

Roosevelt Still Lives in Minds Of People at Little White House

Editor's Note: The author of the following dispatch is the senior White House correspondent. He has covered Presidents Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower. His latest book, "Meet Mr. Eisenhower," was published yesterday. He was at Warm Springs with the presidential party when FDR died 10 years ago today.

By MERRIMAN SMITH
United Press White House
Writer

Warm Springs, Ga.—(U.P.)—Ten years ago today Franklin D. Roosevelt was sitting in a white clapboard cottage here, posing for a portrait. It was 1:15 p.m.

Suddenly he clapped his hand to the back of his head. His face twitched in pain and he said: "I have a terrific headache."

Two hours and 20 minutes later he was dead.

The man is gone but he still lives here in the minds and hearts of the people who reside around and near the "Little White House."

Looking around the cottage you get the idea that Mr. Roosevelt merely has stepped out for a few minutes. His old floppy Panama hat rests on a cupboard shelf just off the kitchen. His wheel chair waits by the front door. His monogrammed towels are stacked in an open linen closet. Fala's leash hangs from a hook in another closet as though the venerable scottie were waiting for a walk along the wooded path outside the house.

I have just been back revisiting Warm Springs. It seems such a shorter time than 10 years. The epic events of those days still stand out in great headlines in my memory.

World War II was racing to its victorious close. Mr. Roosevelt had just returned from Yalta and come here for one of those breaks that had so often refreshed him. But the signs of his coming death were there for those who looked closely.

I shall never forget the sultry Easter of April 1 when he went for the last time to the small white chapel on the grounds of the Warm Springs Foundation.

Around him in the church were his fellow victims of infantile paralysis.

During the service FDR began to shake and quiver in the manner of a palsied man. A loud chord from the choir made his head bob even more pronouncedly. Sweat burst from his forehead and his glasses fell suddenly from his face to the seat of the pew.

A wide-eyed youngster on a litter lay nearby. He looked in surprise at the President, then at one of the Foundation officials. The man shrugged his shoulders mutely as if to say, "I don't know."

A few days later he had three of us reporters in for a talk. We sat on a small couch in his tiny workroom. It was cluttered with mail, documents just flown in from Washington by a special courier, newspapers and other personal odds and ends.

We talked about the forthcoming United Nations conference in San Francisco and a host of other subjects.

He smoked constantly, fitting cigarettes into his much-cartooned and burned ivory holder. Each time he lighted what he called "a cig," it seemed to require unusual effort on his part to scratch a kitchen match. I'd never seen his hands shake so badly.

Five days later he was posing for the New York artist, Elizabeth Shoumatoff. He was in the living room of the cottage, sitting somewhat despondently, gray and tired in a leather chair given to him by members of his "cuff links gang" who had tried to elect him vice-president in 1920.

Painting Never Finished

When he suddenly collapsed and sagged against the side of the chair, the artist was terrified. The President's cousin, Laura Delano, raced from the rear of the room where she had been sewing and cried out for help.

House servants carried him to his small bedroom. He was unconscious. Secret Service agents

outside the cottage could hear him gasping for his life. He never recovered consciousness. He died at 3:35 p.m. of the cerebral hemorrhage.

When I revisited the cottage last week it was a gray, rainy day. The stream of tourists (110,000 a year) dropped their voices as they entered. They looked in silence at the unfinished Shoumatoff portrait. It has been left exactly as it was when the artist dropped her brush in dismay.

I walked out into the kitchen and there was Daisy Bonner, a dignified Negro woman who cooked for Mr. Roosevelt down here from the late 1920s until his death.

What were his favorite foods here? Daisy says they were chocolate soufflé and her specialty, "country captain." The latter is a fantastic heap of chicken, rice, mushrooms, currants and about 40 other ingredients.

I asked her if she missed her old boss. Tears came to her eyes and her voice choked up when she answered.

"It surely hasn't been the same," she said. "He did love my cooking."

As I talked to the people here who remember FDR so well, it was amazing to me that no one of them, not even some of his closest old friends, discussed politics, his impact on the world's affairs.

Here they talk of Roosevelt the man. They speak of what he has done for people who are crippled as he was.

Fred Botts, an urbane, cultured fixture of this community of people who labor sweatingly, doggedly to educate their stricken arms, legs and chests to the demands of a modern, mobile life, says:

"The president was a man, regardless of your politics, who brought to those of us who cannot travel easily an exciting, inspiring sample of the outside world several times a year."

"His success, his smiles, his warmth reminded us that when you're fighting polio there are no Democrats, no Republicans."



THE EYES ARE BIGGER—Terry Bretzke, 8, may have "eyes larger than his stomach" but since it's for a good cause he's going to put away that stack of flapjacks and more to boot. The Minneapolis Southwest Lions Club invited Terry's Boy Scout troop to the pancake eating session and donated 50¢ to construction of a summer camp for crippled children for each flapjack eaten by the boys.

Portland —(U.P.)— The corps of engineers has invited bids here for 10,200 cubic yards of dredging at Depoe Bay on the Oregon coast.

There are 64,875 private airplanes owned by individuals and businesses, not counting the commercial airlines, in the United States.

Domiciliary Officer On Wage Study Team

Camp White—H. J. Heitkemper, domiciliary personnel officer, is on special assignment here this week in connection with the establishment of new wage board schedules.

He is a member of a group of wage analysts conducting survey of comparative wages in districts where Veteran Administration stations are located. The study being made here is similar to that being undertaken at 40 other points, and is expected to

be completed by July 1.

Heitkemper is the only personnel officer on the team selected to make the report, upon which the new wage scale of specialized civil service employees will be based. He plans to go to the VA Hospital at Roseburg next.

"The real job is getting accustomed to the weather in the different parts of the country," he says. "In the East it was the heat, in Montana, the snow, and in Colorado, the wind."

Roadside Cleanliness Plan of BF Lions Club

Butte Falls—Butte Falls Lions club and high school students are cooperating in a program to keep roadside areas clean during coming months.

They plan to place three signs along roads in this area asking motorists not to throw trash from car windows. It is hoped to have the signs in place before start of the fishing season.

Dead line Sunday. Classified is at noon Saturday; 1 a.m. Monday for Monday; other days 5:30 previous day.

NASH WINS IN MOBILGAS ECONOMY RUN

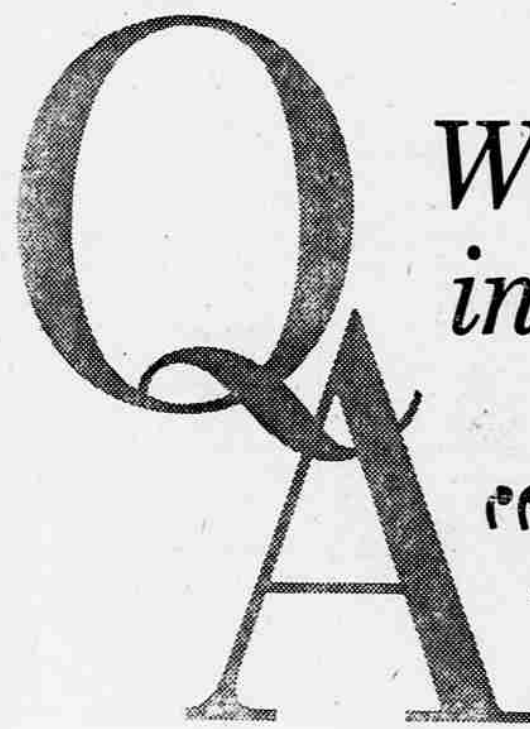
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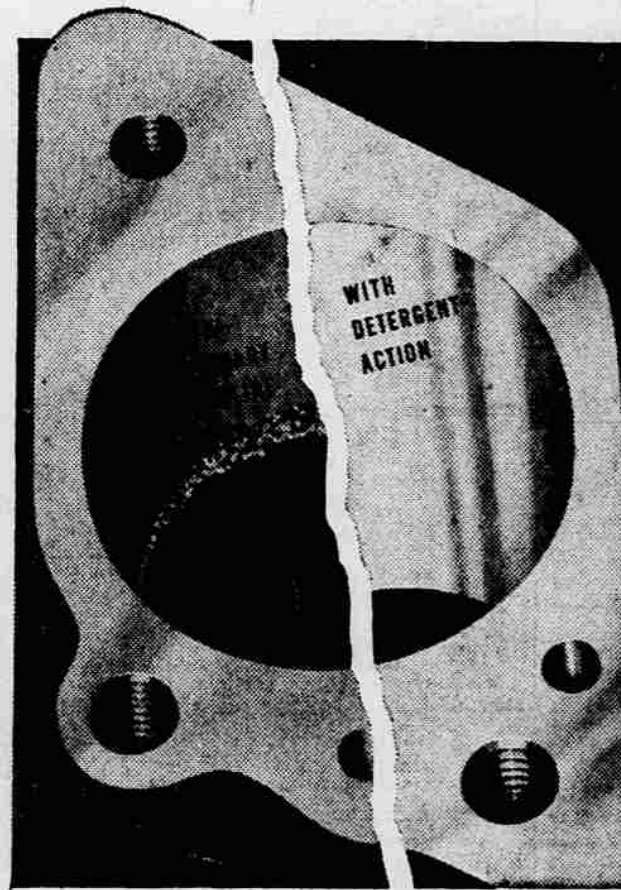
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Infants' Sleep Set.....	1.77

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Men's Dacron Dress Shirts.....	3.95
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