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1	Diary	Lady Bird Johnson's Diary, Pages 11-12		2	03/16/1968	C

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Initials 

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Saturday, March 16, 1968

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It was a stolen day - I hadn't really expected to have it. The Gold crisis; the Viet-Nam troop decision, had been pressing in on Lyndon so, I did not think he could go to Texas for Lynda's birthday, and to tell Chuck goodbye. And so I had put it out of my mind.

Then, at a meeting, about the Texas Park, with Doug Hubbard and Dr. Allen Kent, and Mr. Hendrickson from the National Park Service, on Friday, they had told me that they could go to Texas on very short notice. I enquired tentatively, "Like tomorrow?" Yes.

I had gotten word through Connie Worth, that Laurence Rockefeller was going to make it possible to have a long term plan for the Johnson Park, done by the National Park Service. And then maybe, I don't know how much, help out with the exhibits. I had asked Lyndon and he didn't hesitate a moment. "You all go to Texas and be with those children every day you can, right up until they leave."

And so, Friday afternoon, on the late plane, I'd gone down, arriving after considerable trouble, via San Antonio, and automobile on to the ranch, a little before 11:30.

~~And~~ Saturday morning, I woke to the most glorious weather, and Mr. Hubbard, and Dr. Kent, and Mr. Hendrickson, who'd arrived the night before, and been put in the Cedar house, meeting me for breakfast, bacon and eggs, and home made bread, in front of the picture window, looking out on the fields and the glorious blue sky.

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~~And~~ Then, with Laurence's binoculars, the four of us set out and toured the park area, getting out at the site of the visitor's center, and following the string outline of the building itself, and exploring the old log cabin, that had been revealed ~~xxx~~ when the Victorian siding was removed. Looked at the view of the ranch house, from what will be the front porch of the Visitor's Center.

And then all around the whole periphery, seeing the Longhorn^s in the pasture, grazing, and coming up on the buffalo, actually just within 10 feet of them in the car. We stopped at the old Sauer place, to look at the long story of man's life here, from the first little log structure, to the very German masonry work, white lime stone. And then on to the Victorian house with the gingerbread, and the oval glass fronts in the door. There was one little portion where they had the story of Texas fences, all within about a 50 foot space!

A picturesque stone ^{fence} ~~face~~, a split rail, barbed wire. They seemed really quite delighted at the potential. I showed them pictures of the wild flowers, from my albums; of what we can expect in Spring, and actually in the back yard of the Sauer place, I found my first blooming blue bonnet of the season. The ground is thick with them, and I began to get really excited, thinking about our trip April 5th to 9th, and then very especially, what I hope will be, a personal, happy trip with close friends ~~xxx~~ on the weekend

San Jacinto
of ~~Sancho~~ center day.

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We went back to the house without having seen the Danz place, which is, after all, the oldest of the log cabins, according to archaeologist Tunnel. Mr. Hubbard has already seen it and I thought he might take the others later in the day.

We got word that Lyndon was on his way, that he would arrive about two o'clock in the afternoon. I quickly changed the plans for our big meeting for the old birthplace house, and slipped into a dress, and we were off for Fredericksburg, where we met with Mrs. Art ^{KOWERT} ~~Gover~~ at the Pioneer Museum. She and Mr. Tyrus Cox, whose title is either head of the Historical Association, or Director of the Museum, I'm not sure; and the two wonderful old ladies who take everybody through, Mrs. Brody and Mrs. ^{Detjins} ~~Dechin~~.

They took us on the longest tour I've ever had there, a full hour, and I really think it impressed and amazed the Park Service people. They hadn't known the depth of the German culture here, the German language newspaper had flourished beginning shortly after the first settlers came in 1846 until some time in the 1940's.

^{KOWERT}
Mrs. ~~Gover~~ told me the delightful bit about having found in the records of their own paper, the announcement of Lyndon's birth, in German. And, alas, of course, giving him no name, he didn't have one then. I said, "How much was it - about two lines?" And she said, "No, about a line and a half." Anyway it will be fun to have.

On our way through, I took from my purse, my vanity and started to powder my nose. It ^{fell} with a sharp "Crack" to the floor, I shivered and

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before I could stop myself, said "I hope it didn't break." I picked it up, it had shattered. I thought of the last time I had broke a mirror - it was the day that Him died.

I could see signs of preparation for our visit, on the 5th. They are all so excited over it. For one thing, in the kitchen, there's no longer the enormous clutter, dozens and dozens of old iron kitchen utensils, dated 1840, 50, 60, 70. ^{Now there were} ~~It was~~ just approximately the number a family living ^{re} they would use. And in a big wooden bowl, there were fresh vegetables, just as though some one had brought them in from the garden! And here and there in the living room, where Baron Von ^{Mausebach's} ~~Moiseybock's~~ organ is the outstanding exhibit, there's a bouquet of flowers. So our wonderful little museum is getting into stride, with today's idea of how a museum should look.

I looked with fresh eyes at some of the display cases. Several of them are quite extraordinary. Enormous glass fronted, pieces of furniture, about 12 or more feet high. They came from one of the old hardware stores going out of business, I heard.

I asked how they got all these old artifacts, because the museum only began sometime in the 30's. They said they let it be known that the museum was going to open, and the people just dug them up, from their trunks, their attics, and barn lofts. And Mrs. Kowart said, in fact, they'd had quite an assemblage of them in the office of the paper for years, and they brought all

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of them over.

It is quite a community achievement. I take my hat off to it. We went into the little stone patio, centered by the well, ^{and} talked about this might be the place where they'd serve coffee and apple strudel to the foreign correspondents.

I was proud of our local area!

Next, we went to the ^{Tatsch} ~~Totch~~ House, and Mrs. Mueller took us through. Here, I saw another engraving ^{— there} ~~at~~ that had been one of the Museum - of Fredericksburg, ^{as} they looked in about the 1850's. They told us with pride, ^{that} the settlers that came over here, ^{and} were not all farmers, [—] some were artists, ^{and} musicians. The son of one had gone on to be the conductor of the outstanding symphony orchestra of the United States - New York or Boston, I believe.

Then we drove around town and looked at the outside of the little Sunday houses, St. Barnabas Church, the octagon looking shaped kirky, ^{Kierch?} the wide street of town, designed so that a double ox team could turn around without backing. ^{the}

~~And~~ headed for home, alerting Mary to have dinner ready for us as soon as we arrived. We sat down to ham, ^{and} grits. And we had just finished when we got word that the plane was coming in and I went out to the hangar to meet Lyndon, who was preceeded out of the plane by Yuki, and he had Patrick Lyndon in his arms - ^{id} he stopped in Austin long enough to gather him. Luci and Pat were off for a weekend, with friends in ^{Neuva} ~~Larena~~ Laredo.

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The Krims were with him, and I was so glad to see them, because I knew he would have a happy afternoon, riding and talking, and I needed to make use of my afternoon for the park.

For some peculiar sentimental reason, I had decided to have this meeting in the room at the birthplace house, rather than at the Cedar House, perhaps the more logical place, because I remember the wonderful day we spent in the house where Lyndon was born, with John Macy and John Gardner, and Chancellor Ransom, about eight of us, trying to bring into being, the Lyndon Johnson School of Public Service.

And so, about two, we gathered in the West room of the little house - Mr. William Gosdin, the head of the Texas State Parks; our three national park men, Doug Hubbard, and Dr. Kent, and Mr. Hendrickson; Curtis Tunnell, the Texas State archaeologist, who had written us a long letter about his explorations of the three log cabins in the park; Nancy ^{Kott} ~~Cox~~, the exhibits officer in the Texas State Parks; Roy White, Dr. Joe Franz, from the University, the historian on whom we will rely for the way that pioneers of that day lived; and Mr. Tyrus Cox, on whom I shall lean heavily to tie us in with local interest and cooperation.

There were several more people I'd wanted so much to ask - Wayne Bell, who had restored the Wined ^{ale} ~~ed~~ Stage Coach Inn; Mrs. Charles Bybee, who's restored a full dozen perhaps old places, ranging from the 1840's to the 1890's; W. W. ^{Yukum} ~~Yukum~~, head of the Texas Memorial Museum, and author of one of the chapters in A President's Country.

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Of course, I had asked Will Ody^m, without whom the whole project, would never have gotten off the ground, ^{but} he was out of town.

But the speed with which it was put together, made it difficult to get them all, and we did have a good talking group, which we certainly ^{did} for about four hours. We argued pro and con, ^{on} whether the log cabin right there next to the visitor's center, ^{should} be integrally attached to it, that ^{is} the roof lines combined, with just the interior of the cabin used as a exhibit area.

Roy held out that it should; all the National Park Service people agreed with him. I felt I didn't know enough to have an opinion. But Mr. Tunnell ^{Kott} alone and Miss ~~Cott~~ held out for a true restoration, which would necessarily separate it from the visitor's center and maybe make it out of place.

So, we decided to proceed as it was, that is, an integral part of the visitor's center, and we all decided that it would be best to set our sites on making it our first exhibit, that is, with the sort of bed, ^{and} chair, and rifle, ^{and} spinning wheel, ^{and} whatever, the settler of the 1870's, who lived there, ^{for} that is about the time Curtis Tunnell, the archaeologist says it was built, ^{would} have had in his home. And it was right here that one of the most useful statements of the day was made, by Mr. Tyrus Cox. He said ~~ix~~ he thought it would be no problem to find these artifacts, these articles ^{the} pioneered with. He thought that people still had them, and would be proud to donate them. I'll believe it when it happens, but it was a mighty cheering statement, and I am sure the Museum in Fredericksburg

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itself, has many that it cannot effectively display. I venture to hope that any that they may have in storage, they might be generous enough to lend us with proper credit.

Mr. Tunnell talked about some explorations at his diggings around the three cabins, to find in it bits and pieces of the things those pioneers had lived with, the sort of kitchen-^{midden}~~hitter~~ idea. And to find foundations of outside buildings.

^{Mr.} Frantz outlined for the National Park Service people, the history of the area, the German immigration, the Indians before that.

Incidentally, Curtis Tunnell said there was an Indian mound, not any particularly exciting possibility, but there, on the park premises.

I think it was a consensus of opinion, the National Park Service will proceed with the overall plan, and in about two weeks, Mr. ^{Goslin}~~Gysin~~, and Mr. Tunnell and Nancy Kott will come to Washington, and go to their laboratories, discuss further with them their plans.

The theme of the exhibits is Life in the Area, In Times Past, Indians, Germans, Cattle Drives - and there will probably be a map and some mention of the complex surrounding the President's home, the ranch house itself, the house where he was born, the family cemetery, his grandfather's home, the little school he first attended. All of these will be very simply pointed out, low key and minor, as long as we are in public office. This was what I kept on insisting on, and I think the idea was acceptable to

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every body.

I kept on bringing us back to the point, if the contract was let in May as they planned, the building would probably be finished between November 68 and January 69, and that we must have some sort of an exhibit for then - what would it be? And the assets that we had to go on were some very handsome Longhorns, several rather ratty looking buffalo, plenty of white tail deer, three old log cabins, and a view of the President's house; taken from there, what could we produce between now and next Christmas, let's say?

It was a meeting full of enthusiasm, with a good deal of "rabbit chasing" as Lyndon would have expressed it, but a lot of good suggestions tossed around and some decided on. And to me, it was another step forward for one of the dreams I hope to see come to pass.

Of course, I got in my word for plenty of wild flower seeds and for slides of the wild flowers, ~~of~~ the Edwards Plateau, to be viewed, perhaps, in one of those participating exhibits where you just punch a button.

We went up to the main house, close to six, and had beer and no~~t~~ches specials, made plans to keep in touch, each with the person with the particular expertize that he needed to explore further. And I insisting to Mr. Hubbard, that I did think it would be quite appropriate, whenever they could, for Mr. Kent and Mr. Hendrickson to see the little Fort complex in Johnson City, meet Jesse Hunter and Betty Weinheimer, and get a sort

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of a forecast of how many people might come to see this exhibit once it was done. ~~to~~ talk with Wayne Bell and Mrs. Charles Bybee about restorations. In short, there was much to be done in the locality, if they had the time, ~~to~~.

He felt that they would return to Washington the next morning, so we made them reservations, and I sent them down to the Lewis house to spend the night, half of me anxious to go with them and talk about it further.

And the other half anxious to get out in the car and join Lyndon, and Lynda Bird and Chuck who had come in about four or five o'clock, and the Krims.

It ended by Roy taking them to the Lewis place, and I set out at once, and we rode until dark drove us in. The pastures are already starred with a few little pink phlox and lots of blue-eyed grass. The elms are coming first, and the red oak in the back yard is just beginning to bud. I stopped once and I explored the northwest pasture and the 80 acres where I put out the blue bonnet seeds. There was a sprinkling, a justification, no great mass, alas, and then so much rain, I ^{dis}pair of ever getting our trees planted. The big live oak outside of my bedroom window; and we definitely have lost one of the live oaks, by Mr. Klein's workshop. Otherwise, the place is looking great, and I have Lyndon's permission to take down the bubble top over the swimming pool before we get back on April 5th.

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The John Hills and the Moursunds came for dinner. Lynda Bird and Chuck were on their daddy's right; the Krims, and Marie, and Diana Heiges, and it was a happy evening. I wonder if anybody who has been watching us would have thought it strange, that there was so little mention of the big event of the day - Bobby Kennedy's announcement.²

It had been in the back of my mind all day long because I knew he was going to have a press conference in the morning, but it was not until the Park people left, that I could ask somebody in our office, I think it was, what he had actually done and said. Yes, it's official; he's running. And then, just before dinner, Arthur Krim described his statement. He considered it dangerous; he was running not on personality reasons, he said, but to save the country from a perilous course on the Vietnamese war.

Arthur is deeply worried, I can see; and I bless him for caring.

The Moursunds and the Hills I would describe as just angry. And Lyndon as philosophical, he'd known it all along, I think, since the moment Bobby Kennedy walked into his office, the first time after John Kennedy's death.

It was Lyndon that suggested that we see Guess Who's Coming to Dinner, and we all went out to the hangar which is completed now, for showing movies, and very nice, except that it is hard to see from the back rows, because there is no incline.

I stayed for about the first 30 minutes of it and then went in. Lynda and Chuck had gone in, and Lynda and I had a good long talk, all about Acapulco, how she feels, their plans.

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SANITIZED

The others came back into the living room about 11:30, and amazingly, did not leave it once. We talked about the movie. It's odd that Lyndon should admire it, and find it so interesting that he would see it twice, when he usually goes to sleep after the first 10 minutes of any movie.

Mathilde is sure that this is the shape of things to come, and I sadly, expect it is. A. W. is solidly against it, and doesn't want it to be shown to impressionable young people, he is a conservative to his bones and I doubt that the changing world around him, will change him, although he might be the last of a breed.

The gold situation is teetering perilously, close to some black chasm, and from the little I know, it's ^{clear} ~~either~~ the French are hurting us as much as they can, and the British helping us as much as they can, and Lyndon, Joe Fowler, all the Administration people, working as hard as they can, to achieve some stability in it.

And so with this mixture of problems, and blessings, my dear husband went to bed about midnight, and I remembered one amusing little vignette of the morning, at the ^{Tatch} ~~Tatch~~ House, when Miss Mueller was describing the early life of the German settlers, in the 1850's. She showed us a little pewter lamp, and she said they used bear grease as a fuel in it. I asked, "Do we have bear in this country?" And she said yes, the Indians would

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kill them, put the grease in deerskin sacks, and bring them into town to sell, to be used in frying, and as fuel for lamps.

And she described how the peace that Baron Von Meusebach made with the Comanche Indians, included terms of trade, where they would come into the community and bring things to sell.

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