

ISCHUA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MACHIAS MAN GEORGE BURT GREETS VET WHO WORE PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S SHOES

Ellicottville Herald -- January 10th, 1934

Mr. [George Burt](#) of Machias, had the unique experience the other day of holding in his hands one of President Roosevelt's shoes and shaking hands with the World War veteran who called on the President recently and walked out of the White House with the President's shoes on.

The veteran was a drifter, not quite down to the tramp stage and yet not far from it. He wandered into this section one night recently and was put up for the night at the County Home.

The next day he appeared at the Machias Junction Depot when Mr. Burt was on duty and asked about the trains. During the conversation he asked Mr. Burt if he wanted to see the contents of the box which he was bearing. He carefully unwrapped it to disclose his own picture and that of President Roosevelt that was framed and a pair of worn shoes.

A few weeks ago this veteran called on the President at the White House. During the interview President Roosevelt noticed the shabby condition of his caller's shoes and he changed with him then and there. All the big newspapers carried this touching incident, disclosing the deep and sympathetic humanity of our President. Perhaps many readers remember the incident.

The veteran, whose name was not remembered, wore the shoes for a while, but decided they were too valuable a souvenir to be worn out and discarded. Now he treasures them and has along on his journey, his sole possessions being the contents of his pockets and this treasured box with the pictures and shoes.

Always ready to ask why, your editor questioned the fact that an obscure veteran could obtain audience with the highest and busiest executive of the country. I was told that is one of the privileges of veterans who have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, to be granted an interview with the President of the United States whenever it is requested, no matter how insignificant the soldier's rank may be.

Submitted by William Watkins, Deputy Historian of Machias.