

December 24-26, 1943

[Visit to Hyde Park (Narrative) and Remarks]

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VISIT OF PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT TO HYDE PARK, DEC. 24-26, 1943.

The President arrived in Hyde Park on the morning of December 24 and came to the Library at about 11:00 a.m. He remained in his room until almost 1:00 o'clock, returning shortly after 2:00 for his broadcast on the Cairo and Teheran conferences. The people of the estate and the Library staff had been invited by the President and Mrs. Roosevelt to a Christmas party to be held in the Library after the broadcast. Shortly after the conclusion of the broadcast at 3:00 the President and Mrs. Roosevelt, accompanied by John and Franklin Roosevelt, their wives and children, Mrs. Boettiger and her children, and guests (including Secretary and Mrs. Morgenthau) joined the others in the Main Exhibition Room. The President and Mrs. Roosevelt received their guests and gifts were distributed by Mrs. Boettiger and John and Franklin.

The President had planned to stay in Hyde Park until Tuesday but because of the threatened railway strike he decided to return to Washington on Sunday night (December 26). Two parties had been planned by Mrs. Roosevelt for the men of the 144th M. T. Battalion for Sunday and Monday evenings, but because of the change in the President's plans the dates were changed to Friday and Sunday evenings. On both evenings the President spoke to the soldiers and their guests of his conferences in Cairo and Teheran. His remarks were made "off the record" and were not taken down stenographically. A summary of his two talks was, however, made by the writer (Edgar B. Nixon of the Library staff) in order that they might be preserved as part of the records of the Library.

Remarks of the President at the parties held for the soldiers on
the evenings of December 24 and 26, 1943.

Mrs. Roosevelt: "At the party we had here last year, the President told us of some of his experiences during the first World War when he was Assistant Secretary of the Navy. This evening I have asked him to tell you about his trip to Cairo and Iran. I don't know what he will talk about and if there is anything you want to ask him afterwards you may do so."

The President: "I'm very glad to see you all again and to be here in Hyde Park. As you may know, I had originally planned to stay through the first of the week but this railway strike has come up and I'm going to have to go back Sunday night. Some of the Brotherhoods have agreed to call off their strike but a number of them are still holding out. I may have to turn the roads over to the Government and if I do I'm going to let the M. P.'s. run the trains."

When I went to Cairo and Teheran to meet Mr. Churchill and Mr. Stalin and Chiang Kai-Shek I expected to talk with them across the table but I found we were all on the same side of the table. The Generalissimo is a smallish man and wears a poker face most of the time -- until something is said that he likes and then his face lights up in a perfectly marvellous smile. He's got a great sense of humor and he's a real fellow. As a matter of fact, I'm rather inclined to think that of all the other peoples of the World the Chinese are more like us than any others. They have the same sense of humor -- they laugh at the same jokes.

Stalin is a big fellow -- and a tough guy! He reminds you of a block of granite -- just about as hard. He doesn't have the big handle-bar moustache you see him wearing in the cartoons; as a matter of fact his moustache is rather closely trimmed. Well, we -- Chiang Kai-Shek, Stalin and Mr. Churchill and I, -- talked over our long range plans for the prosecution of the war in Europe and in the Far East. Mr. Stalin, of course, didn't come in on the Far East conversations because Russia isn't -- yet -- at war with Japan. We decided -- that is -- at the two conferences that Germany and Japan will have to be handled after the war so that they won't be able to start another one -- say -- twenty years. We didn't attempt to settle any boundaries -- that's something that should wait until later. We did reach certain decisions with regard to the war in Europe and you'll see the results of those decisions in -- well, in the near future. With regard to Japan, we decided that she should not be allowed to hold any of the territories she has seized by force in her wars with China and Russia and now against us. Once this is done -- and the Chinese are given a chance to develop their potential strength as a nation -- I don't think we'll have much to fear from Japan in the future. When you realize what Japan with 70,000,000 people was able to do in the last

50-60 years, it gives you an idea what China will be able to do with her 400,000,000 people. I think it will be a very good idea to cultivate her friendship!

Chiang - Kai-Shek has gone marvels with what he has in the way of arms. Remember that the Chinese have no tanks, no modern artillery, practically no airplanes, and practically no trucks. We're trying to fly material into the Chinese from India — mostly gasoline and medical supplies.

In Egypt I visited one of the battlefields — in fact the only one I was able to visit over there. This was at the point where our army joined General Montgomery's forces in the last part of the African campaign. We went through a village that had been in the battle area and I thought at the time how differently this war was being fought compared with the last war. Then the battle line was comparatively short — running from Belgium through France and down to Italy. Gains were measured in yards, and everything in the field of fire was completely devastated. Now this village was right in the middle of the battlefield but most of the houses were untouched. There were a couple of buildings completely demolished and a few with only the walls standing but most of them were unharmed. All over the battlefield we saw wrecks of German tanks — so thoroughly smashed that they couldn't be hauled away.

By the way, I visited the Pyramids and the Sphinx while I was in Cairo. I've always been a great admirer of the thing the Sphinx is famous for and I think it would help if some other people were. I'd going to get up an endowment to send Congressmen to Egypt — give 'em the trip free — on condition they sit and look at the Sphinx for a whole week! In Cairo I was guarded by 400 M. P.'s. I got them all together before I left and told them it was much more homelike for having them around — because I was used to seeing the M. P.'s when I went up to Hyde Park. And do you know I found there were about 12 or 13 boys there who had gone through the M. P. school here?

Well, from Cairo we flew to Teheran — it's a wonderful way to see the country but I'd like to go back to see it from the ground sometime. Teheran is on the route of our supply line to Russia. We've got 35,000 men in Iran all engaged in just one thing — getting the food and machinery and clothes and other supplies into Russia. They're doing a marvellous job and they don't have much to work with. There's a single track railway that runs up from the head of the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea and there's a double lane paved highway that we've built. The railway gets held up by bandits ever so often and the road goes through the desert country — where the temperature's 110 in the shade eight months of the year — and across mountains — that are covered with snow eight months out of the year. So you see what a problem those fellows are up against. But their work is tremendously important — in fact at a dinner Stalin had for me he proposed a toast to these men — said that if it

hadn't been for them his own country could never have kept up the fight against the Germans.

About this dinner Stalin gave me -- you couldn't call it a banquet for there were only 10 to 12 of us there -- we had caviar and a kind of Black Sea fish that was very good. (Here Mrs. Roosevelt whispered something to the President). Mrs. Roosevelt wants me to tell you about the toasts at this dinner. Well, it seems that at a Russian state dinner you don't carry on a conversation in the ordinary way -- you don't simply say "This is a fine dn., isn't it?" No, you drink a toast -- I drink this toast to this beautiful day! So you see if you do much talking you're apt to run into difficulties! I think there were about --let's see -- I guess about 365 toasts were drunk that night.

On the way back we stopped at Malta. This little island -- it's about eight by nineteen miles in size -- has put up one of the truly heroic fights of the war. Ever since Italy entered the war the people in Malta have been subjected to daily air raids -- at least two air raids a day and sometimes more. The civilian population has suffered heavily -- about 10% of the people have been killed or injured -- and the destruction of property has been terrific. Well, when I was in Quebec I told Mr. Churchill I thought of giving the people of Malta some kind of a medal in recognition of their heroic defense and when I got back to Washington I took the matter up with the Attorney General and the War Department and the Navy Department. But they all said I couldn't give the people of Malta a medal because the laws governing such matters said a medal had to be given to an individual, and of course, I couldn't give a medal to everyone of the thousands of people on the island. So I asked the lawyers if there was any reason why I shouldn't give Malta a Presidential Citation. They said they had never heard of a Presidential Citation being given to an island but that there was no law against doing it! So I had a document engraved -- had it illuminated -- and presented it to the people of Malta.

In Sicily we stopped at one of the airfields being used by our ferry command. Sixty planes a day were coming into this airfield after making the trip from the United States down to Natal, Brazil, and across to Africa and on up to Sicily.

There's just one thing more I want to tell you --when we left for home a destroyer took us out to the ship --and it towered way above us -- seemed about a hundred feet higher. So they took me aboard in what they call a bos'n's chair. But Major General Watson --my military aide --we call him "Pa" Watson --and Harry Hopkins -- had to go up a kind of staircase they'd slung alongside the ship. It wasn't very wide -- only about a foot and a half -- and there was no rail. Well, the Navy people who were with us walked right up but Pa Watson and Harry Hopkins --do you know how they went up? They went up on all fours and the first thing I did when I got abroad was to apologize to the ship's company for the most undignified manner in which two members of my party had come aboard!

(At the conclusion of both talks, Mrs. Roosevelt asked if there were any questions the soldiers might like to ask but none were asked.)

END

Used at Christmas party
given by Mrs. K. for soldiers
of M. O. Security Force

Dec. 24, 1943.

"CHRISTMAS CAROLS"

"THE FIRST NOEL"

1. The first noel the angels did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields,
as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Chorus:-

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.

2. They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night:
Noel, &c.

3. This star drew nigh to the northwest
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay.
Noel, &c.

4. Then entered in the wise men three,
Full rev'rently upon their knee,
And offer'd there in His presence,
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
Noel, &c.

* * * * *

"IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR"

1. It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth, To touch their harps
of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good-will to men From Heav'n's
all gracious King".
The world in solemn stillness lay, To hear the angels sing.
2. O ye, beneath life's crushing load, Whose forms are
bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way With painful steps and slow!
Look now! for glad and golden hours Come swiftly on the
wing:
Oh, rest beside the weary road And hear the angels sing.
3. For lo the days are hast'ning on, By prophets seen of old,
When with the ever circling years, Shall come the time
foretold,
When the new heav'n and earth shall own The Prince of
Peace their King,
And the whole world send back the song Which now the
angels sing.

"SILENT NIGHT"

1. Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and
Child!
Holy Infant, so tender and
mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace;
Sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven
afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia,
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born.
3. Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy
face,
With the dawn of redeeming
grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

"WE THREE KINGS OF
ORIENT ARE"

1. We three kings of Orient are;
Bearing gifts, we traverse
afar
Field and fountain, moor
and mountain,
Following yonder star.

Chorus:-

O Star of wonder, Star of
night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still
proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

2. Born a King on Bethlehem's
plain,
Gold I bring, to crown Him
again,
King forever, ceasing never,
O'er us all to reign.
O Star of wonder, &c.

(continued)

3. Frankincense to offer have I,
Incense owns a Deity nigh.
Pray'r and praising all men
raising,
Worship Him, God most High.
O Star of wonder, &c.
4. Myrrh is mine, its bitter
perfume
Breathes a life of gathering
gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding,
dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.
O Star of wonder, &c.
5. Glorious now behold Him arise,
King and God and sacrifice,
Alleluia, Alleluia;
Earth to the heavens replies.
O Star of wonder, &c.

"HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING"

1. Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!
Joyful all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With th' angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
With th' angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
2. Hail He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth!
Ris'n with healing in His wings,
Light and life to all He brings;
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Hail the heav'n-born Prince of
Peace.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
'Glory to the new-born King!'

"LUTHER'S CRADLE HYMN"

1. Away in a manger,
No crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus
Laid down His sweet head;
The stars in the sky
Look'd down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus,
Asleep on the hay.

2. The cattle are lowing,
The poor Baby wakes,
But little Lord Jesus,
No crying he makes;
I love Thee, Lord Jesus!
Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle
To watch lullaby.

* * * * *

"GOD REST YOU MERRY,
GENTLEMEN"

1. God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember, Christ, our Savior,
Was born on Christmas day;
To save us all from Satan's
pow'r,
When we were gone astray.

Chorus:-

O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.

2. In Bethlehem, in Jewry,
This blessed Babe was born,
And laid within a manger
Upon this blessed morn;
The which his mother Mary
Did nothing take in scorn.
O tidings, &c.

3. From God, our heav'nly Father,
A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same;
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name.
O tidings, &c.

(3)
(continued)

4. "Fear not then," said the angel,
"Let nothing you affright,
This day is born a Savior
Of a pure Virgin bright,
To free all those who trust
in Him
From Satan's power and might!
O tidings, &c.

5. The shepherds at those tidings,
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a feed-
ing,
In tempest, storm and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straight
way,
The Son of God to find.
O tidings, &c.

6. And when they came to Bethlehem
Where our dear Savior lay,
They found Him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary, kneeling down,
Unto the Lord did pray,
O tidings, &c.

7. Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brother
hood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All other doth deface.
O tidings, &c.

* * * * *

"ANGELS FROM THE REALMS
OF GLORY"

(continued)

1. Angels from the realms of
glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the
earth,
Ye, who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth.

Chorus:-

Come and worship! Come and
worship!
Worship Christ the new-born
King!

2. Shepherds in the field abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by
night,
God with man is now residing,
Yonder shines the infant Light.
Come and worship, &c.

3. Sages, leave your contemplation;
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of
nations
Ye have seen His natal star.
Come and worship, &c.

4. Saints before the altar
bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In his temple shall appear:
Come and worship, &c.

"WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED"

1. While shepherds watch'd their
flocks by night;
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came
down,
And glory shone around,
And glory shone around.
2. "Fear not," said he; for
mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind,
"Glad tidings of great joy I
bring,
To you and all mankind,
To you and all mankind."

3. "To you, in David's town,
this day
Is born of David's line,
The Savior who is Christ the
Lord;
And this shall be the sign,
And this shall be the sign."

4. "The heav'nly Babe you there
shall find
To human view display'd,
All meanly wrapp'd in swath-
ing bands,
And in a manger laid,
And in a manger laid."

5. Thus spake the seraph; and
forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels, praising God on high
Who thus addressed their song
Who thus addressed their song.

6. "All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace:
Good-will henceforth from
heaven to men,
Begin and never cease!"

"DECK THE HALLS"

1. Deck the halls with boughs
of holly,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
'Tis the season to be jolly,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Don we now our gay apparel,
Fa la la la la la la,
Troll the ancient Yule-tide
carol,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
2. See the blazing Yule before us
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Strike the harp and join the
chorus,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.
Follow me in merry measure,
Fa la la la la la la,
While I tell of Yule-tide
treasure,
Fa la la la la, la la la la.

"OH, COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL"
(Adeste Fideles)

1. Oh, come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to
Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him, born
the King of angels;

Chorus:-

Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

2. Sing, choirs of angels, sing
in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of
heav'n above;
Glory to God in the highest:
Oh, come, &c.

3. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born
this happy morning;
Jesus to Thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father now in
flesh appearing:
Oh, come, &c.
* * * * *

"JOY TO THE WORLD"

1. Joy to the world! the Lord
has come:
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him
room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and heav'n and
nature sing.
2. Joy to the world! the Savior
reigns:
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks,
hills, and plains,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding
joy.

(continued)

3. No more let sin and sorrow
grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his bless-
ings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is
found.

4. He rules the world with truth
and grace,
And makes the nation prove
The glories of His righteous-
ness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of
His love.

* * * * *

"THE CHRISTMAS SONG"

1. O silent night! When, in the
fields abiding,
The shepherds watched while
their flocks sleeping lay:
O silent night! When, to their
gaze appearing,
A radiant star turned the
darkness into day.
And in the air a song of
gladness rang,
The Christmas song the holy
angels sang:

Chorus:-

Glory to God, And peace on
earth, good will to men,
Glory to God, peace on earth,
good will to men, it soundeth,
Glory to God in the highest.

"O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM"

(6)

1. O little town of Bothlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dream-
less sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets
shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all
the years
Are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary,
And gather'd all above,
While mortals sleep, the
angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the Holy Birth!
And praises sing to God the
King
And peace to men on earth.
3. How swiftly, and how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where mock souls will receive
Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in;
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
Oh, come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

* * * * *

"GOOD KING WENCESLAS"

1. Good King Wenceslas look'd out
On the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about,
Deep, and crisp, and even:
Brightly shone the moon that
night,
Though the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight,
Gath'ring winter fuel.
2. "Hither, page, and stand by me;
If thou know'st it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?"
"Sire, he lives a good league
hence,
Underneath the mountain;
Right against the forest fence,
By Saint Agnes' fountain!"
3. "Bring me flesh, and bring me
wine,
Bring me pine logs hither;
Thou and I will see him dine,
When we bear them thither!"
Page and monarch forth they
went,
Forth they went together;
Through the rude wind's wild
lament,
And the bitter weather.
4. "Sire, the night is darker now,
And the wind blows stronger;
Fails my heart, I know not how,
I can go no longer!"
"Mark my footsteps, my good page
Tread thou in them boldly:
Thou shalt find the winter's
rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly!"
5. In his master's steps he trod,
Where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod
Which the saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be
sure,
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor,
Shall yourselves find blessing.

* * * * *