

Secrets of Hohenzollerns Revealed by an Attache

First of Series Tells How Kaiser and Crown Prince Caused Undoing of the Wife of One of Germany's Nobility.

(Continued from First Page.)

for that reason that you ask me to jot down, for the benefit of the world, a few facts concerning the plots of the Kaiser and his son—the idea of Germany, the Kronprinz "Willie."

A Strange, Inexplicable Affair. In the early days of 1912 I found myself, as the personal-adjutant of His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince, involved in a very strange, even inexplicable, affair.

The drama opened in the Emperor's palace in Berlin on New Year night, 1912, when, as usual, a grand court reception was held.

The scene was one which we who revolve around the throne know so well. Court gowns, nodding plumes, gray uniforms, and glittering decorations—a vicious, tinselled, gossiping little world which would develop into a dark suspicion or struggles for the Kaiser's favor.

In the famous white salon, with its ceiling gaudily emblazoned with the arms of the Hohenzollerns as burgraves, electors, kings, emperors, and what not, its walls of colored marble and gilded bronze, and its fine statues of the Prussian rulers, we had all assembled and were waiting the entrance of the Emperor.

Kiderlen-Waechter—the foreign secretary—was standing near me, chatting with Von Jagow, the minister of foreign affairs, and with the Kaiser's personal friends by the way, author, with Von Moltke, of the Kaiser's much-advertised "Song to Egir"—a fact not generally known, approached me and began to chat, recalling a side-splitting incident that had occurred a few days before at Kiel, whither I had been with the Crown Prince to open a new bridge.

Of a sudden the tap of the chamberlain's stick was heard thrice, the gold-and-white doors instantly fell open, and the Emperor, his decorations gleaming beneath the myriad lights, smilingly entered with his waddling consort, the crown prince, and their brilliant suite.

The Cause of the Kaiser's Annoyance. All of us bowed low in homage, but as we did so I saw the shrewd eyes of the All-Highest One, which nothing escapes, fixed upon a woman who stood close to my elbow. As he fixed his fierce gaze upon her I saw, knowing that glance as I did, that it spoke volumes. Hitherto I had not noticed the lady, for she was probably one of those unimportant persons who are commanded to a grand court, wives and daughters of military nobodies, of whom we, at the palace never took the trouble to inquire so long as their command-cards, issued by the grand chamberlain, were in proper order.

That slight contraction of the Emperor's eyebrows caused me to ponder deeply, for, knowing him so intimately, I saw that he was intensely annoyed. For what reason? I was much mystified. Naturally I turned to glance at the woman whose presence had so irritated him. She was fair-haired, blue-eyed, petite and pretty. Her age was about twenty-five, and she was extremely good-looking. Beside her stood a big, fair-haired giant in the uniform of a captain of the First Regiment of Hussars, the Emperor's Guard, of which the crown prince was colonel-in-chief.

Within a quarter of an hour I discovered that the officer was Count Georg von Leutenberg, and that his pretty wife, whom he had married two years before, was the eldest daughter of an English financier who had been created a baron by Great Britain's rule-of-thumb politicians.

An Interview With the Crown Prince. Next day, just before noon, on entering the Crown Prince's private cabinet, I found "Willie" in the uniform of the Second Grenadiers, apparently awaiting me in that cozy apartment, which is crammed with effigies, statuettes, and relics of the great Napoleon, whom he worships just as the War Lord reveres his famous ancestor, Frederick the Great. "Sit down, Heltzendorff," said his Imperial Highness, waving his white, well-manicured hand to a chair near by, and puffing at his cigarette. "It is really pleasant to have an hour's rest," he laughed, for he seemed in merry mood that day. "Look here! Do you happen to know Count Georg von Leutenberg, of the Hussars of the Guard?"

"By sight only," was my reply. "He is a very good fellow. I understand. Do you know his wife—a pretty little Englishwoman?" "Unfortunately, I have not that pleasure."

"Neither have I, Heltzendorff. But I soon shall know her, I expect. In that direction I want your assistance." "I am yours for your Highness to command," I replied, puzzled to know what was in progress. After a few seconds of silence the Crown Prince suddenly exclaimed:

"So good is the report of Von Leutenberg that has reached the Emperor that—though he is as yet in ignorance of the fact—he has been promoted to the rank of major, and ordered upon a foreign mission—as military attache in London. He will leave Berlin tonight to take up his new post."

"And the countess?" "By a secret report I happen to have here it is shown that they are most devoted pair," he said, glancing at a sheet of buff paper upon which was typed a report—one which I recognized as emanating from the secret bureau at the Polizei-Prasidium, in Alexander Platz. "They live in the Lennestraasse, No. 44, facing the Tiergarten. Note the address."

peror's good will, and ordering him to report here to take leave of me as his colonel-in-chief."

Scarcely had he spoken when Count von Leutenberg was announced by a funkey in pink silk stockings, and a moment later the tall officer clicked his heels together and saluted smartly on the threshold.

"I thought you would be pleased at your well-merited promotion," said his highness in quite a genial tone. "The Emperor wishes you to leave for London by the 10 o'clock express for the night, as a response to his excellency, the ambassador, before he departs on leave. Hence the urgency. The countess, of course, will remain in Berlin. You will, naturally, wish for time to make your arrangements in London and dispose of your household."

"I think she will wish to accompany me, your imperial highness," replied the fond husband. "London is her home."

"Ah! That is absurd!" laughed "Willie." "Why, you who have been married two whole years are surely still upon your honeymoon?" and his close-set eyes glistened strangely. "You will be far too busy on taking up your new appointment to see much of her. No. Let her remain comfortably at home in Berlin until you are quite settled. Then I will see that Kiderlen grants you leave to return to put your house in order."

From the count's manner I could see that he was very much puzzled at his sudden promotion.

Indeed, on entering he had stammered out his surprise at being singled out for such high distinction.

A Command From the Crown Prince. Von Leutenberg's hesitation was the crown prince's opportunity.

"Good!" went on his Highness in his imperious, impetuous way. "You will leave for London tonight, and the countess will remain until you have settled. I congratulate you most heartily upon your well-deserved advancement, which I consider is an honor conferred by the Emperor upon my regiment. I know, too, that you will act to the honor of the Fatherland abroad."

And with those words the major was dismissed. "A charming man!" remarked the Prince, admiringly, as he closed the door. "He has only been brought to my notice quite recently. An enthusiastic officer, he will be of great use to us at Carlton House Terrace. There is much yet to be done there, my dear Heltzendorff. Fortunately we have put our friends, the English, comfortably to sleep. It has cost us money, but money talks in London, just as it does in Berlin."

"Heltzendorff," he exclaimed a few moments later, after he had reflected deeply between the whiffs of his cigarette. "Heltzendorff, I wish you to become acquainted with the Countess von Leutenberg, and you must afterwards introduce me. I have a fixed and distinct reason. I could obtain the assistance of others, but I trust you only."

"But I do not know the lady," I protested, for I had no desire whatsoever to become implicated in any double-dealing.

"Hohenstein knows her well. I will see that he introduces you," replied the Kaiser's son. "She's uncommonly pretty, so mind you don't fall in love with her. I've heard, too, that Count Georg is a highly jealous person, but, fortunately, he will be very busy writing secret reports at Carlton House Terrace. So go and see Hohenstein at once, and get him to introduce you to the pretty little Englishwoman. But, remember, not a word of this conversation is to be breathed to a single soul."

"His Majesty Only Gives Reward When It is Due." What did it all mean? Why had the Emperor singled out for advancement the husband of that woman, the sight of whom had so greatly annoyed him? I confess that I became more than ever puzzled over the curious affair.

Within a week, however, thanks to the introduction of Hohenstein, I had dined at Count von Leutenberg's pretty house in the Lennestraasse in a fine room, the long windows of which commanded a delightful view over the Tiergarten and the Siegesallee. The Countess, extremely charming and refined, having the misfortune of being English, had not been taken up warmly by Berlin society. She was, I found, a most delightful hostess. The party included Laroque, the elegant first secretary of the French embassy, and his Parisian wife, together with Baron Hoffmann, the curly, round-faced minister of the interior, and Doctor Paulsen, under-secretary at the Colonial office. Hohenstein was, however, not there, as he had been suddenly dispatched by the Emperor upon a mission to Corfu.

At the table the talk ran upon Leutenberg's sudden promotion, whereupon the Minister Hoffmann declared:

"His majesty only gives reward when it is due. When he discerns talent he is never mistaken." A week later the Crown Prince had returned from a surprise visit the Kaiser had made to Stettin. The Emperor had played his old game of rousing the garrison in the middle of the night, and then laughing at the ludicrous figures cut by his pompous generals and colonels rushing about in their night attire eager to greet their sovereign.

I was in the Prince's private room arranging the details of a military program at Potsdam on the following day when he suddenly entered and exclaimed:

"Well, Heltzendorff, and how are you proceeding in the Lennestraasse, eh?" and he looked at me with those crafty eyes of his. "I hear you were at the house last night."

"Yes, I called there," I admitted. "The count is returning from London next week to take his wife back with him."

A Visit From Count Zeppelin. The crown prince smiled mysteriously, and critically examined the curious snake ring which he always

wears upon the little finger of his left hand. "We need not anticipate that, I think. Kiderlen will not grant him leave. He is far better in Carlton House Terrace than in the Lennestraasse."

"I hardly follow your Highness," I remarked.

"Hm. Probably not, my dear count," he laughed. "I do not intend that you should."

And with that mysterious remark he turned to meet Count von Zeppelin, the round-faced, snow-haired, somewhat florid inventor, who was one of his Highness' most intimate friends, and who had at that moment entered announced. Zeppelin was a character in Berlin. He sought no character in Berlin. He sought no advertisement, and shunned notoriety.

"Ha, my dear Ferdinand!" cried the prince, shaking the hand of the man who so suddenly became world famous at the age of seventy. "You have traveled from Stuttgart to see me—unwell as you are! It is an honor. But the matter is of greatest urgency, as you will be with me. Then you will introduce me to your pretty friend, understand?"

A Puzzling Sentence. That night, in accordance with my instructions, I sat in the Emperor's box with the Crown Prince, Tresternitz, and two personal adjutants, and recognizing the Countess von Leutenberg in a box opposite, accompanied by an elderly lady, I took the Crown Prince round, and there presented her to him, greatly to her surprise and undisguised delight.

The Prince and the Countess chatted together, while I sat with her elderly companion. Then, when we had withdrawn, my Imperial Master exclaimed:

"Ah! my dear Heltzendorff. Why, she is one of the prettiest women in all Berlin! Surely it is unfortunate—most unfortunate!—that she is married to that unfortunate!"

What was unfortunate? I was further puzzled by that last sentence, yet I dare not ask any explanation, and we went back to our own box. After our return to the pale crown prince, who was standing in the corridors talking with the slim, fair-haired Baroness von Wedel, one of his wife's ladies-in-waiting, left her and beckoned me into an adjoining room.

"I wish you, Heltzendorff, to call upon the Countess von Leutenberg at 9 o'clock tomorrow evening. She will expect you."

I looked at his highness, much puzzled. How did he know that the pretty countess would expect me? But he gave me no time to reply, merely turning upon his heel, and striding down the corridor to the private apartments.

"You Are Witness He Has Drawn His Sword Upon the Hair of the Throne." Punctually at 9 o'clock that wintry evening I called at the Lennestraasse, and Josef, the elderly manservant, informed me that his mistress was engaged, adding that his imperial highness the crown prince had paid a surprise call.

"The crown prince here!" I gasped, astounded. "Yes, count. And, further, my mistress is in high glee, for my master returned this morning quite unexpectedly from London. He has been out at the ministry for foreign affairs all the evening, and I expect him home at any moment. The crown prince ordered me to ask you to await him here."

Count von Leutenberg in Berlin! What did it mean? He was absurdly jealous, I recollected. He might return at any moment, and find the crown prince alone in the countess' drawing room. If so, the situation might certainly be a most unpleasant one.

Hardly had the thought crossed my mind when I heard the Count enter, his spurs clinking and his saber rattling as he strode up the stairs. I crept forth, listening breathlessly. A few seconds later I heard the Count's voice raised in anger and high, bitter words. Next moment I sprang up the stairs and dashing into the room, found the pretty countess standing near the window, white and rigid as a statue, while the two men in uniform faced each other. Von Leutenberg's countenance was distorted with rage as he abused the crown prince, and openly charged him with having brought about his exile to London.

His highness made no reply, but only smiled sarcastically and shrugged his narrow shoulders. So enraged the other became at this latter gesture that, with a sudden movement, he drew his sword. The countess shrieked and swooned as I sprang forward and stayed her husband's hand.

It was a dramatic moment. The count instantly realized the enormity of his crime, and his hand dropped. "Enough!" cried the crown prince, waving his adversary aside. Then, turning to me, he said in a calm, hard voice:

"Heltzendorff, you are witness that this man has drawn his sword upon the hair of the throne."

And with those haughty words he bowed stiffly and strode out of the room.

A Message From the Emperor. Two hours later I was commanded to the Kaiser's presence, and found him in council with his son.

The Emperor, who wore the uniform of the guards, looked pale and troubled, yet in his eyes there was a keen, determined look. As I passed the sentries and entered the lofty study, with its upholstery and walls of pale green damask—that room from which the Empire and the whole world have so often been addressed—the Kaiser broke off short in his conversation.

Turning to me as he still sat at his littered table, he said in that quick, impetuous way of his:

Emperor, became after a time a wearisome business, however gay and cosmopolitan a man may be. I had only been at home a few hours when a telephone message summoned me at 5 o'clock to the Crown Prince's palace.

His Imperial Highness, who had, I knew, been lunching with the Emperor at the Konigliches Schloss across the bridge, seemed unusually serious and thoughtful. Perhaps the Emperor had again shown his anger at his peccadilloes, as he did so frequently. "Count," he said, after a few seconds of silence, during which I noted that upon his table lay a private letter from the German Ambassador in London. "You will recall my conversation regarding the Countess von Leutenberg—eh?"

"Perfectly," was my reply. "I told you what I should require you to introduce me," he said. "Well, I want you to go so this evening. She has taken a box at the Konigliches Opera tonight, where they play 'Faust.' I shall be there, and you will be with me. Then you will introduce me to your pretty friend, understand?"

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"Count Heltzendorff, the crown prince has informed me of what has occurred this evening in the Lennestraasse. I wish you to convey this at once to Count von Leutenberg and to give it into his own hand. There is no reply."

And his majesty handed me a rather bulky envelope addressed in his own bold handwriting and bearing his own private cipher impressed in black wax.

"Thus commanded, I bowed, withdrew, and took a taxicab straight to the Lennestraasse, being ushered by Josef into the presence of husband and wife in that same room I had quitted a couple of hours before.

I handed the count the packet the Emperor had given me, and with trembling fingers he tore it open. From within he drew three letters, these same letters which his wife had written to London, and which had been intercepted by the secret service—the letters which I had read in his highness' room.

As he scanned the lines which the Emperor had penned his face blanched. A loud cry of dismay escaped his wife as she recognized her own letters, and she snatched the note from her husband's hand and also read it.

The light died instantly from her beautiful countenance. Then, turning to me, she said in a hoarse, hopeless tone:

"Tell His Majesty His Command Shall Be Obedied."

"Thank you, Count von Heltzendorff. Tell his majesty the Emperor that his command shall be—yes, it shall be obeyed."

Those last words she spoke in a deep, hoarse whisper, a strange, wild look of desperation in her blue eyes. An hour later I reported again at the imperial palace, was granted au-

dience of the Emperor, and gave him the verbal reply.

His majesty uttered no word, merely nodding his head slowly in approval.

Next afternoon a painful sensation was caused throughout Berlin when the Abendpost published the news that Count von Leutenberg, the man so recently promoted by the Emperor, and his pretty wife had both been found dead in their room. During the night they had evidently burned some papers, for the tinder was found in the stove, and having agreed to die together, they being so much attached during life, they had both taken prussic acid in some wine, the bottle and half-emptied glasses being still upon the table.

The romantic affair, the truth of which I here reveal for the first time, was regarded by all Berlin as an inexplicable tragedy. The public are still unaware of how those intercepted letters contained serious warnings to the British government of the Emperor's hostile intentions toward Britain, and the probable date of the outbreak of war.

Indeed, they recounted a private conversation which the countess had overheard between the Kaiser and Count Zeppelin, repeating certain opprobrious epithets which the all highest had bestowed upon one or two British statesmen, and she also pointed out the great danger of a pending rupture between the two powers, as well as explaining some details regarding the improved Zeppelins in course of construction secretly on Lake Constance, and certain scandals regarding the private life of the crown prince.

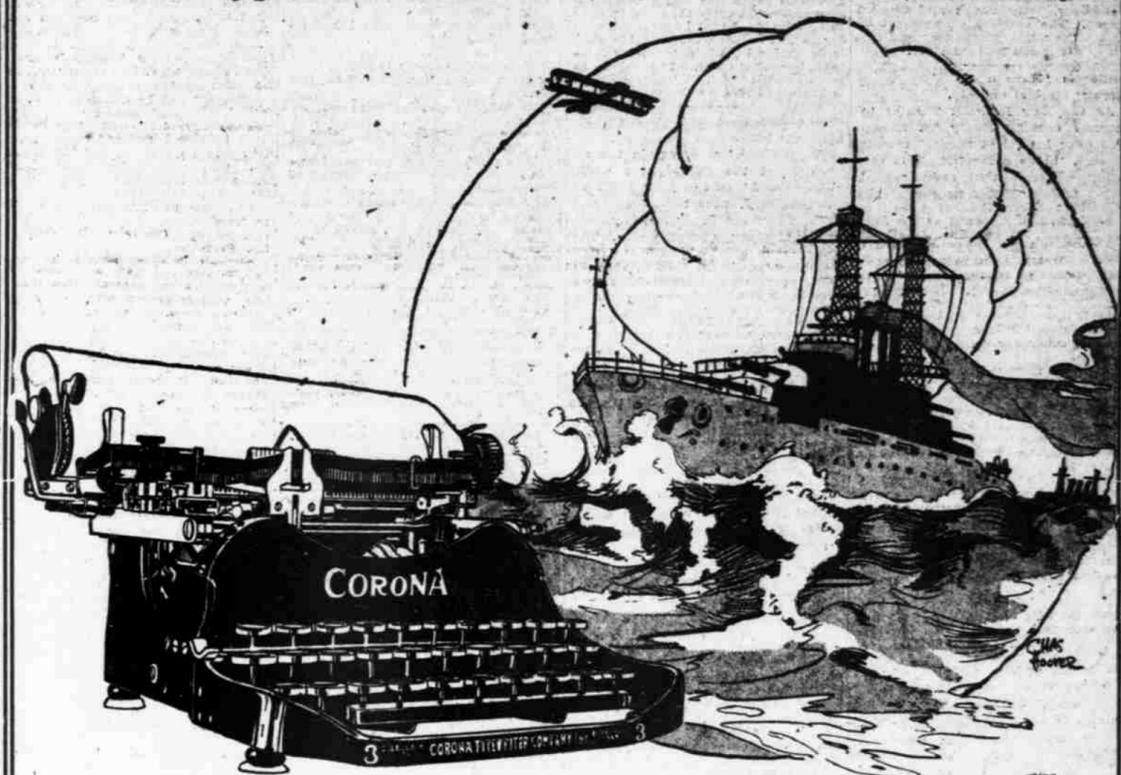
Thus the well meant warnings of an honest English woman never reached the unsuspecting address to which they were sent, and thus did "Willie"—who, as I afterward discovered, devised that subtle vengeance—act as the Emperor's cat's paw.

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This is the first of Count von Heltzendorff's revelations. The second revelation will appear next Sunday, and will tell how the Kaiser escaped assassination.

PARAGUAY SIDES WITH U. S. ASUNCIÓN, Paraguay, April 12.—Formal expression of sympathy with the United States in her position against Germany has been announced by the Paraguayan government. The formal statement asserted that Germany's policy "violates international law."

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