

1965

Saturday, March 27th

Carol Fortas and Mercedes Eichholz and her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Davidson, came over to go swimming with me. It's my once-a-week greatest luxury, just before I go to the beauty parlor. Mercedes, fresh from a month in Mexico, is brown and blonde and exuberant. She and her third husband, Robert Eichholz, toured the back roads of Mexico in a rented car, practicing their Spanish, staying wherever they pleased, and apparently meeting adventure at every corner.

Later I met a group of 80 people from Ahoskie, North Carolina, who had come up by bus for a tour of Washington and were going to present me with a scrapbook of my Whistle Stop in Ahoskie. Ahoskie is where I settled down to knowing I was going to enjoy the Whistle Stop. It was a small rural community -- I was the first "famous" guest since Buffalo Bill and didn't draw quite as big a crowd as he did, I understand. They nevertheless turned out en masse for me. And such an air of excitement and friendliness prevailed that I began to loosen up, and so Ahoskie is legendary with me. Everybody was in a holiday spirit, and I felt like I was meeting old friends. "Do you remember this?" "I was on the train with you." "I'm the one who was Chairman of the decorations." It was such fun. One of the men even put a wooden nickel in my hand, the first time I've ever seen one.

The Ahoskies of the United States have really beat a path to the

1965

Saturday, March 27th (continued)

White House these last ^{two}~~few~~ years.

Then I went to the Frotases for luncheon. It was a family affair.

[The only other guest was the doctor who had taken care of Walter. I particularly wanted to have a chance to explore how a real friend of Walter's should talk, should react, should be around him in the years to come. The road is not easy and not clear of pitfalls. But the news is good. They've bought a house, they sound happy, Walter is working. He has plenty of work to do, thank goodness.]

Abe and Carol, who do so much to mend the broken lives of all their friends, have made Walter and his problems their heart's concern for many months.]

Back at the White House, I kept on hearing what Lyndon had mentioned to me early this morning -- that maybe, if you want to, if the sun shines, we'll go to Camp David. So I got ready just in case, and passed the time reading and working, sending in a note that I thought the Buford Ellingtons would be fun to go along with us. Then a little past six I got the word to be on the point, and at seven we lifted off in the chopper -- the Valentis, the Bill Whites, the Ellingtons, for Camp David, all arriving in a holiday spirit, tired but ready to make fun our business.

We sat around the fire, looked on the drifts of snow that

1965

Saturday, March 27th (continued)

were still left over from last weekend when Lynda and Warri Lynn went tobogganing down the hill. Had a delicious dinner. And then Lyndon went to bed at nine o'clock, the greatest recipe for health that could be written, the best night's sleep he's had in such a long time.

Everybody else watched the movie, Why Bother to Knock, which made me feel, if anything, uncertain of this generation's morals and sense of entertainment, and so I departed to watch the Old West at ten o'clock, in Gunsmoke.

Some of the dinner conversation had been about Buford Ellington's work with Governor Leroy Collins in the community relations massive effort of the last few months. Later, Lyndon said, "I've got to read a book on Andrew Johnson." I don't even know whether there was a good one. I think perhaps he felt himself in many ways in the same situation as Andrew Johnson, even after a hundred healing years.