

LT from
Bournemouth.
May 18, 1937.

L.T. - SUNOCO. FROM BOURNEMOUTH, ENGLAND, TUESDAY,
MAY 18, 1937.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Tonight I am on the south coast of England - in the harbor of Southampton. I have just made myself at home aboard the giant liner QUEEN MARY. But in a way I feel I should not be here at all. I ought to be in Dublin. Having broadcast from Rome, London and Paris on this trip, Mussolini, the Coronation and Premier Blum of France - I decided that the logical wind-up would be - Ireland. Broadcast from Dublin, ~~in~~ President DeValera. But unforeseen events stopped all that. I had passage back to the United States booked on the QUEEN MARY and she was scheduled to sail tomorrow. That would have given me time for a flying trip to Dublin. Then the word came that the sailing date had been advanced twelve hours - because of that great post-Coronation event at sea, the King's Naval Review this week at Spithead. The newly-crowned

monarch will survey the might of the King's Navy in an immense survey of the King's Fleet in the waters of the harbor. So many warships about that the majestic liner might get in the way. The QUEEN MARY is sailing in advance of her schedule. So I had to come down here to Southampton sooner than I had expected and the trip to Dublin was off.

Just before leaving London this afternoon I put in a long-distance call to President DeValera, at Dublin. I had been talking to Robert Flaherty, writer on Irish themes and producer of the stirring picture "Man of Aran." He said, "if you want to 'phone the Free State President, go and see Minister Delanthy, representative of Ireland in London." I took his advice, saw this Minister who gave me the private telephone number of President DeValera, in Dublin. So, I was calling him.

The President's office told me that an important election was about to be staged in Ireland. A political campaign is now being waged that will decide the fate of the DeValera government. The President at that moment, they said, was at an important session of the Dail, waging his political fight, and

could not be reached just then. So I continued the conversation with the DeValera office - listening to more about the significance of the coming Irish election which will have a significant bearing on the future relations of the Irish State and the British Empire. All the members of the Irish government up for reelection.

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Before sailing for home tonight perhaps it would be appropriate for me to run back over a few events of this trip - things I haven't had a chance to mention. But first here seems to be a little news from France:-

WINDSOR

Mrs. Wallis Warfield, not Simpson, will be amply prepared in the way of clothes, for her wedding on June third. Her wedding dress is not quite finished. Two more fittings will be necessary before it will be the proper garb for the bride of His Ex-Majesty, the Duke of Windsor. Finished, ~~not~~ or not, Wally of Baltimore is not entirely devoid of nuptial finery. She has been getting dresses from Paris by the dozen, frocks upon frocks for her bridal day - her third bridal day.

Today we are told of how she is providing herself with forty-eight separate and distinct dresses - delivered to the Chateau of Cande by Paris costumiers. Thirty of these marriage frocks have been specially designed for Wally, the Paris creations of a sort that she alone will wear, the models not to be duplicated for anyone else. There are fourteen evening gowns, six afternoon gowns, five tailored suits and four beach suits. That's what Wally will wear on her honeymoon - honeymoon number three.

Along with this sartorial sidelight in the news today, comes the announcement by the Duke of Windsor that he will marry

Mrs. Wallis Warfield, on the third of next month, which happens to be his father's birthday - the day on which that prudent and sedate monarch, George the Fifth, was born. The Duke in exile says in his statement that the only wedding guests will be those with whom he has been surrounded in his sojourn. No member of the Royal Family will be present to witness the consummation of the romance that caused a constitutional crisis and shook an empire.

One thing I wonder about is - what will the newspaper men get to drink? I was at dinner the other night at the sylvan country estate of Lord Beaverbrook, that mighty power of British journalism. Lord Beaverbrook has been exceedingly close to the former Edward the Eighth and could tell many a story about the royal romance, if he will. He did the other evening. He told us of an English lord of newspaper renown who discussed with the Duke of Windsor - what to do about the journalists - swarms of them, who have been around the Castle of Cande - covering the great Edward and Wally story. "What about all these newspaper men when the wedding is solemnized in the Chateau?" They will

be red hot, white hot, on the assignment, news hawks after one of the biggest bits of news. "What about them?" asked the lord. There are a hundred and sixty newspaper men there on the scene at present. A hundred and sixty!

"I will invite them to the wedding," responded Edward. "Then there will be five hundred of them," interposed the lord.

"Five hundred?" said the Duke of Windsor. Then we will have a pavillion for them in the castle grounds and will let one of them in to be the eyes for the others in the pavillion," smiled Edward. "And I will serve the five hundred with champagne."

"In that case," responded the lord, "there will be a thousand!"

"Oh," reflected Edward, "then I will serve them with lemonade." So I wonder whether on June Third, at that famous wedding:- will newspaper men have to drink lemonade?

At Lord Beaverbrook's dinner party, our conversation ran along in sprightly fashion. And out of it popped a good line, a catchy remark. I was saying how in scoring the comment on the Movietone Color Film of the Coronation I referred to Windsor Castle

as a haunt of jolly Shakespearean melodies, the Merry Wives of Windsor. Likewise, it's the home from which British royalty now takes its name - the House of Windsor. Also - the Duke of Windsor. Whereupon someone passed the laughing remark - "The Merry Wife of Windsor."

PARSEE

Now for an incident that occurred at the Coronation, one I didn't have time to tell you about in my broadcast from London the other night. I'll leave it to you to decide whether it was a humorous or a tragic incident.

The noble Lady sitting on one side of me changed places with her Lord for a little while so that he and I could chat about what was going on, the solemn ceremony of coronation. Right in front, and just below us, sat one of the most distinguished men of India, a stately Parsee dignitary from Bombay. The Parsee kept his tall, Zoaroastrian headdress on most of the time as is their custom. Like so many other easterners when indoors, they take off their shoes and keep on their hats, tall like a stovepipe. But now and then this fire-worshipper from Hindustan would take his off and hold it in his lap - revealing an egg-shaped head, utterly bald.

The resplendent British nobleman beside me stood up for a better view. The Archbishop of Canterbury was in the midst of the impressive anointing ceremony. Holding the golden ampulla and pouring oil from it, His Grace said to the King:- "Be they Head anointed with holy oil - as Solomon was anointed king by Zadok the priest."

His Lordship standing beside me was wearing his sword, and turning to whisper to me he swung his sword around, raking the scabbard right across the Parsee's bald head. Whereupon the Parsee uttered words of wrath.

We all had books in our laps,-each of us had been given a bound volume entitled "THE FORM AND ORDER OF THE SERVICE THAT IS TO BE PERFORMED AND THE CEREMONIES THAT ARE TO BE OBSERVED IN THE CORONATION." Only a few minutes after his Lordship had apologized for raking the Parsee's bald head with the sword, my neighbor stood up again. The Archbishop of Canterbury was handing the golden Sceptre to George the Sixth, saying as he did so:- "Receive the Rod of Equity and Mercy..... Be so merciful that you be not too remiss." And at that moment His Lordship's bound book of the service slipped from under his arm and crashed down on that bald Parsee head. Whereupon the follower of Zoroaster from Bombay rose out of his seat, rubbed his head and muttered remarks which were not at all similar to the words which His Grace the Archbishop was uttering to the King just below us.

ABSORBINE JR.

One of the most interesting Coronation visitors I encountered was a charming lady. (That last story may have given you a smile at the expense of a Parsee and an English Lord. This concerns an American.) The lady's fortune is derived from that much advertised product known as ABSORBINE JUNIOR. I met her on the ship coming across. You may recall that when Mrs. Simpson left England in such a hurry she was rushed across France in an American car, the King's chauffeur at the wheel. A few days later Edward abdicated. The chauffeur who had gone with Mrs. Simpson was out of a job. The King no longer needed him. And an item about this appeared in the newspapers.

When the Queen of Absorbine Junior saw the item, so I was informed, she cabled to Europe, to the Ex-King's ex-chauffeur, hiring him to meet her with a car at Southampton and drive her around during Coronation Week.

THE IRISH PRIEST

Yes, there were stories I didn't have time to tell on Coronation Night. And, here's one that was crowded out in Rome:-

I paid a visit to St. Peter's - and there I found the usual scenes of grandeur and glory - with an added touch of color, gaudy color, and dusky color. In the ancient center of Christendom we saw a vivid gleam of red. Not the red of Cardinals, but the crimson in the robe of a Coptic ecclesiastic, a small dark African prelate of gorgeous dignity.

And with him - a file of those Askari warriors who were everywhere in Rome, there for Empire Day. Those Askaris were the devoutest Christians I ever beheld. They not only kissed the toe of Saint Peter in ancient traditional style, but they also kissed the rails before the altars. And then, stooping to the ground, they kissed the floor. Of all the sights of African conquest that I saw in Rome that was perhaps the most interest - those Askari, so famous in the Ethiopian War paying their homage to St. Peters - they and their Coptic priests in gorgeous robes.

I was watching these singular sights when up to me

came a priest of a different description - ruddy complexion, grey hair and twinkling blue eyes. When he spoke there was a touch of the Irish in his voice. "Stop," he said. "Stand there a moment. You look like somebody from home." He stood staring at me, saying: "Don't tell me who you are. I will recognize you in a minutes." After a moment of scrutiny he exclaimed:- "Yes, yes, I've got it." Then calling me by name he introduced himself: "I am Father Mahar of Notre Dame." "How about the team this Fall," I asked. Then Father Mahar told me he had been in Rome for six weeks after a trip around the world. He had been to the Eucharistic Congress in Manila, had traveled through the Far East, India and Ceylon, he had been in Egypt and the Holy Land, making his devotions in Jerusalem. Now - in Rome.

Father Mahar gazed about at the splendor and glory of St. Peters and at the worshipping warriors from Africa. And he heaved a deep sigh. "There is one thing I am wishing for and praying for," said he. "All this is magnificent. It's like a miracle. But, you know about the angel of the Lord who took the man by the hair of his head and carried him with food to Daniel

in the Lion's Den? Well, I wish that same angel would take me by the hair of my head, carry me and set me down in South Bend, Indiana."

There in St.Peters, beside the Vatican, was a priest who was the most homesick man I ever saw - homesick for South Bend, for Notre Dame, and Spring football practice.

Right now I feel too as if an angel were about to take me by the hair and carry me home. The angel in this case being the good ship QUEEN MARY. We are about to sail. And So Long Until we hear from George Sokolsky - tomorrow night.