14
Lights Out

Arabians at the Fairmont. Very, very rigid about the Communists. Campaigning. General MacArthur, the grandest man in the world. An open attack from Al Smith. Mr. Hearst's secret newspaper. Lights out.

MD: I had eaten lobster or something and I went into a coma. I was poisoned and I had an awful attack and thought I was going to die.

I was at San Simeon when that happened [in April 1945]. Right after luncheon I doubled up and I hardly could get over to House A [from the main building, Casa Grande, to Casa del Mar]. I was on the floor, screaming at the top of my lungs. I didn't know what had happened to me.

W.R. sent for a doctor, by airplane from San Luis [Obispo], and he said it was appendicitis. But W.R. wouldn't let him operate. He called San Francisco and they wanted me up there. So I had a pill of codeine, but it didn't do any good. I was really cramped up. I couldn't move. Everything inside me was going like mad, and it was horrible. So I had another codeine, and then I remember I was in an ambulance and then in a plane and then I'm on a stretcher in San Francisco.

They gave me the Murphy Drip. That was the last stage. It's a pipe they put up you—to get the water out of your system. You just lie there and go drip, drip, drip, all night long.

Of course, I got the wrong room [in the hospital]. Next to the kitchen. I was trying to sleep and they had gotten the pipe in wrong. I called the nurse and said to send for the doctor. "Take this thing out of me. I'm going crazy."

She said to me, "Ahhh, signs of life."

I said, "This is no time to be funny. Tell them to stop rattling the dishes in the kitchen and get me out of here."

She said, "You can't."

Well, it was four in the morning and she said the doctor had gone to bed. I'd been there for five days, but I didn't know where I was.

I said, "The pipe is in wrong. I'll tear it out."

She said, "Don't you dare touch it."

Well, I was going to have a fight with her. I said, "You let me alone or I'll kill you." So she sent an intern to me. But he couldn't do anything without the doctor. I could see the fear on his face.

I said okay. He said, "You must be feeling better."

I said, "Look, I couldn't feel worse." And I was there three weeks and I was going to kill everyone in that hospital.

That was the week that Roosevelt died, and they had the United Nations conference [in San Francisco] and there were Arabians at the Fairmont [Hotel]

PP/KSM: *The U.S. President died on April 12, 1945, and the Charter conference of the United Nations began officially on April 25. It would last until June 26, when it was signed by representatives of fifty nations.*

TC: No account of these events of 1945 appears in Guiles, *Marion Davies.* On pp. 327-328, his narrative skips from wartime to postwar without touching on them.

Meanwhile, the Hearst family privately retains a most unusual item. A copy of Taylor Caldwell's recent novel *The Wide House* (New York 1945) was in Marion's hospital room. In lieu of using conventional paper, W. R. wrote the following message on the blank side of the Caldwell dust jacket. His penciled but undated words—conveying Marion's dictated voice, as had been done several times in the past—were sent (presumably wired) to Anna Roosevelt Boettiger after FDR's death on April 12:

"Dear Anna: I am in St Lukes hospital in San Francisco with appendicitis. I take this first opportunity to send you heartfelt condolence over the death of your father the President. Mr. Hearst joins me in best love and sincerest sympathy." (HSSP)

MD: They took my suite, the whole floor, and asked for all the beds to be taken out so they could sleep on the floor. I had to go to the Huntington House [another hotel on Nob Hill], which was opposite.

I could see [Vyacheslav] Molotov but I didn't meet him. I could look out the window and see him. He made a very nice impression, as far as looks were concerned.

W.R. met Molotov, and though there was a difference of opinion. W.R. thought that he cared [about the U.N.'s prospects], that he had a sort of amenability toward being sensible. Molotov looked like he might have a little brains in his coco. He was old [fifty-five, b. 1890]; he looked a bit calmer than the others.

They looked like wild, violent, tearing reds who wanted to kill everybody. They had that big fat fellow, a horrible person, [Georgi] Malenkov, and the other [Lavrenti Beria], the chief of police.

PP/KSM: *Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov was Foreign Minister, representing the Soviet Union at the Founding Conference of the United Nations. Subsequently he represented the Soviet Union at the United Nations in New York. Later Nikita Kruschev would post Molotov to Outer Mongolia, as Ambassador.*

Georgi Maksimilianovich Malenkov was the deputy Prime Minister of the Soviet Union at that time and succeeded Joseph Stalin as Prime Minister in 1953. Later he and Molotov were accused of conspiring against the Communist Party, and he was assigned to work in a hydroelectric plant.

Lavrenti Pavlovich Beria was the chief of the secret police and a Marshal of the Soviet Union. He served with Molotov and Malenkov in a ruling triumvirate after Stalin died. Convicted of treason, he died two days before Christmas, 1953, before a firing squad.

MD: About Malenkov, Mr. Hearst said—and I never forgot it—"A person who's fat, with a fat face and a fat figure, has a meanness in him." And they were chubby guys. And they were tough.

I thought there would be a revolution in Russia. But most of the Russians know of nothing beyond their iron curtain.

Now W.R. was very, very, very rigid about the Communists. He was almost rabid, and he predicted another world war unless America could keep her money and defenses. And if we could get South America and Mexico in with us, then the western hemisphere would be

perfectly fine. But he thought we were spending too much money and we shouldn't be bothered by foreign wars.

Like the fighting in Korea [1950–1953]. He put it this way: How many Englishmen and Scots are [in uniform] there? Six with bagpipes and violins. They're playing music and the Americans are being killed. And are they going to protect us if we get into a war?

The English will have a happy holiday and so will Scotland. The English used to pay the Indians to scalp the Americans. So W.R. used to say [echoing George Washington], "Keep out of foreign entanglements."

W.R. thought that a president was not supposed to leave the United States, and [Woodrow] Wilson broke that rule [by attending the Versailles Peace Conference of 1919]. Then [Warren G.] Harding went to South America [or rather Herbert Hoover did]. Then Roosevelt went over to Malta [to the "Big Three" Yalta Conference of February 1945] when they [Churchill and Stalin] should have come to see him [in the U.S.].

TC: See the end of Chapter 4, p. 23, for its references to Hoover. Concerning Roosevelt, he stopped in Malta in December 1943, while en route to Iran for the Tehran Conference with Churchill and Stalin. Those two leaders also met in Malta early in 1945, but without Roosevelt in attendance.

MD: Now they have all of our money and we still have to go and see them. Well, W.R. thought we were an independent country and we didn't belong to England or Ireland or Italy or France or any goddamn country. He thought we had to fight for our own rights and that we were really floating on [thin] ice, then.

General [Douglas] MacArthur was the grandest man in the world. W.R. thought MacArthur was one of the greatest men since George Washington. He had met him on several occasions and was very much impressed.

TC: From 1922 to 1929, MacArthur was married to Louise Cromwell, a sister-in-law of Doris Duke, who as we've seen was part of the Hearst-Davies

circle (Chapters 1, 3, and 8). Louise Cromwell was next married to the actor Lionel Atwill, with the Atwills likewise being members of the circle.

MD: He [W.R.] knew his [MacArthur's] policies, and he didn't have to know the person very well to judge them. W.R. had the most profound respect for him, for his mentality. Mr. Hearst followed every move MacArthur made.

He said, "He can't make a mistake. He's too good, too honest." But, he said, "There will come a day when people won't appreciate him." We found that out when we had the haberdasher [Truman].

PP/KSM: *A reference to President Harry Truman's business venture.*

TC: Truman ran a men's furnishings store in Missouri after serving in World War I and before his election to the U.S. Senate in 1934.

MD: We had buttons made and started campaigning for MacArthur for president in 1948. But you can't campaign on two blondes. I understand that. It winds up that you work against him, not for him.

PP/KSM: *Patricia Van Cleve Lake, Marion's niece and companion, was involved in many of Marion's activities, including the 1948 campaign. Like Marion, she was a striking blonde.*

TC: This footnote by Pfau and Marx was another one expanded substantially by Bobbs-Merrill.

When MacArthur's name was being mentioned as a possible Republican candidate during the primary season, early in 1948, his ex-wife, Louise Cromwell, had this to say: "If he's a dark horse, he's in the last roundup." After the earliest primaries MacArthur withdrew his name from further consideration. Geoffrey Perret, *Old Soldiers Never Die: The Life of Douglas MacArthur* (New York 1996), p. 530.

MD: I had meet the General at MGM, when I was doing *[The] Bachelor Father* [in 1931]. He came on the set with W.R. I think then he was a governor or an ex-governor of the Philippines. We all had luncheon over in the [Cosmopolitan] bungalow.

TC: A photo of Marion and MacArthur on the set of *The Bachelor Father* appears in Guiles, *Marion Davies* (section following p. 204).

MacArthur served two tours of duty in the Philippines from 1922 to 1930, the second of them (1928–1930) as Commander of the Philippine Department. His and Louise Cromwell MacArthur's friendship with Manuel Quezon, elected president of the Philippines in 1935, resulted in Quezon's entrée to the Hearst-Davies circle.

MD: I was busy [at MGM], and I have a one-track mind. I didn't pay any attention to the politicians, politics, or society. I would just sort of be oriented, but I'd keep thinking about something else.

I think George Bernard Shaw [who visited San Simeon and MGM in March 1933] said that anybody who doesn't have a one-track mind will never be a success in life. In a way, that theory is true. If you jump from thing to thing, then you're nothing. You become a parasite, and then you become a borrower, and then you're a beggar.

W.R. was happy with most of the newspapers [he owned], but not all of them. He was constantly working on them, trying to get them to see what he wanted done.

He said to me once, which is so true, "It is so much more difficult to get people to do what you want them to do than to do it yourself."

The papers came first. The magazines came next. He didn't really bother about the gold or silver mines or the paper mills. After all, he paid the experts [such as Donald McLaughlin of Berkeley, a mining engineer] to run them.

He owned a million-acre ranch called Babicora in Mexico, in Chihuahua. The government took over half of it away for the agrarians [about 1940]. There were a lot of cattle there, and two or three silver mines and two gold mines [elsewhere in Mexico], but W.R. didn't pay any attention to them. The main focus on his mind was on the newspapers, just the newspapers.

He had a theory: The people should know the truth. He said, "A free press; but if the press breaks the faith . . ." He meant that freedom was for the public but not for the columnists. He had to watch that faith all the time. So many times, interviews would be falsely written.

He would read not only his own papers but the other papers [especially the *Los Angeles Times*], to find out what they were doing.

He watched his own like a hawk, to see if they were stepping out of bounds.

He used to say, "I don't read criticism of myself, because I know what they're saying. I know they don't approve of me. If I read all that, I might lose faith in myself."

I didn't believe in that theory. I got great delight in reading nasty articles about myself. I thought it was best to be mentioned rather than ignored. But still I would get a little bit mad, for a minute. But then, you could learn something from a little criticism.

I guess I didn't. I never was a very good actress, but I tried my best. Maybe W.R. had the right theory. He said that the critics would get you so down, you would be in a furious mood and wouldn't believe in anything. Since all I had to believe in was my own ability, and I didn't have any of that, I couldn't believe in anything.

I did hear the criticism in the early stages, but it went in one ear and out the other. I was the captain of my soul, and I wanted to do what I wanted to do, regardless of what people thought. I happened to have a little mind, and I would not have other people interfering in my life. And I think everybody should say that.

No one ever criticized me to my face. You can be criticized anywhere for anything, but never once did it happen.

There were two factions. Some would say, "Ummm, better not talk to her." That was Louella Parsons and Hedda Hopper. If you talked to one, you were no friend to the other. This wasn't so in Europe, and in New York I didn't go around much with the café society set. I was theatrical.

TC: The intense rivalry between Parsons and Hopper as gossip columnists came along relatively late. It wasn't until 1937, while in her early fifties, that Miss Hopper began her writing career, most notably at first through the *Los Angeles Times*. She'd previously been a minor actress for many years and had also tried other kinds of work.

MD: It might have made a little difference that I was working for a living then [until making her last film in 1937]. There might have been one or two little burrs, but they didn't mean anything to me.

The only open attack on living in sin, being a mistress and all that, was from Al Smith when he was campaigning for something or other. President, maybe.

TC: Smith ran unsuccessfully for President against Herbert Hoover in 1928; meanwhile, in 1919–1921 and in 1923–1929, Smith was Governor of New York. Here, though, Marion may be alluding to an earlier time, perhaps as far back as 1917. It was then that W.R. eyed the mayoralty of New York City but, partly because of Smith's opposition, had to hide behind a hand-picked John F. Hylan, who held that office until 1925. W.R.'s best-known clash with Smith was in 1922, over the Governorship. These varied details were ripe for Marion's conflation, as much here in Chapter 14 as anywhere else in *The Times We Had*.

MD: He [Al Smith] made a stump speech, and then W.R. wrote an article and said he had no respect for a man who would do that. Then Mr. Smith made another speech. He started in on "the man who attacks me." There was a little bit of a legal thing, I guess. He didn't mention *my* name, but everybody knew who he meant. Of course Mr. Hearst was opposed to Mr. Smith. He didn't like his politics, didn't think he was conservative enough.

Maybe he didn't like his brown derby; I don't know. W.R. wrote a few articles in the paper [predominantly the *New York American*], and then Mr. Smith figured out that he couldn't get even with a newspaper-man, so he tried to attack me, by the grapevine route.

When anybody ever said anything to W.R. about me, he would be ready to kill them. He didn't care about himself, but he wouldn't take anything about me. He really stuck up for me.

I think he liked me.

We used to play singles at tennis and go swimming and yachting. When I caught a big fish, he helped me reel it in. He told everyone not to say that he helped me.

Everything seemed to jive [jibe] just right. We sort of liked the same things.

We sort of liked the same people, up to a point.

We used to play backgammon a lot, or gin rummy.

W.R. didn't like bridge. He thought it was stupid game, because the partners always argued. We used to play Monopoly [patented in 1935]. I always used to win that, and he said I knew more about real estate than he did.

PP/KSM: *In* Time *magazine, August 1, 1955, an article under Real Estate, headed "Tycoon Davies," read: "A onetime Hollywood queen and a longtime friend and helpmate of newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst last week talked about her 'current consuming interest': real estate. Said Marion Davies, now fiftyish [fifty-eight in 1955], 'Land is the most important thing in the world because it's God-given, and should be developed.'*

"Her most recent action proving her words is the purchase of Palm Springs' $2,000,000 Desert Inn . . .

"Her reasons for buying were not always dictated by potential profits. 'I went on a house-buying spree one day, bought about eight houses in one day. I don't know why I did it; I didn't like most of them.' But she likes the comparatively small 27-room house in Beverly Hills [at 1007 N. Beverly Drive] that she now lives in . . .

". . . she tore down some old brownstones at 57th Street and Park Avenue in Manhattan that were bringing her $8,000 a year, got the Tishman Realty and Construction Company to put up and lease the 22-story, aluminum-sheathed Davies Building. It pays her about $120,000 a year. Down came a block of flats on her property at 55th Street and Madison Avenue, and now a-building is the 17-story Douras Building, named for her father, onetime Manhattan Judge Barney [Bernard] Douras, which will bring her about $50,000 a year. By improving property she owns on 57th Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, she added still more to her revenues, bought control of Fifth Avenue's Squibb Building. Still to come are improvement of two pieces of property in Los Angeles near the 'Miracle Mile' [on Wilshire Boulevard] and development of residential acreage in Bel Air, Beverly Hills and Santa Monica.

"Marion appreciates the talents of her lawyers, whose guidance has helped her earn an estimated annual income of $400,000 a year from real estate.

"Lawyer Arnold Grant [of New York] estimated last week that 'she could liquidate for spot cash right now for $12 million or $13 million, I suppose. If these holdings were mine, I wouldn't sell for $20 million.'"

MD: Now, every organization needs a leader, and I was wondering why things at the [Hearst] papers were going so haywire. When they would come up against the smallest kind of a snag, they immediately would flock to W.R., and he would have to solve their problems.

Right to the bitter end [in 1951], they bothered him day and night. They were being paid excessive salaries and he wanted them to make the decisions, but they were not equal to it. Some of them might have been afraid their decisions would be wrong, but if they knew they were right, they should not have run to W.R. and bothered him. I thought, They are being paid—to use *his* brains?

These were editors and publishers themselves, and they would run to him all the time. Bill Curley [W. A. Curley] ran the most successful paper in the whole institution, the *Journal* [as of 1937 the *New York Journal-American*], but now that he's not working on it, it's brainless. He never bothered W.R.

Mr. Campbell ran the *Herald* beautifully, and Mr. Hearst only met him once. There [in Jack Campbell's situation] was the difference between a good editor and a bad one. Mr. [Richard] Carrington used to say, "This [the *Los Angeles* Examiner] happens to be the pet paper of Mr. Hearst, and therefore I have to be very careful." I thought he should have used his own mind occasionally, but he didn't have one.

PP/KSM: *John B. T. Campbell was the managing editor of the* Los Angeles Herald-Express. *Carrington worked in Baltimore.*

TC: Dick Carrington had moved from W.R.'s *Oakland Post-Enquirer* in the 1930s to Los Angeles, there to become publisher of the morning paper, the *Examiner*. If he'd ever worked in Baltimore it was much earlier in his

career. Despite Marion's low opinion of him, Carrington was one of the executives named as a trustee in W.R.'s will.

MD: Some of his editors went haywire. They tried sensational stuff, and people don't like that all the time, especially when the papers go into the home and the youngsters see them. Like the Tallulah Bankhead diary. That was nice stuff for the kids [meant sardonically, regarding the scandalized "youngsters"].

W.R. wouldn't allow that.

Then John Hanes [the former Undersecretary of the Treasury] came in, but he never took over [the Hearst Corporation]. Of course nobody could tell W.R. what to do. If they tried to, that was the time for him to go forward. Mr. Berlin [Richard Berlin, head of Hearst Magazines] would say, "Now don't buy so many antiques."

And W.R. would say, "What's that got to do with the price of eggs?"—he got that phrase from me—and that would stop them.

And things would go on just the way they were.

But they [the Hearst executives] were not running things properly, and they wanted to blame it on him. It was up to them to run the organization as they were supposed to, not to bother W.R. They promised me they would never give him any bad news. But then I should never have gone to sleep [during the deathwatch in Beverly Hills in 1951], because they got to him, even when I asked them not to.

Their running to him accomplished nothing, because he'd say, "I'm paying you to work. Why do you bring your problems to me?"

Especially the financial problems. Mr. Hearst was not financially minded at all. He didn't care anything about money, and he wasn't interested in the finances. He'd say something like, "If you can't do it, I'll have to get somebody else." Not those words, exactly, because W.R. was very kind, but that was what he meant. Then they would get panicky.

Of all the opposition papers, the one he admired most was the Los Angeles *Times*. That was the prime one. He thought the Los Angeles *Mirror* [likewise a Chandler paper, launched in 1948] would go way

ahead, like the *Daily News* in New York, because there isn't a town in the United States that doesn't like at least one tabloid. He wanted a tabloid himself, but they kept talking against it.

TC: W.R. had had a tabloid in the *New York Daily Mirror* since the 1920s, a second-place rival to the Patterson-owned *New York Daily News*. His morning paper in Boston—the *Daily Record*—was also at one time a tabloid.

MD: Now I can't really talk about it, but just between us [between the interviewer Stanley Flink and Marion], W.R. owned the Los Angeles *Daily News*. They used to call it the Los Angeles *Option* in their conversations, but W.R. owned fifty-one per cent. There was something about one newspaper owner not being allowed to have more than two newspapers in one town. Three is bad luck.

TC: Hearst had three papers in New York for more than a decade, right up until the merger of his morning *New York American* and his evening *New York Journal* in 1937; the third paper was the morning tabloid, the *Daily Mirror*.

MD: The idea of the tabloid was to protect the Los Angeles *Herald-Express* [the evening paper, as distinct from the morning *Examiner*]. But I don't think it worked. In the first place, the *Daily News* wasn't really a tabloid. It was in-between. They call it a three-quarters or a bastard paper.

W.R. never touched it; he just owned it. That was a military secret, but Manchester Boddy [who'd taken over from the founder, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr.] knew it, and so did Mr. Robert Smith, the editor, who was later the publisher.

TC: "In February 1951, Boddy formalized what had been fact for so long. He had the board of directors name Robert Smith president of the *Daily News*. Boddy continued with the title of editor and publisher, and now chairman of the board. He owned eighty-nine percent of the stock in the Daily News Corporation, but he gave up his office to Smith and left for Descanso Gardens [his residence near Glendale] full-time." Rob Leicester Wagner, *Red Ink White Lies: The Rise and Fall of Los Angeles Newspapers 1920–1962* (Upland, California 2000), p. 269.

MD: Money went into a new press and other things. They wanted it to hang on as protection for the *Herald*, but I failed to see the point. If anybody had bought the *News*, I suppose it would have hurt both the *Mirror* and the *Herald*. Any more competition might have affected the evening papers, but not so much the morning papers. He [W.R.] said he had control of it as a shield to protect the evening papers.

In a way, it was a kindly gesture toward Mr. [Norman] Chandler.

TC: Chandler was the son of Harry Chandler, who had died in 1944.

PP/KSM: *Some years earlier, Mr. Harry Chandler had made a kindly gesture to Mr. Hearst. When W.R. had financial problems and mortgaged San Simeon, it was through a bank controlled by the Chandler family that the money was obtained.*

Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., was the original publisher of the Los Angeles Illustrated Daily News*, which first appeared on green paper on September 3, 1923. After W.R.'s effort to keep the paper alive, a San Diego publisher, Clinton D. McKinnon, made a fresh effort in 1949, but on December 17, 1954, the* Daily News *tabloid, Sunset Edition, carried its own obituary.*

Within ten years of W.R.'s death [in 1951], Los Angeles was a two-newspaper town. The Times *had closed its afternoon* Mirror*, and the* Herald-Express *was merged with the* Examiner *to become the* Herald-Examiner *[in 1962 to be exact]. The simultaneity of these changes would arouse some judicial interest for antitrust proceedings, but no charges were brought. The Chandler organization's* Los Angeles Times *now dominates the morning paper field, and Hearst's strike-ravaged* Herald-Examiner *has little opposition in the barren afternoon.*

TC: Harry Chandler's "kindly gesture" toward Hearst (of a loan purportedly for $600,000, guaranteed by the munificence of San Simeon) is a twisted, highly wishful tale that *Time* magazine trumpeted in its issue of March 13, 1939, under the front-cover heading of "Dusk at Santa Monica," pp. 49-56. The story has thus gained much currency, right down to the present day in L.A. and Chandler lore. A recent public-television special on the Chandlers and their dynasty softened the usual wording considerably when it came time—as it inevitably did—to include the Hearst yarn of 1939. And thus this updated question: if there's any truth to the story, might it pertain to

Hearst's Piedmont Land & Cattle Co., which conceivably could have borrowed $600,000, using the Hearst San Simeon Ranch as collateral?

MD: Not that he [W.R.] was afraid of anybody, but he didn't want an outside influence to come in and pick up that paper, the Los Angeles *Daily News*, which was a lame duck. And there was a threat from Marshall Field [owner of the *Chicago Sun*]. I knew him, and he didn't use very nice tactics.

W.R. thought the Chicago *Tribune* and the New York *Daily News* were maybe the two best papers in the country. He owned the New York daily *Mirror*, and that one was doing all right. In Chicago he owned the *Herald-American*, and they couldn't get it straightened out [after its in-company merger in 1939].

Well, the Hearst Corporation would have a meeting every three months, and they would discuss things like the printing and new presses and color and those sorts of things. They always wanted to improve things. Like the Sunday supplements.

But it would cost ten million dollars for new color presses, and they had just paid ten million dollars for a new black-and-white press. They just didn't have the foresight to think of color and rotogravures.

I was always very nice to Mr. Hearst's boys, and we got along fine until the night that Mr. Hearst died [August 14, 1951].

I imagine they thought he had changed his will, and that was why it started [the animosity]. George and John weren't there [in Beverly Hills], and Randolph was somewhere but not in the house.

David and Bill were right in the office that night. It was pretty awful. They didn't know what they were talking about.

David [assistant publisher of the *Los Angeles Herald-Express*] said to me, "You trying to run the papers?"

I said, "No."

He said, "Who ordered that?" He showed me the third page of the Los Angeles *Examiner*, where there was a story about a children's party at the Mocambo [a nightclub on Sunset Boulevard].

I said, "Your father ordered it."

"I don't believe it. You're trying to run the papers."

"Look—I don't want to run the papers, for God's sake. All I am is a messenger boy. W.R. orders a thing, and I have to telephone it. If you have any objections, go in and talk to your father."

This was just before Mr. Hearst died. There had been a party for poor kids who didn't have homes or any place to go. I had contributed some money for it, and Hopalong Cassidy was there, and I thought it was all right. Mr. Hearst had ordered page three, the whole page, for the story, and David was blaming it on me. He said that I was trying to monopolize the paper for my own publicity. Well, maybe he was trying to put on an act. I never heard of anything sillier.

PP/KSM: *[Cassidy was the] Western actor William Boyd.*

MD: I think it was just kind of a stirring up of a feud that was beginning. They knew that something was happening upstairs; otherwise they wouldn't have dared to talk to me the way they did. They were taking the chance that I wouldn't talk to W.R. In fact, they knew I wouldn't. I never had. But this was brutal.

I left the room. Maybe they thought I was going upstairs, but I went in the living room and cried my eyes out. When I came back, Bill said, "I think you've gone a little bit too far."

I thought it was an act [on his part]. I said, "All right . . . if I've done anything wrong, I'm sorry. I'm just a messenger boy for your father, and I don't know anything about the newspaper business."

David said, "He's got secretaries."

I said yes, "But lots of times the secretaries are asleep, in the middle of the night," which was true. At three or four in the morning he'd say, "Would you call up the *Examiner* and say that I don't like the crossword puzzle . . ." He'd pick out everything, and I'd call and say I was talking for Mr. Hearst.

It was absolutely preposterous. I was no newspaperwoman. I wasn't even an actress, though I had intended to be one.

Yet, I liked to think that W.R. was at his happiest when he was with me. That's a very conceited thing to say, but we always did have a

good time. I'd be sewing, he'd be working. I'd be reading, he'd be working. We'd have an occasional conversation. With a great long friendship, and love, you don't have to talk. You are perfectly contented to know that somebody's just there. That means a lot, that complete tranquility.

He would say, "I know you are young, and wild, and want to have a good time. But I'm tired of so many people. Why don't you try to quiet down? Read a book or sew or do something."

I said that was all right, but it was awfully difficult for me at first, especially at the beach house. But once it was conquered, I couldn't lose it. I had stopped making motion pictures. I tried to follow his idea, but I was like a pony or a horse that has not been quite trained. There were still newspapermen and guests around, and relatives. It wasn't easy to relax, but gradually I got the hang of it. There really never was a moment's peace with all the comings and goings, in and out, all the time.

The night before he died, there were blazing lights in the hall, and everybody was talking at the top of their lungs. He had no chance to rest. I was furious; I went out and asked them to go downstairs.

Right to the last moment, W.R. was tortured with people. He wanted to lead a quiet, peaceful life, but we only had it for a little while. A very little while.

There were seven nurses [in Beverly Hills], and they got officious and said, "You must do this." The newspapermen came, and there was no way to avoid them. I had no way to help him.

We were at San Simeon [in 1947] and he had had a slight attack. Not a heart attack, but indigestion. He had eaten too much. The altitude was too high at San Simeon. It was only 2700 feet [on the hilltop: actually 1,600 feet], but it was bad for his heart. Now, you don't feel any heart trouble until you're over 5000 feet, but we went for that corny idea and moved to Beverly Hills. Then it was quiet, for a while, for three months.

Then one night we had strange nurses in the house [on N. Beverly Drive], and from then on everything was chaos. The nurse who slept in his room snored, and he couldn't sleep.

MD: When we were back at San Simeon [as of November 1944], I had my room in House A [Casa del Mar], and he had his room over on the other [south] side. Through the door lattice, I could see that his lights were always on, all night long. I'd walk in and say, "Are you going to bed or are you not?"

He'd say yes.

I'd say, "Turn the lights off."

Well, half an hour later he would still be writing or playing solitaire or thinking. There were millions of things for him to do, and he had a fantastic mind. Yet he was so human.

His feeling for people was so strong. And he was kind. He was depicted as a strong, masterful character who made hard bargains, yet he never made any negotiations at all. He never cared about money. He was no bargainer.

The studio [MGM] made all the film deals. If the question would come up where L[ouis] B. Mayer might say, "I think this is too much," W.R. would say, I'll pay more out of my own pocket." That was a good quality. I loved that quality. But it could be dangerous sometimes.

I like generous people. I was acquainted with one for thirty-two years [1919–1951], so I can appreciate them. Generosity is a very rare, rare gift. You can never tell who is a generous person. We're always on the outside; we never really know.

TC: Marion met W.R. earlier in the 1910s than 1919—possibly as early as 1914, thought Hedda Hopper, whose memory was much better than average among Hearstiana writers. See for instance her second of two autobiographies, *The Whole Truth and Nothing But* (New York 1963), p. 185. The Hopper account errs in giving Marion's age as fourteen in 1914 but otherwise is closely on target, as noted in Chapter 1 of this new compilation.

MD: W.R. didn't believe in canned charity. He believed in personal action. He gave millions to the Red Cross and the Community Chest and the Knights of Columbus, but he felt the personal way was better. You could be sure of it, without the percentage taken off.

One of W.R.'s pet projects was the University of California, up in San Francisco [or rather Berkeley]. His mother had had something to do with it, and he gave them huge sums of money, as his mother had.

[Sidebar, p. 253 in *The Times We Had*: "A Love Affair in Telegrams"]

PP/KSM: *Over the years, Marion received hundreds of wires from W. R. Here are excerpts from some of them [as showcased in the "Love Affair" sidebar]:*

May 8, 1918, from Mount Clemens, Michigan:

> "I will come to New York and spoil your parties . . ."

May 15, 1918:

> "Develop your talents . . . you can do it if you want."

*August 2, 1923, from San Simeon, after reviewers praised one of her films [*When Knighthood Was in Flower*]:*

> "I knew your genius would be recognized."

May 18, 1928, from La Junta, California:

> "We never know how many more years we have . . ."

April 23, 1929, en route to New York from Albuquerque, New Mexico:

> "Dusty California is the Eden of the world. . . . Adam had to leave Eve behind."

May 29, 1929, from Albany, New York, after trying to reach Marion by phone:

> " . . . but operator could not find you. Where were you? Explanations are in order."

*November 22, 1930. W.R. and Marion had returned from Europe. W.R. remained in New York, while Marion hurried back to California to work on a movie [*The Bachelor Father*]. She didn't stay long because W.R. telexed to her:*

"Patient is on the blink . . . [bring] your nurse's uniform."

TC: Regarding the entry from 1928, there's a La Junta, Colorado, and a La Quinta, California, but not a La Junta, California.

MD: W.R. became interested in the Lawrenceville school [near Princeton, New Jersey]. He had met a Dr. [Thornwell] Jacobs from there [actually from Ogelthorpe University in Atlanta, Georgia], a nice old gentleman who came to visit at San Simeon [in the early 1930s].

TC: Another conflation is afoot here. At least one of Hearst's sons attended the Lawrenceville School. The other institution—Ogelthorpe—was the recipient of generous funds from Hearst and was also the school that bestowed on him a Doctor of Laws degree in 1927. As partly noted in Chapter 13, Hearst delivered a special baccalaureate address in Atlanta on May 22 that year, "Original Proposal for Anglo-American Understanding."

MD: There were really a lot of schools around the country that he gave money to. I never checked, but it must have been millions, and I know there were a lot of them.

From San Simeon we'd go to the church in Cambria [ten miles south]. We didn't go all the time, but we did for funerals, and there were lots of those. At first there was a tiny church [the Santa Rosa Catholic Chapel] where we went on Sundays, and W.R. would look around.

The next time it wasn't the same. It was enlarged, had heating in it, and a new organ. I said, "Things must be picking up in Cambria."

It had been maybe three months since the last time. Afterwards we stopped to talk to the priest. He was Irish, and with his brogue I couldn't understand a word. But I suspected something when I heard him say, "You're a fine man, Mr. Hearst . . ." And, of course, I found

out that W.R. had had the whole little church fixed over. He hadn't said a word to anybody.

W.R. should have been an architect, but he would have been terribly expensive for anybody. He was always changing things. But he just lived for plans, and anytime you wanted to find him, he would be in the architect's office [behind Casa Grande]. It was that way at San Simeon.

When there was the atom bomb scare [in 1945], W.R. wasn't worried about himself. He had a bomb shelter built downstairs because he was worried about me. This was at [1700] Lexington Road [in Beverly Hills], but he wasn't satisfied with only that one; he had another put into the garage.

Later, I had that bomb shelter knocked out of the garage. It was the only garage I had, and it only held one car. The bomb shelter in the basement became a storeroom. That was all right.

W.R. was going to build another bomb shelter on the side of the hill. The first thing you were supposed to do was throw yourself under the bed and not get near a window. Then the next thing was to run downstairs and turn the pilot lights off. How could you do all those things and still run to your bomb shelter? Besides, I said, "Where are we going to put the cars?" So on that question he had garages built for six cars.

TC: This last paragraph pertains either to San Simeon or more likely to the Beverly House (1007 N. Beverly Drive in Beverly Hills). The "garages built for six cars" precludes its being 1700 Lexington Road.

MD: W.R. thought we were going to be bombed, but I said, "What's the use of worrying about it?" He wanted to be prepared. But I thought the best thing to do was to jump under the bed. He didn't. He went to all the expense of building bomb shelters, with bathrooms —but no windows or anything pretty—and they have never been used.