

# The Biography of His Majesty—KING GEORGE V.—By Major C. F. L. Kipling

## YOUNG PRINCE OF WALES CAUSES TURMOIL IN SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO GET TO FRONT LINE OF BATTLE

### CHAPTER 13

As action adds more worry to heavily burdened King who toils unceasingly to lighten suffering of his people who are cast in gloom as fearful toll is taken in titanic struggle.

(Lloyd George says, "There is one man who is working as hard as the hardest worked man in the country, and he is the Sovereign of the Realm.")

By Major C. F. L. Kipling (COPYRIGHT, 1930)

It is not for me to describe at any length or in detail the progress of the most terrible war the world has ever seen. Yet because he was the ruler of the British Empire every smallest aspect of that war was naturally of the greatest concern to King George. Generals and leaders had their own particular spheres of action, and in that action they found relief. Ministers of State were so busied with the conduct of the war that they too, had little time to think. But the King, standing aside from politics, standing aside from military or naval leadership, had to watch day by day and hour by hour the agony of his people, feeling that agony all the more keenly in that his nature is intensely sympathetic.

Yet it was equally characteristic of him that, once the time for talking was over, once there was no longer a shadow for meditation, he should set his lips, square his shoulders, and with dogged determination, decide to see it through, with the knowledge that his people were behind him. It was not for him as he resolved from the first, to interfere with the action of Ministers, but from the moment of the outbreak of the war, he was simply and unreservedly, at the disposal of the nation, ready to lead his

subjects and to share with his subjects whatever might be in store. On the 9th of August, the British Expeditionary Force landed at Boulogne. The King inspected the men before they left for France—the first of many similar inspections, which never lost their poignancy. The King shook the officers by the hand, congratulated them, wished them luck and those near him saw the tears standing in his eyes, as he bade farewell to that little force which was soon to earn the proud nickname of "Contemptible".

There is no need to tell here how England stood like a rock during those first weeks of war. But was it ever quite fully realized at the time—is it even realized now—England's good fortune in having at her head a King who was absolutely and resolutely English—a King who knew his Empire and had made himself beloved by it from end to end, so that his call to arms became a personal matter, a father summoning his sons to defend the home. A King, moreover, who had been so essentially a sailor and who understood the work of the Fleet from within. At the Admiralty he knew all that was passing and judged matters for himself, as an expert; he visited the Grand Fleet far more often than it was expedient should be known at the time, and few realize how often his advice was sought and followed in naval matters.

With regard to the military side, King George, naturally left things more completely to the soldiers, above all, to that great soldier, Lord Kitchener in whose name the new armies came into being, who from the very first, foresaw how far away the end would be in spite of the easy promises of lesser more selfconfident leaders.

### "England Expects Every Man—"

Yet, if the King did not visit the War office, he was kept in most constant touch with all that was passing with the armies in the field. Almost daily, the Chief of Staff, or the Director of Military Operations, would call to inform him of all that was happening, finding in the King a most eager student keen to learn and to be told, and to follow intelligently the whole course of operations. He constantly visited Aldershot, Salisbury Plain, and all the other training centres for the new armies and for the Colonial troops; he never spared himself in the effort to make all his soldiers realize that his thoughts and prayers were with them; no words could be more sincerely meant than those which he addressed to the soldiers going overseas:—"I have implicit faith in you, my soldiers. Duty is your watchword,

and I know your duty will be nobly done. I shall follow your every movement with deepest interest, and mark with eager satisfaction your daily progress; indeed, your welfare will never be absent from my thoughts. I pray God to guard you and bless you and bring you back victorious."

Like so many other fathers in the land, King George, too, had a young soldier in his home, aching and longing to be at the front. The Prince of Wales in his youthful enthusiasm was a gleam of brightness in those dreary days for his father. Having been gazetted Second-Lieutenant in the Grenadier Guards he bombarded everyone, from the King downwards, with questions as to how soon he could get "out there." He joined his battalion at Warley Barracks, and about five weeks later, when it was ordered to France, it was a most bitter disappointment to the Prince that he was not allowed to accompany it, since Lord Kitchener considered that such a step would be unwise. The Prince tried to persuade his father to reverse his verdict, but the King was adamant and, in any case, protested that he was powerless to question Lord Kitchener's decision.

Straight back to the War Office went the Prince, and once more tried to move the War Minister, protesting that it could not possibly matter if he were killed, since he had brothers who were quite fit to fill his place in such an event.

To which Lord Kitchener replied, that, if such was the only question, he might not think it right to oppose the Prince's will. But there was the chance that the heir to the throne might be taken prisoner, and there was plenty to do already without having such a business as that upon their hands.

### Prince Gets To France

For the moment, Lord Kitchener's will prevailed, but the Prince of Wales has a will of his own, too, and by continually sticking to the point, he actually succeeded in getting out to France within two months. Whilst the King must have fully understood and sympathized, it added another heavy burden to all that he was supporting already, when he knew that his eldest son was at the front, and often, in undoubted danger however much those around might try to guard him from the enemy—and his hatred of taking care.

What the King's family burdens and anxieties must have been, it is perhaps impertinent to try to estimate. Closely related as they were to most of the Royal Houses of Europe,

with connections everywhere, there was bound to be an added pain in so much that happened. And sometimes that pain came, though unintentionally, from his own people. To take a single case,—that of Prince Louis of Battenburg—it must have caused King George intense grief to see this relation of his own, his brave and loyal servant of his adopted country, this unrivalled naval leader, compelled by public opinion to resign his post, and subjected to such cruel and lying gossip.

All, or almost all, were busy in wartime, but the King's activities were so many that it would be absolutely impossible to enumerate them. He was one of the first to send an ambulance and a pair of his own horses, and made personal gifts at the very outset of the war of £200 to the Belgian Relief Fund, and £5000 to the Prince of Wales Fund. To give an idea of one minor thing that the King accomplished: between the outbreak and the end of the war, he had personally presented 50,649 war decorations to the serving men and women.

Lloyd George's tribute was a very real and unexaggerated one, when he said: "There is one man who is working as hard as the hardest-worked man in the country, and he is the Sovereign of the Realm."

### Live In Frugal Economy

From the beginning in homely as well as great matters, it seemed to the King and Queen expedient that they should set an example. Buckingham Palace during war time was a model for every household in frugal economy and prevention of all wastage, and that example meant much.

After breakfasting with the Queen and any of his children who were at the Palace, the King settled down to work—work which often did not end until far into the next morning. Breakfast itself was a very simple matter: china tea, toast, marmalade, and fish or eggs constituted that wartime meal. The forenoon was always taken up with various duties at the Palace, every quarter of an hour being mapped out, in order to get the maximum amount of work into the time at his disposal. First of all, the King received members of the household, then, towards eleven o'clock, all the London papers were brought to his study. In peacetime, he had often seen as many as thirty newspapers in a day, but in these strenuous war days they naturally had to be limited. Various articles were especially marked for the King's attention, but otherwise, as always the newspapers were entirely untouched and uncessored.

The morning's mail was also attended to with his secretaries before luncheon, and during the war that mail was extraordinarily heavy, for people wrote to King George from all over the world. Luncheon was at half-past one and the Royal Family were rationed by the King's express wish exactly like ordinary people. It was the simplest of meals, and was often taken by the King alone with the Queen, and after a very hurried fashion, since they were obliged to start immediately afterwards to visit munition factories, flying grounds, hospitals, and all the other centres of war activities. These visits were carried out regularly, day after day, and the fact that they so constantly saw their King and Queen amongst them did a great deal for the morale of both civilians and soldiers. All those around them in the Royal Household were amazed by the steady

perseverance of their Majesties in this perpetual round, for the strain was sometimes almost overwhelming, both physically and mentally. Tea was served at five o'clock, if the King and Queen were back in time, but they often did without this meal, and the King, returning home from some protracted inspection or visit to the troops, would go straight to his study and remain hard at work there until dinner-time.

### King Works Hard and Long

Only then, was there any relaxation; it was during this meal that the King heard what his children were doing and rather more personal matters were discussed. Yet even in the midst of his family, at these simple war-time dinners, the King was not free to be himself, to think of himself. Often important papers would be brought to him during the meal, and, after glancing through them, he would quietly leave the table, with an apology, and return to his study, work-work had been accomplished—a task which often lasted until far into the night, and beyond. "I make it a rule," he said to a member of his household—"never to leave anything over till the next day. If I did that, I should never get through the work at all."

It is difficult for those who were not actual eyewitnesses to realize the magnitude of that work. Even the purely clerical part of it, as done by the King's own hand, was colossal. For instance, every single list of promotions that went through was signed by the King's own hand, and there was much other routine work of the same kind, which could not be delegated to others. Yet even with all this burden of toil thrust upon him, King George retained his versatility and his wide knowledge of almost any and every subject. Lord Northcliffe once said

of His Majesty: "King George can talk on any subject for three minutes better than any man in the world. If he ever had four minutes at his disposal, no one knows what he might do." The great journalist showed a good deal of critical insight in that estimate, and such a gift is an invaluable one for kings, who must of necessity be all things to all men, in so far as is possible.

(Major Kipling discloses in the next chapter how the King of England, defying an unwritten law of nearly 200 years, visits his armies on the blood-soaked battlefields of France.)

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### BEAUTY ARTS

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Blond or ashen-blond hair needs washing with a pure mild soap such as liquid castile, olive oil or coconut oil shampoo mixture. Thorough rinsing in plenty of tepid water is very necessary. Dry between warm towels. Avoid artificial heat, as it is apt to make the hair dry and dull. An excellent shampoo and rinse for blond or ashen blond hair may be made as follows: Beat up the whites of two eggs and add one tablespoonful each of lemon juice, peroxide and rosemary water. To this mixture add one pint of warm water in which one scant teaspoonful of salts of tartar has been dissolved.

First wet the hair with warm water, apply a little of the mild liquid soap shampoo and lather thoroughly. Rinse out the soap lather. If the hair is exceptionally dirty or oily two or three latherings will be necessary. After the soap washing apply the egg mixture evenly over the hair and scalp using fingertips or a small brush for the purpose. Divide the hair into sections so that you may apply the special shampoo mixture evenly. Leave it on the hair about fifteen to twenty minutes and then rinse off with tepid water. Rinse thoroughly in several waters using tepid water with a little perfume added as the final rinse. Dry between warm towels.

If the hair is exceptionally dry the warm oil treatment may be used before giving this shampoo. A little white mineral oil or brilliantine may be sprayed on after the hair has been dried thoroughly, or a few drops may be put into the palms of the hands and then used to stroke the hair evenly all over. Then brush the hair for several minutes. Very little oil is necessary to give the hair a glossy appearance.

### Scalp Food

Once a week a scalp food or pomade may be used to massage the scalp and lubricate the dry type of hair. There is a useful transparent



pomade that will not darken the hair: Spermaceti, 1/2 ounce; castor oil, 1 ounce; Cologne water, 1 ounce; oil of Jasmine, 1/2 dram. Melt the spermaceti slowly and add the castor oil. Dissolves the oils in the cologne water and then add them slowly to the warmed spermaceti and castor oil. Place in a jar and allow it to cool.



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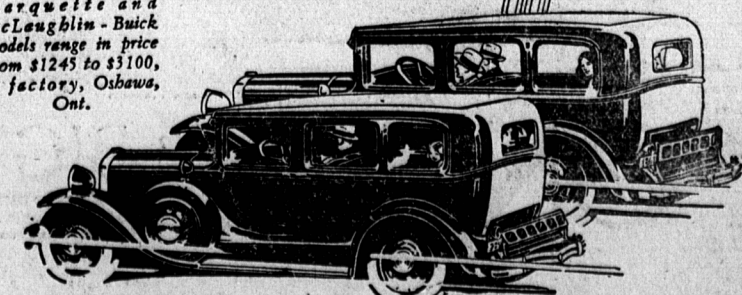
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