



# *What's Ahead for the WINDSORS?*

*The Coronation next month may mean for England's jobless ex-King a new career in which he can once again devote his training and talents to the service of his country. And it may mark the beginning of a new era for the most discussed couple in the world. Here is an intimate appraisal of the Duke and Duchess as they come to an important crossroad in their lives*

*by Roul Tunley*

**E**ARLY next month—June 2, to be exact—the world will take time out from its atom bombs, cold wars, and financial worries to re-live for a day all the jeweled delight of an old-fashioned fairy tale. This fairy tale will be all the more significant because it happens to be true. And it will be cherished because it may not happen again in our lifetime.

In short, a young Queen will be crowned in London.

Lords and ladies will bring out their ermines and coronets, visiting monarchs will arrive with precious gifts, and coaches as unbelievable as Cinderella's will be pulled through the streets of the cheering city. Inside the ancient abbey of Westminster, a ceremony solemn and dazzling will be celebrated exactly as it was in the time of Shakespeare and that other Elizabeth, "Good Queen Bess."

But, amid all the glitter and the pomp, the one man who would normally be expected to be the most important guest will not have a role to play.

The Duke of Windsor—himself the creator of an authentic fairy tale, and the symbol, along with his Duchess, of the greatest love story of our time—will, in effect, be refused participation in the ceremony. He may possibly be in London, taking a peek at the procession from a distant window, but the most colorful member of the British royal family will not take official part in any of the great spectacle, unless, of course, there is an unexpected, last-minute gesture by the Queen.

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- at the Paris embassy

climax a period of more than 16 years, in which he has been condemned, in effect, to permanent exile, 16 years in which for the most part he has been out of a job, 16 years in which his Duchess has not been officially received by his family.

Of course, the Duke and Duchess *could* go to the Coronation. No one would physically stop them. But the barriers for them are far more formidable than physical ones.

I think the reason they cannot attend is best summed up in a remark that was made not long ago in their apartment in New York when a friend asked them if they were planning to attend an important movie *première*.

"I believe we should go," said the Duchess, "only if we can slip in by the back door."

The Duke corrected her: "No, my dear, we mustn't go anywhere that we can't enter by the front door."

This offhand statement explains not only why the former Edward VIII and his wife, Wallis, will probably not participate in the Coronation; in a larger sense, it also explains why he abdicated the throne of England after the shortest reign in five centuries. For, although this controversial man is conceded by his friends to be stubborn, naïve, and impulsive, he is also frank, open, and straightforward. When his government objected to his insistence on a legal marriage with "the woman I love," he felt it his duty to resign a job he had held for only 325 days.

Whichever way you see it—whether you think he let his people down or believe he was the victim of a powerful clique that wanted to get rid of him—there is today a touch of pathos about "the man who had everything." Photographs indicate in his face the marks of sadness. Friends testify to it. And the Coronation of his favorite niece, Queen Elizabeth II—an occasion for family as

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well as national rejoicing—brings to mind the contrast more poignantly than ever.

To many of us, it seems only yesterday that we heard by radio the famous words of the King who announced to the world that he was giving up his throne for the woman he could not live without. Almost everybody felt a tingle down the spine. Some dabbed at their eyes over a gesture worthy of a Tristan, an Antony, or an Abelard. No man had ever given up more for love. It was indeed a fairy story come to life—all the more welcome in a harsh, modern world.

A few months ago, with the approaching Coronation attracting world-wide attention, it was only natural, I suppose, that millions of people, including myself, should have wondered about Britain's jobless former King who won't be there.

How did the fairy story work out? Did the Prince Charming and his loved one live happily ever afterward? What happens to a man who gives up "all for love"? What will the Coronation mean to him and to his wife?

**T**HESE questions burned in my mind until I started asking people, particularly those around the Duke and Duchess, the answers. Finally, and inevitably, my questioning took me to England, to Nassau, to New York, and to Maryland, where the Duchess was born.

My previous personal contact with them had been slight, but I had seen them often and followed their career closely and with interest.

One summer, a year or so ago, I crossed to Europe on the same ship with the Duke and Duchess. The ex-King's democratic touch worked wonders with everyone, from the swimming-pool attendant to the room steward. The Duchess was more reserved. On the other hand, it was impossible to escape the electricity of her vitality as soon as you got within range of it. On that same trip, we shared a coach on the boat train for Paris. The Duke was missing for a moment, and the Duchess was struggling with the luggage. I helped her put it up on the overhead rack. We chatted for a couple of minutes about France. I felt keenly her charm and the force of her personality.

Her voice, clipped and British that day on the boat train, was low-pitched and rippling, thoroughly compelling. She looked trim and chic in a tan herringbone suit, a satin blouse, and a close-fitting hat with feathers. "She's the very antithesis," as one friend said, "of the slovenly housewife." On the other hand, when the Duke joined us, he looked worn and tired. He wore a rust-colored tweed suit which he confessed was 20 years old.

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Neither one of this couple is currently available for formal interviews. The Duke has turned author himself (the first of his family to do so). He keeps his material for his own writings. But I found it possible to form a detailed picture of how the Duke and Duchess live, whom they see, and what they are thinking by talking to friends, associates, relatives, and servants. Most of these people necessarily must remain anonymous, for that is the only condition on which they would talk freely.

**W**HEN the Duke and Duchess were married 16 years ago, many cynics predicted that the "greatest romance of the century" would last but a year or two. And in the last few years gossip columns have reported that the Windsor idyl was on the rocks. These reports have never been substantiated. Even the most devoted couples have differences, and when people live as must the Windsors, in a goldfish bowl, they are apt to be magnified. The Duchess is a high-spirited, energetic woman who likes parties and people. The Duke is more shy and reserved. With the passage of years the ex-King has become increasingly quiet in his social life. He likes to sit by the fire with a book or newspaper. The Duchess's visits to night spots in New York have been reported in the press, not always too charitably. However, in private, with their guests about them, the Duke and Duchess give every evidence of being a happy, devoted couple.

They have confounded the cynics for more than 16 years, during most of which time they have been constantly together.

An obvious source of unhappiness for the Duke, of course, has been his treatment at the hands of his countrymen. Unwilling to live in his own land, where his wife is not received even by his own family, his exile is not only a physical but a spiritual one. A British diplomat told me: "I am careful to avoid going to a party where I might meet the Duke and Duchess. It would be embarrassing."

Since this occurs among officials of his native land wherever he travels, the Duke is constantly aware of his aloneness. This fact has not escaped the notice of the cafe society crowd, and there have been those who hope some of the glitter of a former monarch will rub off on them and have tried to capitalize on contacts with the Duke and Duchess.

But perhaps the Duke's greatest reason for unhappiness is that he is given nothing to do, a fact which mystifies many Americans—and Britons. He has asked repeatedly for a job, but his plea has been heeded only once.

He was given the post of Governor of the Bahamas in 1940. This position he

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acquitted with high satisfaction for over four years. In Nassau nearly everyone from the cab drivers to the legislative heads wants him back, but the powers that rule England have never given him another appointment. It has made no difference whether the Laborites or the Conservatives are in power. People thought he might get a break when his friend, Winston Churchill, became Prime Minister, and certainly when his niece took up the royal scepter. But so far the result has been the same—unemployment for the Duke.



More than once, he has publicly hinted he'd like to go to work. "I don't miss being King," he said recently, "but I do miss my country and working for it."

When it was rumored that he might be offered the post of Ambassador to the United States, he promptly declared: "I would certainly accept the ambassadorship if I thought it was in the interest of our two countries."

He makes no secret of the fact that he would like to be Ambassador here, or Governor General of Canada, or Governor in Southern Rhodesia, or, in fact, almost anywhere as long as he's kept busy.

Of course, he keeps occupied by throwing himself into a dozen activities—gardening, writing, traveling, playing golf—but these are not satisfactory substitutes for a man trained to play a world role in statecraft. For years, as Prince of Wales, he was known as "Britain's No. 1 Traveling Salesman." It was conceded throughout the world that he was excellent in the job. It has been a long time, however, since he's been given a chance to sell anything.

For a country that so obviously needs salesmen at the present time, it seems indefensible for Britain to keep such an able one out of work. I asked a man who

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recently had an important post in the British government the real reason for this.

"I could give you lots of reasons," he said, "but if you want the *real* one, you'll have to agree to keep me anonymous."

I agreed.

"Frankly, there are too many important people in England still opposed to the Duchess," he declared.

**BOTH** the Duchess and the Duke have been the victims of so much slander, on the one hand, and so highly romanticized, on the other, that it seems time for an appraisal to determine just what kind of people they really are.

Of the two, the Duchess seems by far the more controversial. It is almost 57 years since she was born Wallis Warfield in Baltimore. Her family background was impeccable and she can hold her own, genealogically speaking, with the Windsors themselves. But, although there was lots of social status in her family, there was little money. Her mother was widowed and took in boarders to make ends meet. She was an only daughter.

One of Wallis's early admirers said, "Her mother was the smartest woman I ever met. She had a mind like a steel trap." As a debutante, Wallis was not beautiful, but she more than made up for it by her wit, charm, and vitality. She had a wonderful sense of humor.

Her first serious beau, to whom she was unofficially engaged, told me, "She always did what she darn' pleased, and she seemed to delight in making a point of shocking me. Perhaps because I was a member of the old guard, so to speak."

To a girl-friend, she confided her ambition one day: "When I am married, I want to have a Buick and a bulldog."

"The best you'll ever have," said her friend, "is a Ford and a fox terrier."

(Wally was more prophetic than her friend. She left London in a big, black Buick, followed by a king. If the symbol of England is sometimes a bulldog, she certainly gained her ambition.)

She didn't have many dresses as a girl, but she was the kind of person, according to Patterson Pendleton, another early admirer, who could "put on a shirtwaist and skirt and look like a million dollars." She was very gay and had a strong, brisk, almost masculine directness.

In 1923, she married her first husband, a naval lieutenant, Earl Spencer. The marriage ended in divorce a few years later. Subsequently, in New York, she met Ernest Simpson, a Canadian. He married Wallis and took her to London to live. In 1931 she met the Prince of Wales at a house party. Quickly a friendship developed between them.

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On January 20, 1936, the Prince of Wales became King of England. His continuing friendship with Wally Simpson caused a crisis, especially when the King asked the government to consider the "possibility" of his marriage. Mrs. Simpson, meanwhile, had gotten a divorce.

On December 4 of that year, Prime Minister Baldwin made his first statement to the House of Commons about the matter, and the next day Mrs. Simpson went to the south of France. The same day, the King went to his home at Fort Belvedere, where he remained for the few days left of his reign. The government refused to sanction Mrs. Simpson's becoming queen, or even his morganatic wife. On his side, the King was equally steadfast. The deadlock broke December 11, when, after a five-hour conference with Baldwin, Edward VIII signed the instrument of abdication. The next night he left England.

He gave up an income of \$2,000,000 a year, one-quarter of the world's population as his subjects, and the rule of a domain on which (at that time) the sun never set—roughly, a quarter of the earth's land surface.

Lord Beaverbrook, a strong friend of the King and one of England's great press lords, said last year that "the King clearly intended to barter the threat of abdication against the government's acknowledgement of a morganatic marriage." His plan failed, largely because of the determined opposition of Baldwin; Dr. Cosmo Lang, the Archbishop of Canterbury; and certain segments of the press, particularly the powerful London *Times*, which reportedly undertook to turn public opinion (up to that time said to be favorable to the King) away from the marriage.

**O**FFICIALLY, the opposition was based on the fact that Wallis had been twice divorced. Actually, most of it stemmed from her unpopularity with certain members of the ruling clique.

But, despite that, friends of the couple have hoped that with the passing of time, with the upheaval of World War II, and with British dependence on American aid, there might be sympathy in government circles for an alliance between the King and an American, even a divorced one.

Also, as my informants pointed out, attitudes on divorce in England have been altered over the last few years. Anthony Eden was divorced and remarried not long ago, and did not have to give up his high post as Foreign Minister. Sir Ulick Alexander, Keeper of the Privy Purse for 16 years, married a divorcee in 1947 and was not asked to resign his appointment. Even the divorced movie

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actor, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., had the privilege of entertaining Queen Elizabeth II and her husband at dinner a few months ago. Elizabeth and Philip have also received actors Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh, although both of the latter were named as correspondents in divorces from their former partners.

The British law, moreover, makes a distinction between the guilty and the innocent in divorce cases. In both of the Duchess's divorces, she was "the innocent party."

In any event, as soon as Wallis's divorce decree from Mr. Simpson became final, she and the former King (by now the Duke of Windsor) were married. The event occurred in France on June 3, 1937. Almost immediately they started a cycle of foot-loose wandering that has gone on, more or less, ever since.

**U**NTIL recently, they have never had a home of their own. In the back of their mind was always the hope that they might return to England, that the Duchess would be received by the royal family and accepted as a "Royal Highness," and that the Duke would be given a job in keeping with his abilities. But so far, in almost 17 years, with the single exception of the Nassau appointment, nothing has happened. So, last year, the Windsors decided to have their own home at last.

They bought a house, an old mill on the outskirts of Paris, for \$85,000, and have been busy getting it in shape. The Duchess, who is one of the world's most fastidious decorators, is determined that this four-bedroom retreat shall be a gem. For a year, now, they have been putting in bathrooms, installing central heating, and buying furnishings.

In the winter, they live at the Waldorf-Astoria Towers in New York, or visit such society friends as Mrs. George F. Baker at Tallahassee, Fla., or Robert Young at Palm Beach.

There have been widespread rumors that the Windsors are broke, but these too are only half truths. The Duke and Duchess live well, travel with a retinue of six or eight, and, accordingly, have to watch their finances. In Paris, they have had a rented house on the fashionable Rue de la Faisanderie with 4 cars and 12 servants. They are giving this up now that they have the old mill, but the Duchess has declared that she would like to have an apartment in Paris too "if things in France were not so expensive." At Antibes, on the Riviera, they have a 17-room rented villa with a private beach, but they often leave it in summer to go to elegant resorts like the Lido in Venice and for cruises on a rented yacht in the Mediterranean.

When the Duke abdicated, he is sup-



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posed to have given the several million dollars he inherited from George V to his brother, George VI, receiving in return an allowance of \$100,000 a year. With the devaluation of the pound, his income went down to \$70,000 a year. It is expected that Elizabeth will continue this allowance, although it is not known definitely that she will. There is little likelihood, however, that the ex-King will be allowed to go begging.

Several years ago the Duke wrote his memoirs, *A King's Story*, for which he received a substantial sum. In addition, the Duke supplements his income with occasional magazine pieces, the most recent of which will appear in the June issue of *Woman's Home Companion*. He has confessed that writing "is the hardest work I've ever done."

Not long ago, he and the Duchess were offered a \$100,000 television contract to do a husband-and-wife show. They turned it down as lacking the proper dignity for their position.

Socially, they entertain once or twice a week, never with large cocktail parties, but generally with small dinner parties for six or eight persons. The Duchess is a meticulous hostess, and takes infinite pains in preparing everything, however unimportant. She has three handwritten cookbooks, containing choice recipes for dishes which she likes to serve to guests, and she oversees the preparation of each. One of her favorites (given here for those ladies who may hope to catch a king) is a consommé jelly with a hole in the center into which caviar and sour cream have been put. Another is an avocado pear, cut in half, with a heavily spiked Jamaica rum dressing. This, avers the Duke, is "a wonderful way to warm up a stuffy dinner party." The Duchess also turns out, I am told, a fabulous fish soufflé with curry sauce and chutney heated in butter, although I have never been lucky enough to sample it.

The Duke drinks little, and never touches alcohol before 7 o'clock in the evening. The Duchess all of her life has drunk sparingly and never smokes.

**I**N NEW YORK, elevator operators, doormen, and others who encounter him are continually charmed by the Duke's down-to-earth qualities. One anecdote is typical. In connection with his magazine articles, he has occasion to talk frequently with editors by telephone. One day he visited the offices of a magazine. After a very brief talk with the editorial people, he left them, with the explanation: "I can talk to editors any day. I want to talk to the telephone operators. So far, they have been just voices to me." He then went down to the switchboards and chatted with the "gals," as he called

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them, for 15 minutes. When he left, one of them summed up the feeling of the whole room. "As far as I'm concerned," she said, "there's only one King of England."

The Duchess, to many persons in New York and London, has appeared, rightly or wrongly, as a woman concerned principally with clothes (she has headed the list of "The World's Ten Best-Dressed Women" for years), jewels, antiques, and fashionable resorts. I found that this opinion of her is not shared in Nassau, where she was active in charitable undertakings, and established baby clinics and did daily chores in the servicemen's canteen.

Last January she took over the chairmanship of a ball in New York for the benefit of the Emergency Musicians Fund. The affair became known as the "Duchess of Windsor's Ball," and was an immediate sellout. She modeled a dress from one of the smart shops and danced prettily with café society's Prince Serge Obolensky. I noticed that night that she had lost none of her svelte figure nor chic poise, and she seemed to be having the time of her life. She has also taken an active part recently in local philanthropies, such as the New York Cancer Fund campaign.

Last November the Duke made a special trip to London. If it was for the purpose of getting his wife and himself officially invited to the Coronation, he failed. He issued a statement soon after to the press saying that he wouldn't be at the Coronation ceremony because it was not customary for ex-monarchs to attend. In March, he went to London again because of the illness of his mother, the Dowager Queen Mary. After her death, late in the month, he remained for her funeral, then sailed for New York to rejoin his Duchess.

But if the Coronation next month is a wistful occasion for the Duke, it may also, in the opinion of many, hold the seed of new hope for the hero and heroine of today's most fabulous romance. In fact, instead of being a low point in the Duke and Duchess's life together it may very well become a *turning point*.

Many of the most violent enemies of the Duke's alliance have died. Among them are Dr. Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury; Prime Minister Baldwin; and Geoffrey Dawson, head of the London *Times*. And recent surveys, taken in England, show a slight majority of the people there now favor the Windsors' making their home in that country and ending their long exile.

Recently, the *Evening Standard* editorialized in London: "More and more people think it is time for the Duke of Windsor to come back and settle in his native land." A few weeks ago Lord

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Beaverbrook also strongly urged that his exile be ended. Even the London *Times*, often considered an organ of government opinion, no longer opposes the Windsors' return.

All in all, there seems to be a growing feeling among all classes in England to let "bygones be bygones," as far as the Duke is concerned. From a practical point of view, certainly the British Commonwealth of Nations could use his training and his knack for popularity.

It may be only coincidence, but the fact remains that Britain's fortunes have declined markedly since Edward's abdication. For years, now, her economy has been faltering, and government officials have been constantly admonishing the people that England "must export (i.e. sell) or perish." It would appear that Britain could well use the services of the man whose abdication Sir Compton Mackenzie, England's well-known writer, called "the greatest political disaster Britain has suffered in my lifetime."

It would be rash to make any predictions or proposals, but I heard on all sides the opinion that the Coronation should be the time for John Bull to have a thorough re-examination of his heart. Perhaps he will now feel that 16 years of wandering is an adequate price for a man to pay who swore that he would never contract "a loveless marriage," and who followed his vow through to the point of abandoning his throne for the woman he finally chose.

At the time of writing this, I notice that the Crown has just granted a general amnesty to 30,000 World War deserters. This is in keeping with the mood of forgiveness which pervades the air at Coronation time. Many feel that that mood is also destined to influence the fate of the Windsors.

If so, England, full of hope and pride as she crowns a young, beautiful, and happily married queen next month and enters a new Elizabethan age, will grant another equally important amnesty to the world's most famous lovers. At the same time, incidentally, England will be harnessing the badly needed talents of "Britain's No. 1 Salesman."



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