and Molly took up a role as a swimming coach. While the men on the street gravitated towards him for his sociable spirit, the women marvelled at Molly's ability to bake cakes and keep a supermodel figure. She was athletic and well groomed. He was gregarious and welcoming. They appeared to have it all.

'They were the most loved-up couple you would ever see,' said

a neighbour. Always holding hands, always kissing and laughing. They just seemed very, very happy.'

But all was not well in the marriage. Jason had been resisting persistent attempts by his wife to adopt his two children. Sources say she became 'obsessed' with them both, in particular, Sarah.

Molly had led neighbours in the area to believe that she was their biological mother, even describing her pregnancy with Sarah to one.

To add further strain to the marriage, Jason was deeply unhappy in the United States. He was incredibly homesick and missed his friends and family.

He had become down on life and had started to gain a lot of weight. Molly goaded him about putting on the pounds. The night before the killing, the couple were at a gathering at a friend's house where she made a remark about his weight in front of them. Jason left early.

The following night, August 2, 2015, Molly and her father beat Jason to death.

After they were charged, it was back to a life of privilege and protection in Farragut.

From the comfort of her hometown and the added protective shelter of her childhood home, she quietly began 'moving forward' with her life.

In a change from her previous incarnation as a 'stay-at-home mom', she has enrolled as a student at Pellissippi State College, where she took up a course studying interior design. Her mother Sharon, who teaches in the college maths department, would never be far away.

In a photo posted on a social networking site associated with

the course, Molly can be seen striking a sultry pose next to her classmates after winning a prize for 'best presentation'.

There were field trips to IKEA, were Molly playfully posed for the camera lying across a bed, and social outings with friends where she was spotted 'glammed up to the nines', seemingly without a care in the world.

Outside her studies, the former swim coach threw herself back in to the world of swimming, taking part in the Tennessee Open water series last summer. In a series of pictures of the event the blonde can be seen swimming alongside competitors at a swim meet.

Waiting close by on the jetty at Kingston Waterfront Park, after

### Molly was seen 'glammed up to the nines'

ferrying his daughter from their luxury Knoxville home, her father, ex-FBI agent Tom, passed the time watching the action.

Few knew that both were facing second-degree murder charges and those who did knew not to mention it.

Throughout the trial Molly would retreat home to Tennessee at the weekends under the watchful eye of Tom and Sharon, carrying on with life as normal.

But this time they couldn't cover up the ugly truth.

Yesterday, as they were laid away in handcuffs, the gig was finally up.

# The swag who trie

**T**OM Martens walked with a swagger as he made his daily arrival into court. His apparent confidence, or some might say smugness, pointed to a man who looked like he was in attendance due to politeness, rather than by necessity.

He was, after all, a distinguished FBI agent. Moreover, he was a trained attorney who had been called to the bar in Georgia. The fact that he had beaten in a man's skull was beside the point.

Born on January 20, 1950, Thomas Michael Martens would go on to lead a life that, for the most part, was the stuff of a law enforcer's dreams.

He had attended prestigious Emory University in Atlanta as an undergraduate student. While there he is believed to have met his wife Sharon, who was studying maths.

Tom went on to study law at graduate level at Emory, eventually graduating in 1975. He was later called to the bar in Atlanta, Georgia, but never practised as an attorney. Instead, shortly after law school, he joined the FBI.

The first part of his career involved mainly criminal investigative work. After initial training, he was stationed in Miami, where he was involved in violent criminal investigations.

The area was particularly volatile in the late 1970s because of the activities of Cuban drug gangs.

During his first year in Miami he was assigned cases attempting to catch violent fugitives.

While he was being interviewed by Davidson County detectives investigating his son-in-law's death, he proudly told them that it was 'a great time to be young in Miami' during this part of his career and that he enjoyed kicking doors in as part of criminal raids.

Not long after, he was assigned to a very lengthy racketeering case that lasted three years. From there, he found himself serving as a lawyer for the bureau, teaching substance and drug law at the Drug Enforcement Administration. After 31 years of service, Tom Martens retired at the mandatory age of 57.

Afterwards he went to Oakridge National Laboratory in Tennessee where he worked as a counter-intelligence officer for eight years.

An employee of the Department of Energy, he still had a security clearance but was a civilian at that point.

One of his former colleagues at Oakridge, Joanne Lowry, came to court on the fifth day of evidence to testify for the State.

Ms Lowry said that she had worked at the Oakridge National Laboratory for 15 years.

She was the coordinator of the sensitive foreign travel programme and she had the highest level of security clearance, as did Tom.

There were 13 people in the counter-intelligence unit where they both worked. Mr Martens would routinely tell them about his 'disdain' for his son-in-law and Mr Corbett's family, she said.

Two months before Mr Corbett was killed, she said she was sitting next to Mr Martens in an area where they did classified work when she asked him how his weekend went.

'He said it was fine,' she told the court. 'The children were home and as glad as he was to see them come, he was glad to see them go.'

'Then he said, "That son-in-law, I hate him."' Ms Lowry said she was aware that Mr Martens had a daughter

called Molly. She said that around the time of Molly's wedding to Jason in 2011, Mr Martens commented on his disdain for Jason. 'It had to do with the pre-wedding celebrations, she said.

'Jason and his friends who were going to be at the wedding were staying at his house. He said he was not very fond of Jason and his rowdy friends.' She added that Mr Martens said they were messy in the house and rude. He did not say anything about drinking.

During his own testimony, Tom Martens himself made no secret about his dislike of Jason.

'He wasn't my favourite person,' he said. 'I didn't like him. I'm sure I said disparaging things about him.'

He said Jason and his friends had stayed at his house a few days before his wedding to Molly and that there was a lot of 'cigarettes and beer cans'.

'It was just general behaviour that was inconsistent with what I think was polite,' he said.

The court heard that alongside her mother, Jason and the two children, Molly Martens had made a trip to Washington DC a few months before Jason's death.

### 'He was not fond of Jason and his rowdy friends'

When asked by a work colleague why he didn't go, Mr Martens said, 'Why would I go anywhere with that a\*\*\*\*\*?'

His daughter, the court heard, had never had anything more than 'casual' employment over the years.

Martens himself admitted that he supplemented her income.

She had worked in a café and had employment as a nanny, he said.

When she met Jason Corbett he held a half-share in a profitable business in Limerick.

Jason gave Tom Martens more than \$40,000 to pay for his daughter's lavish Tennessee wedding. He later provided Molly with an 'upscale' house in Wallburg, where the couple settled after marriage.

'Would you agree that it was upscale?' asked prosecutor Greg Brown.

'If that's the word you want to use,' replied Tom Martens.

Despite the comfortable life his daughter had suddenly found herself living - the frequent holidays, the nice cars and the beautiful home - Tom Martens wasn't happy.

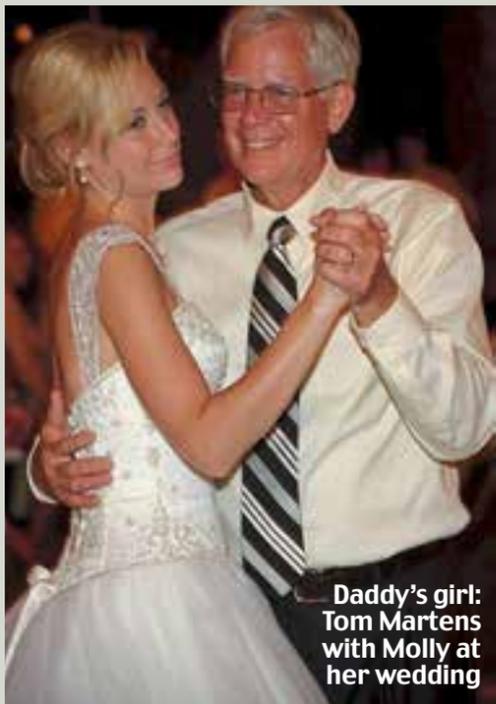
In his view, he told the court, Jason Corbett 'never measured up' to his expectations for his daughter. He had told her so and advised her to seek legal advice about the marriage.

His disdain for his son-in-law, a dis-

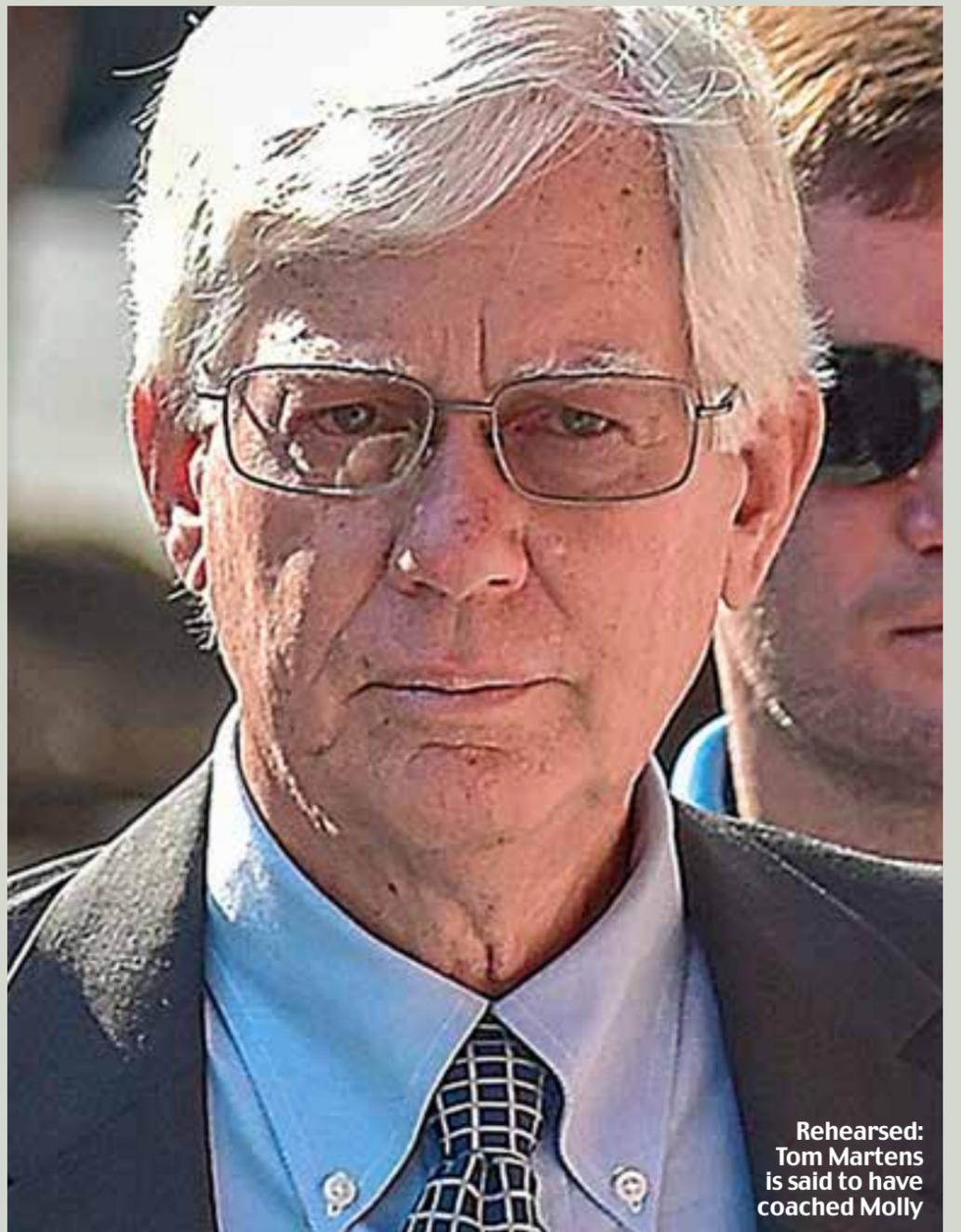
# Angering ex-FBI agent led to outwit the police

**Tom Martens never felt Jason was good enough for his daughter. He felt the Limerick man 'never measured up', despite his providing Molly with**

**a lifestyle she could never pay for herself, writes Catherine Fegan**



Daddy's girl: Tom Martens with Molly at her wedding



Rehearsed: Tom Martens is said to have coached Molly

## Bat 'not in the bedroom'

**DETECTIVES** believed the bat used in the killing of Jason Corbett was taken from the garage, not from the basement bedroom where Tom Martens was staying. Mr Martens told investigators that the bat belonged to his son Stewart and he had brought it to the house as a present for Jason's son Jack. He claimed he had not yet given it to the boy and, when he intervened during an argument between Molly and Jason, he

used the baseball bat in the assault on his son-in-law. Investigators, however, believe the bat may instead have been given to Jack the previous summer and was kept in a bag in the family's garage. According to a search warrant document, an investigator states: 'I have probable cause to believe that the baseball bat... may have come from the sports equipment bag used by Jack Corbett and stored in the garage.'

dain that seemed apparent as he testified on the stand, must have been present in his mind on the night he killed Jason Corbett. During his own testimony, he said that he had arrived to the house to see his son-in-law drinking beer with his neighbour. 'He was obviously drunk,' he told the court.

He couldn't comment on the neighbour, who had drunk the same amount, even though he had spoken to him as well. With reference to Jason, he said that they 'made nice' as Jason came to help him unload his car. 'We were superficially friendly,' he said. 'I am sure he knew I had some feelings about him.'

In his own testimony, Tom Martens said he 'didn't know' how many times he struck the father-of-two. He hit him until he went down, and probably didn't even stop then. What happened next has also been hotly disputed. Martens claimed he waited about 'two minutes' to gather himself before he got his daughter to call 911. The prosecution alleged he took longer. The scene, it appeared, had been altered. A vacuum cleaner that had blood spatter suggesting it was lying down when blood hit it, had been stood upright. Emergency responders noted Jason's body was 'cool' when they arrived. Martens himself admitted he had CPR training, but waited until a 911 operator told him to start administering it. Tom Martens's FBI know-how and legal training may have already kicked in. He had made a point of telling the 911 call operator that his son-in-law had been 'choking' his daughter and that he had 'intervened.'

He must have known the call would be recorded, and later form part of any investigation. From there, he and his daughter went 'voluntarily' to the sheriff's office to give their statements. The belief of prosecutors is that these statements had already been rehearsed prior to calling 911 and that 'daddy' had schooled Molly in what to say, and, more importantly, what not to say. What he didn't account for was that the two detectives who were interviewing him had considerable intelligence and know-how themselves. Tom Martens - the FBI agent with over 31 years' experience of outfoxing his opponents - thought he would get the better of a couple of detectives from small-town Davidson County. In court, it was revealed that during the interview, Mr Martens 'interrupted questioning and took charge'. He had already told the two men that he had a long career in the FBI and that he 'really enjoyed outwitting' other spy agencies.

Mr Brown said that at one point during interview, the defendant said: 'Perhaps it would be helpful if I just launched into a story that would account for my state of mind.' 'Were you trying to match wits with the detectives?' asked Mr Brown. 'No,' replied Mr Martens. Mr Brown told the court Mr Martens tried to use his FBI training and legal qualifications to lead the interview to support his claim of self-defence. After his interview at the police station, Mr Martens took his daughter back to Tennessee. They both engaged a team of high-powered lawyers. Back in Lexington, detectives had all they needed. Tom Martens and his daughter were charged in 2016. It was a development he probably never saw coming. Tom Martens, in his own mind, had nothing to answer for. Investigators, and in the end the jury, thought differently. *catherine.fegan@dailymail.ie*