

He Walked With Kings—

SHADOWS OF THE GREAT

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Chapter IX THE PRINCE I KNEW Present King George. Then Prince of Wales, spans present Prince—latter's thoughtfulness Provides best Coronation Present for King George—Prince of Wales insulted at Berlin. In 1913—Kitchener... settles dispute between Prince and Prime Minister.

Volumes have been written about His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. His famous tours have been recorded and nearly everybody has had an opportunity of seeing his all-winning smile.

"I do not propose to add to this miscellany but simply want to record His Royal Highness upon whom I have personally waited, whom I have a few hitherto untold stories about guarded before, after and during the war.

My earliest experience with the Prince was, I am afraid, an unpleasant one for him. It was in King Edward's days and I had been ordered to act as a guard to his father, then Prince of Wales, when he was visiting London.

I presented myself at Marlborough House well before the then Prince of Wales was due to start and was just in time to witness a little comedy—I am afraid it was no comedy for our present Prince.

The morning had been wet and the little Prince was recovering from a severe chest cold. He had asked his mother's permission to go out in the garden and play and she, in view of the fact that the grass was wet and realising the danger to his chest, refused him permission. Then the Prince went into the room where his father was sitting writing. He settled himself down before the fire and presently asked his father if he might go out and play.

His father, not knowing that his mother had already refused him permission, took a look out, saw that it was fine, and said he might.

The Queen saw him playing in the garden and came to him asking what he meant by disobeying.

"Dad said I might!" said the Prince at once.

The Queen went straight to the King—who was then Prince of Wales of course—and explained the position. Our present King sent for the Prince at once, gave him a stern "talking to", then lifted him up over his knee and gave him a sound spanking. The Prince howled dismally as any other little disobedient boy would under similar circumstances, but he soon forgot it and before I left in attendance upon his father I saw him proudly showing Princess Mary a new set of mounted soldier's his grandfather had given him the day before.

The next time I came into contact with him was during King Edward's last illness. The late King was tremendously fond of his little grandson and my heart was touched when I saw him being taken from the royal bed chamber.

Young though he was, he realized that his grandfather was very, very ill; his tears welled in his eyes.

Prince takes blame in Cocoa Theft At the late King's funeral I was specially chosen to guard the Kaiser. I saw little of our Prince then, but afterwards, when the arrangements were being made for the coronation, I noticed him frequently.

One episode remains in my memory. The young Prince was in the chair, so to speak at a solemn conference of his brothers and sisters in the nursery. They were deciding no less a question than the coronation present they were to give their daddy.

All sorts of suggestions were put forward but finally the Prince carried the day with his idea. He had set himself to find some article of beauty worthy of the occasion and at the same time something useful, something that his father would use often.

He knew that at eleven o'clock every morning the King had a tureen of turtle soup taken to his room. The Prince's proposal, eventually carried, was that the children should club together and present the King with a golden soup tureen with a crown engraved on it or imposed near the top with the proper initials engraved upon it.

This children did. It must be remembered that they had only a very limited amount of pocket money. The Queen, who had herself been very rigorously brought up, was a firm believer in teaching

her children the value of money. She only allowed them a little pocket money. The gold tureen's cost meant weeks of scrimping economy but, despite the fact that the Prince knew that there was now no indulgent grandfather to replenish the "ways and means" department in princely manner, surreptitiously, as the late King often did, he was ready to make the sacrifice. Nothing was too good for his daddy upon this great occasion.

The tureen was purchased and duly presented. I saw the King immediately after he received it. He was more than pleased. He was



Mr. Lloyd George, then chancellor of the exchequer, with his daughter Megan and the late Mr. C. F. G. Maitland, in 1910, followed by the author.

deeply touched, because this was a spontaneous gift, nobody had given them the idea, and in order to make his great appreciation he gave an order which has since been rigorously carried out, that no other vessel than that golden tureen should ever be used to bring up his eleven o'clock soup.

No matter where the King is, that tureen accompanies him and is used at eleven o'clock each morning.

The Prince is exceedingly loyal, he would never allow anybody to be blamed for his faults.

Every evening before he retires to bed the King has a cup of cocoa brought up to his ante-room. One night the King was engaged with a minister and I was waiting expecting to accompany the King to the French Embassy. The Prince wanted to see him about something and he waited in the ante-room until his father should be at liberty. Meanwhile the cocoa which had been brought, was getting cold.

"He'll never want that tonight," said the Prince. "I'll drink it," and he took the cup from the servant and drained it.

He had no sooner done so than Sir Edward Grey came out, and a moment later the King called his valet and asked for the cocoa!

The valet mumbled something about thinking the King did not require it and stated that he had drunk it himself and would immediately get more. The King began to rebuke him but instantly the Prince went into his room and confessed that he was the culprit.

"Then you may have the privilege," said the King, "of going personally to the kitchen and getting me another." The Prince, with a grin, obeyed immediately.

The Prince's Last German Visit One night when the Court was at Balmoral the young Prince gave everybody a scare. He had gone for a day's fishing on the Dee and with that amazing skill which he was to demonstrate so well later on, he contrived to give his escort the slip. I searched hours for him but with no avail. I care not return to Balmoral without him so I telephoned every half hour to see if he had returned—he had not.

At last I ran him to earth in a tiny way-side hostelry, miles away, surrounded by admiring Highlanders. He was in his element, listening to tales of the days of old which had been handed down faithfully from generation to generation. He laughed uproariously when I told him of what a search I had had. Ultimately when we got back, I prepared a report showing that by misadventure we had missed our way. The Master of the Wardrobe took

my report with a wry smile and I presented it. "Very excellent," he said, "but I think I would put it in the fire if I were you. You are absolved."

Evidently the Prince, with characteristic honesty, had told exactly what had happened.

The next time I was brought intimately into association with him was when he went to Germany in March, 1913. It was a state visit and there were many parades and ceremonies. I had been strictly charged before I departed that I must keep an extra sharp eye on his movements because there was already

cheering and waving his hat. He was an old man with a white beard and he wore on his coat the two African medals and the Egyptian campaign medals. The Prince asked that he might be presented to him.

A German colonel went straightway to him. He turned out to be an English ex-soldier employed in a Berlin chemical works. The Prince said a few words to him and asked how he fared. The man replied that he was comfortable enough and thanked the Prince for his graciousness. Then, on impulse as it were, just before he went, when the Prince was shaking hands with him, he leaned forward and said in a hoarse whisper "We'll have them to fight. Your Highness, we'll have them to fight!"

The Prince smiled and bade him good-bye. I often wonder what happened to that man when war broke out.

After that I was not brought into personal contact with the Prince until war came.

He came to me just after the outbreak and said: "Woodhall, I am being gazetted to the Grenadiers and I'm going out to France. Someone, I understand, has to accompany me from your department so I'm asking for you!"

I thanked him and made ready to accompany him with the Expeditionary Force. Then a hitch arose. The Prime Minister told the King it was inadvisable for the Prince to go. The Prince was furious.

"I will go to Lord Kitchener," he said. "What good am I doing hanging about Chelsea Barracks?"

He went to Kitchener and later he came back and told me the result of his application.

"He told me," said the Prince, "to go back to my unit and learn something more about soldiering and then he'll let me go!"

Lord Kitchener was no respecter of persons. "Car Wrecked and Prince Missing! Later on of course he did go and I was attached to him in France. Although I have already mentioned some of them, all my experiences with His Royal Highness at the front cannot be dealt with at the end of an article but I will relate one or two more incidents.

In the first place it must be understood the Prince had to be specially protected and guarded. That was natural. But to a young man of the Prince's spirit it was equally natural that the restrictions imposed upon him were intolerable. He chafed under them continually.

Divisional Generals to whose care the Prince was entrusted were made responsible for his personal safety so very naturally they were taking no risks. But the Prince hated it all. He longed to be with his regiment in the trenches and when that was not allowed he sought a transfer to another division where he might find a more accommodating general. But they were all the same in insisting on precautions for his safety.

After patiently bearing the restrictions for a while the Prince rebelled. He knew perfectly well that I had to accompany him but he found ways and means of shaking me off.

I remember one day near Merville getting off with him one morning. He travelled in a staff car and made his way towards the front line. The shelling was heavy just in front and the driver had instructions not to approach beyond a stipulated point on the map. The Prince took matters into his own hands by taking the wheel.

In a road block he managed to separate the car from my following motorcycle and took another road. I followed the route he should have taken but after going several miles I did not come up with him. Inquiries of people coming the other way revealed no trace of our quarry so I knew he must of dodged into another road at the traffic block. Doubling back and going along the other road at the fork led me into a regular hail of long distance shelling. The road before me was impassable for a car. My heart was in my mouth. What if the Prince had fallen!

I lifted my machine over shell holes and wherever possible rode on. At last I came to the Prince's car—wreck on the road! Black misery filled my heart. I would have put a bullet through my head rather than go back and report what had happened. While I was searching the wretched car a cheery voice from some distance away called out.

Just before the train started the Prince noticed a man in civilian clothes standing behind the barrier

"Hello, Woodhall! They've done it this time, haven't they?" Crouching under a wall was the Prince. He had left the driver to attend two wounded men he saw in a wayside field, and while the car was deserted it was hit—a direct hit—by a shell.

The Prince laughed at the adventure but I was so shaken that it took all my energy to steer the motorcycle back with the Prince sitting pillion behind. The driver walked to the nearest transport depot.

CHAPTER X THE KING AMONG HIS TOMMIES

Scheme to Assassinate King George is Nipped in the Bud—King Decorates "Most Bibulous Old Beggar in the Battalion"—Why "Papa" Joffre Ate a Wineless Lunch—Bearing Horse Falls over Backwards on the King.

During the war His Majesty made several trips to France to visit Headquarters, hospitals and the battlefields. Needless to say these journeys were a source of very great responsibility to the general staff, and all concerned with his safety. Every humanly possible precaution was taken to ensure His Majesty's safety. Apart from the distinguished escort which always accompanied him, several Special Branch detectives were always attached to his person because, as is pretty generally known, northern France and Belgium swarmed with enemy spies; some of these were so fanatical that they would gladly risked their lives if they could have given the Central Powers the tremendous moral victory that the assassination of our Gracious King would have meant for them.

I was always glad when these journeys were over, they were sources of endless worry. There were nearly always some unpleasant accidents to mar them and there was at least one occasion when an assassination plot was defeated in the nick of time.

The King was staying at a chateau used as a temporary headquarters by Sir Douglas Haig. The British Commander-in-Chief was established on his famous train in a siding only a short distance from the chateau so the King dined and lunched there more than once.

The King's programme included visiting certain hospitals and reviewing certain Divisions of troops newly arrived in France but the day before a great review word came to the Inter-Allied Secret Service that there was obviously information of serious leakage. The enemy was getting more accurate information to movements of troops in the vicinity where the King intended to hold his review.

Special efforts were made to trace the leakage, among them, my trip to the suspected district, disguised as a French peasant making few independent enquiries. Spy hunting is more an instinct than an art. There are all sorts of subtleties which have to be used in the most distasteful work. It is not without sound reason that Secret Service men are often dubbed "Agents Provocateur".

I soon found an old Frenchwoman who seemed to be living more comfortably than the present hard circumstances warranted one in the battle area. I tried a bluff. Happening to know three signs used by the German Secret Service and known to most of the peasants, I gave them all to her. She appeared not to understand any, but strangely enough she made no move to express great indignation, or to expose me which, if she had been as simple as she seemed to be, she obviously would have done.

The King and Haig Disagree Instead of that she remained suspicious, distrustful. I told her the plans were being changed, repeated my message. She shook her head stupidly though she looked at me sharply and after several fruitless efforts to get her to acknowledge the code I begged her to give me a French soldier's uniform. She protested she had none.

With a threat to report her to "No. 8" the known designation of the German Secret Service controller in the area, I left her. But I hid myself near her cottage and waited.

After nightfall I saw her leave her cottage and make her way along a shell-hole path to a ruined church. She entered and I followed. I had two assistants at hand and as soon as the woman came out of the church again I had her arrested, leaving her with one man while I, accompanied by the other detective, made my way up the steps leading to the bell-tower.

The tower was partly demolished and the steps unsafe so great care had to be exercised lest one fell through a hole in the side or stepped into space. I neared the top. Twice I heard the hoot of an owl but I paid no attention to that thinking it was merely some night bird calling from its abode in the tower. I could see the stars above me, and was perhaps seven feet from the top when there was a deafening explosion right at my side. A split second later there was a flash followed by the hot burn of flame from a discharged

pistol six inches away from my face. I ducked like a nine-pin and grappled someone's legs.

Another shot was followed by a groan and the sound of someone falling. I gave a tug and the man, whoever he was came down on the stairs beside me. As he fell he must have caught his head on the stone stairs for he lay still a second and then began to move. I took the precaution of giving his head another bump and then struck a match.

I had no electric torch though my friend had. Lying under me he was an elderly grey-headed man bleeding freely from a head wound. He was unconscious. I called to my colleague, but there was no reply. I saw that my captive was safe for the time being and turned to look for my colleague. He was lying in a crumpled heap at the bottom of the stairs—dead, shot clean through the temple at a range of inches! I gave the pre-arranged signals on my whistle and soon there were a dozen soldiers searching the tower. We found a signalling apparatus and in the church crypt a telephone which we afterwards found and connected to the ruins of a mill two miles away.

The captured man's clothes revealed details of the King's movements for the next three days.

The spy was shot following court martial. That is the inner history of why the King's tour was suddenly changed!

I may be relating something new to my readers when I tell them that upon the King's first visit to the front, something approaching a serious disagreement occurred between the Commander-in-Chief and he. The King was determined to visit the front line trenches while the Commander-in-Chief was equally determined that he should not.

His Majesty vigorously insisted; it was not until General Haig pointed out that the King was a servant of the Cabinet at home, responsible to them, that he deferred, reluctantly.

Bibulous Vet Gets King's Watch Near St. Omar the King visited a hospital and chatted with some wounded soldiers. One old veteran, grizzled and obviously over military age, who had lost a leg and an arm, especially interested His Majesty.

"How old are you?" asked the King as he leaned over the bed. There were three high staff officer's standing near, and I stood behind his Majesty on the other side.

"Tell them fellows to go away and I'll tell ye, Your Majesty!" said the Tommy in a pronounced Irish brogue. The King smiled and waved the high officers back.

"When it comes to servin' your Majesty, Sor, I'm twenty-one. That's my age, Your Majesty!" he defiantly stated the grand old fellow, who was not a day under sixty.

The King's face twitched though he smiled. He put out a hand to take the remaining hand of his faithful soldier. As he did so tears coursed down the veteran's face.

"I've served your grandmother in Egypt, and India and in Africa. I've served your father, and I've tried to serve Your Majesty, and if it hadn't been that these varmint's have taken a wing and a leg off me I'd have served you in the next war too!" declared the old fellow in broken accents; then he grinned and tried to make a joke.

"I've only one regret Your Majesty," he said.

"What is that?" asked the King. "The spalpeens have taken the arm off the chap that had me watch on it!" The King with moist eyes joined in his laughter.

"Well we can soon put that right!" he said "Have mine!" and to the indescribable joy of the old warrior His Majesty took the gold wrist watch off his wrist and with his own hands



Wounded ex-soldier breaking ranks to shake hands with the King soon after the war was over.

fastened it on the wounded man's wrist. I saw the King chatting to Sir Arthur Wilson soon afterwards and was not a bit surprised later when I heard that Private McGuinness had been awarded the D. C. M.

"And," as Sir Henry Wilson said afterwards "He was, according to reports, the most bibulous old beggar in the battalion, but he was hard bitten. Good luck to him. I take my hat off to old Mac!"

An amusing incident that occurred on one of His Majesty's journeys, comes to mind. He was lunching on Marshal Haig's train, on which a distinguished company had gathered to meet him. There was Foch, Marshal Joffre, M. Poincare, the Prince of Wales, another French Minister and of course Sir Douglas and his staff.

As the King had taken the pledge for the duration of the war, there was no alcoholic liquor served.

Marshal Joffre is a jovial old gentleman and accustomed to his glass of vin rouge at lunch—I noticed as the soup and fish had been served the old marshal looked meaningly at the waiter behind him. The waiter brought him some orange drink which was waved aside with considerable emphasis.

Shortly afterwards I noticed him making signs to another waiter and this time I saw that Sir Douglas Haig had noticed the signal. Haig's eye twinkled.

"I think Marshal Joffre wants some bread!" he said to the waiter behind him and the waiter promptly offered a bread basket to "Papa" Joffre. But it was not bread the old French Commander wanted! Several times did he make signs but it was all unavailing. The King drew him aside into conversation and animatedly discussed in French something that had happened in Morocco.

The King is Eager Thrown Sir Phillip Sassoon? Sir Douglas Haig's secretary had noticed the little comedy and as soon as lunch was over he took Joffre to one side and explained the situation and at the same time offered him some refreshment in the next saloon.

But no, "Papa" Joffre was not going to have any surreptitious drinks behind corners! He pointed out very forcibly that we were fighting for freedom and that soil was France, thank God!

Perhaps the greatest thrill I ever had and certainly the most unpleasant was when His Majesty had his accident in France. I was deputed to attend him at an inspection of troops near Headquarters. Lunch was arranged that day for twelve o'clock on the train and, as it happened, I was looking forward eagerly to it.

I had orders the day before to accompany the Prince of Wales and had arranged for a motor cycle to ride after his car. At the last minute I was instructed to attach myself to his Majesty and had to change and secure a cha-ger. In the hurry I had no opportunity to snatch a bit of breakfast.

Now the charger which had been prepared for the King was a very mettlesome blood mare, a great favourite of Sir Douglas Haig's, and the same horse incidentally which was used as the model for the lovely equestrian statue of Haig in Edinburgh.

I am told she was a perfectly well trained animal but particularly attached to Haig and his right hand man; she was somewhat awkward for strangers to handle certainly requiring manipulation. The King mounted and beyond a little mettlesome curvetting she behaved quite well until the King rode onto the parade ground where the Divisions were lined up for inspection.

As the King's party appeared the "Present Arms!" order was given

and the drums roled in for the "Royal Salute."

At that moment the mare started to perform. She reared up on her hind feet and pawed the air. Now of course his Majesty is a good horseman and alone and in ordinary circumstances he would have ridden that in a second by taking his crop and administering a sharp rap between the ears which would have sent her down mighty quick!

But as it was the King was pre-occupied, he had a division of troops before him and he had brought his right hand to the "salute." Naturally enough, taken off guard, he put at the reins with his left hand. The ground was slippery and the sudden pull just overbalanced the mare and she came over backwards.

I shall never forget that moment a gasp of horror ascended from all over the place.

It was a terrible tableau. Just imagine it! The steady rank of troops presenting arms to their King, the drums rolling and the bands playing the Royal Salute and their was His Majesty prone on the mud with the kicking horse lying on top of him!

Instantly there was a rush from every direction, and the horse was soon pulled aside. We all braved a prayer of thankfulness that the flying hoofs had not struck the King, as he lay helpless. He was very badly bruised and shaken.

Immediately he was removed to a hospital. The Field X Ray apparatus was brought into operation to discover if there was any serious internal injury resulting. Happily there was not but the shaking was terrible and the bruising severe. The occasion sent a gloom over all the troops but it was a gloom mixed with deep thankfulness that the affair was not worse.

Then emerged the real King George! Almost his first words were of exoneration for the mare. He did not wish the horse to be blamed! How many of his lesser citizens could have risen to that!

He was brought down to the coast on the ordinary hospital train surrounded by his wounded Tommies and even then, suffering greatly, bruised throughout his body, his first thought was for others.

Lying opposite him was a poor fellow very badly wounded, but the King spoke words of cheer at I comforted him. He called his a te and ordered him to hand him a Military Medal. The aide did so and the King decorated the Tommy with the Military Medal as the train rolled along the coast.

Of course, except for preventing the machinations of enemy spies, the job of guarding the King in France was really a routine matter. One was always worried because the responsibility was so great, but I never moved without great preparation. He was always surrounded by a large entourage which minimized the fear of anything untoward happening.

THE END

The women who have been speculating in long skirts apparently have plenty of margin.

Some people get so used to being looked up to that they carry their pedestals around with them.

Occasionally a person who has banked on virtue as its own reward has found that it's a darn poor wage.

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