

EPISODE XIX.

**Sojourn at Matariya; a hit below the belt; recovery;
and a new adventure planned.**

It was on Wednesday, the 3rd of November 1943, that I left Benha. In Cairo, I took a room at first at the Turf Club, having arrived there by car and with a large lorry trundling behind me containing my furniture, which I ~~was~~ deposited in a Store. On the whole, I can look back upon my sojourn in Benha as a most attractive experience which I should have been most reluctant to miss. I had become on excellent terms with my neighbours, both officials, townsmen, and fellaheen; and it was the latter I think ~~that~~ whom I liked the best. Of course there were a few less attractive incidents, such for instance as the terrific storm which flooded the ground floor of my house, disconnected my electricity and blew in my windows, this all happening while I chanced to be ill and confined to my bed. In fact on that occasion all my household was ill, and strangely enough it was the timid retiring wife of one of my ghafeers, who rose to the occasion, looked after us all, and did the cooking. There was also one night a rather gruesome murder only about fifty yards from my front door, the cause being apparantly jealousy over land rights. The corps was a poor old man who had had his throat cut, and the murderers though known, could not be arrested for lack of evidence.

In Cairo, I started a wide search for a flat, but accomodation had become scarce, and eventually I decided to make the experiment of taking a flat in the outlying suburb of Hilimia. It was a good sized flat, of eight large rooms, kitchen premises and servants' quarters, and it occupied the whole of the top floor of a big villa standing in its own grounds. It was rather far from Cairo, but in an attractive "country setting", whose quietness I thought would appeal to my Mother.

Its situation was rather romantic, being midway between the little Church marking the ~~right~~ site where by tradition the Holy Family rested when on the flight into Egypt, and an ancient Cleopatra's Needle, like the one which has been transported to the Embankment in London.

My Mother arrived by flying-boat on the morning of Tuesday the 21st of December 1943, looking remarkably agile and graceful as she alighted from the aircraft, and entered the launch to come ashore; and it was difficult indeed to realise that on the coming 12th of May she would reach her 80th Birthday.

Note:

A letter to my Mother from His Majesty King Farouk's
Private Secretary soon after her arrival at Matariya:-

^{iat}
"Secretary Privé

De S.M. le Roi.

19th January, 1944.

Dear Madam,

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt
of your very kind letter of January 12th and to inform you
that I have duly conveyed your message to His Majesty the
King. I am happy to say that His Majesty has greatly
appreciated your kind thought and has commanded me to ex-
press to you his best wishes for a happy stay in Egypt.

Very sincerely yours,

H. Husny,

Private Secretary."

Our residence in Matariya was only of 6 month duration, for we really found it too isolated for convenience. The most important single event while there was my little Mother's 80th Birthday. This we made as gracious a celebration as possible. The day opened with my head servant Ibrahim (now recuperating on "light duty") taking in a silver tray to my Mother's room with her Birthday gifts upon it. Then telegrams and flowers began to arrive, including telegrams from the King, from Prince Mohamed Aly and from many others of our friends. His Majesty also sent a Palace car in the afternoon, and we had a pleasant drive in it, took tea at Gezira, and ended up by going to Abdine Palace to sign the King's Book. It was a most happy day. Other memories include much kindness from our neighbour Judge Amin Shahed, at whose house we were often guests. He and his family were helpful to us in countless ways. Judge Shahed is a remarkable character, - once notoriously anti-British; yet in the war was one of the kindest of hosts to our troops from nearby camps, Officers and other ranks alike, who frequently were given hospitality in his house.

Now in May 1951 Judge SHAHED has found himself unexpectedly a close relative of Her Majesty the Queen of Egypt, the new Queen NARRIMAN, whose wedding to H.M. King Farouk has just been celebrated with much pomp.

Ju Judge Amin bey Shahed has been of the Select few to be present on Family occasions of the Royal Household, and has received a tittle from the king.

The Shahed house is stile however the placid homely place it always was. They take their new honours with reserve and without any loss of balance; and by no means without a warm and kindly thought for that charming Lady lately the Queen and now in quiet yet dignified retirement. I still often have the pleasure of being the Judge's Guest and sometimes I take to their house Claude Massey, the Minister for Australia, who particularly appreciates Shahed bey's stirring qualities.

There was also an occasion of special significance. I received pressing invitations to visit the famous religious leader Sheikh Abdel Wafa El Charkawi at his home in Nag-Hamad

I realized that his wish to see me might be partly to discu

political situation, so before accepting I consulted my Legal Adviser Sims-Marshall, as to whether I need allow that to influence me against acceptance. The latter emphatically advised me that I need do no such things, and that I might even be wrong to fail to respond to this approach. I became the guest of the Reverend Sheikh from the very beginning of my journey Southward, for he had booked a sleeper for me on the train. At Nag Hamadi next morning, I was met by a car which took me to Sheikh Al Sharkawi's house, or rather Palace, for indeed it was a very handsome abode. He did, as I expected, talk politics, and said a good deal that seemed of immediate importance. I was most curteously entertained by the Sheikh and was also invited to take tea at the local Palace of H.H. Prince Youssef Kamal; who was actually our neighbour at Matariya, and I had been his guest on various occasions at his residence there. The second evening, I returned to Cairo, again by night train and again with a compartment already generously provided for me. It is very rare for this Sheikh to entertain foreigners, and my visit was a mark of special good will.

On my return I again consulted Sims-Marshall and asked his opinion as to whether in accordance with the Sheikh's wish I should, as seemed only reasonable, inform our authorities of the main aspects of my talk. This Sims-Marshall strongly urged that I should do.

On visiting our Headquarters, I stated the circumstances and was curteously welcomed; and I was informed by a Senior Officer that a statement from me would be very gratefully received. For this purpose he provided me with a shorthand typist and necessary facilities. In due course I departed feeling that my duty to all concerned had been done.

At Matariya, I had been preparing to give up my flat, but a sad matter intervened, for Ibrahim suddenly became critically ill again and I had some grim days attending him till he could be moved in to Hospital. Everything that was possible I had done

for him; but not long afterwards he died. Ibrahim was a great loss to me, for besides being a very good servant, he was a young man of unusually gentle temperament and with a nature touched by very gracious ways, unusual in his setting. He was a loyal and helpful friend, as well as a good servant, and I remember him always with grateful affection. Rather fortunately perhaps my Mother had already left for Cairo before this sad incident occurred.

Mother became established in the wellknown Osbourne House Pension at that time mainly frequented by Senior Officers and their wives; and I myself settled into another less impressive establishment nearby.

It was at about this time that I received "out of the blue" a most offensive official letter about my Nag Hamadi visit. The implication therein was that the Embassy considered that this had been an interference. I replied in a brusque note; and that seemed the close of yet another gratuitously hurtful incident; but it was not the close, as the following letters will make clear.

From

Mohamed Aly Club,
Cairo, 17th June 1944.

To The British Consul General,
Cairo.

On the 15th of June 1944, I received a message inviting me to call on Miralai Frazer Bey at the Governorate the following day; this I did. I was then informed that the Egyptian Passport Authorities had decided that, as I have no "resident status", I cannot have my visa extended and must leave Egypt forthwith. I request that within my rights as a British subject, all assistance be extended to me for registering my vigorous protest and causing the local authorities to re-consider their refusal to extend my visa which would cause an unreasonable and quite unnecessary hardship on two of His Britannic Majesty's Subjects resident in Egypt. I suggest that this case is one

of more than mere personal importance.

I have the honour to be etc...

H.H.J.

Mohamed Aly Club

Cairo 3rd August 1944.

To The Rt.Hon. Baron Killearn, P.C., G.C.M.G., C.B., M.V.O.,
H.B.M. Ambassador,
British Embassy,
Cairo.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to state that it has been brought to my notice that rumours to the effect that I am working against British interests in the Middle East are being spread concerning me and that such rumours have originated through certain official channels.

I emphatically deny that by word, thought, or deed, I have consciously or unconsciously, been guilty of any action which is against British interests, either during the War or at any other time.

On the evening of the 14th of June, my Mother was disturbed by a visit from an official of the Egyptian Police (an Englishman) who, on visiting her pension would not even wait in the reception room, but came actually to her bedroom. His enquiries about myself, my passport etc... much alarmed my Mother, who is a Lady 80 years of age and in delicate health, to the extent that her heart condition was accentuated, and the next day she was in a state of collapse and had to be admitted to the Anglo-American Hospital. I maintain that this most aggressive Police action was wholly unnecessary. As British subjects, my name and my Mother's, are always registered correctly at the British Consulate General, where, had the official sought in the proper place, he would immediately have found my address, which is different to that of my Mother. It almost seemed that an attempt had been made to create an "atmosphere" suggesting that I had concealed my whereabouts. Later developments are all recorded in my recent correspondence with the British Consul General;

The curious outline has been that:-

- a) A Senior Official of the Cairo Governorate informed me on June the 15th that on the technical point only of my not having resident status in spite of 8 years residence in Egypt, I must

leave this country forthwith.

- b) The Egyptian authorities at the Ministry of Interior state that they have no wish to press for my departure, unless the British Consul General confirms that this is desired at the British Consulate General.
- c) The British Consul General personally has told me emphatically that any suggestion that the British Consulate General wishes for my departure "would be absurd".
- d) A very high Egyptian Official has apologized to me for the grave lack of official consideration shown towards my Mother's welfare.
- e) Although both the Egyptian and British Authorities directly concerned deny any intention to force me to leave Egypt, my visa actually still remains in abeyance.

Whatever the cause of the situation in which I find myself, it is evidently right and proper that I should place the whole circumstances before the highest possible British authority in Egypt, with an urgent request for a clear enquiry into this most serious injustice.

I have the honour to be,
Your Excellency's
obedient servant,

H.H.J.

British Consulate General, Cairo

1st September 1944.

To Sqdn.Ldr. Hindle-James,
Mohamed Aly Club,
Cairo.

Sir,

I am directed by His Majesty's Consul General to refer to your interviews and your correspondence with him concerning your residence in Egypt, and to state that he has today addressed a letter to the Director of the Permits and Passports Service of the Ministry of the Interior, requesting that your permit to reside in Egypt may be extended.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
H.R. Bird, H.M. Consul.

Mohamed Aly Club, Cairo

17th November 1944.

To B.A.B. Burrows Esq.,
First Secretary,
British Embassy,
Cairo.

Dear Burrows,

I have received a communication from His Britannic Majesty's Consul General stating that a letter has been sent from him to the Egyptian Minister of Interior requesting that my visa to continue residence in Egypt be granted as usual. I have also been personally informed by the Commandant of the Cairo City Police, that the political obstructions to my continued residence in Egypt have been unconditionally and officially removed.

Yours sincerely,

H.H.J.

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= Note : The Commandant at that time was of course a British
Official.

From Sqdn.Ldr. H.H.J. etc...

18th March 1946.

To Air Marshal Sir Charles Medhurst, K.C.B., O.B.E., M.C.,
Headquarters R.A.F. Mediterranean and Middle East
Cairo.

My dear Air Marshal,

Very many thanks for your *D.O.* letter. I will first of
all answer the main question which you inform me the Embassy has
put forward.

The offer of an appointment in Aleppo or Baghdad was made
to me by Lt.Col. Mason, at the Ministry of Information. I
warned him of possible objections but he confirmed the offer to me.
Later he informed me with some distress that after all objections
had been raised from a quarter over which he "had no control".
Colonel Mason insisted that I should again visit his office to meet
his Director Mr. Ryan. I duly met Mr. Ryan in Colonel Mason's
office. He received me with courtesy but explained that our
Embassy did not wish me to have an official appointment. This
offer to me was therefore cancelled.

This case is typical of other experiences which I have had,
and for which I have been able to obtain neither explanation nor
redress.

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I suggest that even if papers were lost at the time of Alamein, yet there must be knowledge of why action has continued to be pressed against me after that date. Although it is distasteful to me, I am now obliged to mention certain curious aspects of this endeavour. In the early stages of arranging to get my visa renewed in the normal way, as I happened to be very unwell, a friend of mine, a British Colonel, kindly offered to do this for me. Both the Colonel and a Senior British Official who assisted him in this, though the latter did not then know me personally, to their surprise found delay and obstruction from a British source. The official, whom I later came to know well, has since informed me that he was actually contacted by the Embassy, and requested not to give me any help, as it was intended to make it impossible for me to stay in Egypt. He protested and said "but surely you have no right to do a thing like that"? To which the reply was made "possibly not, but we are going to try".

In trying to visualize the cause of this abnormal affair, I can only suppose that the first origin is a series of misunderstandings, but I know also that there was, even before my own difficulties, a state of strain between Colonel Cawthorn and the Embassy. I was not aware of any enmity towards me personally. Having started an attack on me, it seems that, when it became clearly unjust, instead of admitting mistakes, efforts have been made to bolster up the attack. Above all, however, I find it difficult to express adequately how detestable has been the callous disregard which has been shown for the welfare and safety of my Mother. She is, as you know, an aged lady, frail in health, and she has suffered irreparable harm, especially through the attempt to force me to leave Egypt at a time when she was seriously ill.

With my kindest regards, I am,

Most sincerely Yours,

H.H.J.

** Note: Lord Killearn had denied to Air Marshal Sir C. Medhurst that our Embassy had any objection to my being given an official appointment. This proved to be manifestly incorrect.

Memorandum

To Mr. Audsley,
British Embassy, Cairo.

After referring the details of my case to Air Marshal Medhurst, the matter was pressed by him as far as could be done. The outcome however was unsatisfactory, and replies from the Embassy ambiguous. I therefore decided to make a further approach to the British Embassy direct ~~xyingx~~ prior to making an appeal as had been suggested by the Legal Adviser at H.Q., R.A.F., M.E.D./M.E., direct to the Premier in England.

I made my approach through Mr. Audsley, Counsellor at the Embassy, to whom I had already a personal introduction.

(The following are extracts from the Memorandum to Mr. Audsley)

"I accepted the political appointment which I held at the special request of the Foreign Office and Air Ministry. This appointment was more than once extended at the further request of the above mentioned authorities. The appointment was resigned voluntarily by myself when it became apparent that its appropriateness had ceased. I had no regret in resigning the appointment, except concerning the complete lack of graciousness shown by the British Embassy at the time of my resignation. The then A.O.C.-in-C., I particularly exclude from this suggestion of ungraciousness, and he expressed at the time complete confidence in my integrity and in the attitude I had taken....."

"Mr. Audsley asked if I had any special suggestion to make, for my satisfaction, and I replied that my request was of a very moderate though urgent nature, and merely that I should receive the normal courtesies from the Embassy to which a Senior British resident here is entitled, and that in order to eliminate further mis-statements by persons of ill will, I should be received by the Embassy in such a way that this would be clearly seen by the British community in general, i.e. such as an invitation to luncheon, where my name would appear in the press in the normal way as amongst the guests invited. Mr. Audsley stated that he considered this a very reasonable request and undertook to put it forward strongly to H.E. the Ambassador."

15th of October 1946.

Mohamed Aly Club, Cairo.

7th January 1947.

To Air Marshal Sir Charles Medhurst,

My Dear Air Marshal,

The attached newspaper cutting (which refers to my presence at an Embassy luncheon party) may interest you, as it gives the "outward and visible sign" that my point has been gained. I have, as you know, required no dramatic re-adjustment, but merely the vindication of my ordinary personal dignity and my prestige as an honourably invalided Officer. The appointment I held during several years, was not of my seeking, but by the invitation of High Authority, which saw fit also on various occasions to express appreciation of my work. I sought no "rewards", but I was quite determined that no unsound misapprehension should be allowed to persist either through the misunderstanding or the malice of any person.

I am deeply appreciative of the assistance recently extended to me by certain authorities at our Embassy, and in particular of the generous consideration and clarification initiated by yourself which has led to this re-adjustment.

With an expression again of my sincere thanks and kindest regards, believe me,

Very sincerely yours,

H.H.J.

The above letters have run rather ahead in date in respect to other events in this episode, but they seem to tell a more coherent description in that way. I will now return to the ordinary sequence of events which I find more congenial to remember though the other too has its entertaining aspects when regarded objectively as a study of the extraordinary pettiness that can exist in high places which would be merely funny except that it can also evidently be dangerous to affairs of state as well as to personal affairs.

In Cairo I continued a routine of various interests amongst which was the acceptance of an invitation to broadcast for the E.S.B. I first did a series of travel talks and was amused one day to find my picture appearing in the local press above an intriguing description in terms quite amiably flattering. I also with Royal permission did a series of broadcasts upon H.M. King Farouk for which I received eventually the following letter.

RAS EL TIN PALACE, ALEXANDRIA
August 13th 1946.

Secrétariat Privé de S.M. le Roi.

My dear Mr. Hindle-James,

I have duly received and presented to His Majesty the volume bound in leather and containing the Script of the three very interesting Broadcasts that you have recently made in cooperation with the Egyptian State Broadcasting. Appreciating your kind thought, the King has commanded me to convey an expression of sincere thanks to you and to Mr. Richards and his collaborators for the part they have taken in arranging the broadcasts and

preparing the volume.

I avail myself of the opportunity to congratulate you once more on the success of your Broadcasts,

Yours very sincerely,

H. Husni.

Private Secretary to H.M. the King.

I had the privilege on one occasion of being present at the opening of the Egyptian Parliament and in November 1944 I was included in a party consisting of the Air and Army Commanders-in-Chief and one or two Senior Officers Egyptian and British to visit the Royal Estate at Château d'Inchass. This is a vast property mainly used for fruit farming and agricultural experiments, but there is also a model village for the King's employees, and an interesting Museum, small but well arranged, which is His Majesty's special hobby. His Majesty was present with us in person and was a charming and entertaining Host. I also had the privilege on October 26th 1944 to be one of the guests invited to a luncheon party at Abdin Palace which was given by His Majesty King Farouk in honour of Mr. Terence Shone the British Minister to Egypt who was acting as Chargé d'Affaires during the temporary absence of Lord Killearn. I found the occasion of great interest and was very pleasantly treated by the Palace entourage, and other friends of mine, British and Egyptian, though possibly one or two of our Embassy folk might have preferred my space to my presence, though Shone himself who has always been a friend of mine was very pleasant. Another occasion which I suppose was officially rather important of me, was my formal attendance at a Levée at Abdin Palace when I was presented to His Majesty by Air Marshal Sir Charles Medhurst in company with other officers of his staff who were also being formally presented. Of course this was not my first presentation to the King but it was congenial to be thus presented again in the company of my brother officers.

It is interesting for me to recall that my first contacts with His Majesty King Farouk of Egypt were not, as certain people have sometimes tried to imply, from some mysterious political angle, but because quite simply a mutual friend, who knew of His Majesty's interest in the social welfare of his people, told the King of my former endeavours in that field in England. His Majesty sent a message asking if he might see certain papers of mine on this subject; and that is how this friendship started, the privilege of which I am still allowed to maintain. The following letter from Sir Louis Greig, with whom I had been on friendly terms since many years, though, of an earlier date, it seems appropriate to remember at this point in my narrative. It is as follows;—

The following is an extract from a letter of mine to Group Captain Sir Louis Greig:-

"Fahmy Pasha Palace,
Benha,
1st July, 1943.

I was glad to hear of your visit and your meeting again with the young King here. H.M. seems to have been exceedingly glad to see you again. I happen of recent years to have been in rather personal touch with H.M. ..
..... These contacts lead me to suggest that definite qualities do exist there which can, by sympathy and understanding, be developed to the real advantage of future British Egyptian co-operation.
..... "

The following is an extract from Sir Louis Greig's reply:-

Air Ministry
Whitehall S.W.I.

26th August 1943

Dear Hindle James,

I was glad to get your letter of July 1st., which has only just arrived and I was most interested to hear of your observations about the King of Egypt and to find that they had tallied exactly with mine. He is a fine fellow, & could be a very great friend of this country. I hope your health is improving & that you are enjoying life.

Your sincerely
(signed) Louis Greig

To/ Squadron Leader H.Hindle James O.B.E.
(R.A.F.retd)

Saraya Fahmy Pasha
Benha - Egypt.

* Note: Group Capt Sir Louis Grieg. At one time Private Secretary to H.M. King George VI. He still holds: an official appointment at the Court as extra Gentleman Usher.

I include now a letter to me from General Haidar Pasha in reply to one I sent him congratulating him upon promotion. Haidar Pasha after some recent vicissitudes since the Palestine war, is now again Commander - in - Chief (July 1951). He is very much "the man of the moment" again, likely, I surmise, to be much heard of in the near future. He & I have for long been on cordial terms. This is his letter. -

Ministry of Social Affairs
Prisons Administration
Under Sec. of State's Office
Cairo, 14th Nov. 1944

This is his letter:

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Ministry of Social Affairs
Prisons Administration
Under Sec. of States
Office.

Cairo, 14th Nov 1944

Dear Squadron Leader Hindle James

It gave me profound pleasure to receive your kind letter of 9th. instant. Very many thanks for your good wishes & sincere congratulations. Please accept my best compliments

I remain

Yours very sincerely
(signed) Moh. Haidar.

of
Yet another letter, which follows now, is special personal interest to me, It is from AZZAM Pasha, now Secr, General of the Arab League, and was written to me at a time when that tendencies seemed towards a more cooperative relationship with the British Governement than in fact has since developped. This retardment the Palestine "impasse" has certainly played no small part in increasing.

Ministère des Affaires Etrangères
Le Secrétaire Général
Cairo. 12 Nov. 1944

My dear Mr. James,

I received your congratulations which encouraged me. The day will come when every body will see what the experienced few are seeing & that Arab Unity & strength & prosperity is fundamental to the stability of at least a great part of this old world. I hope to

See you when I come back from the Higaz & have the pleasure of a long talk.

YOURS VERY SINCERELY
(signed) A. R. AZZAM.

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There came to us at last the news of the ending of the War. The following photo extracts from the Egyptian Mail dated May, the 8th, 1945, and the Egyptian Gazette of August, the 12th, 1945, herewith record those momentous dates.

Momentous indeed they were, and yet in Cairo there was very little manifestation of any particular jubilation. Amongst the British community there was a quiet solemn thankfulness; amongst the Egyptians, that is to say amongst those who had any means of estimating the meaning of world affairs, there was only a kind of uneasy acceptance, and a non-committal attitude of congratulation for this United Nations Victory. The tenor of daily life did not as yet alter very much for better or for worse.

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During my years in Egypt I have had many happy times at Manial Roda Palace, the Cairo Residence of H/R/H/ Prince Mohamed Aly. The Prince, who is Heir to the Throne, is generally spoken of as the King's uncle; in fact He is a cousin, being the brother of the late ex Khedive Abbas, who was deposed by the British in 1914, his eventual successor being King Fuad, father of the present King. The fact that the Heir to the Throne is much older than the King, of wide experience, and in fact at one time with prior rights to the Throne, have ofcourse made their relationship understandably a little strained at times.

I have^{been}/very kindly privileged in my relationship with Prince Mohamed Aly, to whom I was first presented many years ago by that wellknown figure Colonel Jennings-Bramly of Burg El Arab. The Prince gives rare but very charming receptions. To be His guest at a luncheon is a remarkable experience, these occasions being stately yet pleasantly informal; so that the guests feel at ease and yet in an atmosphere of courtly dignity. Foods, often delicious Turkish dishes, and refreshing drinks are excellent; there is handsome old silver, mostly Royal-Heir-looms; the Damascus linen beautiful. A particular sort of party occasionally given by H.R.H. is of an unique sort. The little formal invitation card invites one "for walk in the garden" in the morning. The Prince on such occasions receives his guests without ceremony and one strolls agreeably in the beautiful Palace gardens, full of trees and flowers of types collected by the Prince during the course of his world-wide travels. Finally there is an assembly at a

group of small tables under a wide spreading banyan tree, to drink iced coffee served with sandwiches before departing.

I have been allowed to present many of my friends to H.R.H., including in my official days Brigadier Iltyd Clayton, the Head of my then department at G.H.Q. The Brigadier was brother of the famous General Sir Gilbert Clayton whom I, as a Junior Officer, had admired from afar in Iraq. Other friends presented at different times included Bob Maxwell, B.O.A.C. Chief here when I was working with him; the Hon. Steven Runsiman; Lord Forbes (now Granard), Lord Kinross; A.V.M. Sir William Havers, and so on. With the permission of the Prince I once wrote an article on Manial Roda Palace and its Prince, which I believe still exists.

Early in February 1946 there occurred the death of H.E. Ahmed Hassanein Pasha in a grievous road accident. It happened that I had an appointment with him at his house that morning, but as he was a very busy man, I rang up as usual to confirm whether he would be there. To my surprise and uneasiness I could get no answer at all to my telephone calls to his residence. My call was made from the Turf Club, and as I left the telephone box, I heard a fellow member commenting on the motor accident which had in fact deprived me of a very sincere friend as well as a valuable counsellor. The loss too was a very grave one for His Majesty to whom the experience and human understanding of Hassanein Pasha had been of inestimable service since the days of His Majesty's early boyhood.

This great statesman had done great work for the peaceful progress of his country internally and externally; may his Soul also rest in Peace. I now quote from an article of mine written by special permission of the King, part

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of which deals with an episode of possibly unique interest, in which Hassanein Pasha is a central figure.

Our thoughts turn now to quite a different scene.

It is the Holy Month of the fast of Ramadan when, during the day, no good Moslem may allow either food or water to pass his lips from before dawn till after sunset. At sunset, however, there is ritual breaking of the fast, when families and companions gather together to ease the hunger and thirst of their day's fasting. In Egypt, during Ramadan, by order of the King, the Governors of Provinces arrange at sunset ample meals at His Majesty's personal expense for the very poor of all their districts, and at these gatherings the Governor himself must be present as host to represent the King.

His Majesty, during the Holy Month, also entertains at His Palace the Religious and Government leaders, high officers, and notables. There is a banquet, too, for a great gathering of workmen, the representatives of many and various workers' syndicates; preachers and leaders of Islamic sects are also entertained and, last but not least, His Majesty is host to the foreign Islamic students, who just now include representatives of no less than 26 nationalities.

In that year, for the first time, His Majesty King Farouk had also re-instituted the old traditional custom by which great landowners throw open their gates, after fasting ceases at sunset, to all their tenants to hear the reading of the Koran and to receive the hospitality of the house.

I had had the King's permission to bring guests myself to these readings at Abdine Palace, and on this occasion my guests were a British general and another senior officer.

On approaching the Palace we find a great crowd. Fine looking members of the Royal Body Guard are controlling and directing these people who are entering the Palace courtyard and even the main Palace gates, normally reserved for high personages, in a quiet and orderly manner.

One of the King's chamberlains comes forward to greet us, and we are conducted to one of the apartments inside the Palace. Amongst the crowd there are evidently many country folk who have come up from outside town, and this is proved when, on my way to the inner apartment, a young man in peasant dress steps forward to greet me. He is a farmer whom I had known when living on a Pasha's estate some distance outside Benha. We are most kindly welcomed and, while we drink coffee, high personages of the Royal entourage come up to speak to us.

Many well-known figures are there. General Attalla Pasha, Chief of the Army Staff; General Heidar Pasha, Under-Secretary of State for Social Affairs; General Negoumy Pasha, who, in his dapper, wiry build and dark complexion, shows that the Sudan is his Country.

Then Teymour Pasha, the King's First Chamberlain, with his gracious old-world manner comes up to greet us; then many young A.D.C's and, last but not least, Doctor Husny Bey, the King's Private Secretary, a personality of distinctive charm whose quiet and modest bearing gives little indication of the high and intimate office he holds in the Royal Household.

There is a stir and the King's approach is announced. We guests group ourselves at the foot of the great staircase in the Palace central hall. Then appears the Royal Party, slowly descending towards us, led by a youthful figure, his dark, formal dress covered by a picturesque evening cloak. Behind him are a few of his highest Officers of State, including the tall and distinguished figure of Hassanein Pasha, Chief of the Royal Cabinet.

It is no easy matter, as I think one can realise for a young man slowly to descend a vast staircase before large watching crowds and yet to look dignified and not self conscious, but somehow His Majesty achieves this. On reaching us, we are each presented to the King, then form up behind him, and, in procession, we leave the Hall and cross the Palace court-yard to enter an apartment on the far side, and it is then that a stirring scene occurs, for, gathered in the court-yard are several thousand of His Majesty's subjects. There is a great shout on his appearance, and a surge forward of the crowd, which is with difficulty held in check by the Royal Body Guard, and even they cannot prevent one or two enthusiasts breaking through and kissing the King's cloak as he passes.

The apartment we then enter has the King's chair at the far end and beside it a divan upon which are sitting, cross-legged, the religious Sheikhs who are about to recite from the Koran this evening. Court officials are behind the King and we, his guests, are seated on chairs nearby. The atmosphere is dignified and solemn.

The reciting then starts, and through the broad windows of the apartment the King and his subjects in the court-yard can mutually see each other.

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The voice of the Sheikh is beautifully toned and the recital reminds one rather of chanting in a cathedral. There is complete silence except at any stirring passage when there are murmured cries of "Allah" from the great throng outside. After about twenty minutes there is a pause. His Majesty speaks to the Sheikhs, "sherbert" is served to us all and then the Royal Party leaves the room and similar scenes are enacted as before while we pass to the main Palace building. His Majesty retires, but Hassanein Pasha comes to us and suggests that we should take coffee with him in his study in the upper part of the Palace.

Hassanein Pasha's study is a large but friendly room with comfortable arm-chairs. On His Excellency's enormous desk are silver objects, among them gifts from his Sovereign, with whom he has, of course, been closely associated in loyal service since the King's boyhood. We are chatting pleasantly when the door behind us opens and we see Hassanein Pasha suddenly stand up. On turning we are somewhat startled to find that it is the King himself who has entered unannounced.

We stand to attention but rapidly there develops an easy and friendly atmosphere, and it is interesting to notice with what a pleasant mixture of personal dignity and yet respect the youthful Sovereign treats his guests of very senior military rank. A conversation on various topics follow, mainly on shooting and world travel, and then His Majesty leaves us again, with a hearty handshake to each of us before departing.

And so we are conducted from the Palace carrying a warm and unusual evening.

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At the ^{beginning of} ~~beginning of~~ 1947 a proposition arose which caused a complete alteration in the course of our way of living. My sister Molly who by now had gone to Australia from the Argentine, to reside upon the extensive property which her husband have recently inherited from his father, wrote to my Mother suggesting that we two should proceed for a visit to Australia. The proposition seemed at first a somewhat startling one but of course most congenial from the point of view of a reunion again with my sister and her family, and the thought of seeing her grand children again obviously filled my Mother with great happiness. We considered the matter from every point of view. It so happened that my brother proceeding on leave from Uganda chose at this time to travel to England via the Nile and Egypt. It was delightful to welcome him in Cairo and he too joined with us in considering this Australian plan. He and I could not fail to realise that in spite of its attractiveness there was a certain definite risk in my Mother venturing on such an enterprise; for such a complete change of climate and circumstances would obviously, with her gracious seniority of years, be a definite strain upon her constitution. We also had some slight misgivings as to what might be the actual reactions of my sister and her household upon the arrival in their midst of two relatives who with the passing of years might in a way seem almost strangers. We put these points of view to my sister and her husband in an exchange of letters. A telegram came back to us briefly saying "definitely come", and so that was our decision.

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Faced with the decision to depart, one set to work to organize plans. For me it was a basic uprooting. Everything I had planned for the future now meant nothing. I had somehow to re-orientate my thoughts and hopes. It is always however a heart-warming thing to feel one is wanted, — and it was on this note that my Mother and I always ended ~~our discussions~~ when discussing the future with a trepidation which was inevitable. For Mother indeed the plan had special attractions; to go to her daughter's home and be part of a real family again. I had done my best to make her happy, but understandably Mother did not really like Cairo very much; and subconsciously again she was seeking what could now never be found in this world at least, the loved companionship of my Father.

To get a sea passage was very difficult; but at last a ship became available, an Egyptian ship the *Misir*. She was quite a small vessel, lately a British Troop ship, bought by an Egyptian Shipping Company. This was to be her first voyage under the Egyptian flag. Her mates and crew were Egyptians, but her Captain was an Austrian Ex-Naval Officer, who had been till recently interned by the British in Uganda. Captain Drexel and his charming young wife who was with him turned out however to be a very pleasant pair. We found them very companionable during our long six-weeks voyage. By the kind intercession of Commander Atif, then King Farouk's Naval A.D.C., there was reserved for my Mother what had been the cabin of the O.C. Troops, with a private bathroom. I was given what had been the Adjutant's cabin next door. We were fortunate for the ship was closely crowded. My Mother and I were received in farewell audience by H/R/H/ Prince Mohamed Aly who was charming to us both; and I went to a farewell

luncheon at our Embassy. My last weeks were made rather difficult because I became unwell with an unexplained fever, and had to spend ten days in bed, which was most inconvenient. Before leaving Cairo, I was once more received in audience by H.M. the King. I will now quote from a description which I wrote just afterwards of this interesting farewell occasion.

"This time the scene is Kubba Palace, the family residence of Egypt's Royal Family, just outside Cairo.

It is not an informal meeting to which I am going now, but in response to a Royal Command to attend a formal Audience with His Majesty the King, delivered to me at my flat by an N.C.O. of the Palace Guard, a fine fellow in a fine uniform. Not having a car of my own, a kind British friend has lent me his car and chauffeur to add dignity to my approach. The audience is timed for 5.30 p.m., and it is dusk as I reach the Palace.

Again I pass through a wide area of orchards and gardens till we reach the lofty wall of the inner palace area, and pass by saluting guards through the handsome archway of the gate. The car stops at the foot of an impressive flight of steps. Feeling a little solitary I mount these steps, and at the top the familiar figure, dignified and gracious with the charm of "ancien régime", is Teymour Pasha, and he, with a kindly welcome, at once restores my confidence.

A brief wait occurs in an ante-room, made interesting by discussion with Teymour Pasha on the beautiful selection of paintings which are on the walls. An A.D.C., then arrives with a summons for me to attend the Royal Presence. Passing through two more rooms

handsomely but comfortably furnished, I am escorted to a lofty open doorway, and then left to enter alone. I then find myself in a very large "L" shaped apartment, spacious curtained windows along one side, and lighted in an unusual way by what appear to be a series of braziers all around the room, giving a warm and friendly glow.

Soon I am seated in an arm-chair near the King. We smoke and talk of the many things which have happened since our last meeting, and then he asks about my proposed visit to Australia, and asks about its people, culture, newspapers, and way of life.

At last it is time to leave, and His Majesty, with a warm handshake, bids me good-bye and "bon voyage" and is so gracious as to express a Royal hope that I will not fail to return to Egypt before very long.

I leave the Royal presence, my audience is over.

And so ends this very formal occasion — which was not so formal after all."

The following is a letter from H.R.H. Prince Mohamed Aly:

Dear Mr. James,

"I have received your most kind letter and I am sorry to hear that you are leaving Egypt.

Such is life and the world:everything has got its end.

I hear that you are intending to live with your brother-in-law in Australia; you will certainly find yourself in that country in a friendly atmosphere.

I thank you for your kind thought in sending me the small memento as a souvenir, as well as, also, for your warm good wishes.

With my kind regards to your mother, believe me sincerely yours.
Mohammed Aly.

Of course I had become closely acquainted with the Palace entourage of Prince Mohamed Ali, especially Ahmed Mokhtar Bey (who was also a Member of Parliament). Mokhtar Bey at one period of his career had been actively anti-British but this had since changed. He is a man of charming manner but not without astuteness in intrigue for his own benefit. Said Bey Lutfi, Director of the Prince's Domains has always seemed to me of quiet and sincere temperament; but it was Youssef Bey Taha with whom I became most acquainted. The latter was himself of Royal descent, being of the family of the famous Taha Pasha, and so related through marriage to Mohamed Ali the Great. Youssef Bey Taha and I became on close terms, and as he was a very well informed man, and in H.R.H.'s special confidence, he had a fund of interesting knowledge both of the past and present. He also had a keen and sometimes caustic turn of humour which often lent a piquant turn to his conversation. I shall always remember very cordially my many years association with Youssef Bey, his consideration to myself and also his good will to England, for which latter quality he seemed to receive strangely little official recognition from our diplomatic folks. Youssef's much elder brother had been private Secretary to the Khedive Abbas Helmy, who was deposed by the British at the outbreak of the first World war. Actually that Taha was himself also well known for his good relationship with the British. As I knew him, he was still a fine type of distinguished gentleman of the old-world sort. After the Khedive's banishment he lived in very quiet retirement in Cairo. Both he and Youssef had inherited only very modest means, and of course their relationship with the successors of the deposed Khedive were somewhat strained, and so no preferment from that quarter could be looked for. Youssef's position as H.R.H.'s private Secretary was often I know financially difficult. Later, but after his brother's death,

Youssef inherited a considerable fortune; not that this seemed actually to bring him much increased happiness.

Of H.R.H. himself I shall always retain the memory of a personality truly representative of what is connoted by the term "a princely figure", in its romantic, as well as impressive implication. Of dapper build, with keen eyes, fine features, and the trim pointed beard which one associates with the dignity of our senior Navy ranks, the Prince was always dressed with perfect appropriateness to each particular occasion. The only slight touch of oriental flamboyance was a magnificent emerald ring always worn upon the little finger of his left hand, said to be valued at many thousand pounds. H.R.H.'s manner was fully in keeping with his appearance; of natural dignity yet easy, and full of charm and invariable courtesy. The Prince, being a World wide traveller, and a student of humanity, of history, and the arts, - he has considerable talent in water colour sketches - was always a most entertaining conversationalist. In his early youth H.R.H. had been the guest of H.M. Queen Victoria; and at the Russian Royal Court, in the days of its glory. His reminiscences of those days of Royal splendour, and his intimate accounts of the great personages of those times, had a touch of that dignity and spaciousness of living which, for better or worse, seems now, to have left for ever this World of "progress"; which so far seems in fact to retain many grievous aspects of past history, but without the pomp and grandeur which occasionally lent at least some zest and thrill both to those participating and those looking on.

In his personal opinions H.R.H. belongs also to a past age, - autocratic, just, yet often ruthless. Some fifty years ago H.R.H. could have been a great Sovereign ruler, as successful perhaps as Mohamed Ali the Great, his famous ancestor. In this generation however his success would be more doubtful.

In looking back I shall deem it always a fortunate privilege to have experienced the historic interest of knowing this most Princely of Middle Eastern personalities, and to have known the kindly hospitality of this Prince, so human in its warmth. There were very few people whom H.R.H. honoured with his more personal intimacy; - and I retain a memory which I greatly esteem, when I was included by Prince Mohamed Ali in a little gathering of "elder Statesmen", in which besides our Royal host, the only others present were Sherif Sabry Pasha, (brother of H.M. Queen Nazli) and Aziz Ezzat Pasha (an early Ambassador to London), both of exactly similar impressiveness as the Prince, and both of whom had been co-Regents with H.R.H., during His Majesty King Farouk's Minority.

A little known aspect of H.R.H.'s private life is his romantic and happy marriage with a French Lady. In the days of his youth the Prince met this lady who came from a good but not aristocratic setting. The lady also could not agree to change her faith so the marriage was therefore strongly opposed by His Highness Abbas Hilmy, Khedive of Egypt, Prince Mohamed Ali's brother; and the young couple were faced with many frustrations and anxieties before eventually the obstacles to marriage were overcome. They have been a devoted couple ever since. The lady has however never been accorded official position at the Egyptian Court, and has lived very quietly in her husband's Palaces. She is always spoken of as "Madame" but is seldom referred to except amongst a small circle of the Prince's special friends, including for instance Mrs Elgood that remarkable, dignified and energetic figure amongst our British community.

It was a long time before I had the privilege of meeting "Madame"; and then I discovered a charming petite lady, with lovely white hair and gentle and attractive voice and manners, simple yet dignified and very princessly in her bearing. Obviously she has deep affection for her husband and her thoughts seldom seem far from him and his welfare. This was very noticeable during Air-Raid alerts in war-time, for wherever she happened to be away from the Palace and her Prince she would immediately return, regardless of personal danger, to be with him. This devotion H.R.H. obviously reciprocates. Indeed a charming life time romance which has peacefully outlived its tempetuous beginning. This happy pair have however no family so there has been no complication concerning royal inheritance.

One of these final flash backs, when I think on those days of preparation for an apparently final departure from Cairo, is of the hospitality of el Lewa (General) Gayer Anderson Pasha. He had had a varied Military and diplomatic career in the East, including a period as Oriental Secretary at Cairo's British Embassy. Then he decided to retire, and with his twin brother, conceived the unique idea of becoming the possessor of one of the most ancient palaces in the old quarter of Cairo. This rambling mansion, known as the Beit Karetlia, adjoined the famous mosque of ibn Tulun. The Egyptian Government arranged for him to have this residence at a nominal rent, on a reciprocal arrangement with Gayer Anderson that he would bequeath this home and his unique collection of oriental furniture and antiquities in due course to the Egyptian Nation. I have very interesting experience of being a guest of the distinguished owner of this great mansion, indeed an impressive abode, even if one sometimes felt that it might be a difficult place to live in from the aspect of ordinary home comforts.

There was a yearly local festival in memory of a local Moslem "Saint", when Anderson always gave a special party. From a secluded balcony of his, one watched the festivities; which included ritual dancing. This ritual ecstasy would increase in energy until the dancers began even to pierce their flesh with needles and skewers, - a gruesome sight, even though apparently painless for the fanatical participants. Often a visit to the Beit Karetlia included a tour of its neighbouring Tulun Mosque, of which Anderson had expert historical knowledge. In this exotic setting Anderson lived out his latter years, happy and active amidst an atmosphere of patriarchal prestige; and now in Cairo the Beit Karetlia still remains a monument to his memory. Of similar memory is the old house near Guiza, once I think an ancient convent, which old Macpherson inhabited till his death, also unique in atmosphere in its time, and famous for its hospitality. There is still a street there named Sharia Macpherson, but the house I believe is gone. My last memory of Macpherson (he was then about 80 having arrived in Egypt in about 1909) was his arrival at an official reception given by Lord Kinross, just before I left Egypt, in his attractive riverside house, also old, and of oriental type. Mac. arrived, riding in the fashion of the old days, upon a handsomely caparisoned white donkey.

Our days sped on apace. There was much to supervise, including the sale of my furniture, though even now I retained in store just a few favourite possessions, Sentimentally I fear, and without much logical reason ! I telephoned a goodbye message to our friend Vittorio G. at his handsome Alexandria mansion, where we had spent that rather exotic visit the year before--ending in an unexpected breakdown of our host's car in the desert on our way back to Cairo ! However we spent a comfortable night at the Desert Rest House, and all was well next day. I also had a little assembly at Shepheard's Hotel, to say goodbye to dear Lorna Borton, looking particularly trim and elegant that day. Brigadier Brown was with us, Robin Cornell (of Australia), and Omar Rageb. Shazli Pasha also joined us, and we were a cheery party despite farewells.

In those busy days I cannot omit a tribute to my faithful servant Mohi for his real help and consideration. One of my saddest farewells was the moment of parting from this loyal retainer of mine.

Actually in the outcome of unforeseen events, Mohi returned to me. He was in fact amongst the first to greet me upon my eventual solitary return to Egypt. He is still with me now.

Much kindness surrounded us in the days of our final departure. Sir William Havers came to see us off at Cairo Station, and Brigadier Hackett and his wife met us with a car in Suez. The following day Fouad Cherine Pasha, Governor of the Canal Zone, came to call upon me in person and was most helpfully disposed. On the actual day of our departure we found three launches placed at our disposal, one by the Brigadier and two by Fouad Pasha. Brigadier Hackett and Mrs. Hackett accompanied us on Board in spite of the rather crowded conditions which we encountered on arrival at the ship. Our cabins however were quiet and quite comfortable. There we made our final farewells to our good friends.

And so we set forth my Mother and I in this 83rd year of her life. During this voyage though we met with much that was strange and unexpected, yet it included also many good companionships, amongst them that of José D. who came on board at Mombassa. She became a staunch friend; and that friendship is still for me one of life's most enheartening realities. Mother seemed uplifted by the thrill of expectancy, gay with the zest of adventure. At times I was torn with anxiety for the stress of endurance to which she was put; but we were very happy together, and I and all who saw her marvelled at her youthful aspect. In her dapper outfit, with her upright graceful courage she was indeed an inspiration and an example of encouragement to me and all our fellow passengers who like ourselves were setting forth into the thrill of the unknown.