

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1966

Page One

Saturday, November 26, my guests had breakfast in their rooms-- Senator Dirksen and Senator Mansfield and Maureen, Congressman George Mahon. But we met in the dining room later, sitting by the big picture window looking out at the fields for another and yet another cup of coffee. George Mahon was the first to leave, flying back to Lubbock, and Senator Dirksen and the Mansfields who were going to Florida, lingered and talked with Lyndon. I find myself so easy around Senator Dirksen. The fact that he is the leader of the opposition party is no abrasive element to our friendship. I hope he lasts as long as we do in that position. In the course of their talk, Lyndon made a very arresting statement. "When I drop dead, I want you all to remember this. The thing that I'm most afraid of is the influence of Communism on controlling public opinion <sup>thru</sup> on the communications of this country." Maureen was shocked. It was a very uncomfortable thing to hear. She said, "Do you mean that?" Mike, no surprise, did not commit himself. It was a little past eleven when they left for Florida and I at once set out in the car for Johnson City for my appointment with my restoration friends.

At Lyndon's boyhood home I met Roy White and Mrs. Hudspeth and a research man, whose name I cannot remember, from the University and Mrs. Charles Bybe who is something of an authority on restorations in

11/24/66

Page two

Texas, having worked on 14 old houses <sup>by</sup> herself, of the period from about 1840 to 1880. We drove to the Old Fort site. I had Mrs. Bybe with me and I described our plans for the place. The landscape architect from A&M had laid out the road, hoped to have an arched bridge over the little creek, hoped sometime to clear the creek out and have a free flowing stream and, eventually, picnic tables and benches under the Pecan trees by it, and meadows of bluebonnets. But we must first clear it, of course. But then our objectives were the old stone buildings--the one that may have been a barn or a commissary or a fort or a combination and the smaller one whose purpose is unknown, to me at least. I think in later years it's been used as a smokehouse. <sup>JP</sup> Mrs. Bybe's interest and knowledge was a delight to see. I remember the phrase one of the curators from Williamsburg had used, "An old building will tell its own story". And indeed, with a little interpretation by her, it did. She pointed out a line about eight feet up <sup>where the</sup> ~~with~~ texture and color of the stone changed markedly. Below it looked like it had been cut with a chisel and above the stones had a solid look and even the mortar was different. So apparently, at one time, this structure was about eight feet high and then some later owner decided that he needed about four feet, perhaps for a loft to sleep the cowboys or to store the hay, who knows? But at any rate it had undergone this change in the years. And on the inside there <sup>was</sup> ~~was~~ further vindication. <sup>At</sup> ~~in~~ the eight foot height perfect holes on each side in which timbers had been inserted to form the supporters for the roof, a whole line of them all across. <sup>There</sup> ~~It~~ was a rickety

11/26/64

Page three

ladder to the loft and in her high heels and city clothes, Mrs. Bybe<sup>2</sup> climbed the ladder pointing out, with interest, architectural details, which I could see as soon it was my turn to climb the ladder. Mrs. Hudspeth said that the University would be glad to furnish some research on the old place. We talked about methods. The county courthouse, alas, had burned in 1879, or there abouts, with all the records--interviews <sup>and</sup> pictures from old timers in the community, files of the newspapers and Dean T. U. Taylor's book on early Texas as well as a scattering of others including John <sup>Mourasund's</sup> ~~Marrison's~~ history of Blanco County. At any rate research is starting on this small project. Ch.  
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Lunch time finally drove us home. Lyndon met us at the birthplace and we showed Mrs. Bybe what we had done there. And I never had a more interested audience and very pleasantly she applauded our work. We went home for lunch, joined by Luci and Pat, who had the James Montelaros as their guests. They're staying at the Lewis Place, cooking their breakfast there and coming over for lunch and dinner--and Marie and Mary and Jake and Bill Moyers. Mrs. Bybe has been working at this for 20 or so years, knows the people at Williamsburg and at Winterthur and, even more importantly, follows the restoration with her workmen from the very beginning, going to the woods to find the right tree, getting it sawed and aged, and if there are no tools on the market like they used in the 1840's or '50's, getting them designed and made. I felt like we had launched an exciting new project. <sup>1st</sup> Lyndon brought out his Korean robes and gave one to

Page four

Luci and to me. We put them on. Mine was deep cherry red. He loves to give gifts and he loves to have them modeled immediately and see that the receiver is really happy.

I spent the afternoon at the beauty parlor and then came home to hear that we planned to go to the West Ranch for dinner. But these days a night out for us, which is so rare, seldom means a real night off for Mary and James. What a big household we are! We helicoptered over. The Krims and the Moursunds and <sup>Mariallon's</sup> ~~Mary Ellen's~~ cute sister Claudene and Mrs. Krim's father, Mr. Galland, were there. And it was a typical West dinner which is delicious and enormous. And happily, I felt enough at home to slip off and watch Gun Smoke afterwards.