

HARDING, WARREN G.

U.S. elnök



Harris & Ewing

PASSION

*Presidential philandering through history
with Warren Harding*

PRESIDENTIAL PASSION

As students of past chief executives can testify, Presidential philandering did not begin with Judith Campbell Exner and John Kennedy. Locked until 2014 in the vaults of the Library of Congress is a trove of letters that offers an intimate glimpse at one White House resident, Warren G. Harding, conducting an affair.

During Harding's undistinguished administration that began in 1921, the President had a mistress in his home state of Ohio. Over forty years later, historical writer Francis Russell found Harding's love letters while in Harding's hometown researching a biography of him. Russell gave the letters to the state historical society but a lawsuit brought by Harding's nephew prevented him from quoting the letters in his book, *Shadow of Bloomington Grove*. Before the letters were locked up, however, a number of people saw Harding's billets-doux and one Easter morning missive provides a sample of the presidential passion the world will have to wait thirty-eight years to read in its entirety.

"Carrie Darling, Sweetheart Adorable," Harding began his letter to Mrs. Carrie Phillips. "There! You see my mood in the opening words. I penned them because they express my exact feelings. . . I wanted to kiss you out of your reserve—a thousand of them, wistful, wild, wet and wandering, and I wanted you to kiss as only you can. God! I find my heart hurrying at the thought. And I wanted to feast my eyes, to intoxicate them in glorious breasts and matchless curves and exquisite shapeliness. . . How I would revel in your matchless charms. I'd pet. And coddle and kiss and fondle and admire and adore, utterly impatient until I made you the sweetest and purest and darlingest wanton.

"There is one engulfing, enthralling rule of love, the song of your whole being which is a bit sweeter—'Oh Warren! Oh Warren!'—when your body quivers with divine paroxysms and your soul hovers for flight with mine."

Biographer Russell was apparently not overwhelmed by the lyrical quality of Harding's love letters. "Compared to what is available today at any drugstore rack, Harding's eroticism as expressed in his letters is naive, and even pathetic as the quality of his mind peeps through the boudoir phrases," writes Russell in his book. "In his sexuality (Harding) was Adolphe rather than Don Juan."

