

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Sunday, April 23, 1967 W45

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We were awake early. Lyndon said he had slept hardly at all. A tough beginning for this demanding trip -- demanding as it is -- as every day is. I am living with the feeling now that there is a slight lifting of the clouds, an occasional ray of sunshine. Things are getting better.

Lyndon went down in the elevator about 8:45. I wasn't dressed, so I just rode down with him and kissed him goodbye and then came back up to start a full day of doing all those things that I never somehow do when he is here.

My first adventure of the day was to go to Mrs. George Maurice Morris' at 2401 Kalorama Road a little past 10:00. She had dismantled an old house that had stood in Connecticut before the Revolutionary War. In fact its front door has a bullet hole that was meant for the last Colonial Governor. And she had brought it down, board by board, and re-erected it lovingly, creating one of the most complete and beautiful and authentic homes of that period in the United States.

Going through it slowly had been high on my list of things that I wanted to do. And finally with a clear day in April, here I was.

My hostess met me in the front yard and opened the door to the spacious halls, dimly lit, lined with a scenic French wallpaper, familiar to me here at the White House. A magnificent stair case rising at the other end past the <sup>Palladian</sup> ~~paradian~~ window. There followed two absolutely enchanting hours.

There are a few concessions in this house to the modern age -- bathroom fixtures <sup>are</sup> of camouflage, the telephone is in a box, and the lighting appears to be candles with its tiny, flickering bulbs skillfully contrived.

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There were stenciled floors, Queen Anne and Chippendale <sup>pendule</sup> furniture worth a King's ransom, handsomely paneled walls. And one place, they hid a secret panel that led to a narrow, winding stair case. There were fabrics dating back to the 17th Century, bearing the handiwork, lifetimes of it, eyesights of it, of ladies long dead. Much of it was <sup>Crewel</sup> ~~enamel~~ work. And there was a pair of gloves dating from 1625. And Mrs. Morris' own great-grandfather's cradle from the early 1700's. And King George's tobacco box.

She quoted King James, I believe it was, on the subject of tobacco. He said it was very dangerous to the lungs.

Nicest of all was Mrs. Morris' own knowledge, her dedication, her enthusiasm to her subject. I do like seeing a person who knows a lot about something, loves it, works at it. She does, and she shares it.

Tomorrow a symphony group would be here. Frequently there is an architecture society group or art group, or Mrs. Pierce's class on the history of furniture.

We had coffee and I said goodbye and rushed back to the White House to have lunch with Marny. I had planned a series, greedily, of all the things I liked best today, making it <sup>Chock</sup> ~~chalk~~ full.

We lunched on cheese souffle and strawberry <sup>mereniges</sup> ~~marangas~~. And then at 1:30, Marny and I left, heading out across the beautiful Virginia countryside to Fredericksburg. My main mission was to go to the James Monroe Law office and see Mr. Lawrence <sup>Gouverneur</sup> ~~Governor~~ <sup>Hope</sup> ~~Hope~~, descendent of both Monroe and Madison, who I earnestly <sup>hope</sup> will give to the White House an excellent portrait

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of Madison by Vanderlin.

One of my main two goals in this house, <sup>to</sup> to replace the poor posthumous portraits of John Adams and James Madison with <sup>good ones</sup> ~~Goodwin's~~.

I wore one of my most stylish dresses and we went in a big black car, because somehow I thought it would make a more memorable day for Mr. <sup>Hoos</sup> ~~House~~. I had carefully not told the press about the trip, but when I arrived there, he was out front to meet me and there was a cameraman and an expectant little group. I wanted very much to live up to the occasion for them and to look at the beautiful old furniture and historical things for me.

So I went on my ambivalent way for the next two hours. The first thing that greeted me in Monroe's law office were two old friends! The very secretary desk that stands in the West hall by the entrance <sup>to the</sup> ~~Lincoln's~~ room and the chest on the opposite wall, or so it seems. Actually, these were Monroe's own pieces. And Mrs. Hoover, when she was first lady, had had them ~~copies~~ copied beautiful reproductions for the White House. And it was in a secret drawer of this secretary desk that Mr. <sup>Hoos</sup> ~~House~~ had jarred loose when as a seven-year-old boy he was climbing around over it that had spilled forth marvelous letters to Monroe from George Washington and Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson and George Mason -- the whole roster of founding fathers, a marvelous treasure trove of letters that had apparently <sup>lain</sup> ~~layed~~ untouched and forgotten for some 75 years.

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It was piece after piece of the furniture that Monroe had used when he was in the White House. Darling little ~~slipper~~ satin slippers that had belonged to his wife and ball gowns with tiny waists and exquisite lace <sup>and</sup> the embroidery. And mementos of the first wedding of a President's daughter in the White House -- <sup>Maria</sup> ~~Monna~~ Monroe I believe her name was.

His presidential papers are stored here, Mr. <sup>oes</sup> ~~Hens~~ told me. So this is the antecedent of all the libraries. And there was a marvelous portrait of Monroe. But I got no nearer to my goal -- the portrait of Madison. It was off being repaired after it had been injured in a showing. Mr. <sup>oes</sup> ~~Hens~~ talked enthusiastically about "You and I must do something about that and I'm very interested in seeing that you get what you want." But I cannot say that he promised anything.

It was a marvelous way to spend <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ Sunday afternoon in April, crossing the lovely green of Virginia and going to the homes of the great ones of our Nation's infancy.

Next, we went to Mary Washington's home, the mother of George Washington. He had gotten her settled there in her old years where she could be just within a block or two of her daughter, Betty Washington <sup>Lewis</sup> ~~Louis~~, in a beautiful estate of Kenmore. As an insatiable tourist I had been to both of these houses before. How I missed Mr. Monroe's law office I don't quite know.

Kenmore is a most impressive Georgian manor house built in 1752, carrying, imbedded in it still, at least two cannon balls fired during the

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Revolution. Some of the ceilings and panneling are handsome Adam design. And some of them are enormously elaborate and done by the Hessian soldiers after the Revolutionary War.

I was interested in hearing the number of tourists that come through per year -- something like 30,000. And I made a mental note of it in comparison with our own simple little place in Johnson City. The guides wore colonial costumes and their love of the houses showed in their descriptions. And at Kenmore, they served Betty Washington's ginger bread and coffee in the kitchen which was in the back yard. I never go into one of these kitchens without praising the Lord for our deliverance from hard labor!

The Mayor, Mr. Roe, and his wife and children, went with us to all three places along with Mr. ~~Boes~~<sup>Boes</sup>. In fact we became quite an entourage as we moved from house to house to house. And miraculously the cameramen managed to get there ahead of me everytime. And I tried to play the two rolls of being looked at and looking.

It was nearly 5:00 when we left Fredericksburg with many ~~than~~ thanks to Mr. ~~Boes~~<sup>Boes</sup> and a feeling on my part that I am the world's worst salesman. We drove back to the White House looking all the way ~~at~~<sup>for</sup> the roadside park that I had dedicated about two years ago this time on a beautiful drive down into Virginia. I did not find it but I think I found the white dogwood tree that I had planted and it was blooming.

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Back at the White House I said a quick goodbye to Marny, who had told me along the way that she wanted to give to the White House a plaster group of figures by Rogers, the Council of War -- Lincoln, and Grant, and Stanton -- which would be just wonderful for one of the Lincoln rooms.

And I went on to my next treat of the day -- to Abe's and Carol's for a ~~drink~~ drink. They had both been gardening all afternoon and swimming and they were in the back yard. We had a drink and talked. With Abe I slipped more easily into the velvet ease of old friends' happy conversation enlivened with ~~spice~~ spice than with nearly anybody.

I dropped the Fortas' off at Mercedes and then went back to the White House just in time to meet Jane and Orville Freeman whom I had invited to go with me to the Arena to see "Look Back in Anger". It was an early curtain -- 7:30 -- with no time to eat. I settled into my seat with that eager anticipation that I bring to any play. Lynda had described this one, by John Osborne, as a sort of antecedent of the modern way out plays -- the Alby type. And it took me only a few minutes to realize that I was alien. And I found myself, and I think a great deal of the rest of the audience, doing the same -- looking at each other with a sort of puzzled frown wondering, how are you taking this? Were we hoping for a cue from each other? disapproval perhaps? The characters, to me, seemed tortured, bitter, lost, not at home in the world and making a wretched mess of life. But the acting was splendid, and no matter how much I disapproved, I must say I enjoyed watching it.

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Orville and Jane, I was rather relieved to find, felt the same way about it as I did. I am searching perhaps to find whether it is really I or the Theatre that has changed. Because I liked in their day Eugene <sup>O'Neil</sup> ~~Unser~~ and Tennessee Williams, and they raise the same sort of outraged protest that Osborne and <sup>Albee</sup> ~~By~~ do now.

When it was over we were ravenous. So I invited <sup>them</sup> to come back to the White House where I had had a platter of sandwiches put in the ice box -- perminto roast beef and cheese; there was not a servant in sight. But we went into the kitchen and fixed our <sup>a plate</sup> down drinks and each brought back of sandwiches and we put up our feet and had a delightful hour or more, during which <sup>time</sup> Orville told me about his trip to several farm states, And meetings in which he had a dialogue with farmers on the Administration and its policies. It's a rather gloomy picture. The only good part to me is that I believe he can express the Administration's activities ably and enthusiastically.

It was a cozy, informal <sup>sort</sup> ~~thought~~ of real companionship -- just three people -- and was a perfect ending to what had been a marvously varied and full day.