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Events, emotions, duties followed so fast on each others heels that there was no chance for real savoring, for full enjoyment.

I was up early. I had to leave for Mr. Per's by 8:30. I had heard that the children of the Nixon Administration were going to be brought through the White House on a tour by Tricia. Liz of course, the everguardian, alerted me. I called Luci who is no hand to get up early, particularly after a State Dinner. But she rose magnificently to the occasion. And while I was at Mr. Per's under the dryer, she was standing promptly at the Diplomatic entrance saying, "Welcome to the White House" to Tricia and the 33 or so children of the Nixon Cabinet appointees, escorted them through the house while Jim Ketchum gave details of history and art. She filled them in on all sort of warm family happenings in each room together with a dose of philosophy -- "It can be the loneliest place in the world or the most rewarding. It can be as much as you put into it." And meanwhile from the other side of the world we got word that Chuck had joined Lynda in Bangkok. They had as the papers expressed it gone into five days seclusion.

I used my time under the dryer to read the report of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House, covering the whole five years of its existence, to go over in my mind the agenda of the meeting and the members that would be present. And at 11:30 feeling crisp and

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smart in my black wool by Mollie Parnis went into the Yellow Oval Room to greet for the last time the Committee for the Preservation of the White House. Mr. Henry du Pont. And I consider it something of a triumph that in these years I believe he has come to like me. And Alice Brown who was going to spend the night was already settled in the Queens' Room. And ebullient Bill Benton who had flown in all the way from Phoenix for this meeting. And the six who are members because of their jobs -- George Hartzog and Jim Ketchum and Dillon Ripley and John Walker and Bill Walton and J. B. West and Rex Scouten as Executive Secretary. Absent were the other public members; Mrs. Aristotle Onassis and Jim Fosburg who has pneumonia and had written me a very sad letter. And Jane Engelhard whose absence is a blow -- we all depend on her vitality. But she is in the hospital and has just had surgery. And Mrs. Marshall Field who had just telephoned this morning that she was down with the flu.

The fire was crackling and the room was lovely and I had a sense of well-being and accomplishment as I looked around the group in spite of the last-minute blow on the Madison portrait.

I welcomed all the members and reporting on the absent ones. And then turned it over to George Hartzog who talked about the changes

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in visitors' service. And Mr. West who told about the closets by
~~Hammock~~ Schlemmer
Hammock Eschlimer and the new rug in the State Dining room.

Here a ripple of applause led by Alice Brown. And in the family
dining room with a painting of the Mansion.

And then John Walker took over and gave a report on the
White House Historical Association which had given the House
\$50,000 for the calendar year '68 -- most of it we had applied toward
the Madison -- and we would have another \$50,000 for the calendar
year '69. This in spite of the fact that visitorship had fallen off in
the White House because of the April riots. I think it has gone down
to about a million, 275 thousand instead of the record million nearly
800 thousand. And here Dillon Ripley and John Walker and J. B. West
all joined in comparisons of figures with how our various monuments
had fared in visitorship following the April riots. It has been an
across-the-board thing. People had simply not come to Washington
in droves. They had in other summers, though actually the summer
remained more peaceful than had been expected.

And then Jim Ketchum reported on the acquisitions in the field
of art. The four Glackens were the main thing. We had three of them
hung in the second floor hall. The two most delightful ones flanking
the entrance to Lynda's and Luci's room. And they are delightful there.
I hope they stay. And the still life to the right of the entrance to the

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Yellow Room. And the smaller one in the Queens' Room keeping happy company with Pendegast. They give a complete new feel to that hall -- one of warmth and home and people. I thought the Catlins were smashing decoratively -- such a broad sweep of them. But I never really enjoyed them.

And then he passed around pictures of the two mantels by Latrobe that have been given to the White House from Brentwood. They had gone into a house that Latrobe had built in 1816 for the then Mayor of Washington, as Jim expressed it. And Latrobe had just about the same time been working on the White House after it was fired by the British.

The long, long thread of history keeps winding through this house. It's wonderful to have them. We talked about where they should go. Jim and Mrs. West said there were two rooms where the mantels had no particular historic significance or architectural beauty and recommended them -- that is, my bedroom and what is now Luci's bedroom.

Meanwhile, George passed around copies of the report to the President from the Committee and asked everyone to read it as soon as they could and call back on any suggestions or changes. And Jim passed out a list of acquisitions from '64 to the end of '68. Of the recent ones we had on due were two little miniatures of President

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McKinley and his wife. And yet another -- an oil painting of George Washington in an idealic country setting -- a very British look.

I thanked them all informally and warmly for their work on the Committee, and leaving achieved that sort of feeling that is possible only with people who have worked together on a project they all love. I shall miss these people too, as well as my Beautification Committee. Of course there is some overlapping.

Bill Benton said something I treasured. He spoke of the fact that I had sent him a picture of me standing beside the Robert Henri that he had given to the White House. He said, "You know a politician's wife should have an infinite capacity for detail. You have. That's the most thoughtful thing for you to have done. My wife and I were so pleased." Of course I beamed. And then he went on to say what has been our big mistake as a Committee -- we have not publicized our successes, our acquisitions for this house, nor our goals, all the pictures that we wanted, the John Singleton Copley and the George Caleb Bingham and the Benjamin West, the Eastman Johnson. And he is so right. I came very late and timorously to the uses of power. I really turned aside from it, half knowing what could be done with the leverage of the White House, an invitation here, a hand-written

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letter there, a story planted with a columnist about how much the White House wanted The John Singleton Copley, let us say. It would have been possible to create an atmosphere that it was smart and very, very patriotic to give a painting to the White House. And I did not work at doing it. Would I do it over if I had the chance? I think perhaps so. I think I would be a more positive person. Yes, there were some stories, but not many.

Meanwhile, sherry was being passed and I unveiled the Madame Shoumatoff portrait of Lyndon and also of myself. They had seen the one of me before -- most of the members. And there was that hushed moment when you waited to hear what anyone would say. To my disappointment actually they said very little. Dillon Ripley spoke up with an expression of approval of Lyndon's portrait. And Alice with a much warmer, firmer expression. Someone asked me, "Does he like it?" I said, "Very much, and I do too."

About 1:00 the 11 of us went in to lunch in the Treaty Room. We had used the china of the day when the Victorian Treaty Room was the very height of fashion. Our place plates, the bizarre Rutherford B. Hayes hand-painted china of flora and fauna. And our dinner plates, the Benjamin Harrison china -- one of my favorites -- with goldenrod and corn and wheat. And there were some Lincoln pieces on the

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table with flowers in them. And we ate off of one of Mrs. Merriweather Post's elegant table cloths. Mr. du Pont was on my right, and it was a pleasant time -- full of talk of the house and what we hoped for its future. We agreed that we ought to make some plans toward getting great artists of today to leave a painting to the White House. For instance I said I would love to see an Andrew Wythe hang here some day. And John Walker volunteered to write him and make the request. Meanwhile in the intervening several decades a painting could hang at the National Gallery.

The whole meeting was permeated for me at least with the thought that this was the last time we would be together as a group.

When lunch was over, we trooped downstairs into the depths of this great house and saw the Latrobe mantels laid out on the floor in the room where Luci's gifts had been kept, and later Lynda's. They were lovely. And then we went upstairs, and I led everybody into my bedroom. Yes, they all agreed the larger mantel would be great here. No one mentioned what would happen to the plaque on the present fireplace. Although later Alice Brown had her say about it. Take it off. We even stuck our heads in the door to Luci's room. Yes, the smaller one would be charming there.

And then I invited Mr. du Pont to take a rest in the Lincoln Bedroom, and Bill Benton upstairs. Jim Ketchum would escort

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him. I told them I very much hoped they would be back for the Reception in their honor. And by 2:00 I was in my bedroom in time to do a little work, call Jane Engelhard in the hospital and tell her how much we missed her. And Liz to make plans for the pictures with Mrs. Nixon and Tricia at 5:30. And Jim Ketchum to discuss some of our donors who were coming this afternoon -- will you have Louise Cox' silver coffee service out on the buffet, and do be sure to put the Library on the tour since the Joseph Hirschhorns were coming. And also point out the Russell bronze to all the guests because I wanted Mr. Armand Hammer to know how much it was appreciated. And most importantly, make sure that everyone saw the four new Glackens because the donor, Mr. Ira Glackens, the son of the painter himself, was one of the guests. And I most especially wanted him to see how they brightened the house. Alas for such hostess plans, later on at the Reception the first lady down the line in the Green Room cast a quick look around and then demanded, "Where are the arm chairs I gave?" I could only feebly reply, "Oh the lovely ones that always sit one by each of these sofas." And then a helpful voice by my side (I do not remember who from this wonderful White House staff) said, "We've moved them into the East Room during the reception." Actually, it was a very small crowd -- only about 85. Besides the members

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of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House they were chiefly donors. Susan Mary Alsop, alone. Joe is still in Viet-Nam. They had given a lovely English Sheraton drop-leaf mahogany table years ago. And the Bill Barnackes whom I had last seen on a platform in Georgetown, Texas. He is one of the Library donors. And Mrs. Mark Bortman who had given the Adams coffee urn -- the first great thing I had brought to the White House. And I had added Jean and Price Daniel because she is both interested and knowledgeable in the old houses like this and is writing a book on the Governors' homes of the 50 States for which I had done the Foreword. And the young, attractive Dick Dietricks who had given the Fannie Kimball and had lent us the John Singleton Copley. Lynda's friends, the John Flemings from New York. And I pointed out the Dolley Madison they had given me in the West Hall.

Several of my library-oriented friends -- the Deputy Director of Presidential Libraries, Dr. and Mrs. Frank Evans. And also Evans Walker from the Office of Presidential Libraries. And Kay Halley who brought a nephew of Winston Churchill. They paused on the first floor to look at the bust by Epstein of Sir Winston.

Our old friends, the Connie Wirths. And I had invited my cousins, the Winston Prathers -- she's a professor out at the

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University of Maryland. And Mrs. Emma ^{Guffey} Guthrie Miller who had come to say goodbye and was escorted around on the arm of an aide. And of course to me the lions of the afternoon were the Joe Hirshhorns -- a perpetual favorite of mine. And Ira Glackens, a genial, tweedy man from another era with whom I spent the most time and picked up some delightful bits of stories. His father had known Pendegast. In fact Pendegast had painted him when he was about 7 I think and he was delighted to have one of his father's paintings hanging in company with a Pendegast.

Alice Brown was playing with perfection the role of helpful guest by explaining to the Richard Dietricks just how perfect the John Singleton Copley was there. And expressing her delight to Mr. Glackens in his gifts. And I could have purred as I listened to her.

After the brief reception line there had been a tour up to the second floor. And then we invited everybody down to the State Dining Room for refreshments. This -- a last-minute reversal, hoping that the stay upstairs wouldn't seem too ungraciously brief and that everyone would be back in the dining room by the time 5:30 came and the Nixons were at the door.

Luci was standing in for me down at the Diplomatic entrance. But by 5:30 I felt that I had talked to everyone, thanked and indeed enjoyed

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and I could make my departure without being rude. So I actually was at the South Portico along with Lyndon and Luci a few moments before the President-elect and Pat and Tricia drove up in the big black car. We stopped for pictures -- the great battery of lights in front of us flashing. And then the men went over to Lyndon's office. How easily that phrase comes. And Luci and I took Pat and Tricia up to the second floor to the West Hall family room. I had gone carefully in my mind over a possible agenda to discuss with her. Could I mention Blanco? I had finally, as usually I do with all the hard things, left it up to Lyndon. I did tell her that Bess Abell would be glad to help her social secretary out with any of the background, any of the details that she could be helpful. And I described to her the makeup and the work of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House. And once over lightly the wonderful services of the wonderful staff of this house -- the flower room, Betty Tilson's office, the smooth continuing operation of the maids and the butlers -- some of whom have been here through many administrations under the general direction of that very undescriptive title, The Usher, and the housekeeper. They couldn't have been nicer -- Pat and Tricia. But actually they smiled a lot and said very little. I do not have any idea at all what her plans will be in regard to the Committee for the Preservation of the White

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House or what part of her husband's administration she will be most active in. As a matter of fact why should I or anybody at this point. Everyone, every First Lady, must make her own way, must find the things to which she responds with joy and excitement and work on them.

I offered tea and coffee. Actually they were as I was just about afloat at this point. Washington days can be like that. And Luci chattered along about the tour this morning, and Tricia about the rest of the tour of the Capitol and over the town. Luci was a star throughout -- at least in her fond mother's eyes.

A little past 6:00 Marcia brought a flank of photographers (I think there were about 20) up to the West Hall, and they took some pictures of the four of us sitting and chatting. And then went away, and we began to walk around to show Tricia the rooms that might possibly be hers, with special accent on Luci's and Lynda's rooms. And I pointed out how wonderful the great bank of closet space was between those two rooms -- by far the best closet space in the house. And then up to 303 which lovely though it is was really better for a guest room considering the closet space. And Luci laughed about how the tourists would be under her window on a summer morning by 8:30 -- some 6,000 strong, but how one would get used to it.

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Mrs. Nixon was interested in the warehouse and the sort of furniture out there and the amount of budget she would have to do over the private part of the house. She spoke jokingly of how her daughter Julie had taken a great deal of her furniture for the new apartment she and David would have. And I assured her there would be plenty in the warehouse and that through the regular appropriation she would have plenty, or so I thought, to make their bedrooms and the West Hall seem like home. And I think I underlined a bit -- I meant to -- that the \$50,000 from the White House Historical Association would be for the purchase of works of art or items of historical interest.

We went for the second time into my bedroom which I think is so lovely. She did give me a clue here when she said she just didn't like a canopy bed. And I had a quick mental vision of my bed being moved into one of the guest rooms -- possibly Lynda's or Luci's with the other one becoming Tricia's room. I hope it doesn't go to the warehouse. Actually, her main concern seemed to be the Cuban couple that she was bringing with them and where they should stay. And we looked carefully once more in the upstairs third floor rooms and walked through the servants' quarters. And I learned by far the most I had ever known about them. I thought it was very nice that her regard for their comfort was so thorough.

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Suddenly it dawned on me a little past 7:00 that we were supposed to go to the return engagement of the Kuwait's. I had completely forgotten it. I wasn't dressed. I excused myself for one moment while Luci took over and went and jumped into my pink lace cage and was back in moments not too soon because about that time our husbands appeared and we left the Nixons with Luci with excuses and goodbyes and left late for the Kuwait Embassy. And here occurred one of those funny bits that once more says it's time to depart. As we emerged from the Diplomatic room there was a long line of big black chauffeured limousines. We started as we always had to get into the lead one. Suddenly we realized it was strange. And then we tried the second. And finally the Secret Service ushered us into the fourth, which was ours. Quite naturally one would expect a guest to depart first. And so the President-elect's was at the head of the group. And then we tore off down the driveway, and the President-elect's motorcycle escort blared out in front of us. We called them off on the walkie-talkie and proceeded to the Kuwait Embassy -- a lovely new building. Very much the stamp of the East with grills and tilework on a wooded street down on the edge of the park. And there at the door was the Emir himself and the Ambassador and the party in the long black Arab robes banded with gold embroidery, the white headdress also

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banded in gold and flowing over their shoulders. And lovely Madame Talaat Al-Ghoussein looking absolutely smashing in a gown that was like their's but also very western -- short, black, sharp with gold embroidery and fluffy little white ruffles around the neck and wrists. A stunning woman.

The Emir led Lyndon, and I followed with Al-Ghoussein into the most crowded room I have ever seen. Fortunately it was very, high ceilinged. There must have been all of the 1200 guests they had invited in that one room. And to my shock and amazement I saw Ashton in the crowd. We made our way through shaking hands to right and left. The only thing to do at an Embassy Reception is to see and be seen. And then presently our hosts escorted us into a charming low-ceilinged room. The walls were lined with sofas and big fat cushions on the floor and little tables that looked like hammered brass, elaborately decorated. And in the corner, great big brass water pipes. Were they for smoking or decoration? At any rate it all spoke of Kuwait -- the tile, the grill work, the paneling -- which had in fact they said come from an old house in their country.

An attractive young woman whom I could scarcely understand came in and sat beside me and was introduced as the daughter of the Emir. I think her name was Awatif. And I was chagrined that she

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had been in this Country last night and had not been at the White House. Actually Bess told me later, "We had tried hard to locate her. She was traveling with her husband, separate from her father, quite intentionally, not wanting her visit to be official."

All the women were very attractive. Presently the waiters brought in on an enormous platter a roast lamb, brown and juicy, stuffed with rice. And as they sliced him open and began to serve plates I discovered that there were all sorts of nuts and spices in the rice. It was a delicious dish. We had quite a feast sitting there on the little sofa -- at least I did. I noticed that Madame Al-Ghoussein who was really managing everything and very skillfully considering the crowd -- directions with her eyes and hands and then turning back to me for some gracious words while I proceeded hungrily to eat the menu of a Kuwaitite feast. None of them of course had anything to drink -- just fruit juice. They believe in prohibition and they practice it. But they don't impose it on their guests apparently.

Lyndon and the Emir and the Ambassador and from time to time other men in long robes talked quietly on one of the low sofas -- no women around them. Later Lyndon told me that he thought it would be a good idea if the Emir would have a quiet visit with Nixon while he was here. It would be useful to our two countries.

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I think we broke a record for staying at an Embassy party. And it was after 9:00 when we left. And I had wished every moment of the time that Lynda Bird could have been there. She likes and feels close to the Kuwaites. And I had told them how much she adores Lucinda's hope chest which will be a family heirloom.

On the way back in the car I thought with chagrin of George and Alice and George's ulcers. I asked the Secret Service to phone the Usher and get them some food immediately and walked in full of apologies about 9:30 confessing that we had had our dinner.

The four of us sat in the West Hall and this will be the last time. But that is the refrain against which all these days are played now.

We had a drink and we had their dinner brought in on a tray. And Arthur Krim came in and joined us. And we talked about all the vacation spots we were going to after January 20th. I can't think of better companions on a trip than George and Alice.

When they had finished their dinner, I called Mr. Pierce and asked him to put up the Madison portrait and turn on the lights. And the five of us went downstairs and stood silently in the Blue Room and looked at the Vanderlin Madison, strong and handsome -- just great -- and the poor faded copy on the floor beside it. And I was full of pride that we had brought it to the house -- after all the house has waited 150 years for a good Madison and a few months more don't

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matter. It won't hang while we are here. But there is a little niggling doubt in my mind that there might be some cloud on the title of the portrait and not just the proceeds of the money.

We had a long, happy, quiet talk, and then said goodnight.

We went to bed reading over the big news of the day -- the names and brief biographies of all of Nixon's Cabinet. Of course some of them had leaked before and it was a big disappointment to me that there wasn't a single Rockefeller anywhere in it. But one big plus was that Nixon has said he will reappoint Mayor Washington. And Walter will accept. Next to the Ambassador to the U.N. it is probably the roughest job, the most hopeless job. But in my opinion he is absolutely the best man for it, Walter is. I am so glad Nixon has left him there. And completely on the other side of the political spectrum, there was some happy news from one of the Kennedys. Ethel's baby is born -- the eleventh child -- a daughter. We must send a wire tomorrow. I thought of her touching one to Lynda.

And so a day that was full of last-times came to an end around midnight -- and to bed.