

TAFT DENIES BUTT WENT ON MISSION TO THANK PONTIFF

Washington Times

Monday 22 April 1912

President Sends Letter to Tennessean Explaining Trip of Military Aide

President Taft today denied Major Archibald Butt was returning from a mission to Rome when he went to his death on the luckless Tiatnic.

The denial is contained in a letter written at the President's order by Secretary Hilles and disposes of the rumors that the military aide was sent to the Vatican to thank the Pope for creating three new American cardinals and that he was bringing important letters back with him when he was drowned.

Mr. Hilles' letter, which was addressed to William J. Oliver, of Knoxville, Tenn., is in part as follows:

"Them is absolutely no truth in the report that Major Butt was on a mission to Rome. The sole object of his trip was to get the benefit of the long sea voyage, and in order to add to the interest of the trip, the President save him a number of formal notes of introduction to personages in Rome, whom he knew. None of the letters contained more than a formal introduction."

Courtesy of Mark Baber

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