

Transcript of Mrs. Johnson's Audio Diary

Prepared by Staff of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum

San Jacinto Day

Tuesday, April 21, 1964

Today there was a delightful article about Warrie Lynn Smith by Frances Lewine about her life in the White House. If I can get through my time here as well as Warrie Lynn can with the press, I'd be lucky. She is so gentle and gay and sensible.

[This portion precedes Page 1 of the April 21, 1964 transcript.]

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, April 21, 1964

Actually, I slept like one drugged, until about 11 o'clock, and could have had a very easy day, if I hadn't, myself, long ago, told everybody that I wanted to see the 4-H youngsters when they came to town.

So about 11:30, I began my day with a talk with Bess, about the May 7th tea, for all of the Arts people, which looms ahead of me, as one of the few things I've ever regarded with serious awe and inadequacy.

And then there was John Connally, in the west hall, with Lyndon, Secretary Rusk, Secretary McNamara, and McGeorge Bundy. They were there for lunch. I had a sherry with them.

John was up to testify before the Chief Justice's Committee, about his own memories of November 22nd. He and Nellie, both of them, did it. His hand was out of the sling, which I heartily disapproved of because he's going to have to use it, I'm afraid, during the campaign, unless he keeps it in that sling. He looks so handsome, and really quite well, but very grey.

I kept it to myself, what I thought, when that loud blast went off in the plane, but I was very cognizant of what John said in an interview, about the 21 gun salute to Erhard in December, and how it almost shook his nerves unbearably, strong man that he is.

Then at 2 o'clock, I went down to the Blue Room, to greet the 200 4-H youngsters; four from each state, selected ^{for} ~~from~~ their outstanding qualities of achievement and citizenship, for this convention trip to Washington.

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The party got off to a lively start^g when Him and Her, being petted by Luci on her return from school, eluded her, dashed into the East Room^f, where the delegates to the conference were assembled, raced through the room, with Luci in hot pursuit, wearing bobby socks and loafers, and with a raincoat billowing out behind her. (Not a very pretty sight). She caught them, tucked one under each arm and made off with them.

With delicious good luck, I had happened to choose my green silk dress to wear, found that all of the girls were in the green four H uniform.

First, I met the leaders: Ann Williams of Ang^{le}elton, Texas, who gave me a leather bound volume of the report to the Nation by 4-H. And Ronald Keyes of Kansas, who had a handsome pair of stirrup bookends for Lyndon. And Lynda Curtis of Vermont, who gave me a paperweight with a 4-H emblem on it. And Claudia Truex of Indiana, who gave me a great big bouquet of white carnations. Jane Freeman received with me. Everybody knew her because she had been with them throughout the conference.

Actually, there were some 220 4-H's and 120 sponsors^h I guess footing the bill for the trip^g, certainly gives them the right to join in on anything nice that happens. From reading their badges^g, I judge that they are the executives of the companies^g, that would have some bearing on the lives of 4-H people, like the Coates thread people.

And then all the county home demonstration agents, and agricultural extension people from colleges like Texas A&M.

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I followed them on into the State Dining Room where they were having punch and cookies. They seemed to like the brownies that Zephyr made the best....)

Talked to several groups of them and thought what a fine bunch of young folks they were and how glad I am that 20% of their membership^{is} is now reaching into urban living, since we, no happy thought to me, are ceasing to be an agricultural, rural country, and turning into an urban, industrial country.

They were wholesome and fine, and I'm glad I had them, even if I'd have been up until 3 o'clock the night before.

I left them to go downstairs to meet the group of five ^{kind?} students of the Liberty School of Braintree, Massachusetts. Their classmates had gathered together, collected trading stamps and financed ^{the} trip for these youngsters^{to} to Washington. What a country we are - so much compassion, so much interest, it's still a cinderella sort of country!

Lyndon strolled in - looking for me - and so they all got to meet him too.)

Their teacher, a negro, was Mrs. Woods Pittman, who of course, taught them in brail!

Next, I went quickly upstairs^{for} for a little private chat with Mrs. Ed. Cape from San Marcos, and two of her friends, Mrs. Camp and Mrs. Evans, both up here for the DAR convention. I had asked Mrs. Cape to ^{come} and to bring her friends, and come to the 4-H tea because it would be the only

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chance I'd have to visit with her. We reminisced about the days of '37 and the ensuing eight or ten years, in San Marcos, old campaigns, that crystal clear San Marcos river, the camp, the wonderful weekends we spent there. She talked about Lyndon standing, shaving in the middle of the stream, while we listened to a poet from some long-ago political campaign. . . Family news of her daughter Mary Louise and banker-son, Bob. And dear Mr. Eddie who had entered that shadow land, of lingering on in life, with his swift, able mind gone.

And then I said goodbye and Ambassador and Mrs. ^{Heisler} ^{ca} Hasberg came for a farewell visit to me. If I don't watch out, I'm going to get tea poisoning, because it's easy to have five or six sessions of it in one day!

We had a good visit, ^{there} among the easiest to know among the diplomatic corp^s, ^{and} but I'm so sorry to say goodbye to them. She says she'll leave a part of her heart behind in Texas.)

I talked about my trip to Luxembourg - I told them that surely we'd be meeting on their trips back or ours over there.

Then after they left, there was an hour or two of work on mail... Late dinner with Lyndon. The "read and file" envelope to go through, the unread newspaper to go through the articles, and then to bed.

I got along alright in the Cleveland stories. It just sounded like the gay adventure that it was.

Every night Lyndon and I talk about what's happening to the railroad

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negotiators and we look over toward the EOB and I know how much is hanging in the balance for him.

How can I possibly say for him, when it's really for the country that its hanging in the balance?