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World & I



What Kennedy Thought of Johnson

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INSIDE STUFF: An unexpected salvo has been leveled against Lyndon B. Johnson — and from an unexpected critic in this election year. She is Elizabeth Lincoln, who joined John F. Kennedy as personal secretary shortly after he was elected to the Senate, and remained with him until his death.

Very much a Kennedy person, and author of a previous book, "My Twelve Years With John F. Kennedy,"

Mrs. Lincoln spills a few secrets in "Kennedy & Johnson," a record of their running mutual antagonism.

JFK and LBJ simply didn't get along well, Mrs. Lincoln tells us. They hadn't since they both jockeyed for the presidential nomination of 1960 when Mr. Johnson finally backed Hubert Humphrey in the West Virginia primary seeking to eliminate JFK right there. Mr. Kennedy's first choice for vice president after the nomination, she reminds us, was Orville Freeman.

This book was in the news recently when Senator Robert F. Kennedy denied her statement that Mr. Kennedy had decided to dump Mr. Johnson from the 1964 election ticket. She relies on a detailed daily diary of everything that happened in



Mr. Kennedy's office, and one tends to believe in her position as "sieve" for all information coming into that office. Mrs. Lincoln on Mr. Kennedy's choice for 1964:

"At this time," he is quoted, "I am thinking about Governor Terry Sanford of North Carolina. But it will not be Lyndon."

At best, "Kennedy & Johnson" is a footnote to history. Mrs. Lincoln admits she is not a professional historian. Yet there are painful moments that show Mr. Kennedy seldom at ease with Mr. Johnson. One particularly distressing vignette describes Mr. Kennedy's pain during a pre-election visit to the LBJ ranch; the 6 a. m. deer-stalking assignments, and perpetual blare of loudspeakers relaying ranch orders, or just piping Musak.

After the election, she tells us, Mr. Johnson was always after her to get him on important White House social guest lists. Other embarrassing out-of-office tales range from Mr. Johnson's lifting the President's personal copy of the New York Times to tantrums, abusive language and the Vice President's irritating habit of shaking his finger under the President's nose and saying: "But now let me tell you, Jack."

Mrs. Lincoln's diary entries carry a certain gossip value, and certainly emphasize once again the vast difference in political styles of the two men. President Kennedy was acutely aware of this. Perhaps, Mrs. Lincoln writes, the difference between them is best summed up in a wire Mr. Johnson sent to Mr. Kennedy when the Kennedy baby was born: "Name that boy Lyndon Johnson and a heifer calf will be his."

Kennedy & Johnson. By Evelyn Lincoln. Holt, Rinehart & Winston; 207 pp.; \$4.95.