

McDUFFIE

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proach, and so on it was done until the President reached his office.

About two minutes later Mr. McDuffie came and invited me to his room on the second floor of the White House. I was impressed with this fact, as very few servants live under the same roof with their employer, whether they be an ordinary business man or the President of the United States.

Born in Georgia

But if you had listened to McDuffie's conversation, you would understand why the President has given him and his other employees such fine quarters. The room is next to the maid's room. It consists of a bedroom, a desk, comfortable rugs and excellent drapery. A telephone is in the room for his use, and he had the privilege of living with his wife. This was denied him while he was the valet in New York.

McDuffie was born in Elberton, Ga., March 14, 1882. Seven years ago he was a barber in a shop in Atlanta known as the McDuffie-Herndon Barber Shop, which catered to white customers. McDuffie was manager and barber in the shop, and Mr. Herndon, of the Atlanta known as the McDuffie-a stockholder. While actively engaged in the barbering profession McDuffie sprained his leg, making it difficult to stand on it all day to cut hair, and incidentally while waiting on a customer he mentioned to him that he was quitting the barber business and wanted a job as a valet.

Sought Valet Job

McDuffie had been a valet to Dr. Zoepffel, white, consul for the German Empire of the Southeast division, containing six Southern states. It was while in this capacity that he got a liking for valet work. The customer expressed regret of his proposed departure but informed him that he would look out for such a job and would let him know if he knew of anything.

It happened that at that time this same customer was selling some building material to Mr. Roosevelt for his home in Warm Springs, Ga., and was informed a few days later that he was without a valet. Securing this information, Zoepffel returned to McDuffie's barber shop.

Resigned from Shop

"I had forgotten I had spoken to him about work," said McDuffie, "when he told me he thought he had hit on the job I wanted. He asked me how I would like to work for Franklin Roosevelt. I replied 'Fine.'

"The next Thursday I got a telegram from Mr. Roosevelt to come to Warm Springs and I would be met at the station. I left, and after ten minutes' conversation we had closed the deal. I went back to the barber shop and got a leave of absence for a year, because I didn't know just

Byron and Shakespeare.

"The experience I have had as valet for Mr. Roosevelt has been an education that one cannot get in the schools. What other people talk about I have seen. I have nearly circled the United States twice. I have been to Canada by water three times, to Montreal, Paris, Bahamas Islands and lots of other places."

When questioned about his talks with the President, his reply was, "I learned early not to talk unless there was an excellent opportunity for the conversation, and that I do not get so often, as the President is a busy man. When I do, I refrain from discussing his personal affairs, but discuss things in general. From my association and conversation with him, I can say frankly that the President does not think in terms of races, but in terms of Americans; and he believes the Negro is an American. I heard every speech he made during his campaign, and never did he single out the colored people. It was always 'Americans.'"

McDuffie accompanies the President on all of his trips over land or water, but stated that he was not ready to fly yet, so when the President made his aerial flight to Chicago to accept his nomination, McDuffie was left behind.

Bars Flying

"I always manage to get out of that in a diplomatic way, but if he insisted that I fly, I think I would go," said McDuffie.

While the President is on his vacation, usually McDuffie is, too. "Next to his wife," said McDuffie, "I am around the President more than anyone else. I am the first he sees in the morning and the last at night."

When asked what he thought of the President as an individual, in contrast to a boss, Mac's reply was:

A Great Man

"As an individual, I think the President is the finest man in the world. He is one that the dumbest need not fear to approach. Anyone who is slightly acquainted with him loves him. He is the greatest humanitarian I know. He is president of the Warm Springs Corporation and allows people to come there and take baths free.

"He has found out more about infantile paralysis than any doctor I know, and has everything imaginable for its cure.

"As a boss? I do not think of him in terms of a boss, because he never orders, but requests. I think of him not as a boss, but as a friend. One thing I can truthfully say, I am working for one great man."

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Cut President's Hair

When asked was his work difficult, his reply was: "It is as simple as it was before the President was governor of New York. When he became governor, his habits were the same. Nothing at all runs to his head."

McDuffie's duties include shining the President's shoes, cleaning and pressing his clothes, keeping his hair cut and preparing and waking him up each morning for his breakfast. Other than that, he has nothing to do with the President's meals.

"After eating his breakfast, the President reads the morning papers, including the leading Negro papers," stated the valet. "He does lots of work before he gets up. He can work five men to death while he lies in bed."

Prolific Reader

McDuffie has never been higher than the eighth grade, yet he holds an interesting conversation and has a very pleasing personality. When asked how he accounted for this, he said:

"I have read all of the Harvard Classics, several histories, the Bible, Balm, Emerson, Tennyson,

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