DR. PAT IRELAND NIXON

75th Birthday
CELEBRATION

HONORING

DR. PAT IRELAND NIXON

ON HIS

SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY
“During his years of ministry to the sick in body, Doctor Pat has, through his kind and sympathetic manner, been a tower of strength to their loved ones.”

**Dr. Pat Ireland Nixon**

*Born at Old Nixon, Texas*

*November 29, 1883*

*Began the Practice of Medicine in San Antonio, Texas*

*September 27, 1911*
PROGRAM

AT THE SAN ANTONIO COUNTRY CLUB

November 25, 1958

Chairman . . . . . . . . . . . . B. B. McGIMSEY

Invocation . . . . . . . . . . . Dr. Howard H. Hollowell
Pastor Laurel Heights Methodist Church

Toastmaster . . . . . . . . . . . C. Stanley Banks

Speaker . . . . . . . . . . . . Mr. Frank Wardlaw
University of Texas Press

Benediction . . . . . . . . . . . Dr. James W. Laurie
President Trinity University

HOSTS

Mr. and Mrs. John M. Bennett, Sr.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry M. Hart

Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Labatt, Sr.

Mr. and Mrs. B. B. McGimsey
THE INVOCATION

DR. HOWARD H. HOLLOWELL:

O Lord, our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for all that is good, honorable and true in the world. We thank Thee for men and women who are honorable, good and full of faith. We are deeply thankful for the lives and labors of these, Thy faithful servants, Dr. and Mrs. Pat Nixon, and we pray Thy continuing blessings upon them and upon their children.

While we pause here this evening to pay our sincere expression of love and honor to them, let us be reminded, O Lord, that the strong and good traits of solid goodness which they have so faithfully made a part of their very lives may also be ours if we, too, live in devoted consecration to Thee as we know that Dr. and Mrs. Nixon have done.

Bless them, we pray Thee, with many more wonderful years, for we know they will continue to give Thee their very best.

We thank Thee for this blessing of fellowship and for the material gift of food now spread before us. Bless all this to our good, and all who are here assembled to the service of Jesus Christ our Lord. We ask this sincerely in His Name. Amen.
THE WELCOME

Mr. Brooks B. McGimsey:

Ladies and Gentlemen: My part in this program will be very brief, but it is a most happy duty for me and on behalf of your hosts Mr. and Mrs. Bennett, Mr. and Mrs. Hart, Mr. and Mrs. Labatt, Mrs. McGimsey and me to open this meeting. I want to express our appreciation for your being here tonight to help us participate in this celebration given in honor of Doctor and Mrs. Nixon on the occasion of his 75th birthday. I am sure that it is just as great a pleasure to all of you as it is to us who have been so close to him for a great many years. It is wonderful to see such a fine turnout on such short notice because we didn’t get started as soon as we had hoped to on this. I now turn the meeting over to Mr. Stanley Banks, a great friend of Doctor Pat’s, who will be your toastmaster.

THE INTRODUCTION

Mr. Stanley Banks:

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: I would like for you to hear everything that is taking place. If any of you in the rear of the audience should have any difficulty, I wish you would raise your hand. This is a very happy event. I am going to proceed at once with the introduction of guests. First of all, I would like to introduce to you the hosts of the evening. They are Mr. and Mrs. John M. Bennett, Sr. Will you please stand? Mr. and Mrs. Bennett, Mr. and Mrs. Henry M. Hart, Mr. and Mrs. T. Weir Labatt, Sr., and Mr. and Mrs. Brooks B. McGimsey. Now, in introducing to you the members of the Nixon family, I shall start with their four sons. First of all, their physician son, general practitioner, Dr. Pat I. Nixon, Jr., and Mrs. Nixon, their son Pat Nixon III, and their daughter Peggy. Will you please stand? Dr. Robert R. Nixon and Mrs. Nixon and their son Robert, Jr.; and then their son who is a Major in the Air Corps, the flyer, Major Ben Nixon and Mrs. Nixon; and then their farmer-rancher son, Mr. Thomas Nixon and Mrs. Nixon. I would like to say that Doctor and Mrs. Nixon, our honored guests tonight, have 13 grandchildren. Dr. Pat Nixon, Jr., has four children, Dr. Bob Nixon has three children, Major Ben Nixon has three children, and Thomas Nixon has three children.

Now, I want to introduce to you some out of town guests—people who are related to the Nixon family or their friends of many years. I would like to introduce to you Mr. and Mrs. L. F. McCollum of Houston, Texas, who are niece and nephew of our honored guest. Mr. McCollum is president of the Continental Oil Company. Mr. and Mrs. McCollum. The next gentleman I want to introduce is Dr. H. Bailey Carroll of Austin, who is the Executive Secretary of the Texas State Historical Association, of which Doctor Pat is a past president. Dr. and Mrs. Carroll, will you please stand? I want to introduce to you a gentleman well known in Texas history, a close friend of Doctor Pat’s for many years, Mr. Dudley Dobie of San Marcos. Mr. Dobie, also Mrs. Dobie. I also want to introduce to you Mr. and Mrs. Rankin Starkey of Kerrville, Texas. Mrs. Starkey is a niece of Mrs. Nixon. I want to introduce Mr. and Mrs.
Frank C. Allen of Corpus Christi. Mrs. Allen is a sister of Doctor Nixon. Mr. and Mrs. Allen. I would like to introduce next Mrs. W.M. Randolph who is the sister of Mrs. Nixon. Mrs. Randolph I would like to introduce to you the dean of the medical profession of San Antonio and Bexar County, particularly in the field of surgery. Dr. Witten B. Russ. Mrs. Russ, I understand, is also here. Mrs. Russ. I also want to introduce to you a friend of the Nixon family and her son, Mrs. Annie Mae Reichert Whitehurst and son of Corpus Christi. Mrs. Whitehurst. There are others here at the head table that I also want to introduce. We have Dr. and Mrs. James W. Laurie here. Dr. Laurie is president of Trinity University. We have also Dr. and Mrs. Howard Hollowell, pastor of the Laurel Heights Methodist Church. Dr. Hollowell and Mrs. Hollowell. I would like also to introduce my wife Mrs. Banks. I also want to introduce Mrs. Mary Johnston who for more than twenty-five years has been the secretary to Doctor Nixon. Mrs. Johnston.

Having completed the introductions of the guests, I, as toastmaster, will tell you something of the Nixon family. In the early autumn of 1832, if you had been in Asheboro, the county seat of Randolph County, North Carolina, you would have observed there a young man, twenty-five years of age, with a team of horses and a covered wagon; his name was Robert Thomas Nixon. He and his bride of a few months were setting out on a journey for the land of Texas, land of tradition and hope. From 1838 to 1852, the population of Texas had increased from 34,000 to 300,000. People were coming to Texas to get land to establish themselves, to have a greater opportunity for themselves and their families. Robert Thomas Nixon was born in North Carolina in 1827; so when he set out from his home county of Randolph for Texas in 1852, he was twenty-five years of age. It was a long hard trip. Finally, he arrived at the end of his journey. He settled in Guadalupe County, seven miles south of the present town of Luling. His financial resources were very limited; as a matter of fact, he had no money. So he sold his watch and mule in order to make his first payment on a tract of 400 acres of land. There he spent the remaining forty-five years of his life. He died in 1897, at seventy years of age. He was the father of eighteen children, eleven children by his first marriage to Laura Wood Nixon and seven children by his second marriage to Fannie Andrews Nixon. The honored guest tonight, Doctor Pat, is the fifth child of the second marriage. Robert Thomas Nixon occupied a very prominent place in that part of Texas. He was a farmer, a stockraiser, a ginner, county commissioner, a Captain in the Confederate Army, and a leader.

When our honored guest came into the world there at the Nixon plantation on November 29, 1883, two other very important events were taking place in Texas that year: one was the opening of the University of Texas, from which in 1905 he was to graduate; the other was that the cornerstone was laid and the building of our present State Capitol in Austin was commenced. It happened that in the Governor's office of our State at that time was a man by the name of John Ireland, noted for his honesty and integrity. He was a country lawyer from Seguin. Seguin was the county seat of Guadalupe county in which the Nixons had settled. There was a friendship between Robert Thomas Nixon and John Ireland; so it was quite natural that when this son was born on November 29, 1883 he should have bestowed upon him the name of Pat Ireland Nixon.

Now, Pat spent his boyhood on the farm. I have never, as long as I have known the Doctor, heard him say too many things about his early life there seven miles south of Luling. But in 1956, there was published a book entitled The Early Nixons of Texas, the work of Doctor Pat, with genealogies by Doctor Pat, Jr., and his wife. Robert Thomas Nixon came to Texas 106 years ago. Today his descendants number more than 500. I should say more than 600 and their names and history are set forth in The Early Nixons of Texas. This book, two years ago, was awarded the prize, known as the Summerfield Roberts Award of $1,000, annually given to the best book published during the year on Texas history or pertaining to Texas life. As we go through the pages of this book, we come across several incidents that might be of interest to you: one deals with Doctor Pat when he was just five years of age. The account goes on to say that trouble came to the Nixon household from many directions: death, illness, drought, hard times. One source of trouble could have been eliminated had two little boys of five years been more mature and less cold. One of those boys was the last but one of the Nixon family, Doctor Pat, and the other was colored Stevie, son of Uncle Dan McKinney. These two were quite cold one winter morning as they proceeded to the haystack near
the south barn and struck a match. *The Luling Signal* of December 6, 1888 records the results:

A fire occurred at Captain Nixon’s place in Guadalupe county last Monday, destroying all its cribs with about 700 bushels of corn, 140 tons of hay and 200 bushels of cotton seed. Fortunately, the bulk of his corn had not been cribbed. It was only by superhuman efforts that the flames were prevented from spreading to the warehouse, office, and residence. The origin of the fire is not known, but the article goes on to say that the account was entirely correct, and this was the comment by Doctor Pat, that the account was entirely correct and accurate except for the last sentence. Well remembered is the route travelled by these two little boys: south to the neighborhood of Dallas Warren’s house, east for a short distance, and then north to the big house, breathless and very much afraid. Guilt was easily to be seen. Well remembered also is the punishment: there was none.

Now, there is another incident recorded here about Doctor Pat. I had wondered if he had really done any work on the farm down there, and I find in one of the letters written by his Mother that he had. I quote here as confirmation of the fact that he really did farm work, for in the letter she makes mention of Pat and his younger brother Zeb picking cotton. There is another story here about Doctor Pat’s Mother, Mrs. Fannie Andrews Nixon. It goes on to say that his Mother had the capacity to reprove without harshness. This is not to say that she did not use the rod or slipper when the occasion demanded it. One summer the older of her two sons went to San Antonio on Sunday to play baseball; this was Doctor Pat. He knew that she would object, so he played under the name of Johnson. Late that night, on his return, she called out to him, “Well, Mr. Johnson, did you play a good game today?”

Doctor Pat was graduated from Luling High School in 1900; he was graduated from Bingham School in Asheville, North Carolina, in 1902. He went to the University of Texas, graduating there in 1905. Then he went to Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, graduating from there in 1909.

I have some telegrams that I am going to read at this time; one of them is from some eminent physicians and surgeons from Baltimore: “Each of us and your many friends in Baltimore send our best wishes and congratulations for a long and happy life.” That is from Walter Baetjer, Benjamin B. Baker, Alfred Blalock, and Edwin Richardson, Sr. These are eminent physicians and surgeons at Johns Hopkins, from which Doctor Pat was graduated in 1909. I understand that Alfred Blalock, one of the signers of this telegram, is considered one of the greatest surgeons in the world today. At this moment also I would like to read two other telegrams that have been received; one is from Bishop Everett H. Jones and his wife: “We deeply regret that a previous engagement keeps us from your celebration. We shall always be grateful for all that you have meant to our family and to our community. May God bless you and yours.” Also, a telegram from Mrs. Elizabeth Bennett Strange, the daughter of the John Bennett, Sr.’s, sent from Old Westbury, New York: “Happy Birthday, dear Doctor Pat. I wish I could be there to celebrate with you. Betty and Bruton join me in congratulations and lots of love from all of us.”

Doctor Pat opened his office here in San Antonio, September 27, 1911. Two of our hosts tonight, T. W. Labatt and John M. Bennett, Sr., selected him as their family physician two months after his arrival in the city. They have been his close friends and patients ever since. Not long after that the Henry Harts selected him as their family physician; likewise, there has been a close friendship with them throughout all the years, and Mr. and Mrs. Brooks McGimsey have been his patients as well as close friends likewise for many, many years.

In this morning’s *San Antonio Express* there was an editorial, something that I would think was quite unusual for the Express. They came out with this lengthy editorial of Doctor Pat. I intend my remarks to mean that it is not often a citizen of San Antonio gets this recognition, and they recognize here the great contribution that Doctor Nixon has made to San Antonio and to the medical profession.

I could stand here a long time and tell you about the achievements of Doctor Nixon: the books he has written, the service he has rendered to his city and to mankind; but I do not wish to encroach upon the address of the main speaker of the evening. What I want to say is that Doctor Nixon’s nearly fifty years here in San Antonio have really been a benefaction; not only has he aided the city by his knowledge of medicine and surgery but also in his literary achievements and in his civic efforts.
Now, we have with us tonight as the principal speaker a gentleman who came to Texas from South Carolina about eight years ago. He was graduated from the University of South Carolina at Columbia. It is my understanding that the State of South Carolina has two mottoes and those two mottoes are in Latin: “Animis opibusque parati” and “Dum spiro spero”; the equivalent of the Latin being as follows: First, “Prepared in mind and resources” and second, “While I breathe, I hope.” He was prepared in mind and resources and he was breathing and hoping. He came to Texas to the University of our State for the purpose of taking over the University of Texas Press. During the eight years he has been the director of that branch of our University, it has obtained stature and standing with the literary people of our State as well as the country. He has endeared himself by the publication of many fine scholarly books. He is going to tell you tonight something about Doctor Pat’s efforts. It is with much pleasure that I introduce to you Dr. Frank Wardlaw. I call him doctor, he denies that he is such. I shall, however, introduce him as Dr. Frank Wardlaw who is the director of the University of Texas Press. Doctor Wardlaw.

THE TRIBUTE

MR. FRANK WARDLAW:

Mr. Toastmaster, Doctor Pat, Mrs. Nixon, Ladies and Gentlemen: It is a very great pleasure for me to be here tonight, not only on my own account, but as a representative of the University of Texas, to help do honor to one of the University’s most distinguished and useful sons. I have had a couple of very nice surprises tonight, the introduction being one of them. I remember hearing the Governor of South Carolina introduce Sally Rand to a joint session of the House and Senate, and he introduced her as “a little woman you have probably gotten the wrong impression about.” I am sure that you have gotten the wrong impression about me from that introduction, and I think that it is very fortunate. In one of the books that we published, a book of Texas Negro folk tales by J. Mason Brewer entitled The Word on the Brazos, the author tells the story of old man Gregg who lived up in the Brazos River bottoms. He worked hard all week long and he loved to hunt and fish; and every Sunday he went hunting and fishing, which was a terrible source of distress to his wife who was a very pious woman and wanted him out of the house of the Lord on Sunday—but he went hunting and fishing. One day the Reverend Sin-Killer Jackson was holding a revival service in their church and she insisted on her husband going, and he went and he sat down on the front pew with her. Suddenly, to his amazement, he was called on to lead in prayer. This was a most unusual situation for him, and he got up and said, “Lord, before Ah begins dis prayer Ah reckon Ah better let you know who Ah is. Ah ain’t Ben Gregg, de one what pick 600 pounds of cotton a day when he teckin’ two rows at a time, and Ah ain’t John Gregg, de one what plays de fiddle and de banjo evuh Saddy night for de platform dances, and Ah ain’t Joe Gregg, de one what stole his boss-man’s bess pair of mules and run way off somewhar.—Ah’s old man Gregg, de one what shoots de gun so good.”

I said that I had two unexpected pleasures tonight—the other was the fact that I was billed as the principal speaker. I really am a stand-in for Dr. Harry Ransom, the vice-president and provost
of the University. I am delighted that he couldn't come because it means that I get a chance to pay a personal tribute to my friend, Pat Nixon. I'm reminded in that case of a story about a woman, also from my home State of South Carolina, who named her children after jewels. She was explaining it to a white friend of her's and she said, "Ah name de fuss one Ruby 'cuz her lips so red, and Ah name the next one Pearl 'cuz her teeth so white, and Ah name the third one Onyx 'cuz he so unexpected."

I am not going to try to make a speech to you here tonight. I am somewhat in the position of a young lady who turned up with a man at the home of a minister one Friday night and told him they wanted to get married, that they had just gotten their marriage license and wanted to get married right then. He told them that he was sorry, "You'll have to wait three days. The laws of the state require it." So they just begged and pleaded with him to marry them right then, and he said, "No, I'm sorry, you'll have to wait three days," and then the lady said, "Well, Reverend, couldn't you please just say a few words to tide us over the weekend?"

I'm just going to say a few words to tide you over to Dr. Ransom's remarks which I am going to read in a minute. When you celebrate Doctor Nixon's 75th birthday—we are also celebrating the University's 75th birthday this year—one would expect that the element of age would creep into the discussion. Actually, things are not always as they seem. You may, perhaps, recall the story of the porcupine that backed into a prickly pear and said, "Is that you honey?" Things are not always as they seem.

I heard a story about Pat's early practice here in San Antonio. They say that there was an old lady, a very ancient lady in her nineties, who had been ill for quite some time, and she was wandering a little bit in her mind and couldn't focus on things, and didn't really know what was going on. Her doctor called in Doctor Nixon as a consultant. Doctor Nixon examined her and then left the room, and the old lady turned to her daughter and said, "Daughter, who was that new minister who just visited me?" And she said, "Mother, that wasn't a minister, that was a doctor." And she said, "Oh, a doctor! I thought he acted mighty familiar for a minister."

I am going to take the liberty of being just as familiar as I please with Pat Nixon tonight because I not only respect him as a doctor, as an historian, and as a man, but I love him too. So I'm going to be as familiar as I please, and that is why I'll tell you another story about his medical practice here in San Antonio. When he started practicing, babies weren't born in hospitals. They were all born in homes. I was born at home and most of you of my vintage and older were born at home too, rather than in hospitals. Sometimes, of course, childbirth was quite a situation for the doctor to handle because the husband was exceedingly nervous and wouldn't know what to do with himself. Anyhow, Doctor Nixon went to a house to deliver a first baby for a couple. He went upstairs, and he had to forcibly eject the husband from the room. The husband stood outside on the landing, fidgeting. Doctor Nixon came to the door a minute or two later and he said, "Will you please get me a screwdriver?" Well, the man came back with the screwdriver, and about five minutes later Doctor Pat stuck his head out the door again and said, "Will you please get me a hammer and chisel?" The man was terribly distressed but he got them and handed them to him, and a little later Doctor Pat came on the landing again. The man said, "Please tell me, Doctor—is my wife all right? Is it a boy or a girl?" And Doctor Pat said, "I don't know yet—I haven't been able to get my instrument case open."

Doctor Nixon is author of four books that I know of and possibly some others that he is keeping quiet about—A Century of Medicine in San Antonio, The Medical Story of Early Texas, A History of the Texas Medical Association which we had the privilege of publishing, and The Early Nixons of Texas to which Mr. Banks made reference earlier. He is one of our authors, and one of which we are most proud. He is, I might say one of our junior authors. We have published, in the past two or three years, books by a very remarkable bunch of men who are somewhat Doctor Nixon's seniors. One was Carl Hartmann, who had the first Ph.D. degree ever granted by the University of Texas; we published his book on possums. Another one is Dr. C. Judson Herreck, who got his book on his ninetieth birthday. You know Roy Bedechek, of course—he was seventy-nine when his book came out—and just last week we published a book edited by an eighty-four-year-old lady, Miss Lucy E. Foy, a very remarkable woman. We also published a book by Garcelo de la Vega, who was born in 1543, which makes him our oldest author. He is dead, of course, but he is still a pretty old author.
Now, Pat Nixon, I'm going to get serious for a while, if I may. Pat Nixon is not an herb doctor, but he is a man who believes in the importance of roots. There are a lot of people who, with a great deal of justice, believe that we are fast becoming a rootless nation. We pick up from where we grew up and go off anywhere and lose touch with the past, and we lose touch with our people, and I think in consequence that we lose touch with many of the primary sources of our strength as a nation. Doctor Nixon is a man who believes in roots. His historical writings are splendid evidence of that fact. He bridges the gaps between people of one time and another. He has a feeling for the living past. It is not the dead past, and it is never dead in his books because the people come to life and we recognize them for what they are, men and women with the same problems and hopes and aspirations as ourselves, in many instances superior to ourselves. Doctor Pat believes we have an obligation not to forget those who have gone before and what they stood for. My origin as a South Carolinian has already been explained to you—it is something I'm not disposed to apologize for, even today—perhaps it makes me appreciate particularly the importance of this feeling of identity with the past. America needs to be told today, I think, as Isaiah told ancient Israel, "Look to the rock from which you are hewn!" And no Texan of our time has done a better job than Doctor Pat of making Texans realize the importance of looking to the rock whence they were hewn. We sometimes need to turn away from our national preoccupation with security and realize that this nation's greatness was not founded on security, but upon the search for opportunity regardless of the cost. Pat Nixon reminds us in every aspect of his life and work of the fundamental things of America which we must not forget if we are not to become a truly rootless people, and flutter like dead leaves from bare limbs, which are cut off from the good nourishment of the good earth. A great educator once said that the object of education is to lead to a life of loyalty to facts, and that loyalty to facts implies the two qualities which are the key words of education and of life—genuineness and proportion. Genuineness means going back of the symbol to the reality for which it stands, and proportion means viewing the part in the light of the whole. These are the essence of good life and good scholarship, and both characterize Pat Nixon.

This year, as you have already been told, the University of Texas has been celebrating its 75th anniversary by looking to the future, by taking stock of how far it has come and by striving to learn how best in the future it can fulfill its obligation of service to its people. I am sure that Pat Nixon faces the future in very much the same spirit and that we can expect from him many, many more worthwhile contributions for his people in the years that lie ahead. I was talking to my secretary who has a particular yen for Doctor Pat, as so many of the females of the species seem to have, and I was reminded of the poem by one of Texas' most important poets, Karle Wilson Baker of Nacogdoches, and I asked her if I could read that poem tonight; this is the poem:

Let me grow lovely growing old.—
So many fine things do;
Laces, and ivory, and gold,
And silks need not be new;
And there is healing in old trees,
Old streets a glamour hold;
Why may not I, as well as these
Grow lovely growing old?

Now, I thought about Pat's rugged bald dome and I asked my secretary, "Do you think I can apply the adjective 'lovely' to Doctor Pat?" And she said, "You certainly can!" I know, of course, I can apply it to Mrs. Nixon.

There is an old folk song in the South which I used to be fond of singing, with this refrain: "I have been a young man fond of peace and quiet; I shall be an old man full of rum and riot." I don't know how much riot or how much of rum Doctor Nixon is going to take on in future years, but we all want him to have everything that he wants out of life. And that is the message that I bring to him tonight.

Now, I am going to read to you the message which Dr. Harry Ransom, the vice-president and provost of the University of Texas, Editor of the Texas Quarterly has sent.

"There is nothing more deadly than trying to make a merely logical explanation of a man.

"Doctor Nixon has been celebrated and will continue to be celebrated for all the things that get recited chronologically in hono-
rific records. Because I am merely an amateur in such a matter, I will celebrate him somewhat differently.

"Doctor Nixon, thank God, has not always proceeded logically. As science has become more and more impersonal, he has grown more and more human. While headlines have grown more and more interplanetary, he has been more and more perceptive about the local. He has kept his feet on the ground and his eye on life instead of floundering about between the dead past and the unknown future.

"Doctor Nixon is one of the very few people in Texas or anywhere else who writes a letter that is worth reading more than once.

"He is one of the few people who can put a negative opinion so clearly and honestly that it has a completely positive effect.

"In his writing, he is capable of devotion without blind sentimentality, of variety without disorganization, of solemnity without dullness, of lightness without superficiality.

"I have no idea what medical schools teach doctors to be, but I should think that these learned scientific congregations might well amplify Aesculapius with Nixon. Texas medicine, and all the rest of us, are indebted to him for more than impressive history; we are indebted to him for humanity, for the grace of memory and the power of insight and the promise of vision. These are the gifts that kept man from being just another animal and the only gifts that will save man in the future from being just another machine. We will stay grateful to him."

Mr. Banks:

Mr. Wardlaw, I want to thank you very much for your fine tribute to Doctor Nixon and for all the humor that you have injected into the program this evening. We appreciate very much your coming over from Austin to be with us.

Now, we have come to that part of the program where I am going to turn it over to Doctor Pat. Doctor Pat, this has been a marvelous demonstration of the love and affection that hundreds of your friends have for you. It reflects the life that you have led and the good that you have done. Now, I want you to tell us just whatever you have upon your mind and heart.

THE RESPONSE

Doctor Nixon:

This is an overwhelming experience. My reaction to it, if not obvious now, will become so in the next few minutes. There are many of you out there, indeed dozens of you, who should belong up here and I down there. It was my good fortune to fall into the capable hands of eight very loyal friends.

For the moment, perhaps, I had best try to be facetious, lest I give way to tears. One summer, about 100 years ago, so the story goes, Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri was home to shore up his political fences. His friends gave him the ubiquitous barbecue. After the food had been disposed of, the speaking began. One enthusiast made a motion to the effect that Senator Benton was the greatest living man. This was passed unanimously. A second follower moved that Senator Benton was the greatest man who had ever lived. This was approved. A third, not to be outdone, made a motion that Senator Benton was the greatest man who would ever live. This received unanimous approval. Then the great man, with proper senatorial dignity, rose to his feet. "My friends," he said with deep humility, "my friends, you have done me simple justice."

To my good friends, Frank Wardlaw, Stanley Banks, and Brooks McGimsey, go my sincere gratitude. Their words may seem a little extravagant. If so, it can be attributed to the fact that they have approached their subject through friendly eyes and with warm hearts.

To the Bennetts, the Harts, the Labatts and McGimseys, we give our humble thanks. This occasion tonight is an example of their consideration and their generosity and their love for many people and for many causes. In them there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Their philosophy of life can well be epitomized thus:

Help thy brother's boat to cross,
And lo thine own has reached the shore.

Mine is a hard assignment, but a pleasant one,—hard, because it has exposed before you my already keyed-up emotions; pleasant, because it affords me the opportunity to express to you, so many
of our fine friends, my deep and abiding gratitude for your confidence in me and for all you have done for me. It gives me a chance to tell all of you of our undimmed affection as the years have come and gone for a half-century.

There is no general agreement as to what should be done with a man who has reached three score years and fifteen. He is too old to be Oslerized. A certain Arab tribe has a method. They would seat the man of this age on an Arab steed and take him well out into the desert. There, he would be placed on a fine Persian rug and be left with food and water for one day only. The method may have merit.

In a small town there lived a man who was given to predicting the course of events. He was wrong about as often as he was right. As he grew older, he grew more cautious. When he reached seventy-five, a neighbor asked him about certain trends. He replied, "I am making no predictions. The only things I am sure of are that it is getting colder and nine o'clock at night is pretty late." Maybe we of that age should keep quiet.

So, for me and my seventy-five years, this occasion has honored me beyond all calculations. Much of what has gone before and much of what is yet to come will soon be forgotten, but the rich memories of this night shall be bound around our neck and written on the tables of our heart.

When a timid and unsophisticated boy emerged from Guadalupe County near the turn of the century, little of promise could be seen for him. Transitions from Luling High School to Bingham School, the University of Texas, and Johns Hopkins Medical School opened his mind and heart to unexpected and unexplored areas of opportunity and obligation. In 1911, he came to San Antonio and you took him in.

Here for nearly fifty years, you have given me recognition in every direction: social, personal, medical, historical, and spiritual. I have never asked for any personal advancement. But you have heaped upon me unasked and perhaps undeserved honors.

As I look around this unprecedented group, I am reminded of how together we dealt with disease, health, and life. It is easy to recall how you met your problems with more than the courage and devotion of the soldier.

However, a doctor's life has its lighter side. One afternoon, there sat in my reception room a woman and a five-year-old daughter whom I ushered into the world. She waited to the last. Then I asked her in. "No," she said, "we are waiting for Dr. Sam Taylor down the hall. He doesn't want us to sit in his reception room. He thinks my child has whooping cough."

The profession of medicine is in a constant state of change: the doctors of today become the castoffs of tomorrow. It is a form of evolution. It cannot be otherwise. Natural as it is, Pat, Jr., and Bob are now treating many of my former patients and their descendants. I have always held that if a son does not improve on the sire, it is not the fault of the sire.

But I would like to inform these two young men in this presence that there is at least one patient that they cannot dislodge from my care. She is a young lady of nearly eighty delightful summers. Some months ago she took sick, very sick she thought. "Call Doctor Nixon, the old doctor," she said to her daughter Frances. "I am like the old Negro who was caught in his cabin during a severe storm," she continued; "as the doors and windows went out, the roof caved in and the walls blew down, he fell on his knees and prayed: 'Oh! Lord, I is in trouble, I is in big trouble. Come on down and help me. Come yourself. Don't send your Son. This is no job for a young man.'"

In my practice of medicine I have sought to be sincerely honest with my patients and they have appreciated it. However, I have not been as honest as Dr. Benjamin Rush was. Doctor Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was the most eminent physician of his day. In his diary, he recorded this gem of frankness: "Mrs. Mease told me when dying that among other sins she had to repent of one was too much confidence in my remedies."

Profound soul-searching is not always beneficial to the doctor, as evidenced by this excerpt from a letter:

"This is my first week that I went out since I was sick. I made a little money—and I said to my self said I—now I am going to pay the Dr. but it got cold and I needed an over coat—so the good angel said to me you better pay the Dr. never mind the over coat and the bad angel said to me never mind the Dr. you better get yourself an over coat it is cold.—So Dr. the both angels have been
fighting the whole night and would not let me sleep so this morning
I compromised with them. I got me an over coat and left $2 for
you."

And now, before I close, may I say this personal word? Olive and
I have come a long way together and there are no regrets to our
backward glance. Early, we learned to believe with Disraeli that
life is too short to be little. She and I have had the same ideals.
We have read the same books. We have gone to the same places.
We have hunted from the same blind and fished from the same
boat. We have enjoyed the same music. In later years, we have
developed the same ailments. We have seen eye-to-eye on things
moral and spiritual.

And, especially, for this occasion tonight, we have loved the
same friends. Nothing in time or in eternity, can dim the memo-
ry of her love and her loyalty to friend and family alike. In
quietness and in confidence, we face toward the sunset.

Truly, we have together warmed both hands before the fires of
life. Our incomparable experience tonight has added an extra glow
to those fires. And our feet have walked in pleasant places. And
you, our wonderful friends and you our precious family, have
walked with us.

Thank you for honoring us with your presence. Thank you for
all you have meant to us and still mean. Good-night. And may God
bless you and keep you, everyone.

THE CONCLUSION

Mr. Banks:

I come now to a very pleasant assignment as toastmaster this
evening. When Doctor Pat entered the University of Texas, he
met a young lady from Mineola, Texas, and later on he married
that young lady. The young lady was Miss Olive Gray Read. They
were married July 3, 1912, at Mineola and for forty-six years they
have lived happily together. They learned to enjoy the good for-
tune that has come to them, they have shared their sorrows to-
ether, they have walked happily down through life. Oftentimes,
when we consider the life of a man and the success that he has
achieved, we fail to realize that behind the scenes, so to speak, is
the wife who has encouraged, who has been a real helpmate, who
has been responsible for a great deal that the man has accom-
plished in his lifetime. Mrs. Nixon, Olive Read Nixon, has been a
real help to Doctor Nixon and much of the success that he has
achieved has been the result of her efforts. Mrs. Nixon, I am happy
to present this gift to you which I understand is a portrait of
Doctor Nixon.

We now come to the end of this delightful evening. I am going
to call on Dr. James W. Laurie, president of the Trinity University,
to pronounce the benediction.

THE BENEDICTION

Dr. James W. Laurie:

Let us pray. Eternal God, our creator and our sustainer, we do
praise Thee for Thy healing love and for the ministry of life and
health granted us by skilled hands of devoted human servants.
Especially we thank Thee for Doctor Pat, one of Thy noblemen,
and for his wonderful family and for his gracious presence with
his friends here tonight. The thanksgiving of countless others joins
with ours for his unselfish understanding and his service to his
fellowman. Wilt Thou bless us in this joy and thankfulness and
use our thankful hearts as channels for renewed blessings, that
Thou whose gift is length of days, may go with us on down the
way, always through Jesus Christ. Amen.
Names of those present

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Adams
Mrs. Stuart Adams
Dr. & Mrs. James Aderhold
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Allen
Mr. & Mrs. J. D. Ansley
Mrs. Scott Applewhite
Mrs. Charles Armstrong
Miss Lucie Armstrong
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Aubin
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Austin
Miss Frances Banks
Mr. & Mrs. John Banks
Miss Lucy Banks
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Banks
Mrs. Gertrude Barnes
Mr. & Mrs. John M. Bennett
General & Mrs. John M. Bennett, Jr.
Mrs. Frank Blair
Mr. Julian Blair
Judge & Mrs. Robert Lee Bobbitt
Miss Sophie Bodenheimer
Dr. & Mrs. Charles Boehs
Miss Gladys Borroum
Miss Margaret Borroum
Mr. & Mrs. Leo Brewer
Dr. R. H. Buck
Father W. H. Buehler
Mrs. Henry Burney
Dr. & Mrs. Bailey Carroll
Mr. & Mrs. Randolph Carter
Dr. & Mrs. Albert Champion
Dr. & Mrs. A. F. Clark
Dr. & Mrs. A. F. Clark, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. S. E. Cockrell
Dr. & Mrs. J. B. Copeland
Dr. & Mrs. Edward Coyle
Dr. Milton Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Diehlman
Mr. & Mrs. W. F. Dobbins
Mr. & Mrs. Dudley Dobie
Dr. & Mrs. E. D. Dumas
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Felthouse
Mr. & Mrs. L. E. Fite
Miss Hope Foster
Miss Inez Foster
Mrs. Sterling Freeborn
Miss Lorraine Garvey
General & Mrs. B. F. Giles
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Gillespie
Miss Mary Green
Mrs. Rena Maverick Green
Mr. & Mrs. Johnson Griffith
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Groos
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Grothus
Mrs. A. F. Grum
Dr. & Mrs. Frank Haggard
Mrs. J. C. Hall
Dr. & Mrs. W. H. Hargis
Mr. & Mrs. Henry M. Hart
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Hart
Dr. & Mrs. Albert Hartman
Dr. & Mrs. H. G. Hendricks
Dr. & Mrs. Al H. Hill
Dr. & Mrs. Lucius Hill
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Hill
Dr. & Mrs. John Hinchey
Mrs. Charles Hoch
Dr. & Mrs. Roger Hollan
Dr. & Mrs. H. H. Hollowell
Mr. & Mrs. Reagan Houston
Mr. & Mrs. H. L. Ingersoll
Mr. & Mrs. George Isbell
Dr. & Mrs. W. W. Jackson
Rabbi & Mrs. David Jacobson
Dr. & Mrs. Max Johnson
Mrs. DuPree Johnston
Dr. & Mrs. Dean Jones
Dr. & Mrs. S. R. Kaliski
Mr. & Mrs. Ike Kampmann, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Meyer Katz
Mr. & Mrs. Winchester Kelso
Mr. & Mrs. Arley V. Knight
Mr. & Mrs. Blair Labatt
Mr. & Mrs. T. W. Labatt
Mr. & Mrs. T. W. Labatt, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. J. W. Laurie
Dr. & Mrs. C. F. Lehmann
Mr. & Mrs. Dillard McCollum
Mr. & Mrs. L. F. McCollum
Dr. & Mrs. Asher McComb
Miss Beatrice McDermott
Mr. & Mrs. B. B. McGimsey
Dr. & Mrs. J. A. McIntosh
Dr. & Mrs. Frank Martin
Dr. & Mrs. J. L. Matthews
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Maverick
Mr. & Mrs. I. Mazur
Mr. & Mrs. C. W. Miller
General & Mrs. W. M. (Nellie) Morgan
Dr. & Mrs. R. A. Munslow
Dr. & Mrs. J. R. Nicholson
Dr. & Mrs. R. E. Nitschke
Major & Mrs. Ben O. Nixon
Dr. & Mrs. Pat Ireland Nixon
Dr. & Mrs. Pat Ireland Nixon, Jr.
Mr. Pat Ireland Nixon, Jr.
Miss Peggy Nixon
Dr. & Mrs. Robert R. Nixon
Mr. Robert R. Nixon, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Nixon
Dr. & Mrs. Ruskin C. Norman
Mrs. Clarence O'Leary
Dr. & Mrs. Brad Oxford
Mr. & Mrs. George Parker
Dr. & Mrs. Lewis Pipkin
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Powell
Dr. & Mrs. T. A. Pressly
Dr. & Mrs. Richard S. Price
Dr. & Mrs. James E. Pridgen
Dr. & Mrs. John Pridgen
Mrs. W. M. Randolph
Miss Vera Rankin

Mr. & Mrs. W. J. Reddell
Dr. & Mrs. L. B. Reppert
Dr. & Mrs. A. C. Resmenn
Dr. & Mrs. Wilbur Robertson
Mr. & Mrs. E. W. Robinson
Dr. & Mrs. W. B. Russ
Dr. & Mrs. Dan Russell, Jr.
Brother Joe Schmitz
General & Mrs. Wm. E. Shambora
Mr. & Mrs. Perry Shankle
Mr. & Mrs. Beverly Slimp
Mr. & Mrs. Chester Slimp
Mr. & Mrs. Chester Slimp, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Rankin Starkey
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Steves, Jr.
Mrs. Walter Stuck
Mrs. Edward E. Sweeney
Miss Frances Sweeney
Dr. & Mrs. E. M. Sykes
Dr. & Mrs. E. M. Sykes, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Lee Taylor
Dr. & Mrs. Charles W. Tennison
Brother Ralph Thayer
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony VanTuyl
Mrs. I. A. Victor
Mr. Frank Wardlaw
Mr. & Mrs. H. E. Watson
Dr. & Mrs. J. A. Watts
Mr. & Mrs. John Wheeler
Miss Dora Mae Wilson
Mrs. J. F. Whitehurst
Mr. Thomas Whitehurst
Dr. & Mrs. J. W. Winter
Mrs. Eloise T. Woodhull
Mr. Sam Woolford