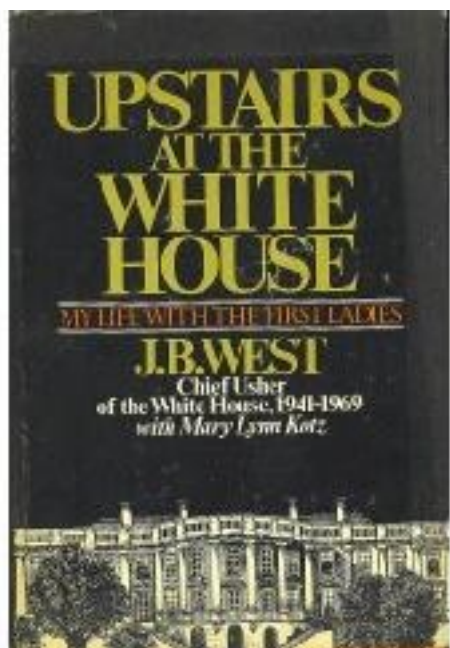


Upstairs at the White House;: My life with the First Ladies,



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著者:J.B. West

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J.B. West, the former Chief Usher at The White House, gives us an insider's view of America's most famous mansion. But this is hardly a boring house tour. Mr. West - in a dignified but very readable account - focuses on the Presidents, First Ladies, and their children, all who made this house on Pennsylvania Avenue a home. With great empathy and appreciation, he recalls the experience of working for Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, Harry and Bess Truman, Dwight and Mamie Eisenhower, John and Jacqueline Kennedy, and Lyndon and Lady Bird Johnson.

Each family had their own style that the White House staff had to adjust to, from the

reserved Roosevelts, to the refined young Kennedys, to the big-as-Texas style of Lyndon Baines Johnson which was in contrast with Lady Bird, his considerate and composed wife.

His portrayals of the First Families are not condescending, yet they are still very respectful. In his position, Mr. West worked closely with the First Ladies and each one had personal qualities that he grew to admire.

The accounts of ceremonies, dinners and banquets, remodelings, sudden changes, and visits by various dignitaries are all compelling reading in themselves. But we get an even more significant historical viewpoint through the description of the events that took place in The White House during crises, such as FDR's death, the attempted shooting of Truman, the Kennedy assassination, LBJ's announcement that he would not seek another term.

Surely, there were frustrations, and many of them are recorded in the book while others were avoided. For instance, I'm sure that Mr. West knew about some of JFK's White House trysts but chose not to write about them. If he would have, the book would have been even more successful than it was.

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