

# Medford Woman Finds Monaco Has Musical Comedy Setting

(Editor's note: Mrs. I. E. Schuler, Medford woman spending several months in Europe, is now in Monaco and has written an account of life in this little principality for The Medford Mail Tribune.)

By MARGARET SCHULER

Monte Carlo, Monaco—In anticipation of the big event here on April 19, a little prodding and suggestion from your society editor that Medford readers might be interested in all that is necessary for me to write my impressions of the Prince Rainier balliwick.

Actually, to an outsider, there is little to indicate on the surface that the great celebration is about to happen. Picture post cards of Miss Kelly—disappointing ones—are for sale in the magazine and book shops; an enlarged facsimile of the stamp (about which philatelists are in a fever) to be released on the day of the wedding is displayed in the travel bureau window; workmen are busily polishing the already highly polished little place, and in the gardens extending from the casino up to the main street, are spreading on the wide paths a rich red topping—startlingly theatrical against the bright green of the new grass and the pink of the large round flower beds.

Things like that—new flood lights, new trim on hotels.

It is under the smooth surface that there are rufflings, like who is invited, who is coming (it is rumored that no royalty will be here, only representatives) where will they seat—and how—the many guests in the cathedral, which holds only about 500.

**Grumbling Heard**

There is grumbling too, that the press and photographers will occupy coveted space when, as an astute English woman remarked, "One or two could write all that is necessary."

In the hotel lobby, and from men's clubs, one hears many things. The prince has ordered 4,000 champagne glasses, with his crest of red and white engraved on them. He will give a party for the Monaguesque people in the gardens at the palace before the wedding. There will be a luncheon for the family. He is in Paris shopping for the wedding. He has bought jeweled brooches—rubies and diamonds for the eight bridesmaids.

The civil wedding is to be on the 18th. After the wedding on the 19th, there is a ballet with Margot Fonteyn and an English company, at 9 o'clock, after which the happy couple will leave on the Prince's yacht for their honeymoon.

**Hotels Full**

Miss Kelly has reserved the top floor of the Hotel de Paris for her guests—about 100. Hotels are booked full—not only here, but at Cannes, Nice, and all along the Riviera. Even the harbor master has troubles—parking problems. So many yacht owners have applied for mooring that "there isn't a cupful of water space left."

Invitations to one function or another, I understand, are greatly to be desired and devious methods are resorted to, to obtain them. Yesterday, the English colony—a great crowd of them—met here to view a solid gold table clock they are presenting. The Dutch, the American colony, and I don't know how many others, have collected money for gifts.

Surely the prince will have to do something about that. At any rate, there will be much to see—decorations, flowers, fireworks and illumination on the water. And the wedding gifts which will be on display.

No one will be permitted on La Roc, excepting the people who live there, and guests with invitations. A gate is to be put up at the entrance. All this may well be in American papers already. What I write is purely alleged.

It is really about La Roc, and the palace, that I wish to write. Yesterday, I went with a woman, well steeped in Monacian lore, up to La Roc, which is a spur of rockbound land, jutting into the Mediterranean. To

reach it, you climb high up a winding, smooth road, beside which are old, overhanging trees, gardens, paths and strategic viewpoint parapets.

From the top you look over Monte Carlo, Monaco, the innumerable villas along the Riviera—and the sea. From the paths along the edge protected by an old stone wall, you may peer down the dizzy precipices to the water, smashing and foaming against the rocks and coves at the bottom.

Besides the palace, government buildings, villas and cathedral—here is Monacoville—surely the most adorable storybook village in all Europe. Its paved streets are narrow and crooked; its buildings are all painted some sort of rich cream, and the ubiquitous shutters and wrought iron balconies trimmed in pale green; its shops and markets are small, clean and attractive; singing birds are in open windows and flower pots and lamps adorn the outside walls.

It is the essence of old world quaintness without the poverty and dirt which so often mars an effect over here.

**Palace Small**

The palace is small compared with—for instance—Windsor, Schunbrunn or Pitti. In front of it, two delightful guards—like toy soldiers—march sturdily back and forth in their red and black uniforms, white spats, blue helmets and gay epaulets, carrying guns with fierce bayonets sticking up the top.

On either side of the big open doors leading into the inner courtyard, is a tiny guard house striped red and white, like stick candy. Six bronze cannon (charming little cannon with elaborately decorated seahorse handles and the whole overlaid with a patina of rich greens) neat rusty cannon balls beside them, point seriously out onto the piazza.

Across from this courtyard, which I think at one time was a parade ground, are shops, where you may buy souvenirs and stamps, or sit on the terrace of the tea house, drink something and watch the gentle picture—which, taken altogether, is quite like a musical comedy setting and onto which a chorus might suddenly dance or Grace, herself, in white robe, pointed hat and flowing veils might ride in on a richly caparisoned charger—her prince behind her.

**Palace Delightful**

Inside, too, the palace is a delight to see, and it is here, I imagine, that much refurbishing, polishing and cleaning has taken place. The large chandeliers sparkle and glitter with fresh washing, the marble floors shine, and much of the furniture and window hangings look newly upholstered, although the wall tapestries show little splits at testing to age.

The throne room, really quite small, is all in red. Older salons are in blue, green or gold. Lovely bric-a-brac—not too much—pleasant portraits and paintings—not too many—and not too warlike or religious—adorn the rooms. Big door windows open onto balconies with panoramic views. From inside, doors open onto an arcade, extending all around the inner courtyard. Here, workmen were painting and scrubbing the great, graceful marble stairway, which goes into the court.

I should have liked to ask about a richly colored frescoe on the walls in the inner court, but our guide spoke no English, no one, anywhere, speaks English. The most satisfactory thing I saw, which makes the palace unique in my estimation, are the large, usable looking fireplaces in every room—complete with andirons and fenders.

After the palace, we went to the cathedral, which is, by cathedral standards, small. It is all greystone, dark, and typical of European churches. As we came down from the altar, we saw a startling effect, the large doors were open, and the only thing visible was the blue Mediterranean, framed like a picture. It was almost as though you would

walk out, and down into water.

Everything considered, I would say Miss Kelly has decided well—all this, and the Prince, too. He is much beloved and respected in Monaco. I would write stories I have heard about the family, but that had better be person to person.

The history of Monaco is interesting. Its beginnings are lost in obscurity of antiquity. Since earliest times the rock has served as a refuge. In addition to its impregnable position, it has the advantage of a harbor. During its long history, Monaco has passed back and forth, through many wars, from one country to another. In 1861, France, with land on both sides, bought part of the little country, guaranteed its independence and paid the then prince, Charles III, indemnity for the loss.

**History of Gaming**

As it was necessary to find revenue other than taxes, it was this Charles, and his mother, who conceived the idea of augmenting their income with a gaming house. A man who had made a success of such a venture in Munich was called in to manage it. Later he was called the Magician of Monaco, because of the incredible success from the beginning of the now opulent and fabulous casino.

The Monaguesque people seem to have plenty—no one here pays taxes. At any rate everything seems easy, dignified, charming and deceptively smooth. Fortunes dropped here by kindly people the world over take care of minor details. Occasionally a relic of a tragic ending is seen wandering about the streets and it is said that in the hotels, charitable managements and more fortunate friends look after many a well known person through long years.

At the moment Monte Carlo opera season is on and many big names in the music world are here—from LaScala, Vienna and Paris. The theater is in the Casino, and between acts, one may wander from the foyer into the gaming rooms and watch the roulette play.

Evening, with full dress, begins at 10 o'clock. All day and every day there is playing, and unless you know (which just now I am learning) you might think, in the day time, a crowd of Iowa farmers had come in for a country fair.

One afternoon, a couple of really oldsters staggered in, each with a cane, and my friend said, "Oh, that is Lord and Lady somebody (I don't remember) they come every afternoon." Milord had to sit down to rest a few minutes before he could venture farther into the room to the table.

I walked up to a table last evening just as, what gave every appearance of being a small town customer, collected 260,000 francs in one play. Not one eyelid flickered (but mine) the croupier pushed over the big chips, the man threw down 10,000 more, on to the same numbers, gave a 5,000 franc tip, and walked casually away to another table where he had a play going. This time he lost, he lost again, twice more, and then I left. My hands were perspiring and I couldn't take it, even vicariously. It is said that Monte Carlo is the most legitimate casino in Europe, and my friends here, who play, speak with high praise regarding it.

Certainly, it isn't as glamorous as our moving pictures would indicate—nor as sinister. No particular cognizance is made of English or Americans, which surprises me because there are plenty of them living here. French is the language, French the clothes, French the food, and French the books. I cannot find an English dictionary in any store. I couldn't find a history of Monaco in English.

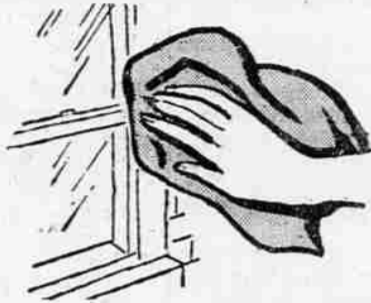
At the Hotel de Paris one may buy Time, Life, Vogue and the Paris edition of the New York Times—that is all. I see a few Cadillacs, but for the most part cars are European. Many things here are puzzling and frustrating to this small town girl.—M.S.



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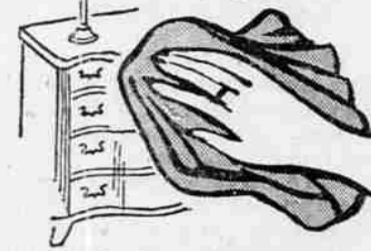


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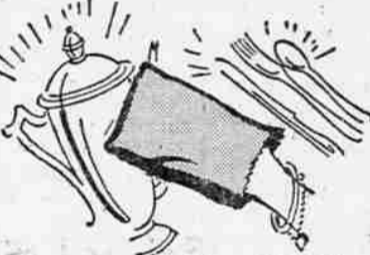
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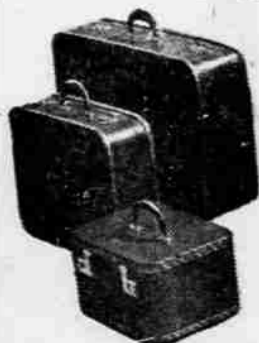
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