



Ex-King Edward VIII and Wally were wed on June 3, 1937.

The Duke and Duchess of Windsor—

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO this June 3, the recently abdicated King Edward VIII of Great Britain married an American divorcee, Wallace Warfield Spencer Simpson.

On their silver anniversary, the world is still fascinated by the monarch who gave up his throne for "the woman I love"—and entranced by the commoner who stirred an empire.

What is their life like now? How do they live? Are they happy or do they have regrets?

I spent the better part of two weeks with this couple while I worked with the Duchess on a series of articles she was writing. Often we were three at tea or luncheon, with the conversation relaxed and revealing. So perhaps I can answer those questions.

At 68, the Duke retains a good portion of the enthusiastic charm which, during his world travels as Prince of Wales, made him known as "The First Salesman of the British Empire." He shows no trace of the autocracy which frequently attaches to monarchs, and never has.

Recently, a sports columnist recalled how the Duke, as Prince, used to golf with champion Walter Hagen. One day as he stood beside a hole marked with the red flag, Hagen called: "Hey, lift the pin, will you, Eddie?" And without ado, the Prince complied.

I frequently observed the democracy of spirit which, when he was Prince and King, bedeviled so many of the old order surrounding him. There was, for instance, the day when we were at luncheon in the Windsor town house in Paris and a small table was set up at a French window. We sat overlooking the balustraded terrace with its tubs of scarlet geraniums, green stretches of lawn, and trees about which rambling roses climbed. The Windsor dining room was a most elegant salon with vivid blue walls, antiqued white moldings, murals, a musicians' gallery, and a great table flanked with tufted white damask chairs.

When the conversation turned to fish, I mentioned how much I enjoyed a breakfast at London's Hotel Savoy, with Dover sole deep-fried to a golden twist, delicate and sweet inside.

The Duke's eyes brightened. "Ah! Sole for

breakfast! I never have that any more." He sounded plaintive.

"Why haven't you asked for it?" the Duchess wanted to know.

"I did some time ago and nothing happened." He gave her a quick, warm smile. "Then I quite forgot about it. It isn't important. I don't like to upset the kitchen."

She reached for the little gold-encased memo pad which is always at her place. If the Duke wanted sole for breakfast, obviously he was to have it.

"There is such a thing as being overly considerate," she told the former king.

She was dressed simply that day, as she always is. At no time did I see her dieting, yet she must observe some restrictions to retain a size-eight figure at 66. She suggested what one of the restrictions might be when she described a dinner she and the Duke favor following a large lunch.

"The Duke rarely eats lunch. A compote of fruit, perhaps," she said. "But if we entertain or have been entertained at a large lunch, our dinner often will be only a baked potato topped with caviar."

I visited the Windsors in both their French homes. The one in Paris is on the Bois du Boulogne; their country place, "Le Moulin de la Tuilerie," is 30 miles outside the city.

A Life of Elegant Informality

The Duchess is said to love *things*. Both of these houses bear witness that the Duke does, too. Their Paris house might be described as crowded; one entire table, for instance, is given to a display of small boxes of gold and silver, ivory and enamel. At the country home, there's the Duchess' beautiful Meissen collection of vegetable shapes, among others a cauliflower, ears of corn, a bunch of asparagus.

The Duchess calls the house in the Bois "hers" explaining that she's "the city slicker" in the family. The country house, called the Mill, is "the Duke's house," she says. The Mill consists of a group of buildings built in 1600 and remodeled in 1730 which are connected by narrow cobbled roadways. The guest quarters once were a cow barn. In the Big House there's a reception room, dining room, and kitchen quar-

ters on the first floor. Upstairs, there's the Duke's suite, the Duchess' suite, and a large beamed drawing room.

There is an elegant informality at the Mill. Straw matting covers the floor of the dining room. Casseroles are passed in basket holders. Butter comes in the forms of animals and flowers (mine was a squirrel, the Duke's a thistle, and the Duchess' a heart). On the terrace chairs are small pillows with embroidered mottos: "Don't look now—somebody may be gaining on you"; "Never explain—never complain"; "Smile at the poorest beggar as you would at the highest king."

The rug in the reception room is placed so it doesn't obscure the gravestones in the floor. During the French Revolution, the peasants, desiring to have marble floors like the aristocracy, robbed the graves. No corpses molder beneath them, the Duke explains.

The Duke Putters in the Garden

The Duke is happiest at the Mill. Wearing old clothes, his plaid cotton shirt hanging outside his slacks, he works in the garden that stretches from the buildings to the millstream.

A wooden bridge crosses the stream to a hill which affords a lovely view of the countryside. Here, beneath flowering shrubs, are buried the cairn terriers that preceded the pugs in the Windsor household.

In the winter, when the Windsors are in residence in New York at the Waldorf Towers, it's a familiar sight to see Sidney, the Bahamian who has been with them since 1940, when the Duke was governor of the Bahamas, walking the pugs on a four-way leash.

There are always dog biscuits on the tea tray, as the pugs so well know. One rainy day when a footman went up the stairs to the big drawing room, a freshly pressed tea cloth draped over his hand so it would not wrinkle, the pugs followed him single file.

"Oh, dear," said the Duchess, "tea is going to be late. It is one of the few things about which the Duke becomes impatient."

But on this day the Duke, plagued with shingles, nervously pacing up and down the cobbled road between showers, quite forgot the tea hour. The Duchess sneezed! (Continued on page 9)

25 Years Later



As they celebrate their silver wedding anniversary, rocked an empire but which has endured and

here is an intimate glimpse of the marriage that mellowed despite great odds

By ADELE WHITELY FLETCHER