

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, May 23, 1964

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This was a significant day to me, because it is the dedication of the ^{Marshall} George ~~Washington~~ Research Library, in Lexington, Virginia. A bit confusing to skip from Lexington, Kentucky to Lexington, Virginia with hardly drawing a breath between.

Lyndon and I left the south lawn about 9:30, with Dean Acheson and Mrs. Acheson, Secretary Rusk, Senator Byrd - in a white suit, as always with him this time of year -, and some staff.

We got on the big plane at Andrews, we flew to Roanoke, Virginia and from there it was choppers again to Lexington, Virginia. This time ladies only in mine. ^g ~~With~~ Martha Hodges, Jane Freeman, Mrs. Acheson, Mrs. Harriman and Mary^{Ellen} Monroney.

The VMI parade ground in Lexington, there was a 21 gun salute and Hail to the Chief, and Lyndon went around inspecting the VMI Cadet Honor Guard Company. Poor dear boys, temperature in the high 80's, sun bright, and the jacket of their uniforms, [^] their summer uniform mind you, heavy, thick, long sleeve ^d wool! ^{Well,} ~~When~~ it said that discipline is one of the main things they teach them there.

Next we went to a lovely, ^g quiet house, where the Superintendent of VMI, General Shell and Mrs. Shell lived. She told us this was the only house left standing when the Yankees burned VMI during the Civil War, and the reason it was left is because the daughter of the Commandant, ^g had a baby just two or three days old, ^a And she asked the Yankee General if he wouldn't

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spare that one house for the baby's sake. He did, ^Qit's walls tell the story of our military great, [/]in pictures ranging over many decades.

At noon we went out for a brief visit ^Lof the library with President Eisenhower, Mrs. Marshall, Governor Harrison of Virginia, a long line of other dignitaries. All of this seems to be for the benefit of photographers, it seems to me, and not the benefit of those who come to "see" the library, because all you do is stand here and there and get your picture made. And what I really wanted to do, [/]was see and plan, and think maybe sometime Lyndon might have a library, smaller in scope, but along the same general plan, only ours would be the old stone fort at Johnson City, at least in part.

And then the men took up their positions on the speaker's platform, and I sat next to Mrs. Marshall on the front row, in the sun, by now about 90 degrees, [/]I think, glad I had worn a hat.

It was a very touching ceremony for many reasons. My particular reason because I believe implicitly in George Marshall, [/]without reservation, a man whose character has seldom been equaled in our government service, and I'm sure that Lyndon does too.

General Omar Bradley, his old buddy, presided. To me, one of the most interesting things that Omar Bradley said was before the ceremony began, when he told me that "this is one of 22 things I'm doing because I think they're good to do. Of course, my heart is in this more than any of the others." He went on to say - "Don't misunderstand me; I've got

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four things I do, that I get paid for doing." He's never one to reach for credit. But that caused me to reflect on the joys of retirement. If he, General Bradley, retired, has 22 things that he does as public service, I wonder if we'll ever quite reach that stage of lying in the hammock at the ranch and reading the Bible; or sitting lazily in a boat, with a fishing pole, with nothing more important to do but wait for the fish to bite, or watch the birds fly over?

Superintendent of VMI, General Shell, welcomed us to Lexington and VMI, and then Governor Harrison of Virginia gave a little talk. Next General Bradley himself, and then General Eisenhower - and all day long, people referred to him as "General Eisenhower, not President Eisenhower - and perhaps everyone was waiting to hear, if there would be any little undertone of apology or explanation because there were those who thought that when he became President, he had not been as loyal or devoted to George Marshall, his long-time chief, as he might have been.

There was a time, during the McCarthy ^{era} ~~error~~, he was said to cut out of a speech, some plaudits of Marshall, to salve the feelings of the McCarthy-ites. It's hard to credit any bad intentions to that genial, open-faced man. It was actually, I think, the best speech that I ever heard General Eisenhower give.

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And then came Lyndon's speech, which to me, was one of the most touching, most beautiful, most impressive tributes, I've ever heard him make, or anybody.

Mrs. Marshall was very much the center of everybody's attention and although she's getting old and not very well, you could see that she was savoring this great day to the hilt - and so would I if I had been she.

It was really a fitting salute to a towering character. One of the moments in American history, I'm glad this job gives me the opportunity to have.

One of the nicest moments of the day, was seeing all those handsome, young cadets. Several of them escorted me around at different moments; at least three came up and introduced themselves as Texans. They all asked about Lynda and Luci - and looking at the calibre of them, I could understand how some great Civil War General would say, just before he went into a battle, where they were going to participate - "The men from VMI will be heard from today."

Back at General Shell's we just had time for a tall, cool drink and beginning to look around and see who all was there. And how surprised I was to see Mrs. Mary Moody North, or is it Northington. I suppose the Moody Foundation was one of the contributors to the Library.

Bob Lovett was one of those most responsible for making the Library a reality.

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Before I could really begin surveying the field of interesting guests, word came that we must leave. And once more it was helicopter back to Roanoke, greeting some people who were there waiting for us at the airport, and then aboard for lunch, and high time because it was nearly three and everybody was ravenous.

That night we went to Abe and Carol's dinner and dancing party, in honor of ¹¹this, that and the other thing, which actually turned out to be both of their birthdays, and their wedding anniversary, all spaced within about a week of the time of the party.

The guest list, ^{many faceted} revealed what a ~~really fascin~~ man Abe is. The world of politics was well represented from us on - uh - well, I can't say down but - all over.

The world of society - at my table there was that cute Scotty Lanahan, one of the most attractive people in town; and also that delightful Mercedes ^{Eicholz} ~~Eicholz~~, I guess you would just say that she has moved through the world of society from the world of the Supreme Court. Her husband came up and introduced himself, with a cryptic remark, "I'm the man." And a charming looking man he was.

And the world of Art was there. Abe introduced me to several of the violinists he plays with. It's his lifesaver, his therapy - just as gardening is Carol's.

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It was a big party - over a hundred, and it had been a very full day,
so we left shortly after dinner.