

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library & Museum

Collection: Grace Tully Archive

Series: Grace Tully Papers

Box 5; Folder = Writings: Unpublished Reminiscences, 1950

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Writings: Unpublished Reminiscences, 1950

Actology, students of Palmistry, those who memorize the good and bad omens in a pack of cards and how your future is shaped by the tea leaves in your cup all fascinated J.D.R. - as well as numerology.³⁷

The people who take these studies seriously always want to send their findings to bigwigs - but of course, they want to be sure that their warnings will be read by the person for whom they are intended. Frequently we would receive letters asking if the President would be interested in their advice as to what he should or should not do in certain months or portions of months, or regard to making important decisions.

Miss LeHand and I both enjoyed reading their warnings but like the President we didn't take them too seriously. It was fun, however, to mark passages and see how near they came to predicting - even on guesswork - future happenings.

All Presidents need some form of relaxation and J.D.R. found such periods when the stars gazed and others were hard at work figuring out his future.

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It amused me very much to have him even take time out to read the results of their work because I know he had great faith in God - not planets, nor numbers, nor turning up the best luck card in the deck at a given moment.

We had in ~~the~~ ^{the} office a very ^{fortunate} diligent and intelligent girl of her own volition for her own enjoyment and family - liked to tell fortunes with the cards. And every so often the Boss would say "Let Roberta, I want my fortune told" Roberta who told the fortunes of many legs important people - all her associates in the office - liked ^{nothing} better than accepting such an invitation. ~~And~~ ^{as he} beside him ^{perked} up the various cuts, which she instructed him to make, she would be quite definite about whether he was going to be successful in working out his business deals, and then on other combinations of cards, she would remark "I have no way of knowing what this refers to, but you are going to be confronted with a very serious question in the next week or two (and then she always said) Of course, you are constantly faced with problems so it sounds foolish when I even suggest it - but this is going

to be quite different) and told him 3
something that he knew was in the
offing but she had no more information
than someone who worked in a laundry.
She was Secretary to the President's
Appointment Secretary but until a
request for an appointment came through
she had no idea of what might be
working.⁵¹

The President like most people
was currently would ask Murray or me
after reading the predictions, to remember
to check certain dates on which he was
told to hold off decisions or possibly
to make them. It was fun to see how
wrong or how right they were - but
actually when big decisions have to be
made, no planets or numbers or cards
enter into the final outcome of the
way in which the decisions were ever
made. The idea was intriguing but
it never had any effect on the President's
thinking, as I think most people
realize, but it afforded a few hours
of entertainment to a very busy man.
(Free)
1661

(4)

Writing on this subject takes me
back to a party at the Edentine mansion
in Albany when Miss Roosevelt for the
entertainment of the Governor's office staff
invited a ~~number~~ ^{number} of guests to be held forth
in the Pink Room and one at a time
heard his or her future fate. It was a
most pleasant party but the next day
when we picked up our paper, the
Governor & Miss Roosevelt were blasted
all over the front pages for selecting this type
of persons to give us a good time. A similar
incident occurred at the White House.

My dear brother was invited to spend
a weekend at Hyde Park - and was she
excited! It wasn't an ordinary weekend,
because she had a birthday on two
Saturday, although we left Washington on
Thursday night - what the Brits call a
"_____". I had said nothing to anyone
including my Boss, about mother's birthday.
But leave it to Roosevelts to know what
goes on, especially when it means bringing
happens to an associate - or a member
of the family of an associate. When the
date dropped - Halloween - I was a
surprised as my mother because I had
holding of the plans to give her a Birthday
Party - complete with all the gadgets of fortune,
which was customary at ^{private} parties given by
the Roosevelts for their friends. I, myself,

had been a guest of honor on many ^{such} occasions
through the years but this was Mother's
first ~~real~~ party. I say real party because
she and I spent her Birthday in 1953
at the White House but we were staying
over in Washington, at the President and
Mrs. Roosevelt's invitation, for a few
days while I rested up on my way to
Buddock Heights, Maryland to
convalesce from an illness - Tuberculosis
to be specific. As always, considerate and
kind they wanted to give me a little "pick
up" on my way. 92

Mother, who was given the room
where the Emancipation Proclamation was
signed was very excited about her
surroundings. Also, she was deeply
appreciative of what the wonderful
family was doing to bring me back to
good health. I think she couldn't
desist at dinner that night, which I
couldn't attend because I had to rest,
telling the family how happy she was
because I was coming along well and
also this was her birthday. Mrs. Roosevelt
and Malvina Thompson never forgot the
date and that tells you a lot about
what not to forget. It gives such
surprise and pleasure and one wonders
how they kept so much in mind. 1703

Evidently Mother had remarked at
dinner in 1933 that she was happy to
be spending that birthday in the White
House which she never expected. A
mental note by Mrs R and Malvina was
made at that moment and as soon as
they got upstairs a note was made in the
Book which Mrs Roosevelt
always has beside her. That's how they
arranged to have a really big time for
Mother at Hyde Park - Mother certainly
had any thought of Mother's birthday in
mind - but that made the occasion - and
she talked to the end of her days about
her visit to Hyde Park and the White
House. She had quite often been in the
White House for inaugurations, Inaugurations,
etc, but these parties were her own. 129

Grace G. Tully
July 7, 1950

FORTUNE TELLING

Astrology, students of palmistry, those who memorize the good and bad omens in a pack of cards and how your future is shaped by the tea leaves in your cup all fascinated F.D.R. -- as well as numerology.

The people who take these studies seriously always want to send their findings to bigwigs -- but, of course, they want to be sure that their warnings will be read by the person for whom they are intended. Frequently we would receive letters asking if the President would be interested in their advice as to what he should or should not do in certain months, or portions of months, in regard to making important decisions.

Miss LeHand and I both enjoyed reading their warnings but, like the President, we didn't take them too seriously. It was fun, however, to mark passages and see how near they came to predicting -- even on guess work -- future happenings.

All Presidents need some form of relaxation and F.D.R. found such periods when the star-gazers and others were hard at work figuring out his future.

It amused me very much to have him even take time out to read the results of their work, because I knew he had great faith in God -- not planets, nor numbers, nor turning up the best luck card in the deck at a given moment.

We had in the White House a very delightful and intelligent girl, Roberta Barrows, who -- mostly for her own enjoyment and fun -- liked to tell fortunes with the cards. And every so often the Boss would say, "Get Roberta, I want my fortune told." Roberta, who told the fortunes of many less important people -- all her associates in the office -- liked nothing better than accepting such an invitation. Sitting beside him as he picked up the various cuts which she instructed him to make, she would be quite definite about whether he was going to be successful in working out his business deals, and then on other combinations of cards she would remark, "I have no way of knowing what this refers to, but you are going to be confronted with a very serious question in the next week or two," (And then she always said, "Of course, you are constantly faced with problems so it sounds foolish when I even suggest it -- but this is going to be quite different.") and tell him of something that he knew was in the offing but she had no more

information than someone who worked in a laundry. She was Secretary to the President's Appointment Secretary but until a request for an appointment came through she had no idea of what might be "cooking."

The President, like most people with curiosity, would ask Missy or me, after reading the predictions, to remember to check certain dates on which he was told to hold off decisions or possibly to make them. It was fun to see how wrong or how right they were -- but actually when big decisions have to be made, no planets or numbers or cards enter into the final outcome of the way in which the decisions were ever made. The idea was intriguing but it never had any effect on the President's thinking, as I think most people realize, but it afforded a few hours of entertainment to a very busy man.

Writing on this subject takes me back to a party at the Executive Mansion in Albany when Mrs. Roosevelt for the entertainment of the Governor's office staff invited a professional fortune teller. She held forth in the Pink Room and one at a time heard his or her fortune fate. It was a most pleasant party but the next day when we picked up our paper the Governor and Mrs. Roosevelt were blasted all over the front pages for selecting this type of person to give us a good time. A similar incident occurred at the White House.

My dear mother was invited to spend a weekend at Hyde Park -- and was she excited! It wasn't an ordinary weekend, because she had a birthday on the Saturday, although we left Washington on Thursday night -- what the British call a "_____". I had said nothing to anyone including my Boss about Mother's birthday. But leave it to the Roosevelts to know what goes on, especially when it means bringing happiness to an associate -- or a member of the family of an associate. When the date arrived -- Halloween -- I was as surprised as my mother because I knew nothing of the plans to give her a birthday party -- cake with all the gadgets of fortune which was customary at every natal party given by the Roosevelts for their friends. I myself had been a guest of honor on many such occasions through the years, but this was Mother's first real party. I say real party because she and I spent her birthday in 1933 at the White House but we were staying over in Washington, at the President's and Mrs. Roosevelt's invitation,

for a few days while I rested up on my way to Braddock Heights, Maryland, to convalesce from an illness -- tuberculosis, to be specific. As always, considerate and kind, they wanted to give me a little "pick up" on my way.

Mother, who was given the room where the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, was very excited about her surroundings. Also, she was deeply appreciative of what this wonderful family was doing to bring me back to good health. I think she couldn't resist at dinner that night, which I couldn't attend because I had to rest, telling the family how happy she was because I was coming along well and also this was her birthday. Mrs. Roosevelt and Malvina Thompson never forgot the date and that tells you a lot about what not to forget. It gives such surprise and pleasure and one wonders how they kept so much in mind.

Evidently Mother had remarked at dinner in 1933 that she was happy to be spending that birthday in the White House which she never expected. A mental note by Mrs. Roosevelt and Malvina was made at that moment and as soon as they got upstairs a note was made in the Birthday Book which Mrs. Roosevelt always has beside her. That's how they arranged to have a really big time for Mother at Hyde Park -- neither invitation had any thought of Mother's birthday in mind -- but that made the occasions -- and she talked to the end of her days about her visit to Hyde Park and the White House. She had quite often been in the White House for Inaugurations, teas, luncheons, et cetera, but these parties were her own.

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~~President Roosevelt~~ was really quite
 a tease. When war broke out in Europe ^{his R}
 invited the Royal families of England, Norway,
 Belgium and the Netherlands to take refuge
 in this country. The Norwegians were the only
 ones who accepted. Princess Juliana, now
 Queen of the Netherlands, came to this continent
 with her two little girls but made her home in
 Canada.

Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess
 Janthe had paid an official visit to the
 United States in the summer of 1939 and
 were entertained in true Provedentian style -
 a "hot dog" affair at the Hilltop Cottage.
 They both spoke English perfectly so they
 could exchange ideas without the services
 of an interpreter, and the President "took a
 shine" to this attractive ^{young} couple.

Soon after they were forced to flee
 from Norway with the Germans ^{took on their}
 trail, they arrived in the U.S. ^{with their 3 children}
 residence ^{here} ~~in Bethesda, Maryland~~. As soon as
 FDR knew they were coming, he set to work
 to find them a suitable home where he
 could keep an eye on them and make life
 pleasant in their new surroundings. Steve
 Early was given the assignment of contacting
 real estate agents and friends to see what
 was available in or near Washington. Herle
 Thorpe had just the house in Bethesda, Md
 known as "Parks Hill".

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(2)

Soon they were settled and Clara returned to be with her father, King Haakon, in London where they had headquarters for their government in exile, leaving his wife, her lady-in-waiting, Countess Ostgaard, and their children under the watchful eye of J.D.R. To the Crown Prince he was his second found Godfather - to Prince Juliana, he was Uncle.

The family frequently attended White House functions in the years before we got into the war, and were entertained at informal gatherings in Washington and Hyde Park.

I recall especially one of Her Royal Highness' visits to Hyde Park when as usual she was accompanied by Madame Ostgaard. Mrs Roosevelt was away and I was pinch hitting as hostess. As the expected hour we joined the President in his tiny study which he preferred to the library unless the guests were too numerous.

Robert, the butler, placed the silver tray with the necessary ingredients on the desk in front of J.D.R., as well as a dish of oer d'houres containing crackers spread with sardines. The President was quite a tease at times and just as Prince's Martha was about to partake of the appetizer, J.D.R. asked her if she had ever eaten, rather

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snake meat. She made a comble face
 at the thought and wondered, for sure
 whether this was to be her imitation. When
 she had recovered sufficiently to speak she
 said "Oh, Mr President you are really
 terrible." Looking greatly surprised, he
 said "Child, do you mean to tell me you
 never heard of eating rattlesnake. Well it's
 a great delicacy and you are missing something."

Turning to me the President with an
 expression I had seen many times before,
 which meant "Help me out," asked me to
 get a pad and pencil and make a note to
 remember to get some rattlesnake, so he
 could serve on the next time the Crown
 Princess came to tea. I did as instructed
 but must confess I thought he was kidding
 and just wanted to make us all ^{to} equivocate.
 It was a good stroke, however, as I knew he
 was enjoying their discomfort as he con-
 tinued to rave about this delicious and
 rare treat. - and he added that it was
 very expensive.

When I saw him alone the next day
 I laughed about conversation of the night
 before and reminded him that I was not
 going on any wild goose chase and, therefore,
 I wanted the truth - "How about this rattle-
 snake meat?" He assured me I could find
 it at any fancy grocery.

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The day I got back to the White House I called in my assistant Dorothy Brady and said "While you are out to lunch today, drop in to Macgudus and get me a couple of rattlesnake meat." Dorothy in a loud and excited voice exclaimed "Rattlesnake meat! Are you kidding?" I quietly remarked "you lead me". She looked at me as though she felt that at least the pressure of my job had caught up with me and wasn't it too bad.

Just as this exchange was taking place I saw Mary Egan. The look on Dorothy's face frightened Mary who immediately inquired what was wrong. Dorothy said "Some just asked me to get her some rattlesnake meat. What do you make of that?" Mary, whose remarks were blunt and to the point, quickly replied "Nothing wrong with her except she gone nuts." A great deal more conversation ensued concerning my mental state - and they left my office with a warning ringing in their ears about not "snaking" back without a rattle of snake in hand.

They reported after lunch we walked in smiles. They had no trouble at all in carrying out their mission, and I promptly landed the Chief Executive his can of fun for the Royal Tea Party.

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Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Marthe had paid an official visit to the United States in the summer of 1939 and were entertained in true Rooseveltian style -- a "hot dog" affair at the Hilltop Cottage. They both spoke English perfectly so they could exchange ideas without the services of an interpreter, and the President "took a shine" to this attractive young couple.

Soon after they were forced to flee from Norway with the Germans hot on their trail, they arrived in the United States with their three children to take up residence here. As soon as F.D.R. knew they were coming, he set to work to find them a suitable home where he could keep an eye on them and make life pleasant in their new surroundings. Steve Early was given the assignment of contacting real estate agents and friends to see what was available in or near Washington. Merle Thorpe had just the house in Bethesda, Maryland, known as "Pooks Hill."

Soon they were settled and Olav returned to be with his father, King Haakon, in London where they had headquarters for their government-in-exile, leaving his wife, her Lady in Waiting, Countess Ostgaard, Mr. _____, and their children under the watchful eye of F.D.R. To the Crown Princess he was her new found Godfather -- to Princess Juliana he was "Uncle."

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Turning to me the President, with an expression I had seen many times before which meant "Help me out," asked me to get a pad and pencil and make a note to remember to get some rattlesnake as soon as we returned to Washington so he could serve it the next time the Crown Princess came to tea. I did as instructed but must confess I thought he was kidding and just wanted to make us all to squirm. I was a good stooge, however, as I knew he was enjoying their discomfort as he continued to rave about this delicious and rare tidbit -- and he added that it was very expensive.

When I saw him alone the next day I laughed about the conversation of the night before and reminded him that I was not going on any wild-goose chase and, therefore, I wanted the truth -- how about this rattlesnake meat? He assured me I could find it at any "fancy" grocer's.

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Grace G. Tully
July 7, 1950

When war broke out in Europe, President Roosevelt invited the royal families of England, Norway, Belgium and the Netherlands to take refuge in this country. The Norwegians were the only ones who accepted. Princess Juliana, now Queen of the Netherlands, came to this continent with her two little girls but made her home in Canada.

Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Marthe had paid an official visit to the United States in the summer of 1939 and were entertained in true Rooseveltian style -- a "hot dog" affair at the Hilltop Cottage. They both spoke English perfectly so they could exchange ideas without the services of an interpreter, and the President "took a shine" to this attractive young couple.

Soon after they were forced to flee from Norway with the Germans hot on their trail, they arrived in the United States with their three children to take up residence here. As soon as F.D.R. knew they were coming, he set to work to find them a suitable home where he could keep an eye on them and make life pleasant in their new surroundings. Steve Early was given the assignment of contacting real estate agents and friends to see what was available in or near Washington. Merle Thorpe had just the house in Bethesda, Maryland, known as "Pooks Hill."

Soon they were settled and Olav returned to be with his father, King Haakon, in London where they had headquarters for their government-in-exile, leaving his wife, her Lady in Waiting, Countess Ostgaard, Mr. _____, and their children under the watchful eye of F.D.R. To the Crown Princess he was her new found Godfather -- to Princess Juliana he was "Uncle."

The family frequently attended White House functions in the years before we got into the war, and were entertained at informal gatherings in Washington and Hyde Park.

I recall especially one of Her Royal Highness' visits to Hyde Park when as usual she was accompanied by Madame Ostgaard. Mrs. Roosevelt was away and I was pinch-hitting as hostess. At the cocktail hour we joined the President in his tiny Study, which he preferred to the Library unless the guests were too numerous.

Robert, the butler, placed the silver tray with the necessary ingredients on the desk in front of F.D.R., as well as a dish of hors d'oeuvres containing crackers spread with sardine. The President was quite a tease at times and just as Princess Marthe was about to partake of the appetizer F.D.R. asked her if she had ever eaten rattlesnake meat. She made a horrible face at the thought and wondered, I'm sure, whether this was to be her initiation. When she had recovered sufficiently to speak she said, "Oh, Mr. President, you are really terrible." Looking greatly surprised, he said, "Child, do you mean to tell me you never heard of eating rattlesnake? Why, it's a great delicacy and you are missing something."

Turning to me the President, with an expression I had seen many times before which meant "Help me out," asked me to get a pad and pencil and make a note to remember to get some rattlesnake as soon as we returned to Washington so he could serve it the next time the Crown Princess came to tea. I did as instructed but must confess I thought he was kidding and just wanted to make us all to squirm. I was a good stooge, however, as I knew he was enjoying their discomfort as he continued to rave about this delicious and rare tidbit -- and he added that it was very expensive.

When I saw him alone the next day I laughed about the conversation of the night before and reminded him that I was not going on any wild-goose chase and, therefore, I wanted the truth -- how about this rattlesnake meat? He assured me I could find it at any "fancy" grocer's.

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Reminiscences of White House Days. ⁴² ①
¹⁺²

One ^{afternoon} ~~afternoon~~, T.R. Missy and I were sitting in the study not feeling at all in the mood for serious work. The President's mind reflected back to the days when T.R. was the Chief Executive and he used to pay an occasional visit to the White House. He recalled in great detail the conversations of T.R. which had a lasting impression on him. We went from T.R. to talk about some of his successors. We discussed the difficulties of the job in one respect - that one is no longer a free agent to go where he pleases, when he pleases and with whom he pleases. President Roosevelt, of course realized that he was even more confined because of his infirmity - more preparations necessary to get him in and out of places.

The President then remarked that it would be nice once more to be able to go places without being tagged by a group of Secret Service men. We reminded him that it might be fun but not very safe. He said President Wilson had once included the SS boys and I then told one of the stories I had heard about Calvin Coolidge from Colonel Ed Starbuck. It seems Coolidge planned to take a little constitutional and just as he

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appeared on the street floor it began to rain ⁽²⁾
quite hard. The Hooper, the head usher,
suggested it might be a good idea if the
President put on his rubbers. The President
thought so too and turned to the Secret
Service man who was to accompany him and
said "Will you go upstairs to my room and
get my rubbers?" He went on the stairs
and President Coolidge went out the front
door. By the time the SS man returned
with the rubbers Coolidge was out on
Pennsylvania Avenue all alone. Following
a Presidential order in this instance might
have lost him his job because he is assigned
to a President to protect him - but what would
you or I do under the same circumstances?
He soon caught up into the practical joker
who was heading all over because
he had successfully rid himself of a
guard for half a block perhaps.

Missy and I wondered if JDR
thought he could devise a way to get out
of the Big House without detection. He
threw his head back for a few minutes
thinking of a scheme. Finally he hit on
one he thought would work if we helped him.

I loved mystery stories and this was a challenge. He decided that we three would plan an afternoon working on pulling out books that he wanted to send to some library in Washington. We would then ask the Waker to send up a very large laundry hamper to pack them in. When the hamper was brought into the study he would get into it and Messy would call the garage and order a station wagon to come by and pick up the books. Because these books were considered of value, Messy and I would personally see that they were delivered. As planned, and no reason for anyone to be suspicious, we three would be in the station wagon and out the White House gate - and nobody any the wiser. We would only go a short distance and then Messy & I would call the White House and request the Waker to ask the President a question to which we wanted an immediate answer. Well, I think everybody can imagine what would have happened at that moment - alarms such as you never heard would ring out through the Nation.

(over)

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It never happened but it was kind of fun to plan and wonder about.

But don't think he didn't pull a real get-away - the two accomplices on the make-believe escape were with him on the real one.

The three of us ^{on the President's open} ~~were~~ ^{and} driving through the woods on the Hyde Park Estate followed by the "Queen Mary" - a Cadillac of unusual dimensions - loaded with a detail of Secret Service men, driven by Dick Glavin, one of the best men ^{they ever had} at a wheel. ~~they ever had~~... The President hit a dead end - I'll never know whether it was intentional - and backed up between trees to retrace his steps. The "Queen Mary" couldn't turn on a dime as the old Ford could, so the Secret Service men were somehow getting on the trail. In the meantime the Boss thought it would be exciting if we just turned left into the gravel pit and ~~waited~~ ^{watched} the boys roll by. We sat in the hollow and smoked a cigarette as they literally flew ~~past~~ ^{by} on the road. They

Collection: Grace Tully Archive; Series: Grace Tully Papers; Box 5; Folder: Writings - Unpublished Reminiscences, 1950

were worried, as they had lost us. After
we finished our smoke the President
with the expression of a little boy who
has been naughty, but rather pleased with
his accomplishment said "I think maybe
we better see what happened to Mike (Sturdy)
and the boys." 5

We pulled up at the booth to
the left of the "Big House" and the
President stopped. He said "Ed (Col Sturling)
have you seen the Boys?" Ed was obviously
relieved to see him, as the "Boys" had gone
by his watch sometime before asking Ed
if he had seen the President. Don't think
Sturling wasn't worried at that moment.

The "Queen Mary" with its
contingent had made its way to the
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have headed, but no sign of him there.
Finally they came back to report and
there was the Ard with its occupants.
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The President looked solemn and
said to Mike "What happened to your
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Mike loved the Boss but at that moment
I think he would have sounded off in
good Irish style if he dared. But soon
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to the fore and he said "Mr President
you certainly fooled us." The President
sitting of course ~~commented~~ that he
wondered what Chief Moran the SS.

Boss would say what he said about the
sued "Wait until I see Chief Moran ^(friend of) the SS
and tell him that your fellows lost me
Mike laughed but hoped - and I think
knew - that Moran would never hear
about the incident from JDR.

The President certainly never told
the Chief of the SS the story. However, about
three or four years later a columnist
~~carried the story~~ wrote an article about
the incident. The successor to Chief
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came to me to find out how it could ~~be~~
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incident had happened years before.
I said "Mike, you know the Boss and

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he was just in a mood to tell stories and was reminded of this episode by something that came up in the conversation, and the writer reported it to some newspaperman. That's exactly what happened because I questioned the Boss and he said he told the story to someone - he couldn't even remember to whom.

Presidents are just like all other human beings who like to play jokes and unfortunately don't realize that jokes of this kind - to which I was a party, don't sit well with the people ^{of the} whose livelihood depends on whether they do a good job of protecting the biggest man in our country or not. But it is something that intrigues every President. Can I once get away from guards? No person is more guarded than your President.

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Grace G. Tully
July 3, 1950

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It seems Coolidge planned to take a little constitutional and just as he appeared on the street floor it began to rain quite hard. Ike Hoover, the head usher, suggested it might be a good idea if the President put on his rubbers. The President thought so too and turned to the Secret Service man who was to accompany him and said, "Will you go upstairs to my room and get my rubbers?" He went on the errand and President Coolidge went out the front door. By the time the Secret Service man returned with the rubbers, Coolidge was out on Pennsylvania Avenue -- all alone. Following a Presidential order in this instance might have lost him his job because he is assigned to a President to protect him -- but what would you or I do under the same circumstances? He soon caught up with the practical joker who was beaming all over because he had successfully rid himself of a guard for half a block perhaps.

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Missy and I wondered if F.D.R. thought he could devise a way to get out of the Big House without detection. He threw his head back for a few minutes thinking of a scheme. Finally he hit on one he thought would work if we helped him.

He loved mystery stories and this was a challenge. He decided that we three would plan an afternoon working on pulling out books that he wanted to send to some library in Washington. We would then ask the Usher to send up a very large straw laundry hamper to pack them in -- because he could get air. When the hamper was brought into the Study he would get into it and Missy would call the garage and order a station wagon to come by and pick up the books. Because these books were considered of value, Missy and I would personally see that they were delivered. As planned, and no reason for anyone to be suspicious, we three would be in the station wagon and out of the White House gate -- and nobody any the wiser. We would only go a short distance and then Miss LeHand or I would call the White House and request the Usher to ask the President a question to which we wanted an immediate answer. Well, I think everybody can imagine what would have happened at that moment -- alarms such as you never heard would ring out through the Nation.

It never happened but it was kind of fun to plan and wonder about.

But don't think he didn't pull a real get-away -- the two accomplices on the make-believe escape were with him on the real one.

The three of us in the Boss' little open Ford were driving through the woods on the Hyde Park estate followed by the "Queen Mary" -- a Cadillac of unusual dimensions -- loaded with a detail of Secret Service men, driven by Dick Flohr, one of the best men they ever had at a wheel. The President hit a dead end -- I'll never know whether it was intentional -- and backed up between trees to retrace his steps. The "Queen Mary" couldn't turn on a dime as the old Ford could, so the Secret Service men were sometime getting on the trail. In the meantime the Boss thought it would be exciting if we just turned left into the gravel pit and watched the boys roll by. We sat in the hollow and smoked a cigarette as they literally flew by on the road. They were worried, as they had lost us. After we finished our smoke the President, with the expression of a little boy who has been naughty but rather pleased with his accomplishment, said, "I think maybe we better see what happened to Mike (Reilly) and the boys."

We pulled up at the booth to the left of the Big House and the President stopped.

He said, "Ed (Colonel Starling), have you seen the boys?" Ed was obviously relieved to see him, as the "boys" had gone by his watch sometime before asking Ed if he had seen the President. Don't think Starling wasn't worried at that moment.

The "Queen Mary" with its contingent had made its way to the Cottage where they thought F.D.R. might have headed but no sign of him there. Finally they came back to report and there was the Ford with its occupants. Were they a happy group!

The President looked solemn and said to Mike, "What happened to you fellows, we looked all over for you." Mike loved the Boss but at that moment I think he could have sounded off in good Irish style, if he dared. But soon his big smile and Irish humor came to the fore and he said, "Mr. President, you certainly fooled us." The President, kidding, of course, said, "Wait until I see Chief Moran (Head of the Secret Service) and tell him that you fellows lost me." Mike laughed but hoped -- and I think knew -- that Moran would never hear about the incident from F.D.R.

The President certainly never told the Chief of the Secret Service the story. However, about three or four years later a columnist wrote an article about the incident. The successor to Chief Moran, Frank Wilson, called Mike in to question him as to its accuracy. Mike came to me to find out how it could have gotten out, especially because the incident had happened years before. I said, "Mike, you know the Boss and he was just in a mood to tell stories and was reminded of this episode by something that came up in the conversation, and the visitor repeated it to some newspaperman." That's exactly what happened because I questioned the Boss and he said he told the story to someone -- he couldn't even remember to whom.

Presidents are just like all other human beings who like to play jokes and unfortunately don't realize that jokes of this kind -- to which I was a party -- don't set well with the people or those whose livelihood depends on whether they do a good job of protecting the biggest man in our country or not. But it is something that intrigues every President. "Can I once get away from guards?" No prisoner is more guarded than your President.

1945. Misc
Reminisc.

I recall an amusing incident during the war years when a portrait painter from Mexico, whose name has escaped me, requested an appointment for a sitting with President Roosevelt. After he was cleared by the Secret Service, a time was arranged. The painter stood on an easel in the Cabinet room and one day as ~~he~~ ^{F.D.R.} was being wheeled back to his office ^{after the} ~~meeting~~, I told him the artist would like to have his comments on the portrait. The artist's idea was "Roosevelt making a Fireside Chat" but the flames seemed to be enveloping F.D.R. He laughed and said "I know a better title for this picture 'Roosevelt in Hell'."