

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, July 25, 1967

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It was a day in which I felt I really accomplished something. Liz and I were up early and at 9:00 on our way to Johnson City to the boyhood home. Ron Wolfe was already there with the recorder. Jessie had some coffee waiting, and I took the script and went to work. I had done the first version of the script in the early Spring of '65 collaborating with Lucia for facts and anecdotes and memories. Liz had worked it over from a newspaper woman's standpoint. And we had both digested it again, hopefully from the listening standpoint of a vacationing family from Idaho Falls or Wetumpka, Alabama, and what would interest them and how long. I recorded and cut and changed and listened and tried it over. We went slowly, but I was more and more pleased as we read it back, dividing it into ~~the~~ segments, if the family were here on the porch as they waited, or in the big main room, or in the pink parlor.

It was after 1:00 before we even thought of stopping, and that because I was so hungry with nothing but coffee for breakfast. But we didn't finish until 2:15. And then we left happily with a feeling that we had it in a can and they could edit and improve it and it would be useful for the future. We will not always have this wonderful supply of volunteer help. And a tape would cut down the number of guides ~~&~~ needed. And next year we must plan for HemisFair when hopefully all of Texas will be inundated by vacationers headed for San Antonio. And besides, I will not

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always be here. So we left feeling good and sat down ravenously for lunch at nearly 3:00. And then quickly drove up to the birthplace house to begin the recording on that one. Here somehow it moved more swiftly. Perhaps I was warmed up -- in tune with it. I sat at a table in the dogtrot and there was a good breeze. And Betty was with us to tell how the tourists acted when they came through and what they said -- to establish the tone of it just as Jessie had done at the boyhood home.

I left in a rush after 4:30 to hurry back to the main house and change clothes and get ready for my tea. I had long looked forward to this -- my group of restoration friends from Fredericksburg who have so generously opened their homes to me and my guests for years had never seen mine. So with Liz here to plan the menu, get out the invitations so that I could be simply hostess and not manager, this was the ideal time. And at 5:00 the Art Kowerts, Miss Esther Mueller who had given me the darling little low rocking chair handcrafted by some German before the turn of the century that sits by the fireplace in the den. ^{attach}It's her family that the ~~Thatch~~ home belongs to. And Mr. Tyrus Cox who is President of the Historical Association of Fredericksburg. And Mrs. Brody and Mrs. Detjen -- a delightful pair of old ladies who are hostesses at the Fredericksburg Museum to which I have been so many times. And the Milton Moseleys -- recently come to Fredericksburg

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but ardently and knowledgeably devoted to its history and the restoration of its old houses. He's an architect -- she's an interior decorator. They came to retire, and they are probably busier than they have ever been before. And Jessie and both the Weinheimers were there. And I had asked two good friends who hadn't been to the Ranch in years and years -- Terrell Maverick Webb whose two husbands were some of the most interesting men Texas ever produced. And Mrs. Ed Cape of San Marcos with her daughter, Mary Louise Thornton. My memories of her go back to our first campaign in 1937 when Mr. Eddy was the biggest lawyer in one of the principal towns of the old 10th District -- a strong pillar of our life for more than a quarter of a century. Seldom have I had a group of guests who enjoyed a party more. And that includes me.

The tea table was spread in the dining room, and there was ample and I thought delicious -- and I repeated far too much the coffee-ice cream punch. ~~And~~ Then I conducted a little tour of the living room and dining room and Lyndon's office against the whole background of the history of the house. And then we all went down to the birthplace house and went through it, for nearly everyone of these people was a devotee of old houses, had restored one, lived in one, or knew a lot about the subject. They kept on remembering things about the Johnson family -- Mrs. Brody's daughter had taken elocution from Mrs. Johnson, and she brought me a copy of a handbill dated 1906 describing an entertainment which was put

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on by Miss Baines' elocution class! Mrs. Detjen, I believe it was, described the little house where the Baines had lived in Fredericksburg. Mrs. Ed Cape brought me a picture that I never remember seeing. It must have been in about 1937 of a very slim Lyndon with black curly hair, and young and handsome Mr. Ed Cape and Dr. C. E. Evans who was President of the school where Lyndon had gone. She said she had lots of old clippings. And I told her that she would soon be hearing from me and from the Archivist of the United States about plans for the Johnson Library.

Terrell is one of the gayest women I know. And the late 60's have in no way quieted her spirits. Rather, they have exploded. She chattered with delightful impartiality about her two husbands. She said when she dies she hopes she will join them both. She brought me a Bible which she had found stored in the garage behind Mrs. Johnson's old apartment when she rented it. But alas I fear it is not really ^a personal family Bible -- an antique that Mrs. Johnson had bought with some purpose in mind. A handsome old volume nevertheless.

And we all had so much to say to each other that it was well past 7:00 when anybody rose to go. A successful party — and I had managed to chat with each guest for quite a few minutes.

Mr. Cox, whom I knew the least, the President ^{of} the Historical Association, told me that the city was feeling its way toward setting up

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some sort of restrictions -- store fronts especially -- that one could do on Fredericksburg wide old main street. And that they've gotten the oil companies to agree to signs that would be no higher than 30 feet. That, alas, is fairly high.

When they all left, we settled down in the yard with a real drink -- Liz and Jessie and the Weinheimers and I. Then we drove into Birk's Barbeque Barn in Fredericksburg where only one or two recognized me. And what attention I caused was only natural and friendly. It was interesting to have this sort of dinner -- this sort of conversation -- and back off and look at it from the standpoint of all the excitement, the companionship, the sharp minds I have shared these last 30 years. How happy will I be when I return to this milieu to live?² I enjoy it greatly. But then I would not like a steady diet of it, unsuited by a John Gardner or a McGeorge Bundy and an Abe Fortas. And a very special blessing -- it's early to bed here at the Ranch.

We were back at home, I had said goodbye, and was in bed before 10:00 which meant reading for an hour and then to sleep with that rare feeling of reasonable satisfaction in the days' accomplishment.