

'My Life With Jacqueline

Jackie's Spending

This is the seventh article in a series on what it was like to work for Jacqueline Kennedy, by her former personal secretary.

By Mary Barelli Gallagher

My battle with the President's budget—or, I should say, his wife's—became so serious that I would take the long way around in the White House halls to avoid meeting him. I just couldn't stand the reproachful look on his face.

In July, 1961, I had been obliged to report to the President that Jackie's personal expenses for the second quarter of the year had totaled about \$35,000. Almost half went for clothes.

The amount we had sent to one couturier alone — Givenchy of Paris — stands out in my mind: over \$4000. I haven't forgotten that because at the time it occurred to me that I could dress for years on what Jackie had spent in this three month period with Givenchy.

However, I don't recall that I ever saw a single bill from Oleg Cassini, the First Lady's favorite couturier, in spite of the many gowns he made for her.

Jackie seemed to be a compulsive buyer. She had the habit of checking the newspapers, for items — big and small — from the department stores. She would tear out ads as she read the paper and ask me to order for her from the "Mary B. Gallagher — Special" account.

In a typical month, I would order from Bloomingdale's, Bergdorf Goodman, Gimbel's, Bonwit Teller, Best & Co., Lord & Taylor, and others.

There was one period, I recall, when she seemed to be going through a boots craze — I ordered pair after pair of them!

Often, when Jackie would go over the books, she would say to me, "Mary, where do you think my heaviest expenses lie?" Invariably, I would answer, "Clothing."

She would seem not to hear me, and would go on questioning how she could economize, picking such other areas as food and liquor and usually ending up with the little items in miscellaneous.

Liked Antiques

Jackie had a blind spot for antiques, too. It came

as no surprise when Evelyn Lincoln called me one day with a message from the President. I can't remember her words exactly, but the call came right after I had delivered the most recent statement of expenses to him. He blew up. He was questioning one item in particular through

Kennedy'

Infuriated JFK

Evelyn, and I could hear his voice as though he himself had been on the line:

"What the hell are we paying Janet Felton over \$1000 for?"

I immediately checked. The money was for a Diette clock with a horse design. Jackie had ordered it through Janet, who had formerly worked for her in the Curator's Office and was now married and living in France.

For a while after that Jackie seemed to become unduly meticulous: I found myself itemizing such trivial things as powder puffs from Julius Garfinckel's — \$1.13.

November 28, 1962, was, as it turned out, a "day of days" with Jackie! I'll never forget those fast, colorfully worded, endless memos!

She informed Tish Baldrige that food and liquor had been flowing as though it were the last days of the Roman Empire, and that the drinks were far too strong and served too fre-

quently.

Limit on Drinks

She went on to give Tish her new plan to set a limit on the number of cocktails or drinks served to any guest: One—and two if he or she really insisted on it.

Also, Jackie felt that from then on, only two wines should be served at official stag luncheons, so that men who had to work all afternoon wouldn't go back to their offices groggy

from cocktails and three wines.

She also instructed Anne Lincoln, the housekeeper, to tell the butlers to refill those glasses that looked relatively unfinished and didn't have lipstick marks on the edge. Jackie said to pass them around again.

As long as she was ordering a clamp-down on liquor, she also put her foot down on the ordering of expensive foods, such as, smoked salmon and sturgeon. She made mention of the fact, too, that the help were ordering huge roasts for themselves at Glen Ora while the children ate hamburgers.

Wanted to See Bills

As she busied herself with all these instructions, her husband was also busying himself with a note to me! Evelyn typed it up and sent it over — on that very same day, ironically enough — November 28, 1962!

The President, Evelyn noted, had told her to get in touch with me about the monthly bills. He wanted to see them after this, before I wrote out the checks.

It was about two weeks later when Jackie picked up the budget once again! She wanted presents for the children, coming in from various admirers, to be scanned to see if they could be used as Christmas gifts for her children and Lee's.

This, in itself, was unusual, because gifts to the White House were ordinarily sent to charitable organizations. I could see that this new practice would lighten her load in the "Miscellaneous" column of her budget.

She also wanted Kenny O'Donnell to suggest any kind of liquor as a welcome gift for the President, as that was where the worst bills were.



Princess Lee Radziwill, foreground, and Jackie stroll around a London

antique dealer's showroom during one of her shopping tours in June 1961.

Provi, who often bought Jackie's cosmetics, was told to be frugal — and also to order something cheap for Jackie's bubble bath.

Jackie asked that the kitchen use every bit of food sent as a gift to the White House. And she wanted the mail room not to send food gifts automatically to orphanages any longer. Instead, they were to be sent to Anne Lincoln. And if the White House received several turkeys, some of them should be put in the freezer.

I don't think I'll ever forget the day I walked into Jackie's bedroom and found her propped up in bed, looking at a picture catalog for trading stamps! She beamed when he saw me.

"Oh, Mary, do you know what I've just learned from Anne Lincoln?" she exclaimed. "You know, all the food we buy here at the White House? Well, she told me that with the stamps the stores give us, we can trade them in for these marvelous gifts!"

Alas, after I battled with the Annual Statement of Expenses for 1962, I was forced to report to the

President that Jackie's spending had not lessened over the previous year.

Her total expenditures for 1962 came to \$121,461.61 — against \$105,446.14 for her

first year at the White House.

It always amazed me that Jackie spent more in a year on family expenses than the President's salary of \$100,000!

NEXT: The War of the Wages.

See also this file 28 Jun 69.