

ROOSEVELT HEARS PRAYER FOR KING AND HIS VICTORY

He Bows Head as Hyde Park Rector Invokes Divine Aid Against George's Enemies

READ FROM CANADIAN BOOK

Rev. F. R. Wilson Explains He Did Not Realize Significance of Use of British Version

By **FELIX BELAIR JR.**

Special to **THE NEW YORK TIMES.**

HYDE PARK, N. Y., Oct. 22—President Roosevelt heard a prayer today that King George of England might be strengthened to "vanquish and overcome all his enemies." His head bowed, Mr. Roosevelt sat with the congregation of St. James Episcopal Church as the Almighty's blessing was asked on the head of England's Church and, also, that his enemies might not prevail against him.

It was a special service and a special prayer which the Chief Executive heard, for there is no such supplication in the American version of the Episcopal prayer book, which mentions only the President among civil authorities for whom divine aid and guidance are asked. But the prayer for the British sovereign was to be found in a Canadian prayer book brought by the Rev. Frank R. Wilson, the President's pastor, from Campobello Island, N. B.

The Prayer for the King

Amid a deep hush, the rector spoke these words:

"O Lord, most heartily we beseech Thee, with Thy favor to behold Thy most gracious sovereign, Lord, King George; and so replenish him with the grace of Thy holy spirit that he may always incline to Thy will, and walk in Thy way; endue him plenteously with heavenly gifts; grant him in health and wealth long to live; strengthen him that he may vanquish and overcome all his enemies, and finally after this life he may attain everlasting joy and felicity, through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen."

No emotion crossed the President's face as the prayer was read and neither did he appear surprised at the locally unprecedented invocation of the divine blessing.

It had been made known that at the services today Mr. Wilson would dedicate the Bible presented to the church by King George as a memento of his attendance there last June, and the little edifice had the largest crowd on hand since that occasion. Accompanied by Mrs. Roosevelt, the President motored the short distance from the family home to find his mother already in her pew on their arrival.

Mr. Wilson, in addressing the congregation on the King's gift, reminded those present that the British Sovereign was "defender of the faith" and head of the English Church. As such, the rector recalled, King George had met Bishop Henry St. George Tucker, head of the Episcopal Church in this country, in the church at Hyde Park.

"The historical significance of the royal visit will become more evident to the American Church as the years go by," said Mr. Wilson.

After emphasizing that the King's visit to St. James Church in June marked the first time in history that the head of the English Church had met the head of the American Church, the rector stated:

"That this has come to pass in our own little parish church is something to ponder."

Dedication of the King's Bible

During the service, the Bible given by King George was dedicated with these words:

"We pray thee, O Lord, to accept this gift which we now set apart in Thy name. May Thy blessing rest upon this gift and the giver of it.

"In the faith of Jesus Christ our Lord, we dedicate this Bible to the glory of God and in commemoration of the visit of Thy servants George Rex and Elizabeth Regina, in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, amen."

In his talk to the congregation, Mr. Wilson mentioned that many of the services held in the little structure during the past hundred years had been marked with some important occurrence and that not the least of these had been the visit of the British sovereigns last June 11.

Then the rector traced the origins of the King James version of the Bible, which version was the one contained in the King's gift. The book given by the King would be used only on special occasions and on the Sundays nearest June 11, Mr. Wilson said.

Brought here by the President on Friday from Washington, where it had been provided with a special glass-covered case, the Bible given by the King rested on a gold lectern throughout today's service.

The larger and older Bible usually in place on the lectern was to be

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PRESIDENT SEES KING'S BIBLE DEDICATED

Mr. Roosevelt with the Rev. Frank R. Wilson at St. James Church in Hyde Park yesterday. The rector is holding the volume presented by George VI when he and the Queen attended services there last June.

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restored to its place after the services today. It has been in use in the parish for the last hundred years.

"What is more fitting than that one of the successors to the throne of England by this gift should remind us all of our duty to preach the word of God in season and out," Mr. Wilson told the congregation.

Message by King on Gift Bible

A resolution of thanks to King George for the gift was read during the service, signed by the vestrymen of the church, including Mr. Roosevelt.

On a fly leaf of the King's gift Bible was the message in his own hand:

"Presented to St. James Church, Hyde Park, U. S. A., by George R. I., June 11, 1939."

A crowd of nearly two hundred persons, including parishioners who could not get into the church and a larger number of curious spectators, stood around the entrance of the church in the Autumn sunshine both before the President's entrance and after the service, and there was generous applause for him.

Many in the crowd said that they had come to see if Mr. Roosevelt's appearance had been changed by the strain under which he has been working since the outbreak of the war in Europe. They went away apparently thoroughly satisfied of the President's physical fitness, as well as his good spirits. Meanwhile, Mr. Roosevelt said that he had come to Hyde Park to catch up on his sleep, and, judging from his appearance today, he had made good his intention.

After a typical Roosevelt family dinner the President got behind the wheel of his specially equipped touring car for another trip around his estate and for a last look at his Christmas tree crop. He had no appointments of an official nature during the day and planned to leave on his return to Washington late today.

RECTOR EXPLAINS PRAYER

Customary Peacetime Petition for King Used at Hyde Park

The Rev. Frank R. Wilson, rector of St. James Episcopal Church at Hyde Park, N. Y., said last night over the telephone to THE NEW YORK TIMES that he attached

no special significance to the appeal for divine strength for King George of England that he might "vanquish and overcome his enemies" in the formal prayer for the British sovereign which President Roosevelt heard yesterday morning at the service.

The prayer has no political significance and is used "year in, year out" in the English church, the Rev. Mr. Wilson said. It must not be confused with the special prayer for victory and that for the armies which are included in the service when the nation is at war, he said. These special prayers were not included here, the form used being the one the English have used throughout peacetime.

The Rev. Mr. Wilson said that he had decided to use the English Book of Common Prayer entirely on his own initiative and had not consulted the vestry, of which President Roosevelt is senior warden.

He explained that at Campobello, N. B., where he spends the Summer, as does Mr. Roosevelt, the Canadian rector always included a similar prayer for the President of the United States and that he decided to use the Canadian form as a reciprocal courtesy, employing for that purpose a Canadian prayer book he had brought down from the Campobello church three or four years ago.

It had not occurred to him when he ran through the prayers in his study that the reference to "enemies" might be misinterpreted to mean belligerent nations, but when he recited the prayer yesterday morning he wondered for a moment if the proper broad meaning of the word as the spiritual, moral and material obstacles to the King's pursuit of Christian ideals would be understood, he said.

The form of the prayer, he pointed out, was identical with one of the two alternative forms here except that the President is mentioned instead of the King.

Donn Fendler Calls on President

HYDE PARK, N. Y., Oct. 22 (AP)—Donn Fendler, the 12-year-old Rye boy who was lost eight days in the Northern Maine wilderness last July, autographed his account of the experience for President Roosevelt today—and got the President's autograph in return. After services at St. James' Episcopal Church, where the President is a communicant, young Fendler was introduced to Mr. Roosevelt and presented him a copy of his book, "Donn Fendler Lost on the Mountain." The President then signed his name in another copy at the boy's request.