

Who was Rose Kennedy?

Documents and Photographs

Campaigns and the White House

List of Documents and Photographs

Campaigns and the White House

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D4 Journal entries: June and October, 1960

D5 Journal entry, Impressions as the mother of the President: 1961

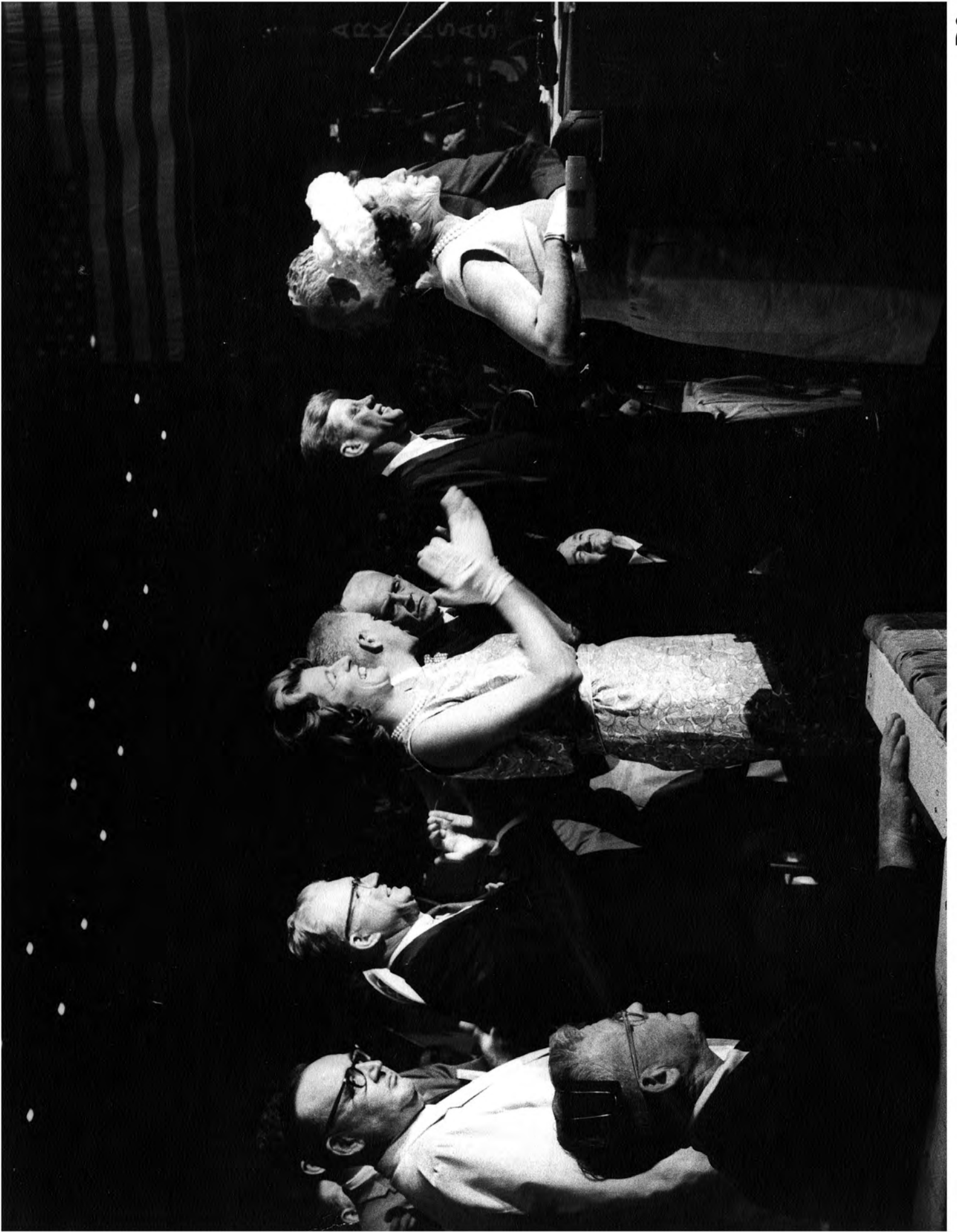
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June 24 and 25, 1960

Jack and Jackie, Jean and the children down at Hyannis this weekend for the Summer. Went for dinner Friday and Saturday nights at Jackie's house, but Jack looked tired and went to bed early. Saturday he played golf in the morning with Jean and later at 7:30 p.m. when I went over they all were playing croquet. Caroline was out there, too, and the dog Charlie racing back and forth chasing Jack's ball. Whereupon, Jack became very emotional and harangued the dog at the top of his lungs.

October 7, 1960

It was our anniversary today, but I almost forgot it this morning when I phoned Joe from Jacksonville where we spent the night as I am campaigning now. I had planned to take a plane here, but ran into an electric storm just before Jacksonville so decided to stay there all night. I went to headquarters this morning and had the regular photos taken, as I did last night on arrival, although I had not expected them and I was in flat shoes and a tweed coat with my hair windblown, after having been matted down half the day by perspiration from the television lights and the humidity which seems to prevade the South at this time of the year.

I have been thinking all day of Jack and his debate and praying, praying, praying. It must be such a strain with all the world watching, waiting, and then reacting, and discussing, criticizing. The immediate reactions, I suppose, depend upon the community, whether it is pro or con Jack. Like Hot Springs, where most people said the debate was even, because Hot Springs was a strongly Republican audience, who did not seem to discuss it in a analytical way, just a haphazard fashion. So many women who had come up in the lines seem to regard Jack almost like a new Lincoln saying, "Thank you for giving us someone like

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your son," or, "I am praying for your son every night," or "I heard his speech and I just know that he is going to save this country," and others would say with a giggle, "I love your son," or, "I touched him and he was grand," and others say, "I am a Baptist, and I am so ashamed of my church," or, "I am a Presbyterian and I am for your son."

IMPRESSIONS AS THE MOTHER OF THE PRESIDENT

I used to think how lucky I was to have had my son chosen out of all of the 180 million people that there were in the United States and how blessed I was to be one of the 35 mothers whose sons had been president. I felt I had been especially fortunate to have had all of the excitement, honor, and fun of being the Mayor's daughter when I was young, plus the honor and fun of being the wife of an Ambassador as I was older, plus being the mother of nine energetic intelligent children, climaxed by being the mother of the youngest elected president and the first Catholic. God had seemed infinitely generous to me. I often used to walk on the lawn at the White House, stopping occasionally to peak at Jack at his desk in his study which was situated in a very bright sunny corner on the ground floor. It was surrounded by long windows on two sides on the ground level, so he could step out and see Caroline. He took a special pride and interest in the rose garden which ^{Ms Paul Mellon} Mrs. ~~dePont~~ had planted ^{first} during the last six months of his tenure in the White House. I never heard him demonstrate any interest in those things at home. The swimming pool had an exceedingly high temperature on account of Jack's back, so I never used it except once or twice.

The first time Joe and I felt that Jack was President was when we first saw him on television enter the White House with President Eisenhower on a preliminary visit. We were not together when we saw it, but we spoke of it later. I did not walk in

Ms Paul Mellon