

Prince—of Wales and Good Fellows

England's Heir Apparent
Is a Regular

By
WILLIAM C. RICHARDS



Royalty carries with it the picture of dignity, majesty, pomp and aloofness. But that isn't the picture of the Prince of Wales America has seen. Mr. Richards's story is a "close-up" of a young man who rolls his own, likes American jazz and American girls, and hates to get up in the morning. It is a story of the youth as he is today, which gives an unusual insight into what the king of tomorrow will be.

THE Prince of Wales is "safe for democracy."

The royal special, a train of monarchical luxury which bears more marks of royalty than the heir-apparent to empire who rides on it, was ready to leap out of Windsor, Ont., the other day.

Private Tim Murphy, late of the Canadian Ninety-ninth Battalion, walked up to the observation platform. Murphy had an idea which, to his way of thinking, was going to flabbergast the boy on whom some day will fall the ermine of Britain.

"You call yourself democratic, eh?" he began.

Edward Albert Andrew Patrick David Wettin, which is the name the prince can use when his breath is good, laughed.

"I hope I am," said he.

"Then gimme two bits," said Murphy, and waited for the crash.

His Royal Highness was clearly puzzled.

"What is it?" he asked.

"It's a bob, Your Highness, in the old country."

The prince did some excavating. He placed in Murphy's hand a Canadian twenty-five cent piece.

"And I know," he remarked, "that you can't get better than two per cent, old buddy, in this arid home-place of ours."

Two thousand voices roared their delight. Murphy held the silver high for all the Dominion to see.

"You're a brick, I say," he praised. The din of the mob multiplied. "Now," the soldier said, with all the irreverent gall of a top-sergeant, "give us a speech."

The Prince of Wales, whose interest in silk hats and pearl-buttoned shirt bosoms and silk-stockings is perfunctory, in comparison with his attachment for the man with the symbol of service in the Great War at his button-hole, leaned over the vestibule rail.

"Only this: I don't want you fellows, in particular, to remember me as a prince, but as a comrade." The wheels began to grind. "So long, Canadians," he yelled. "Y-e-a, Prince," they bel-lowed back. The tracks unrolled between them, but until that animated line lost individuality and seemed but a brown canvas blown by the wind, His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, K. G., M. C., stood unhatted, waving his good-bye.

Why, I considered, as the hour neared of my presentation to him, had I not given more study to courtly custom? I knew Spalding's baseball guide and some now-useless mathematics about the footage of a baseball field and the value of a field goal. I had even met the Queensbury manual, and from devious sources I had learned what to do with any number of forks up to four. What futile knowledge now.

Mind forayed for precedent. My royal intimates, it now seemed, were restricted to the puppet princes of the plays, Kings Lear and Baggot, the Earl of Pawtucket, the Sultan of Sulu, Yotive of Graustark, Shine-Ball King Cicotte and Ban Johnson, the celebrated czar. The Sultan of Sulu, as a pattern, offered one terrifying obstacle. As I recalled, after the populace had sung, "Hail to the king; this is a joyous day," or some such lyrical delight, I had a vague remembrance of villagers breaking into a Texas Tommy.

Now I would no more think of Texas Tommying than I would envisage Irvin Cobb as a dancing partner of Pavlova or William Howard Taft standing on tip-toe in gauze drapes and plunging through paper hoops aboard a circus horse, or Mr. Bryan getting crocked.

ONCE in and introduced, moreover, I would be conversationally stymied. I might start with captious reference, possibly, to the late bereavement of Charles Comiskey, of Chicago, Ill. One cannot talk housing conditions, the most timely subject, to a person whose home suggests the Biltmore and the Commodore and

the Ritz welded in one, and with not a single bed which spends its daytime idleness hooked to a door.

I took comfort from an incident of the day previous. There had been an hour's stop at an Indian reservation. The prince had added to his endless appendages. He became Chief Morningstar. The christening over, an old chief gussied up in beads and paint, given an exotic touch by the pair of rubbers in which he shuffled, put his arm about the prince's waist and two-stepped about the ring. When it was halted, a string of Sioux issued. Then a salaam, a gorgeous thing that looked as if it might back-fire, but didn't. The prince went to American slang for help.

"Atta boy," he said.

It eased my mind some. I moved with more confidence along the line to the introduction.

"How do you do, Your Highness," I said, and wondered whether the official scorer would give me a hit or an error.

My right hand met his left.

"Got to do it," he excused the south-pawing. "They nearly shook my right hand off in Toronto."

Behind me was a Canadian dough-boy, quite red about the ears and in the grasp of a great embarrassment. One hand was bandaged.

"Where?" the Prince asked.

"Cambrai."

"Quite a tiff, too." Frock-coated gentlemen behind the soldier looked their impatience. The prince didn't mind. A prince doesn't have to. The Prince of Wales drew the arm of the Canadian private through his. Suddenly there was a hurried fumbling at the royal pockets. His Highness frowned.

"Got a cigarette?" he pleaded.

The soldier's cheeks had the hue of Britain's flag.

"I've got the makin's," he stammered.

"Quite so. Very good." The prince held out a hand.

And then he who is to inherit the purple rolled a cigarette. He handed back the bag and the papers. "Let me see you again, won't you," he said to the speechless veteran, and turned to the formalities. Henry Ford was one of those who waited.

GEORGE V's son is a regular. He has the *bonhomie* of a Broadway John, smokes all the time, admires a pretty face with an open affection, is bored by Beethoven, is a disciple of American jazz, and he hates to get up early in the morning. Newspaper men on the train frothed a bit over the fancy for feminine beauty of the next head of the House of Windsor.

"He's stuck me a couple of times," a representative of a world famous news bureau told me. "There was a girl I was interested in a bit at Lake Louise, an extraordinarily pretty thing. And what does he do, the beggar?" The correspondent looked fondly at the object of his philippic a few yards away. "Doesn't the good fellow send word that he wants to meet her. It amounts to a royal summons, you know. And that's the last I saw of her, will you believe me?"

And there also was that town in Alberta, and another pair of eyes. The royal motor was stopped, and the parade halted with it. A messenger ran to the sidewalk. The girl, with an overwhelming shyness, came to the side of the car ablush in her hour of surprising triumph.

"You are coming to the dance to-night?" His Highness asked.

She had not been invited.

"Then I invite you, and I hope you come," he urged. He danced seven times with her that night. And if that isn't a good girl spoiled for her insular sphere, then we err greatly. The blades of Alberta will be so many rummies to her. She has danced with her king.

In good time he will ascend the throne of Britain, with all its subject millions, and when he does he will know this side of the Atlantic not as a splotch of color on a map but as a reality translated in terms of city and plain and musical waters and God-believing people.

What is more, perhaps, is that to this side of the Atlantic he will be something more than a distant figure, sitting aloof from the affairs of men. He will know his soldiery not as a mass but as very human units, cold to sophistry and cant, but warm to him who speaks their language as does Albert Edward, who hates reveille and loves the ladies.

