

From *The Indianapolis Times*
by Harold Hartley

CAMPOBELLO, N.B. -- Up this bleak, bare winding coast through hardy, rock-shouldered hills, dipping into the flat bitter smells of low tide, you move through primitive and majestic scenes that have changed little since first the white man came.

It is the alluring path to Campobello, a weather-beaten eight-mile strip of maritime magnificence at the head of the Bay of Fundy, its coves enhanced with Indian fish traps called weirs made of stakes and net to catch herring, in this the heart of the sardine industry.

At Lubec, Maine, you swing across the arching back of the new International Bridge meeting the Canadian Union Jack on the far side at the little customs house. Not many questions, just "Where you born?"

Summer American tourists pour over this bridge at the peak vacation rate of a thousand a day. They are all headed for a shrine, the summer home of the late Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the faithful setting for the play, "Sunrise at Campobello."

There are few places to refresh the inner man except a casual little pine-paneled restaurant named "Ponderosa," built on the edge of an artist's dream called Wilson's Beach with tall graying wharves, tide marks on their "spiling" and a calm that invites you to lose yourself in its magic spell as the 22-foot tide comes and goes twice a day.

We started for the far end of the island. The hard road stopped. We were on gravel, then plain dirt.

As it became wilder the children yelled, "Stop," or "Slow down." Both sides of the car were brushed by wild raspberries which could be picked through the car windows.

At the far end we came to a little wooden bridge which did not look strong enough for the car so we did not try. Turning around in what was now a wide "cowpath" was no easy problem.

Back to a gift shop we bought Canadian yarn and wool cloth, English toffee and postcards.

Canadian courtesy made its imprint. When we asked where the post office was they said at the shop, "We will take you there," and gave us an escort.

The Roosevelt "cottage" where FDR was brought up and where he summered with his own family was hardly a "cottage."

It is built of wood and painted red with Canada's Union Jack on the right and Old Glory on the left of the entrance, the yard brilliant with flowers blooming in the sun and damp air.

It has 34 rooms, and 17 bedrooms, the third floor once used for servants.

It was here that the late President Roosevelt contracted polio. It was here that he fought his first battles with it, could not believe he had it, tried to walk and fell on the floor again and again. It was here that he gained the super-courage with which he led the nation through the depths of the Great Depression and the horrors of World War II.

The dining room is just as it was with a crock water cooler on the table, and the original flowered wallpaper.

He spent his boyhood here. It was here that he got his love of the sea which led him into the post of Assistant Secretary of the Navy and probably caused him to quote in the firm, confident voice of one of his fireside talks, "Sail On, O Ship of State..." He knew, and had a feeling for the sea.

His mother had a place next door but it has been torn down. And the Roosevelt home was sold relatively recently to Hammer Brothers Art Galleries in New York City by his son, Elliott.

Hammer Brothers gave it jointly to the United States and Canadian Governments which posed a problem as to which government was to maintain it and pay guides to tell its story and keep tourists from carrying off mementos.

The impasse has just been settled with Canada presently paying the staff.

In the dining room and living room with a green-painted terrace attached overlooking Friar's Bay were two four-foot megaphones made of deerskin stretched over frames for calling the five Roosevelt children in from sailing on the bay.

He came back to this New Brunswick island only three times after he became president. His bedroom was moved downstairs because of his paralyzed legs and there was a room next to it which could be occupied by the Secret Service men assigned to him.

In the room which abounds with seafaring art and lore was his carrying chair, canvas stretched over a strong wooden frame almost like a patio sun lounge in which he could be carried in comfort to places where he could not go in a car.

The room in which he lived was duplicated in the play "Sunrise at Campobello." I saw both the play and the room.

There was a bronze head and pictures which highlighted his career, one in shirtsleeves at the Democratic National Convention at which he nominated the late Alfred E. Smith but he, himself, came off the hero of the party.

Here the foundation was laid for his own nomination and the longest service any President has ever given his country, also the foundation for the law which limited any President to two terms.

There was a single-barreled telescope through which he used to watch and study the ships as they passed. And a spring-wound gramophone, the kind you cranked before the audio tube.

The late Eleanor Roosevelt's books were on a hall table and the pattern of his White House dishes picturing Mount Vernon were in a glass-doored cupboard.

Even his childhood pony chair used for him as a child to ride "side-saddle."

The President's flag was there, the one that existed 40 years before they discovered the mistake. The eagle was looking at the warlike arrows instead of at the olive branch.

There was a letter from his wife to his mother which said, "Dearest Mama: Franklin has been quite ill." And a clay caricature of FDR brought to him from Italy by Frank Sinatra.

But the most touching and printed in the unsteady hand of a child was this note:

"Dearest Mama: I will tell you what I want for Christmas. I want a lot of blocks, and a train

of cars, and some little boats. But I don't think I want anything else.

Love, FRANKLIN"

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