

**CSPAN SERIES, ELIZA JOHNSON**  
**MAY 9, 2014**

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MALE: She was close to being broken by the time she went to the White House.

FEMALE: This is the earliest existing house. They lived here through the 1830s and 1840s.

MALE: She was educated and she had taught school.

FEMALE: Eliza would read to him in this shop while he worked making suits for the men of town.

FEMALE: The North and the South fought over the occupation of Greeneville all through the Civil War. It changed hands over 26 times.

FEMALE: Andrew and Eliza did purchase slaves. So they did have domestic help.

FEMALE: It was used as a hospital. It was used as a place to stay, and it was basically destroyed.

FEMALE: Eliza being ill with tuberculosis wasn't able to get out much.

FEMALE: Eliza received many gifts that she brought home with her.

FEMALE: This is the room she returned to after their years in the White House.

MALE: She's just obscure, as she probably would've wanted it. But she's who he needed.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SUSAN SWAIN: Abraham Lincoln's assassination, just weeks after his second inaugural shocked a war-ravaged nation, and brought his Southern Democrat Vice President, Andrew Johnson, into the White House.

Johnson's wife, Eliza, was 54 years old and an invalid when she was thrust into the role of first lady, determined to be a helpmate to her husband as he navigated the turbulent end of the Civil War, reconstruction in the South, and his own impeachment.

This week on CSPAN's First Ladies, the life and times of Eliza McCardle Johnson.

Good evening, and thank you for being with us. As we learn more about Eliza Johnson, let me introduce you to our two guests, who will help us do that. Jacqueline Berger is in the midst of a three-volume biography collection on the first ladies, called "Love, Lies, and Tears: the Lives of America's First Ladies" and she's joining us from her home in southern California.

Kendra Hinkle is a Greeneville, Tennessee native, as Andrew Johnson is, and a longtime employee of the National Park Service. She serves as a museum technician at the Andrew Johnson National Historic Site. Thanks for being with us tonight.

Jacqueline Berger, we're going to start with setting the scene. The country had lost presidents before through natural death, but this was the first assassination. So, what was it like in Washington, D.C., the Capitol and in the White House? Was it an orderly transition, or chaos, or something in between?

JACQUELINE BERGER: Well, as you can well imagine, Susan, in the very beginning, it was just disbelief. They just could not believe that it had happened. But Secretary Stanton really took charge immediately and he decided that the president was going to be -- there was going to be a funeral in the East Room, and he went ahead and had -- I believe the gentleman's name was Major French, set up the funeral and do everything for it. And he was -- went to work immediately to elaborate, you know, this most beautiful funeral for the president.

And unfortunately, the first lady, who was upstairs, constantly in tears and in mourning, they were building this beautiful setting for this funeral, and they were banging and hammering, and all night long, she would call downstairs and ask them to please stop because she thought gunshots were going off into the -- inside the White House. So, it was pretty terrifying for her.

SWAIN: Well, to the transition in government, how is it, Kendra Hinkle, that a Republican president ended up with a Southern Democrat as his vice president?

KENDRA HINKLE: Mm-hmm. A unique situation, and one since Abraham Lincoln was trying to appeal to a broader segment of the population. In another sense, I think he was making good on his second inaugural, to bind up the nation's wounds.

So, he was trying to bring the North and South back together again, because Johnson was a Southerner, he was a Democrat, he was intensely loyal to the Union. He was the only Senator who retained his seat when all the other Senators from the South left. And he had spent time as Tennessee's military governor, restoring a Union government there, and freeing the slaves in Tennessee while he was military governor. So, he was a good choice.

SWAIN: How prepared was he for the job of president?

HINKLE: Well, he had held nearly every political office that you can hold on the rise to the presidency. It was just a completely different situation going in after Lincoln's assassination, it was just a very chaotic time.

SWAIN: But in fact, the new president's graciousness towards Mary Lincoln made it difficult for him in his transition. How did that all work?

BERGER: Well, it was difficult in the beginning. Mary, of course was upstairs, like I say, in total mourning, and she remained there for about six weeks.

SWAIN: Six weeks.

BERGER: So, the new president was gracious enough to not set up his office in the White House, so that he could give her time to make the adjustment. It was pretty difficult on him, and although in the very beginning, he was obviously shaken to the core, he started to get into action very quickly. He was prepared to take over the presidency.

SWAIN: Where did he work during that time?

HINKLE: At the Treasury Department.

BERGER: At the Treasury Department in Washington, and his family was not here, so...

HINKLE: No, they came later.

SWAIN: The -- and what were his early days like? Do you have a sense of how he adjusted himself and how quickly he assumed the control of the country and what was going on?

HINKLE: It was kind of two-sided, because at one point it was very tumultuous because he had the grand revue (ph), he had the Lincoln trial, and murders to deal with. On another hand, it was somewhat his golden hour, because Congress wasn't in session, so he just immediately jumped in to trying to implement a variation of Lincoln's very lenient plan of restoration for the South.

SWAIN: In fact, weren't there still in the early days some skirmishes going on from the Civil War?

HINKLE: I'm sure there were, yeah.

SWAIN: So, that was hardly settled in a lot of people's minds.

Taking over this job, at this particular time, in this city, I mean, he had a cabinet that he inherited.

BERGER: That's correct.

SWAIN: So, what were his challenges?

BERGER: Well, he made the decision to keep the cabinet. He said, you know, "this is what I have and I'm going to live with it the best I can." And he discovered later on that might not have been the best decision for himself, because he was constantly struggling with him. They thought for sure that he would go ahead and have a harsher stance on the South, and Johnson did not. He had a very lenient opinion on how he wanted the South and the North to get back together.

So, he had a very, very difficult time with Congress, with the Senate.

SWAIN: We've used the word tumultuous in many of the weeks of this series, but this four years in particular seems to deserve the description. Here's a look at just some of the highlights of that time period, the four years that he's been in office.

First of all, in 1865, his first year, the 13th Amendment was ratified. Those of you who saw the movie Lincoln will remember that that was the great fight. In 1867, vetoes the Tenure of Office Act, which ultimately led to his impeachment, and suspended Secretary of War Edwin Stanton.

In 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution was ratified. That was one of the reconstruction amendments, and among other things, it had a citizenship clause which overturned the Dred Scott decision of the Supreme Court earlier, and as we mentioned, his impeachment proceedings were held.

So, that's just kind of a look at -- at the kinds of things the Johnson family had to deal with.

Now, did he have a Vice President?

HINKLE: No.

SWAIN: Was there any -- any provision for selecting a vice president at that point?

HINKLE: No, and if -- if the impeachment had resulted in conviction, the presidency would've gone to the president pro-tempore (ph) of the Senate.

SWAIN: So let's move on to the Eliza and her story. So, Eliza arrives when?

BERGER: It was probably, I think, about four months later that she finally came with her family. You know, they had set up a situation where she took care of the home, took care of the finances. Her

life was pretty well set. And the fact that her husband became president didn't change things instantaneously. But she did follow. She did bring her entire family with her. Of course, she had two daughters. One was married and had two children of her own. Her other daughter was now a widow at this point, brought her three children with her.

So, it's very, very crowded upstairs in the White House. And of course, we do know that Eliza was an invalid when she got to the White House, but people think that she in fact didn't participate much, and that isn't exactly true. She was very, very involved.

She set up her own bedroom upstairs, right across from the president's office, basically, and she was always able to hear what was going on. She was very active. She read daily newspapers, brought different points of view to the president, was able to calm him down constantly, and of course, she was the grandmother of the house as well as you know, taking care of her daughters and her grandchildren.

SWAIN: Well, her health status is what she discussed, and the only known statement, public statement we have from Eliza Johnson, which we have on screen, "my dears, I am an invalid." This was her announcement to the press, and after making it, what did she do?

HINKLE: She just went upstairs. And the sources say that her face showed interest, but no enthusiasm. And another quote attributed to her is, "I do not like this public life at all, and I'll be happy when we're back where I feel we best belong."

SWAIN: What was the source of her health problems?

HINKLE: Consumption. Tuberculosis. Her health seems to have weakened after the birth of her last son, who was 18 years younger than his brothers and sisters, but then, by 1860, there are many references to, you know, mother's health in letters.

SWAIN: Here is our first question from the -- our viewers, and before I take it, I want to remind you, if you are new to this series, the best thing about it is your participation, and there are three ways you can do it.

First of all, you can call us, and we'll put those phone numbers on the screen. You can also send us a message on Twitter using the hashtag, #firstladies, and you can, as a third choice, go to CSPAN's Facebook page, and we've got a conversation already underway with questions coming in from viewers around the country. And we'll try to mix a number of those in throughout our 90 minute program tonight.

Gary Robinson asked the question, was Eliza concerned for her husband's safety after the Lincoln assassination?

BERGER: Absolutely. She was absolutely terrified. First of all, her husband, his life of course was in danger as well, when he was a Senator, because he in fact did not want his state to secede from the Union, so he himself was considered a traitor, and oftentimes his life was in danger.

And then of course when the president was assassinated, she was absolutely terrified. Her daughter, one of her daughters wrote her father before they got to the White House and said, "Mother is just deranged that you in fact are going to be assassinated," so she was extremely worried about it.

SWAIN: There was some reason for her worry other than the general atmosphere in Washington. Some of the investigations suggest that there was in fact part of the overall plot someone assigned to kill Johnson.

HINKLE: And he had some heavy drink beforehand and lost his nerve.

BERGER: He did stalk the vice president though. He was stalking him that whole day, and he was planning to assassinate him that night. And he did -- he went out, had a little bit too much to drink, lost his nerve, and thankfully did not, you know, follow through on his plans.

SWAIN: Is there any historic documentation about how the president reacted to the threats on his life?

HINKLE: You know, I have never heard any. I just know that grave concern for Lincoln took priority.

And people did try to tell him not to go to the Petersen house that night himself because of all the danger out there. But he went anyway to check in.

SWAIN: And the Petersen house was the rooming house across the street from the hotel where the president was taken after his shot...

(CROSSTALK)

SWAIN: And the cabinet was gathering around and he was warned to stay away in case there were more...

(CROSSTALK)

HINKLE: Because news was coming in of Seward being attacked and -- and so they knew that this was a full-fledged attack on -- on high-ranking government officials.

SWAIN: Well...

BERGER: And of course, it wasn't the first time in history. I mean, there was an assassination attempt on George Washington's life. There was assassination attempts on many other presidents. So I think they just kind of lived with that fact.

I know Harry Truman made the comment that it just goes with the territory and you can't think about it, you just have to go about your business, do what you need to do.

SWAIN: Before we leave the relationship with the Lincolns, Presidential Ponderings on Twitter asked the question, "Did Eliza Johnson have any kind of friendship with Mary Lincoln?"

BERGER: Not to my knowledge.

She was -- you know, once again, she stayed at home quite a bit. It's not like she travelled to Washington any great times. You know, often times, other wives did travel to Washington and spend time with their spouse when they were senators or congressmen. Eliza didn't.

And to -- to the best of my knowledge, she did not have a relationship at all.

SWAIN: Was that your understanding?

HINKLE: My understanding as well. She -- Eliza did come to Washington for a couple of months but -- once but ill health forced her back home.

SWAIN: Jacqueline, you were describing this very active private floor in the White House. Even though the public didn't see Eliza Johnson, there was lots of family going on...

BERGER: Lots of family going on.

SWAIN: A centerpiece room for the family as we understand it was what's today called the Yellow Oval Room...

BERGER: Um-hum.

SWAIN: ... which had been turned into a library by a former lady. We have a photograph of what it looks like today that we're showing people at home here.

But what -- how did they use this and what was there personal life like at the White House?

BERGER: They were an extremely close-knit family.

Martha, the oldest daughter, of course, was always watching out for her mother and the grandchildren adored, well, both of their grandparents actually. They were very, very close. And often times, whether they were doing some studying with some tutors, they'd always come back in and visit their grandmother.

Of course, the president also spent his mornings visiting with her before he went off to do his business. And everything seemed to revolve around Eliza.

SWAIN: Well, (Jenny Standard Webber) on Facebook is asking, "Can you tell us more about her two daughters, Martha Patterson and Mary Stover, who helped her with her role as hostess at the White House."

In fact, did they both serve as official hostesses during the administration?

HINKLE: Martha was the official hostess and Mary supported her in many ways.

Mary was back and forth to (Greenville) several times. She was a bit more like her mother, I think, preferred to be, you know, with the children.

(LAUGHTER)

BERGER: With the children. I was going to say my understanding is when she was the White House, she was responsible for a lot of their education and a lot of their training.

She did step in with her sister but they didn't like the public life. I mean, the entire family didn't care for it at all. And of course, by that time, she (too) herself was a widow. She had lost her husband in the Civil War. So that was difficult on her as well having three children and being a widow herself.

SWAIN: What did it mean to be official hostess in the Johnson White House?

BERGER: It basically meant...

HINKLE: It was a period of mourning. I mean...

(CROSSTALK)

BERGER: It definitely was and I think that says a lot about Eliza that she -- even though it was a state of mourning and of course, you know, the war had just totally ravaged the White House completely. I mean, I can't even describe in what disarray that it was in.

I mean, they said there was mold in the State Dining Room. There was lice in the rooms. The carpetings were filthy.

And so it gave Martha a couple of months while Congress not in session to get the house all cleaned up and she really scrubbed it down from top to bottom, was very, very astute at that.

And then they had their weekly, what they referred to as levies on Thursday nights. One of the...

SWAIN: Which is a traditional that we've seen all the way through from the -- from the Washington administration...

BERGER: Right. And that seems to be the -- in many cases the way it is. Martha Washington kind of set the role for the first (ladyship) and many of them followed along with it.

It was also Johnson's intention to have the common man and the common people come to the house. He didn't want to have such formal dinners, you know, when they were by written invitation but more inviting people to come in on a regular basis and just see the -- the president's home, the people's house.

SWAIN: Kendra Hinkle, just on that note, to capture the -- the Johnsons' approach to it, this quote from Martha Johnson, "We are plain people from Tennessee called here for a little time by the nation's calamity and I hope too much will not be expected of us."

Now, in fact, how did the nation -- Mary -- Mary Lincoln was -- was criticized soundly in the press for her extravagance and her spending, especially during the time of the war.

So how did the nation respond to these folks who said, "We're plain folks and we're going to approach this job this way."

HINKLE: In -- in many ways, they loved it. One newspaper man said there was such a homeliness in that statement and I think people were craving that after the war in particular to know that these were people who had suffered like they had and who were not going to be ostentatious but who were very respectful of the position that they held there in the White House.

SWAIN: Is it true that she, in fact, kept cows on the...

(CROSSTALK)

BERGER: Well, they brought two cows with them for fresh milk and that was one of the things that Martha did first thing in the morning. She would go downstairs and supervise the -- the dairy operation then she would come back into the house and -- and have an inspection of the state floors, you know, the downstairs, make sure that everything was in order. But yes, they did.

They weren't, obviously, the first family that brought animals to the White House with them but they did bring their own cows for their own fresh milk.

SWAIN: (Dave Murdoch) on Twitter, "Were the Johnsons very religious and did their view change over time with the war and assassination"?

You want to take that one?

HINKLE: Mrs. Johnson attended church. Johnson did not because I think there was vague lines between politics and religion a lot of time at that time period.

We do have a letter when he thought he was dying of cholera in the 1870s where he's done his duty by God and his nation and he is, you know, at peace. And so it shows that while not practicing at a church in particular, he was still a religious man.

SWAIN: And before we leave this life in the early days of the White House, you -- tell us more about how the White House ended up in such a state. I mean, in -- in -- Mrs. -- Mrs. Lincoln spent a lot of money and was criticized for refurbishing...

BERGER: That is very true. But after the president passed away, of course, she went upstairs and like I said, she was there for six weeks.

But the -- the White House was still open to the public so as soon as the doors opened in the morning until literally they have to push the public out at night, people were constantly coming through. There was a tremendous amount of traffic.

And there was a lot of vandalism also. They wanted little pieces of the carpeting or their drapery and they would take pieces of fabric. (A china) was missing. And it was just in disarray.

You know, also during the war years, there's a lot of people coming through the White House.

SWAIN: Where was the security?

BERGER: The security wasn't paying much attention.

And I think part of it is number one, they didn't really know or maybe have enough support to go in and say something about it. They didn't feel like they had enough control or they just chose not to. And that's where the -- the confusion came in because like I said, Mrs. Lincoln was upstairs, the president was, of course, not in the White House.

So for about six weeks, it was just run amok, actually.

SWAIN: Congress recognized this and gave the family a \$30,000 appropriate, which is a lot more money than the -- the Lincolns got.

How did the Johnsons use that money in the White House?

HINKLE: Very carefully.

Martha oversaw every cent. She refurbished furniture. She would take up strips of carpet, have it cleaned and if it was a smaller section that was still good, put it in a different area.

So she took down the wallpapers and she just had (guilt) decor put up that was simple but -- but very elegant.

SWAIN: And again, the -- the official Washington, maybe even the larger country must've reacted well to this after the Lincolns.

BERGER: I think they did.

Number one, they were very simple people and I think the -- even Washington society appreciated that. They often times said that they were dressed simply but elegantly.

And I think what Martha did, she did a lot with flowers and she -- you know, she made slip covers for the furniture as opposed to reupholstering it. I think they respected her thriftiness.

SWAIN: And one of the rooms that she particularly refurbished was ones that are on the State Floor and very much referenced all the time with official events, the Blue Room and also the famous East Room.

One of the -- the traditions I understand that she created was by finding portraits of past presidents...

BERGER: That's (inaudible)

SWAIN: ... and bringing them into the White House.

What did she do there?

BERGER: Well, you know, many times when a family moves into the White House, they just stay on the -- either the public floors or the private floors.

Martha went down into the basement. She went up into the attic. She was all over. And she found these portraits. They -- they weren't framed but she did show them to her father and her father thought it was a great idea to frame these portraits and hang up.

And President Johnson loved to walk through the walls with -- of individuals and refer to a president and tell a story about that.

And one other thing I wanted to mention about the thriftiness, Margaret did get that, in -- in fact, from her mother because it was Eliza who said -- when her husband kept going off to whether it be Congress or the Senate, she said, "I remained at home caring for the children and practicing economy."

So that's where she learned it -- Martha, I'm sorry. I said Margaret. It was Martha.

SWAIN: And those presidential paintings we should say remained there. They become part of the White House and one of the more iconic -- if you see movies about the White House, you often see the first family walking down with all of those presidential portraits, it's called the Cross Hall in the State Floor and that began with the Johnson administration.

Well, during this program, you're going to see videos from the Johnson National Park and National Historic Site in Greenville, Tennessee, which is where our guest, Kendra Hinkle, has worked for quite a long time. And we're going to start with one that shows the White House artifacts from the museum.

Before we look at it, how many do you have in the collection from the White House, do you know? Is it a big White House collection?

HINKLE: I would say a dozen, two dozen things from -- from the White House administration and they were allowed to bring them home in those days. So -- (inaudible) (qualify) that before we go on.

SWAIN: And so you got them from the family collection...

(CROSSTALK)

HINKLE: Um-hum.

The family -- three generations of the family lived in the house after Andrew and Eliza. The great granddaughter lived there until 1956 and they realized its importance and really wanted it to become a national historic site.

So we have about 85 percent of the original belongings inside the house.

SWAIN: Well, we're going to now see some of the White House collection and our guest, Kendra Hinkle, will be in this video in her uniform so we'll take a look.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HINKLE: In this case, we have artifacts relating to Andrew Johnson's presidency and beyond.

We have one of Eliza's necklaces, which is a plain black cross, which I think shows her very simplistic taste.

Another is her sewing case. And three of her favorite pastimes being as reclusive as she was were embroidery work, reading poetry and scrapbooking.

On the broader sense, they did receive political gifts while in the White House and we have an ivory basket, which came from Queen Emma of the Sandwich Islands, which are now the Hawaiian Islands and that was the first time that a queen had come to visit the White House.

Andrew Johnson was the first president to have the Easter egg roll on the White House lawn. And previously, it had been held at the Capitol, and it had sort of stopped during the Civil War, but he brought it back. Some theories hold that he held it on the White House lawn so Eliza could watch. Being ill and an invalid with tuberculosis, she wasn't able to get out much and she ended up watching the Easter egg roll from the portico at the White House.

LIZZIE WATTS: During the White House years, Eliza chose not to be -- assume the role of the first lady. She was very ill at that point. But during that time, she received many gifts that she brought home with her after they left the White House. One of the most spectacular is this porcelain box that was given to her by the noble Frenchman. And it had 50 pounds of chocolate bon-bons in it.

And we have in the letters from some of her children saying that they would go up to mom's room in the White House to get a treat from the bon-bon box.

Another item that she brought back was a remembrance of a visit, and that was of Charles Dickens, who in 1867 would come visit them at the White House. She returned and brought back one of his books. She was an avid reader and this gave her a chance to remember his visit. And Charles Dickens, as we know today, as one of the most prolific writers of that time period.

Another item that she brought back was a gaming table that was give to them by the people of Ireland. And it's 500 pieces of inlaid wood. And they would play games like Euchre, which we still play today. It sits up, rolls up, and it looks like a regular table when you open it up, but the craftsmanship is incredibly remarkable.

Another piece that goes back to them during the White House is actually the fruit container. And that was a gift from the children of Philadelphia when they were in the White House. And Eliza brought that back home with her when they returned.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SWAIN: And on Twitter, Michael wants to know aside from Queen Emma's visit in 1866, did any other royals from the Kingdom of Hawaii visit the White House?

FEMALE: Not to my knowledge.

SWAIN: And our first telephone call is from Abraham, who is watching us in Huntsville, Alabama. Hi, Abraham, you're on.

ABRAHAM (ph): Hello. How are you. Thank you for taking my call. I just think this program is so great because we studied so much about the presidents, hearing about the presidents' lives has been fantastic.

But my question is, I know that Eliza Johnson was educated and I wanted to know what kind of books and writings Eliza was interested in the most. And also another question I had was what was the highest level of education that Eliza Johnson had?

SWAIN: Okay, thanks.

Do you know her education?

HINKLE: Most sources say about to the eighth grade. There was a female branch of (Ray) Academy in Greenville at that point, where tradition holds that she went to school. And we still have some of the books that Eliza had, one arithmetic and one grammar that she used to tutor Andrew Johnson by in the early days of their marriage.

SWAIN: Do you know more about her reading as first lady by any chance?

BERGER: Well, she read lots of things. She loved reading the newspaper. She loved reading the constitutional papers that came out. She certainly read all of her husband's speeches and assisted him with that. She loved poetry. So, I mean, it was a very broad range.

SWAIN: And she -- you mentioned this earlier, but she loved to read the newspapers and acted almost as kind of a clipping service for her husband.

BERGER: Yes, that was one of the other things that she loved to do is clip things out of the newspaper. And she -- you know, her husband was a great orator. And she always wanted to make sure he had some very good talking points. So she would read multiple newspapers and nothing missed her eye. Whenever she'd catch something that she thought her husband might be able to use on a speech the next time, you know, she would bring it to his attention.

SWAIN: Excuse me. Next up is a call from John in Tampa, Florida. Hi, (John), welcome to our conversation.

JOHN (ph): Hi, good evening. And thank you for this program.

Just listening to what you were saying just now regarding how interested the first lady was in current events, apparently from the newspaper reading. How much influence did she have over the president and his policies, particularly as they relate to things like the reconstruction?

Thank you.

SWAIN: Well, she clipped things for him. She helped him with his speeches. But do we know if she was an influence on his policies?

BERGER: I think she was a very good calming effect on him. She was able to just go over and touch his shoulder. We do know that Andrew Johnson had a pretty good temper and oftentimes it would -- it would show in his conversations. And she was able to calm him down.

We really don't know how much -- what necessarily her opinions were, because she only shared them with him in private, which many first ladies do, as you might suspect. But I do know he did listen to her periodically, as well as her daughter, and ask advice. I don't know how much he listened to it, but he would certainly ask her opinion.

SWAIN: As I mention throughout the program, we're going to be returning to the Johnson National Historic Site. And we have a few different pieces of video. And as we look at them, Kendra Hinkle, how is the site preserved? It's really quite a large place in the center of a small town, so what do you have there? And what do you -- how are you interpreting (sites)?

HINKLE: Well, we have four different areas, to include the museum at the museum at the visitors center, along with the old tailor shop, which is where he began his political rise so to speak. The early home, which was their home from the 1830s and '40s. And then the larger homestead a couple of blocks away, which they lived in before and after the presidency. And then we also have the national cemetery where the family is buried.

SWAIN: And how extensive is your collection of papers? So, for example, would you be able to research through their writings whether or not she helped influence his policies?

HINKLE: You can. We have a collection. There's also the Andrew Johnson Museum and Library at Tusculum College. And there are some papers there as well. Unfortunately, the letters between Andrew and Eliza were burned later by the family. So, we really don't have that interaction between them to realize how much she might have influenced him.

But he did visit her in the White House every morning after breakfast and we have a silver chafing dish in our collection that was supposedly used in the White House. She would (inaudible) a tea or bite to keep warm for him in the evening if he would come up and visit with her as well.

SWAIN: How frustrating to hear about the burning of letters...

HINKLE: I know.

SWAIN: ... which varies from administration to administration.

BERGER: Martha Washington started that.

SWAIN: Another Twitter question: Being somewhat private and sedentary, did Eliza make friends outside the family?

BERGER: My understanding is that she did. She was a very friendly person. You know, initially historians thought that she only came downstairs two different times during the entire administration. And we discovered later on that that's not entirely accurate.

In fact, it was Ulysses Grant -- Ulysses S. Grant's wife, Julia, who wrote and said that after the state dinners that the first lady would in fact come downstairs. She didn't stay for the state dinner, but she would come down and have coffee and literally walk around and talk to all of the guests. And she was extremely gracious. They said she was always dressed very elegantly and very appropriately.

So I think she did make friends. She was just a very kind person.

HINKLE: And when they left Washington, there were people who called on her to say good-bye and said that they had fond remembrances of her.

BERGER: And thank her, too.

SWAIN: Throughout this series, we've been learning about the role of women in society, so this question comes under that category from (Shelley Cooper) on Twitter: Would we classify Eliza a political equal or superior to her husband?

(LAUGHTER)

HINKLE: Well, (Colonel Crook) said that she had great appreciation for his office and that she may have had greater appreciation even than he did, being that she was so well read and well learned.

SWAIN: Well, now it's time to learn about how the Johnsons became a couple, and we're going to return to the Johnson historic site and learn about their early years together in this video.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HINKLE: We are standing inside the memorial building at the Andrew Johnson National Historic Site, in Andrew Johnson's old tailor shop. He bought the shop at public auction in the early days when he and Eliza were first married, and he used it as his place of business.

Eliza would read to him in this shop while he worked making suits for the men of town. These are some of the books that Eliza used to tutor Andrew Johnson with in the early days of their marriage. This one is "The Teacher's Assistance, With A System of Practical Arithmetic." And the other one is a grammar book entitled, "English Grammar To Different Classes of Learners."

And it speaks a lot for Andrew and Eliza I think that they kept these books knowing the historic import that they had on their lives and his future career.

This is the earliest existing house that we still have for Andrew and Eliza. They lived here through the 1830s and 1840s until he traded this home for a later homestead in 1851. It's here that they start their family. They eventually have five children altogether. And as Johnson works in the tailor shop, he finds out he has a knack for debate. He becomes interested in politics.

Eliza supports him as he first becomes an alderman of the town and then a mayor. And perhaps even though Eliza had married a tailor and that was all she was expecting from life, perhaps she did some entertaining in this room as he started his political journey.

This likely would have been the kitchen or eating area of the home. Andrew and Eliza did purchase their first slaves while they lived in this house. They bought (Dolley) in 1842, and a few days later also purchased her half-brother Sam. So they did have domestic help. They would have helped Eliza with chores such as raising the children, preparing the fires, cutting the firewood, and cooking the meals.

This is the house where they got their start. This is where they put their roots down in the community. This is where he had a thriving business as a tailor. This is where they first entertained as he started into politics. This is the house where their children were born. This house holds a very special place in the lives of the couple.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SWAIN: And once again, I'd encourage you if you get to that part of the country, make a visit to Greenville, Tennessee to see the life of the Johnson family as the federal government has preserved it through the National Park Service.

Well, she has the distinction in history books of being the youngest bride.

HINKLE: Yes, absolutely.

SWAIN: And how old was she?

BERGER: She was 16.

SWAIN: To Andrew Johnson's...

BERGER: He was 18. They were a very, very young couple. And as legend has it, you know, I always thought that her life story would make a wonderful made-for-movie TV -- made-for-TV movie. She was a young girl. She was standing outside school one day talking with some friends, and Andrew Johnson comes into town. And legend is that she is the first person he sees. He's asking for directions, and she makes the comment to her girlfriends that that is her beau.

And within a year, they in fact did marry. Like I say, she was 16 years of age. He was 18. They had four children every two years. I believe she had four children by the time she was, like, 24 years of age. But she proved to be a wonderful homemaker and a very, very good businesswoman as well.

She took care of all of their finances. And it was said that, you know, she would read to her husband in the tailor shop. In fact, she herself was a great seamstress. You know, she came from a very poor family, by the way. She lost her father some historians think when she was quite young. Others say she was, you know, probably in her early teens. And she and her mother helped support themselves by making quilts and sewing sandals, things of that nature.

So she had appreciation for what her husband did. And she would constantly, constantly read to him.

SWAIN: And from these humble roots, they really became rather successful. So where did the entrepreneurial spirit come from and which of the two of them was responsible for it?

HINKLE: I think it was a combination. The tailor shop soon became the sort of hangout spot for men, where they debated. Students in town after Johnson started attending debating societies called him a "Demosthenes" who was a Greek orator who had learned from the great speeches of previous orators, which some Andrew Johnson (inaudible) entirely. He had a book called "The American Speaker" and one of its desires, it said in the preface, was to "teach the callow young to plead their country's calls with lips of fire."

And I just think that inspired him to the point where he just wanted to break away from life as he had known it, being such a struggle, into something greater.

SWAIN: But he had a gift -- he had a gift for oratory.

HINKLE: Very much.

SWAIN: And it was this -- this interest in oratory, which as I understand it, Eliza encouraged, found debating societies for him to take part in so that he could polish his skills. But that was his foray into politics, wasn't it?

BERGER: That is exactly correct. You know, some people say that she really taught him how to read and write, and that is not exactly true. Andrew Johnson knew his ABCs. But she was very, very helpful in helping him form his letters and improve his writing skills, because that was one of the things that she in fact learned in school. And she did encourage him to go to the, you know, the debating classes. And that was something that they did oftentimes, you know. They'd have people come in to the tailor shop and just talk about politics and debate different issues.

SWAIN: Here is Jesse watching us in San Diego. You're on.

JESSE (ph): Yes, I was wondering, after the assassination of Lincoln, did they make sure that Johnson was adequately protected so that something like that wouldn't happen again? And did his wife ever go out in public?

SWAIN: Thank you very much.

And akin to that, (Ken Rubin) on Facebook, can you describe what role the new Secret Service played in the Johnson White House? So was that a response to create a sort of early Secret Service?

BERGER: My understanding is that the Secret Service actually began with Abraham Lincoln. They were so concerned about his safety. I'm not aware of anything that they tightened up, you know, more stringent than anything else.

Eliza did get out. There's no question about that. Unlike today, I mean, she wasn't going shopping. She wasn't going to the market. But she did have various travels with her children and to various (spots). Sometimes it was for her health purposes. And of course, she was very concerned about her sons. Both of her sons had problems with alcohol. And so she was very, very worried about that.

SWAIN: Tom is in Greece, New York. Hi, Tom. You're on.

TOM (ph): (inaudible) and a question I'm very concerned about.

SWAIN: Oh, Tom, you've got to turn that TV volume down. Are you there?

TOM (ph): (inaudible) with alcohol. And...

SWAIN: Oh, sorry. We're going to move on.

Ken in Honesdale, Pennsylvania. You're on, Ken.

KEN (ph): Hi. I would like to know how the Hamlin White House would have differed from the Johnson White House.

SWAIN: How the Hannibal Hamlin White House would have been different. Do either of you have a sense of how he was as vice president and what would have happened if he had ascended to the presidency?

BERGER: I don't. I'm sorry.

HINKLE: Interesting question.

SWAIN: Yeah. So back to the Johnsons, how did Eliza contract the tuberculosis that would eventually have her become an invalid?

HINKLE: It's hard to know. It was rampant, really, at that time because they didn't realize it was contagious. I mean, even the grandchildren visiting her, you know, daily in the White House, it would take its toll on them as well.

SWAIN: How early in her life did she contract it?

HINKLE: Hard to say. It could be after the birth of Andrew, Jr. Certainly by the beginning of the 1860s it was clear that she was suffering from consumption.

SWAIN: And how often was Andrew away as he became more interested in politics?

BERGER: Considerably. He was away quite a bit. And that's why -- another reason why so much of the responsibility fell on Eliza. I'd also read different stories that she in fact was good at selling and buying stock. Here, they came from these very, very humble, humble beginnings and they owned real estate. They owned other property. She would go ahead and collect the rent from these properties and basically manage the money very, very effectively.

SWAIN: And could you walk us through his political career? Where did he start?

HINKLE: Oh, goodness -- alderman, mayor, served as state representative, state senator, governor, U.S. representative, U.S. senator, military governor, vice president and president. And then he's the only president to this day to return to the Senate.

SWAIN: And what -- what were his -- how would you describe his politics? What did it mean for him to be a Democrat at that point?

HINKLE: Well, Democrats and Republicans have sort of reversed as the years have gone by. He was -- he was very much of a fiscal conservative, limited government, more of the decisions being made by the states.

SWAIN: And again, we have no record of, other than a scrap book that she kept, where she was clipping things, I'd imagine, of what her own politics were.

BERGER: No, unfortunately we don't. We do know that Andrew Johnson definitely believed in states' rights. There was no question about that. And he was always putting bills forth for the common man. That was very, very important to him. He didn't care for the aristocrats. He didn't necessarily care for the very rich planters, as he referred to them.

And he wanted -- it was basically the blood, sweat and tears of the common man that he was trying to help support quite a bit.

SWAIN: Bill in San Diego.

BILL (ph): Yeah, I know that Ms. Berger has written, you know, on first ladies. And I've always wondered, was the fact that Mrs. Lincoln was so distraught, set a precedent for other widows?

BERGER: No. No. Actually, that's not the case at all. There are a couple of other women that, of course, lost their husbands during the presidency. Lucretia Garfield happened to be one of them. And she was just the opposite of Mary Todd Lincoln. She handled herself extremely graciously. She moved out of the White House almost instantaneously. And, of course, we know about Jackie Kennedy as well, handled herself, you know, with great poise and great sophistication.

So, no, I wouldn't say that Mary Todd Lincoln set that example at all.

SWAIN: (Ben Hensarling), what is known of Eliza's parents? And did she have any siblings?

HINKLE: No.

BERGER: She didn't have any siblings, we know that. You might be able to address her father more. I do know that she had a widowed mother that raised her by herself.

HINKLE: And John McArdle was a shoemaker. They still have the book shingle for his business at the Andrew Johnson Museum and Library. He also opened a tavern in the town of Warrensburg, Tennessee as well.

SWAIN: We referenced the scrap book. I think we saw one of those in the video. But (Denise Layman) wants to know: Do any of her scrapbooks still exist?

BERGER: I'll change it to how many of her scrapbooks exist.

HINKLE: We have one of her scrapbooks now on display at the house. I left it out. I pulled it out for the show. And that's generated a lot of interest by the public.

SWAIN: What kinds of things did she collect?

HINKLE: She collected newspaper articles primarily about her husband. She would show him some in the evening, some in the morning, depending on the tone.

SWAIN: We were also in the age of photography by this point. Did she collect any photographs?

HINKLE: No photographs in there, but...

(CROSSTALK)

SWAIN: Political badges and things of that nature?

HINKLE: There's a blank pardon that Andrew Johnson was pardoning people as president. So, but, primarily newspaper articles.

SWAIN: Next up is Mary in Omaha. Hi, Mary.

MARY (ph): Hi. Thank you for taking the call. We were just wondering. We noticed that -- I wondered if the natural surroundings and original area around the home has been changed. The roads seem to go right up to the door. Were the roads widened at one time, or did the home back then sit that close to the street?

HINKLE: They sat that close to the street. It was right on Main Street, and I have heard tell that it was very much a Scot-Irish follow-through, and many of the people in that area were of Scot-Irish descent.

SWAIN: So bringing what they knew from Ireland and Scotland to be right in the center of town and to be right on the streets.

How much land did they have at its height?

HINKLE: Well, he had about half an acre with the homestead when he owned it there. About two acres with the yard now. But even as the later family lived there, they would buy pieces as it came up for sale, to sort of make a buffer around the property.

SWAIN: Kim Alicia writes on Facebook, "I visited their first married home in Greeneville, Tennessee. I was fascinated with the fact that Eliza taught Andrew to read and write, and was no doubt influential on his politics."

Gregory Peek wants to know, do we have any evidence of Eliza trying to reform President Johnson of his purported drunkenness? Now, he told us that one of the sons died of alcoholism.

BERGER: That is correct.

SWAIN: What was the president's relationship with alcohol?

BERGER: He didn't -- he was not a drunk. Unfortunately, that was -- he got that reputation because when he was assigned for -- inaugurated as vice president, he had I believe it was typhoid fever at that time, and he was pretty down, he was low, he was trying to get himself -- you know, give himself a little bit of energy, and so he had some whiskey on that day. And by the time he gave up -- got up to give his inaugural speech, he was slurring his words, and people thought he, in fact, was drunk.

But he was not. President Lincoln knew that. In fact, the story is, people were not willing to let the truth get in the way of a nasty rumor, so he was not an alcoholic, although his sons were.

SWAIN: Leroy in Monticello, Kentucky, hi. You're on.

LEROY (ph): Appreciate your conversation here, it's mighty good.

Did Andrew Johnson and his wife, were they both -- did either one become born again Christians before they died and left this world?

SWAIN: OK. Thanks. We talked about the religion earlier, but would you (inaudible)?

(CROSSTALK)

HINKLE: Right. Right.

Well, when Johnson thought he was dying of cholera, he did write a letter sort of making his peace, and Eliza was a church-goer there in Greeneville.

SWAIN: And next up is Janet, asking us a question from Tuscon. Hi Janet.

JANET (ph): Hi. Yes. Mary Lincoln had such a tragic time with her children, and I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about the Johnsons' children, and if there are any descendents now. Thank you.

SWAIN: Thank you.

BERGER: That's a good question. I know she had a wonderful relationship with her children and her grandchildren. I don't know if there's any descendents that are still alive now.

HINKLE: There are a few.

BERGER: A few? Some great, great, great.

HINKLE: And they all come through Martha, the only one who has any descendents now.

SWAIN: And before we move into the Civil War. In the video, we saw that they were slave holders. And EssexandOrange is asking on Twitter, "is there any indication of how Eliza felt about slavery, or has she ever expressed any ideas about it?"

What can you tell us about the family's ownership of slaves and how their thinking progressed about this, and what happened, eventually, to those people.

HINKLE: The Johnsons had a pretty lenient relationship with their slaves. We have a letter that Charles, one of the sons, wrote, talking about Eliza's relationship with Sam. He came for payment for a job that he had done, and she told him that he needed to go cut wood at Patterson's house first, which was Martha's, and he said he'd be damned if he'd go cut wood at Patterson's. He hadn't been paid for the last thing he'd done. And she at some point told him he'd do better to give than to receive, and he said he didn't get half enough, no how.

So it shows three things. One, this lenient relationship. Two, that they paid their slaves for jobs that they had done. And, three, that Eliza was in charge of the finances.

Later on, August 8, 1863 Johnson is -- this the traditional day that Johnson freed his slaves. And, to this day, in Tennessee and surrounding states, that is still celebrated as Emancipation Day.

SWAIN: And, do we know what became of them?

HINKLE: They all stayed on as paid servants afterwards.

SWAIN: And did -- we were talking before the program, they all took the last name of Johnson.

HINKLE: They all took the last name of Johnson. Dolly eventually baked and sold pies out of the tailor shop. She started her own business.

Sam wrote President Johnson at one point asking to buy land for purposes of a church and school house for the -- for the African-American children there in Greeneville, and Johnson wrote back and said no, just have the plot of land drawn up and I'll give it to you. So he started that there in Greenville for them. And eventually gave Sam land, and he built his own house there in Greenville.

SWAIN: Well, the most challenging time for this family had to be the war years. And Johnson was in the Senate at this point, and you mentioned earlier that he was the only United States senator from the South who supported the Union.

Where did his strong Union allegiance come from?

HINKLE: East Tennessee was very much pro-Union during the Civil War. So it was just a different mindset, a different type of infrastructure, a different type of a farming community than middle and west Tennessee, which were more aligned with the Confederacy.

SWAIN: So what happened when Tennessee voted secession to the Johnson family?

And tell us about their life during the period.

BERGER: It was very tragic, unfortunately.

First of all, they were calling Johnson a traitor. They did, of course, confiscate the Johnson home, and that was a very tragic time for Eliza because she was quite ill. And it was very difficult for her.

There is a couple of different stories that, you know, they had given her 36 hours, literally, to leave the home, and she did in fact call her daughter, I believe it was Mary, and Charles, plus, of course, her young son who was only 10 years old, Andrew, Jr., who they called Frank.

And the story is basically that they were trying to get through Confederate territory and it was very difficult, because the Confederate soldiers were all, you know, calling out to them and saying different things to them that were not very, very pleasant.

One of the stories was that one night they slept by the railroad tracks, it was rather cold. They didn't have much food. They would go on various farming communities, knock on the door, ask if they could possibly spend the night there.

It was an extremely difficult time. And by the time they did reach Nashville, where Andrew was at that point, poor Eliza, she was just pretty well spent, at that point. So...

(CROSSTALK)

SWAIN: Were their lives in danger?

HINKLE: Sure. Sure.

SWAIN: Now, can you add some more color to this story and this period of their lives?

HINKLE: She had taken refuge at Mary's house through the summer months. And then, as she said, we have a letter from Charles where he talks about the cold, the rain, the hunger, the danger to their lives.

They were traveling with Mary and her husband, Daniel Stover, who'd been a bridge burner during the Civil War, and had to hide out in the mountains the first winter of the war. They slid food to those men. Finally made it to Nashville.

It's said that Johnson wept at the sight of Eliza when she finally reached Nashville.

SWAIN: And how dangerous was this for her to be slipping food to people?

(CROSSTALK)

HINKLE: Oh, probably very dangerous. Yeah,

BERGER: We do know for a fact that she and March both prepared the food. There was no question about that.

I think there's some question as to who was delivering the food to these guerrilla warriors...

HINKLE: Right.

BERGER: You know, in the hills, basically, and in the caves. I mean, they were hiding out.

So how they were able to get to them, I'm not exactly sure. I think they may have sent some messengers, possibly.

SWAIN: Okay.

BERGER: But they definitely prepared the food; that's for sure.

SWAIN: At the Andrew Johnson National Historic Site, there is some evidence of what life was like for the Johnson family during the Civil War. We're going to watch that video next.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LIZZIE WATTS: One of the things we've learned is the North and the South fought over the occupation of Greeneville all through the Civil War.

It changed hands over 26 times that we're aware of.

So they weren't back here for over seven years. At the end of his presidency, is when his daughter was asked to come restore the house for both Eliza and Andrew's return.

She came back and she found graffiti written all over the walls. One of the best examples, and one of the tragic examples, is here on the wall. It says, "Andrew Johnson. The old traitor."

We've actually found Northern soldiers' names and their unit numbers as well as Southern and their unit.

During that time period, it was used as a hospital; it was used as a place to stay. And then it was basically destroyed. That explains the importance of this part of east Tennessee during the Civil War.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SWAIN: What was the role of a governor of occupied Tennessee, given to him by Lincoln?

HINKLE: It was to restore Union government in the state.

And it was a challenging job. And he was -- he was firing people and standing (ph) in the defense of Nashville. He often came in conflict with the generals. He wrote letters to Lincoln expressing his concern, also hoping for the liberation of east Tennessee.

Lincoln often sided with Andrew Johnson on a lot of the decisions that he made.

SWAIN: How old were their sons at this point, and were they involved in the conflict?

BERGER: Well, his older son, Charles, definitely was. He -- in fact, Charles was a surgeon, an assistant surgeon, during the Civil War. He was killed in the Civil War. And Robert was also, as a matter of fact. I understand he was a lawyer, but he also signed up and went to war.

But that's when his drinking kind of took over. There was -- there were stories about him leaving his army of men and things of that nature.

He had different difficulties. But, absolutely, the two older boys did fight in the war.

HINKLE: He was -- Robert was colonel of a cavalry unit. And he was the only family member who was able to attend Charles' funeral when Charles was killed during the war.

SWAIN: How was he killed?

HINKLE: He fell from a horse and hit his head.

SWAIN: And where did that happen?

HINKLE: Outside of Nashville. And Johnson and Eliza were gone during that time. Eliza was up in Louisville and Johnson had gone up to Washington for a time. And so, Robert was the only one able to represent the family, and it's after that that it really seemed that the drinking problem started for him.

SWAIN: Here's another Mary Lincoln comparison, but Mary Lincoln was devastated about the loss of her sons. Do we have historic evidence about how Eliza Johnson reacted to the loss of hers?

BERGER: We know that she, too, was extremely hurt. There were stories that Charles was her favorite son. I don't know if that's entirely accurate or not, but I think like any mother, I mean, she just -- you know, she just wept for them continuously, plus she was very proud of her son. I mean, the fact that he became a doctor that was something that was so important to her, that her children were in fact educated.

She was proud of her daughters and the -- and the sophistication and class and education that they had received. But she didn't fall apart the way Mary did. Mary just couldn't seem to handle it. And of course, she had an awful lot of death in her life as well.

SWAIN: Next is Cathy in Bensalem, Pennsylvania. Hi Cathy, you are on.

CATHY (ph): Hi. I just was wondering how Ms. Johnson felt about her husband's impeachment.

SWAIN: Oh, thanks. Well, we're going to talk about the impeachment in just a little bit, later on. So, thank you for that question, and we'll work it in as we work our way through the history of the Johnson administration.

Next up is a call from Nan in (Lolo), Montana.

Hi Nan.

NAN (ph): Hello.

SWAIN: You have a question?

NAN (ph): Yes, my question is, why -- the impeachment of Johnson and its associated effect in history, and then the impeachment of our recent President Clinton. Why is there such a dissimilar effect in how he's looked up on by history?

SWAIN: Okay. Thank you. Impeachment. Such an important part of the Johnson administration, so let's move into that.

Johnson's fight with the radical Republicans in Congress, I'm going to have both of you talk about that. But first of all, his -- his big decision was to keep Lincoln's cabinet, and now he was of a different party than most of them, so was he in constant turmoil with them, or do they accept him as president?

HINKLE: Some of them did. Stanton was probably the main one who didn't. Disagreed with a lot of his policies. As one source says, he wouldn't quit and Johnson wouldn't fire him. And later on, his decision to suspend him came in particular with one, that information had been withheld from him in (Mary Serrot's) clemency, and two, that information had been withheld from him in regard to the New Orleans riot, so he went ahead and suspended Stanton.

SWAIN: How about his relationship with Congress, and who were the radical Republicans? What was their point of view?

HINKLE: They were the ones who wanted a harsher reconstruction for the South, break it into military districts, have -- have commanders in charge of those districts. (Thaddeus Stephens), Charles Sumner, (sort of felt like), Andrew Johnson, during the Washington birthday speech, where he started naming people by name, but those were the key players.

SWAIN: What was the concept of reconstruction?

BERGER: Well, President Lincoln's concept of it was to be as lenient as possible. And he had basically said that in his inaugural address, when he was reelected. And Johnson believed that, too. They knew there was still going to be, you know, just because the war had ended didn't mean that people's feelings had changed, and they were very aware of the fact that there were still individuals that disagreed with that point of view, and they weren't going to accept things readily.

And he wanted to be as lenient as possible. He felt that if you would just pledge allegiance to the United States, that he would then give you a pardon and accept it. With the radicals in Congress and the Senate didn't believe in that at all. They thought it was treason, and they really wanted to punish the Southerners. And there was a constant battle between them.

SWAIN: A specific question on Facebook from Cassie Meadows, do we know if Johnson supported the Thirteenth Amendment?

BERGER: Mm-hmm.

HINKLE: Yes

SWAIN: He did. And so how effective was he? What kind of political capital did he have to fight for his version of reconstruction?

BERGER: One of the problems that Johnson had is, unlike President Lincoln, he didn't have the ability to negotiate, okay. He was very hot-tempered. He didn't like any kind of small talk whatsoever. Where President Lincoln was able to talk to the men, he would often -- he would tell various stories, and by the time he'd get around, he was able to negotiate with individuals, where Johnson wasn't as much. He had a point of view, and that was it.

And he would get angry very quickly, and he'd seem to antagonize the people that he was debating with. He had a very difficult time even getting the moderates to go along with him, because of his particular point of view and the way he presented it. He certainly was not politically correct, let's put it that way.

SWAIN: Well, in past White Houses, we saw the -- that the first lady, or in this case it would be the acting first lady, often played a very important role, practicing parlor politics to bring the opposing sides together or in some cases, actually going to Capitol Hill and getting the attention of individual members of Congress. Did the Johnson daughters do any of this? Was there any social use of the White House for political purposes?

HINKLE: Not that I'm aware of. But she did preside over the state dinners. And we have a letter that -- to Mrs. Lincoln that he also passed on to Martha, giving the protocol of where everybody should be seated, and who should be seated first. And that was how you would pair the people up together, so that they probably played it in that manner.

BERGER: But that... That's what they basically did. And I'm sorry.

But the girls basically did. You know, unlike, let's say Dolly Madison, for instance, or, you know, a Louisa Adams -- they were very politically savvy. And, yes, they used their parlor meetings and dinners and things to talk to the various congressmen and senators and kind of get their point of view across.

SWAIN: But an interesting -- we didn't make this connection before, but Martha, as I understand it, came up to the White House frequently during the Polk administration.

BERGER: Absolutely.

SWAIN: The other Tennessee president. And so...

BERGER: That's right.

SWAIN: ... but did she not go to school?

BERGER: No, she went to school there. She was -- she went to school in Washington.

SWAIN: No, I meant go to school off of the way that the Polk administration...

FEMALE: Oh, yes.

BERGER: Well, Sarah Polk was very, very gracious to her. You know, we know Mrs. Polk didn't have any children of her own. And she oftentimes invited the young girls in from the school that were there. And so, she became quite friendly with Mrs. Polk, as well as Harriet Lange, who was Buchanan's niece. And so, she was -- you know, she kind of came in to politics through the back door, let's say. But I don't think she really impressed upon her father, or wanted to push her particular point of view.

Plus, she was married to a senator. You know, her husband was a senator. So, she was very aware of what was going on, but mainly taking it from the back door, so to speak.

HINKLE: And one of the telling sources says that someone appealed to her for clemency for Mary Surratt. And she said that, "I -- I feel so terribly sorry for you, but I have no more right to speak of this to him than any of the servants." So, I -- I think she kept a background.

SWAIN: Darla is next in Fryburg, Pennsylvania.

Hi, Darla.

DARLA (ph): Hi. My question was, are the Johnsons the last presidents to own -- that were former slave owners? Or were there more presidents after them?

SWAIN: Thank you very much.

BERGER: Oh, that's a good question. I want to say no. I am thinking of Andrew -- or, excuse me, Ulysses S. Grant, who was definitely opposed to slavery, and he did -- no, the presidents after that did not.

SWAIN: So, the -- that sad part of our history ends with Johnson and his...

BERGER: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And actually, you know, our first six, seven presidents all did have slaves, other than the Johnsons -- other than John -- or excuse me, John Adams and John Quincy

Adams. They were the only two of the early presidents that didn't have slaves. And it basically stopped with Zachary Taylor. I think he was the last president that literally brought slaves to the White House with him. After that, they didn't.

SWAIN: Next is a question from Tennessee, Jonesboro, and our caller is Carol.

Hi, Carol.

CAROL (ph): Hello?

SWAIN: You're on.

CAROL (ph): Okay, thank you.

Yes, my husband's mother met Mary Pat -- Martha Patterson's daughter, which would have been Andrew Johnson's granddaughter, some years ago. She came to Jonesboro specifically to talk to my mother-in-law at the time, saying she was -- that her grandmother was so thankful that my husband's great grand -- great-great-grandfather had saved the Johnson homestead and had given safe passage to the family -- to the Johnson family so that if they had wanted to go to the homestead during the war, they could have.

He was a confederate general that at one time, was over the East Tennessee area -- General A. E. Jackson.

His -- his granddaughter was my mother-in-law.

HINKLE: Well, thanks for that story.

SWAIN: Yeah, do you any more about that? And granting safe passage, or a general that looked after the family home during the war?

HINKLE: Not in particular.

SWAIN: Great. Well, thanks for telling us about it.

So, Sheldon Cooper asked, "Can we fairly look at Eliza and Andrew Johnson without the shadow of impeachment over their White House?"

BERGER: I think sadly, historians can, but the average public -- that's all that they constantly remember. Historians look aback on it and understand that he had a position on, you know, the Homestead Act, that he wanted settlers to be able to settle on land and develop it and build it, and then, in fact, inherit it. Unfortunately, the public doesn't hear that. Once again, they just want to -- you know, it's the gossip that gets being repeated year after year after year.

SWAIN: How does the National Park Service tell the impeachment story at -- at the site?

HINKLE: Well we incorporate it into the story. I mean, because it is a major part of it. You know, you try to show all sides and let the public decide for themselves how they feel about it.

SWAIN: So, let's tell a more full story about what led to impeachment. Walk us through the steps and I'll ask both of you to tell the story that ultimately led to the House charging him with high crimes and misdemeanors.

BERGER: Right. Well, I can tell you that the Senate, basically -- they had passed a -- an act of Congress that said that the president himself could not fire his cabinet members without Congress' approval. And that, of course, was not constitutional. And President Johnson said there's -- there's no way he's going to do that. You know, that wasn't going to be part of it.

And so, when he went ahead and suspended Secretary of War Stanton, that's when the Senate said, "Okay, we're going to push this." And because he did that, he was, in fact, you know, in violation of this law. That's basically what -- one of the things that pushed it over the edge for them.

SWAIN: But it was a showdown. You said he and Stanton had a lot of antipathy.

HINKLE: Mm-hmm.

SWAIN: So, tell us more about the politics.

HINKLE: Well, he suspended Stanton in the Fall, when Congress was not in session. And then in December when they came back in session, he told them what he had done. And they basically rejected that and restored him to office in January. And then Johnson went ahead and fired him. And that was the impetus for them to go ahead and start impeachment proceedings, but the a caveat in the tenure of office side that says that he couldn't fire a member of the cabinet during the term of the president who appointed them.

So, Lincoln had appointed Stanton, so it's like they very much hurt themselves by doing that.

SWAIN: The impeachment proceedings began in the Congress on March 5th, 1868, and would go through May, 1868. And the first lady had a very active role in all this.

We're going to take a call and then come back and learn more about this.

Next is John, Waverly, Tennessee. You're on, John.

JOHN (ph): Yes, ma'am. I was just wondering about Ms. Eliza Johnson's reactions or feelings about her husband being nominated for vice president and subsequent rise to presidency, as well as Tennessee's relation -- the people of Tennessee's relationship with Johnson after his rise to power. If that became more positive, or what?

SWAIN: Okay, thank you very much.

How did Eliza Johnson feel about her husband being tapped by Lincoln for the vice presidency?

BERGER: She was very proud of her husband. There's no question about that. And she supported all of his decisions. But once again, she was a very private person. So, it was fine for her husband to be in politics. It was fine for him to go to Washington and, you know, be in the Senate, be in Congress.

But she didn't want to be part of it. And yet, she constantly supported his decision to do it all of the time. And she was very much a supporter during the impeachment. I mean -- I know there was other things that were attributed to her -- that she had wished that, you know, that she could be back home where they best belonged, and things of that nature.

But she honestly believed that her husband would be acquitted and was very proud of it when he was. She kept saying she knew that would happen. She absolutely knew it.

SWAIN: So, during the length of that -- the three months that the trial was going on, where -- what was she doing to help support her husband?

HINKLE: It was just very much business as usual at the White House. They went on as if nothing else was going on. And...

SWAIN: And that was part of political posturing, right?

HINKLE: Right. Well, and the grandchildren helped a lot, you know, to keep their minds off things.

SWAIN: That's true.

BERGER: And his -- the attorneys. I was going to say, the attorneys told Johnson not to say anything.

SWAIN: Mm-hmm.

BERGER: To, you know, reserve comment. "We will handle it." And so, Mrs. Johnson said, "We're just going to go ahead as business as usual." Like you said, the grand children were around. They still had their levies every week. And...

HINKLE: And Martha said that she didn't have time to even comment on it.

BERGER: Exactly, exactly. She didn't have time to comment, and she was -- she was still busy, you know, doing so much around the house that needed to be done.

SWAIN: But you told us earlier that she was an avid follower of the press. So, we can presume that she was sitting there every day.

BERGER: Oh, sure, absolutely. And reading everything. And I think that's part of the things when -- you know, when there was something good written in the newspaper, she would show him that at night before he went to bed. And if there was something very critical in the newspaper, she'd wait till morning to show it to him.

But I -- my impression of it was, as much as Johnson wanted to fight himself -- I mean, you know, he wanted to debate it and get out there and fight -- it was his attorneys that said, you know, don't do that. You know, you're the president.

HINKLE: And he had a very well balanced defense team.

BERGER: Exactly.

HINKLE: And Colonel Crook, who was a personal bodyguard and attendant there, writes that he rushed in to tell Eliza that Johnson has been acquitted. And he said this frail little woman stood up and her emaciated hands took mine, and with tears in her eyes, she said, "I knew he'd be acquitted."

SWAIN: Well, on our web site, at [cspan.org](http://cspan.org) and then firstladies, each week, we have one special feature that you can see. And on the web site this week is a ticket for the impeachment. How popular an event was this?

BERGER: My understanding is that it was a very popular event. And everybody wanted to go to it. I think it was a dollar, if I'm not mistaken. I'm trying to recall. Do you have a picture of that? I don't know.

SWAIN: I can see it, but not enough detail.

BERGER: Not enough detail on it? Okay. Yes. I mean, people in Washington, D.C., unlike the rest of the country, very active in politics. Very involved in what is going on. More people -- I'm thinking of, you know, the Middle East and -- or the Midwest, and certainly the West -- California -- they're -- they're somewhat removed from it. And they read about it or hear about it on the news, but it's the people in Washington, D.C. that want to be right there, and want to, you know, partake in it. So, it's very important for them.

HINKLE: And they had different colors for different days. And the galleries were full.

And a little interesting side note is that Mark Twain was one of the reporters at the impeachment trial.

SWAIN: So, if you canvass the newspapers in the time, how was this playing in the papers?

HINKLE: Oh, it was --

SWAIN: Columnists had started in the last administration, so there were opinion writers now following politics, not just the reporting of it.

HINKLE: And political cartoons.

SWAIN: Oh, that's (weird).

HINKLE: Harper's Weekly -- we have a whole compilation of just the Harper's Weekly articles about the impeachment trial.

SWAIN: And how did he fare in all of this?

HINKLE: Oh...

SWAIN: Was there public support behind him?

HINKLE: Some -- some -- some, no.

BERGER: Yes. And that's why when it was good news or bad news, there was always...

HINKLE: Right.

BERGER: ... there was always a divide in the country. And the president just chose to listen to the people that, in fact, you know, supported him. He -- he felt very, very strongly in his views. He was very much a constitutionalist. He believed in the Constitution.

And his interpretation of it is what he, you know, said was going to be law, basically. And that's where it stood as far as he was concerned.

HINKLE: And, and one source says that as much as he was, you know, vilified by some, he was just as passionately liked by others.

BERGER: Exactly.

SWAIN: (Josie) is another Tennessean -- Greenville, actually.

BERGER: Oh.

SWAIN: You're on. Welcome.

JOSIE (ph): Hey. I was wondering, what relationship did the Johnsons have with their slaves?

SWAIN: Okay. Now you have to tell us a little bit about yourself if you will. How old are you?

JOSIE (ph): I'm 10 years old.

SWAIN: And have you been to the Johnson site in your home town?

JOSEI (ph): I've been very well close to it.

(LAUGHTER)

JOSIE (ph): I have been in it.

SWAIN: Well, we hope we've inspired you to do that coming up soon.

Thank you for your question. The president from your own home town, Josie. Thanks for your call tonight.

BERGER: Very good.

HINKLE: It was a very lenient relationship. And Will, Dolly's son, remembers that Eliza had candies and cookies by her bed, and when they came up, and just as we talked before, the support that they gave them as they stayed on as servants and giving land and helping them.

BERGER: Yeah, absolutely.

SWAIN: Next is a call, this is a popular night for San Diego, here's another San Diegan, Cathy. Hi. Welcome.

CATHY CHAMBERLAIN (ph): Hi, this is Cathy Chamberlain, and I'm just calling to give you my compliments. This is a fabulous program. I was born and raised in Greeneville, Tennessee. I go back there every year. I'm very familiar with Andrew Johnson and the family, but I have learned more tonight than I ever have, and it's been years and years and years, so I just want to thank you for this. It's fascinating, and I'll be watching for the other presidents' wives as well.

SWAIN: Terrific. Well, we will be here all the way until president's day next year with a break in the summer with an individual program on nearly every first lady. A couple cases, that we've combined them, but for the most part, 35 programs to tell you about the lives of the first lady and learn American history that way.

You're a Greeneville, Tennessee native. And how did you get interested in the Johnson history?

HINKLE: Wow. I guess when I was about 12, my mother told me she knew what I needed to do with my life. She said, "you love history, you love to tell stories, you need to work for the National Park Service," so she said, "we've got one here in town." And we went to see it and I fell in love.

And when I was in high school in the anchor club, someone came and said, "Who would like to dress in Victorian clothes and help with the Christmas candlelight tour at the Johnson homestead this weekend?" So, "pick me please, pick me!" So, and that just really -- and passionate. I've always loved Civil War history and majored in English and history in college.

SWAIN: And you have at times interpreted the daughter, one of the daughters?

HINKLE: I have done Martha on occasion. I have represented Mary. And one of my first theatrical roles was portraying Eliza, and -- and my big line was, "there goes my boat, girls. Like it."

SWAIN: You were a history in the -- you're interested in the history of the first ladies. You're -- this is a life's work.

BERGER: Yes. Yes it is.

SWAIN: Three volumes. You've published two of them so far.

BERGER: I've published two of them so far.

SWAIN: How did this all start for you?

BERGER: It really started with my name. My name is Jacqueline, and I tell my audiences I'm a national guest speaker, and when I speak, I tell them that I didn't know any Jackies when I was a young girl growing up, that there was Jackie Gleason and Jackie Cooper, but they were men, and that didn't count.

So, when Jacqueline Kennedy walked into the White House and she, you know, she was tall and sophisticated and spoke three languages, you know, I wanted to be just like her. I thought she was absolutely charming and beautiful.

And then of course, with the assassination of President Kennedy, like the rest of the country, I was glued to the television for four days and four nights, long before CSPAN and CNN and Fox News were all 24 hour news, we were just riveted by the assassination. And that's what got me hooked on it, and I've been studying them ever since.

SWAIN: Well, the -- back to the Johnsons and the impeachment. He still had 10 months to go till he finished office after he was acquitted in this process. So, what -- what kind of political capital did he have left, and what were those last months of his -- of his administration like?

BERGER: I don't think he had much. He kept trying to instill thought for his point of view, and the things that he wanted to get through, but he just -- he had no cooperation with -- from Congress whatsoever, and he just didn't know how to do it, and I think that's the sad part of the administration. It's that, you know, they found him surly, basically. They thought that he might've come off a little nasty, and so they didn't want to work with him at all. It was very tough.

SWAIN: Did he have any thoughts of running for reelection?

HINKLE: I think he kind of wanted to, but he was not chosen by the Democratic party. They chose (Horatio Seymour). And he did have amnesty, yet in his power, and on Christmas day that last year, he imposed a broad amnesty proclamation for the South.

SWAIN: So, what did that mean for the people of the South?

HINKLE: That -- it forgave them, essentially, and each of his amnesty proclamations got a little more liberal each time, and this last broad amnesty proclamation, first the restrictions is to, you know, a certain amount of wealth or land-owners, and this last one, it pardoned Jefferson Davis and everyone.

SWAIN: Now, how constitutionally important was his impeachment process? Did it establish the rule for presidents to be able to fire members of their cabinet, was there?

BERGER: Well, that was unconstitutional in the first place. I mean, they -- obviously a president can fire his own cabinet members. Congress, they were just trying to do anything they possibly could to instrict (ph) a greater punishment on the South, and they just couldn't get Johnson to go along with it, so they thought, "well, we'll take him out of office," and like I say, it wasn't constitutional at that time, but it was the first time in history, obviously, that it had ever occurred.

SWAIN: So, was there a constitutional legacy of the impeachment process that in some ways, let's look back on a history for its significance.

BERGER: Well, I'll tell you one thing that I am aware of. There was the one Southern Democrat that did not vote for it, which is why he was not impeached, okay. I mean, he -- the impeachment process went ahead, but he was acquitted.

And that particular Republican Senator, Republican Senator, he basically lost his ability to go on politically after that. I mean, his party just destroyed his political future after that. And it was something that was very courageous for him to do, and something that actually, future President John Kennedy wrote about, in his book, you know, about having courage and things of the nature.

HINKLE: Profiles of Courage.

BERGER: Right, Profiles of Courage.

HINKLE: And the Tenure of Office Act was overturned in 1926 as unconstitutional.

SWAIN: By the Supreme Court. So, ultimately the Supreme court had their say on it. Would either of you care to comment on the -- and you are not American historians, I understand that, but on the legacy of reconstruction on either the South or on American blacks?

BERGER: That's a tough one. You know, I sometimes wonder, you know, history changed dramatically when Lincoln was assassinated. There are some presidents and some individuals that had the ability to make things happen, and we will never know as a country whether or not things would have happened differently. It certainly wouldn't have happened overnight.

I mean, people did have their prejudices. There was no question about that. But it was very sad that we weren't able to move forward a little bit more quickly. The Southern states imposed black laws, so even though the slaves were free, they had other restrictions on them. They still said that they couldn't own land or that they couldn't sit on a jury trial, things of that nature.

Don't really know where it would've gone if -- had Lincoln lived.

HINKLE: And if there could've been more compromise between the two factions, which were so extreme. Extremely divergent. It may have made a difference.

SWAIN: (Regina Krumpke) asks this question. What would the Johnsons have considered their political high point?

BERGER: Oh, wow...

HINKLE: You know, I think going back to the Senate. That was sort of his -- his vindication, and to go back into the Senate, some of the people were still there that had presided in the impeachment trial.

SWAIN: Do you have a different thought?

BERGER: Well, I absolutely agree with Kendra on that. There's no question about it. I was thinking, when I first heard the question, you know, of all the parties and all of the things that they did at the White House, for President Johnson's 60th birthday, they threw an enormous party, and they only invited children, which was very interesting. And there were parents and adults that wanted to come to this party, and Eliza came downstairs and they had -- they had a wonderful event. You know, coffee -- I shouldn't say coffee, excuse me, ice cream, and for the kids, and cake for the children.

HINKLE: And dancing.

BERGER: And dancing. And it was great fun for them. And you could see the Johnsons particularly enjoyed that aspect of it. So that was probably their high point inside the White House, and then afterwards, absolutely, when he got reelected to the Senate.

SWAIN: Well, it's a nice segue into our final video for this program, and this is on life after the White House for the Johnsons.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HINKLE: We are now in Mrs. Johnson's room. This is the room she returned to after their years in the White House. We have her bed, and nearby it says she was an invalid still plagued with consumption, we have what is known as an invalid's chair. In this chair, Eliza could get up during the day and partake in some of her favorite activities, and yet still relax. Not only does the footrest come up, but it also reclines.

Being an invalid also, spending most of her time in this room, there is a spittoon by Eliza's chair. This would've been necessary from the consumption that she suffered. We also have pink washbasin and chamberpot, which incidentally is interesting because Eliza's are pink and the president's are blue in his room.

She enjoyed embroidery work, and we have a sewing bird by her chair clamped onto the table. And she enjoyed reading poetry. And one of the books of poems that we have that belonged to Eliza was entitled the "The Happy Life." She and Andrew suffered a lot during the Civil War, during the years of his presidency, and yet one of the poems that she marked in the book is entitled "Love in Adversity" and it says, "that thorny path, those stormy skies, have drawn our spirits nearer / and rendered us, by sorrow's ties, each to the other dearer." That pretty well sums up Andrew and Eliza's relationship.

Eliza Johnson was an avid scrapbooker, and she kept a wonderful collection of newspaper articles that she clipped about her husband, and she gathered them here in her scrapbook. And they run from the 1850s, even up until past her and Andrew's death, up until the 1880s, so we can only assume that perhaps one of her daughters kept the tradition going for her.

Andrew Johnson would come chat with her every day when he finished his political duties, and she would share the articles that she had clipped with him. The family holds that if there was something particularly good, she would show him in the evenings, but if there was something not so nice, she would show in in the mornings, because she knew he'd be in a better mood.

Here we have, in 1869, an article about the retirement of Andrew Johnson, so that was a momentous occasion in their life, when they left the White House.

Other personal effects of Mrs. Johnson include one of her calling cards, a broach, and a pin-cushion, for any of the embroidery work or sewing that she might have been doing. In many of her portraits, you see that she is wearing a lace cap, and we still have these caps in our collection.

By her bed, we have additional books. One is the bible. That also belonged to Eliza. And the grandchildren were a vital part of her life, and there are portraits of the grandchildren on the whatnot stand in the corner of the room.

Eliza lived here throughout the remainder of her life. She was too ill to attend Andrew Johnson's funeral when he died. Instead, she remained with a daughter and she remained with that daughter until she passed away herself in 1876.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SWAIN: So, based on what you've told us about Eliza Johnson being a homebody who really didn't love the public life, she must've been very happy to be back in Greeneville, Tennessee.

BERGER: She was thrilled, absolutely thrilled. And the irony of that is she was thrilled to go back home, and they were no sooner back home and Andrew wanted to get back into politics. So, their lives kind of went back to the way it had always been for them. She just was not interested at all, but very proud that her husband did in fact get reelected to the Senate.

SWAIN: So, she supported his run for public office again. And did he leave her behind when he went to Washington?

HINKLE: He did. Many letters inquiring after her, how she's doing, how her health is, and when he was in Nashville, at one point, canvassing, he says, "let me know if mother gets worse and I'll -- I'll come back home."

SWAIN: We should also talk about -- I mean, he just went through this impeachment trial, but when the Johnson family came back to their home in -- in Greeneville, Tennessee and to their home state of Tennessee, what was the reception at home for them?

BERGER: Surprisingly, it was very, very good. Because, you know, remember back during the Civil War, they were calling him, you know, a traitor and what not. Now there were signs that he was a patriot. They were very proud to have him come back, and the tone completely changed from being very, very negative to extremely positive.

HINKLE: The townspeople were sending telegrams, "can you tell us what day you'll be here? Let us know what day you'll be here, because we want to plan a reception and we want it to be good."

SWAIN: And this was just a native son effect, or were they -- the politics had changed and they were more receptive to him?

HINKLE: Well, the traitor comments came when East Tennessee was controlled by the Confederacy. The pro-Union faction had always been there very supportive of -- of his politics.

SWAIN: Next is Robert in Chicago. Hi Robert. What's your question?

ROBERT (ph): Yes, I'd like to know if the Johnson home is in the original state of Franklin, which was in eastern Tennessee? And is it true that President Johnson was buried in a flag and had the Constitution on his head? Thank you.

HINKLE: Yes. The home state came later, but this was the area where they attempted to create the state of Franklin, early on, shortly after the Revolution. And yes, Andrew Johnson is buried with the American flag. His obituaries often say that the Constitution was resting under his hand, instead of his

head, so I don't know if that's just a trick, under his head, under his hand, you know, the sleight of sound that changed over the years.

But the family always regretted that he had been buried with his original copy of the Constitution that had his writings and things on it.

SWAIN: I think we've told this story, but (Jo Obertini) on Facebook asked, "did Eliza and Andrew make a love match?" Was this a love relationship?

BERGER: Absolutely.

SWAIN: Oh sure.

SWAIN: And it was 50 years?

BERGER: They've got 48, I think they were married 48 years. And no, it was a tremendous love match. Someone once said that they were the same mind and same soul. You know, I...

HINKLE: Even though completely different.

BERGER: Exactly, even though completely different.

HINKLE: And it said that you know, he could be vehement, he -- he was a fighter, but the one person that he leaned on completely was this frail little woman.

SWAIN: And I am looking for it, not successfully here, but somewhere on Facebook, someone asked, "what would Eliza Johnson wish her legacy to be as first lady?" Do we have any sense of that? And if we don't know what she wished, what should history view her legacy as first lady?

HINKLE: Well, on Andrew Johnson's monument, it says his faith in the people never wavered. And I think hers might be her faith in her husband never wavered. I think that's what she would want her legacy to be. That, her, and her children.

BERGER: You know, so many first ladies really wanted to be in the White House. Mary Todd Lincoln happened to be one of them. Helen Taft is another one. Sarah Polk. They were very politically involved with their spouses.

And then there were a few that really had no desire and no interest whatsoever. As much as they loved their spouse and supported their spouse, they didn't want any part of politics.

I'm thinking, you know, Zachary Taylor's wife, Margaret, felt the exact same way. So, it's just -- just a difference of opinion. You love your spouse, but it's their career, and even Ladybird Johnson made that comment, when they left the White House. She said, politics was my husband's career, not mine.

HINKLE: And one source said that the one thing that may have resigned her to being in the White House was the fact that the entire family was there with her.

BERGER: Right, the fact that the kids were there with her. Exactly.

SWAIN: Ron, in (Boynton) Beach, Florida, are you there sir?

RON (ph): I am indeed, and thank you for taking my call, and it's a wonderful series. Just a couple quick questions.

How does Eliza respond to -- on the night of President Lincoln's assassination, a card was left for her husband as well? And second, just really quick, have any of your guests seen the film, "Tennessee Johnson," which was a wonderful film done in the '40s with Van Halen, or (Van Heflin), rather, playing President Johnson. It was a remarkable film for the time, and it sort of vindicated President Johnson a little bit.

SWAIN: Thanks so much. Have you seen the film?

HINKLE: Oh Yes, during the bicentennial, we had a special showing of it in the old Capital Theater, and we had World War II newsreels go before, as it would've been when it was originally shown.

SWAIN: His first question about Eliza and the Lincoln assassination?

BERGER: I'm not aware that she was even -- even heard about it. You know, unlike today where we're tweeting and calling and you know, doing things instantaneously, it took a little bit longer back then to get information down.

I just know she was terrified. I don't know what her immediate reaction was.

HINKLE: And (Anna Cone), I think they said who it was, who they stayed with after they left the White House, said a reference that we told poor Eliza too quickly, and completely devastated her.

SWAIN: I want to read you a closing comment here on Facebook. (Ted Flint) writes this, "I read that Eliza Johnson looked forward to leaving the White House almost from the day she arrived, saying, 'it's all very well for those who like it, but I don't like this public life at all. I often wish the time would come when we could return to where we feel we best belong.'" And he writes, "even though she felt this way, history has shown that the Johnson family behaved and lived impeccably while in the White House, with spotless social reputations."

Do you agree with his assessment?

BERGER: Absolutely.

And even the people in the White House, people in Washington, all say that they were extremely honorable. They were probably one of the most well-liked families that lived in the White House because they were so gracious. They gave of themselves, of their time, of their energies, their efforts, and I totally agree.

HINKLE: One source said that he -- he was probably one of the hardest working presidents that was ever in the White House, and they also said that once you got him away from politics, he was quite a pleasant fellow to be around.

SWAIN: Well, we hope we've added a little more contour to the story, rather than simply the first impeached president, tonight with it.

And presidential ponderings (asked us this in) closing, "was there any public recognition or mourning when Andrew or Eliza passed away, six months apart from each other?"

HINKLE: Sure. There was a big funeral. The (inaudible) burial for Andrew Johnson. Special trains brought in dignitaries, and people alike. And then, recently, when Eliza died, the same (inaudible) was brought in from Knoxville for her funeral, and it was drawn by four white horses and led by some of the -- the former servants.

SWAIN: The White House historical association has been our partner and will be throughout this whole series, helping us with research, with guests, and also many of the -- the photographs and other additions we bring to the program, and I want to say a special thanks to our two guests as we close here.

Kendra Hinkle, with the Andrew Johnson National Historical Site, which she has been working at as her life's work since a teenager, and Jacqueline Berger, her two books, two of three, in a series on the first ladies, called "Love, Lies, and Tears: the Lives of America's First Ladies" is available for those of you who are getting the first ladies bug through this series.

Thank you so much for being here tonight to both of you.

BERGER: Thank you so much.

HINKLE: Thank you.

SWAIN: And thanks for watching our next is on the life of the Grants.

**END**