

Photos: Stevens from Three Lions

BLAIR HOUSE, across from the White House in Washington, has probably been the scene of more interesting history than any building not designed for a specific government function. Now owned by the U.S. government, the four-story mansion is used as a guest house for distinguished foreign visitors.

The house was built in 1824 by Dr. Joseph Lovell, first Surgeon General of the U.S., and was bought by publisher Francis Preston Blair, a member of Andrew Jackson's "kitchen cabinet," in 1830. Blair and his sons were influential figures in American life for many decades.

Montgomery Blair served as counsel for Dred Scott before the Supreme Court, was mayor of St. Louis and Lincoln's Postmaster General. The younger Francis Preston Blair served in the House of Representatives, was an officer during the Civil War, and later became U.S. Senator from Missouri.

Blair House was the temporary residence of President Truman during the months in 1948 when the White House was being extensively remodeled.



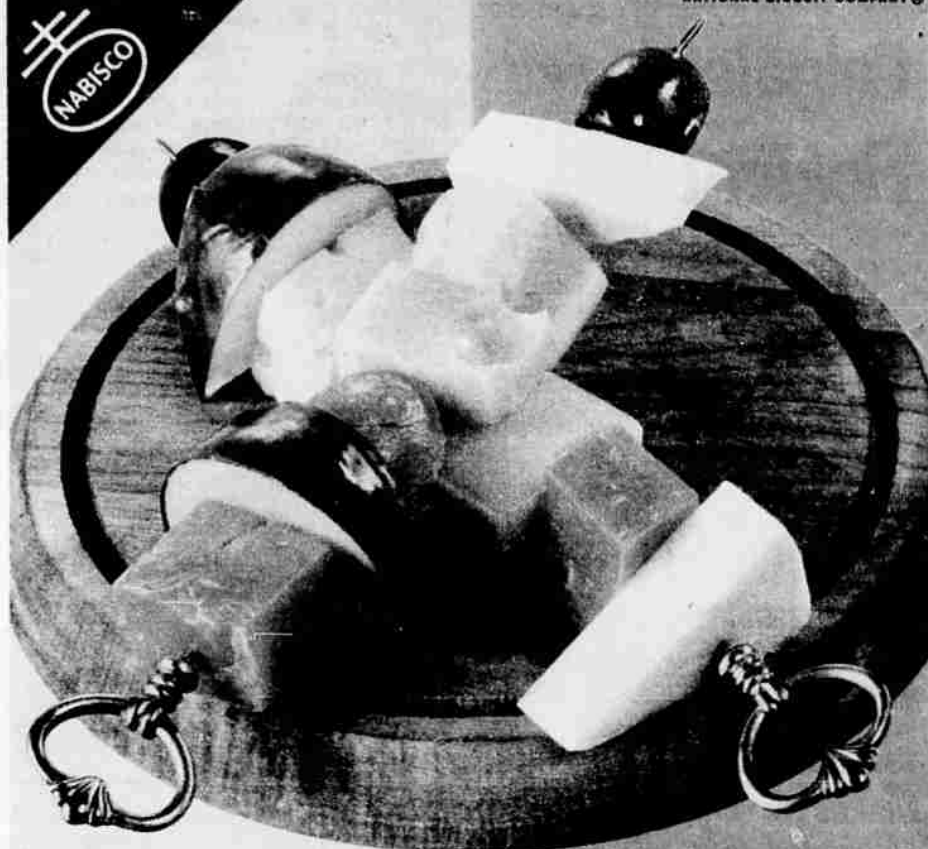
This second-floor library was used as a study by former President Truman during White House renovation in 1948.



Solid silver place settings for state dinner guests at Blair House are famous throughout Washington society.



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