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QUEENLY ENIGMA: What Will Mrs. Simpson and King Edward Do? Asks Wondering World

Nobody mentioned the King. For that matter, no British newspaper mentioned that Mrs. Simpson was his friend.

But minutes before the Baltimore belle slipped out of Ipswich Assizes with her second divorce in her pocket, a million conversations were being launched around the world with the phrase:

"Now that she's free—"

Javanese and New Yorkers and Icelanders wondered, like Britons, whether, "now that she's free," the American woman would:

1. Fade out of the picture as Wallis Warfield to spare her "Davey" any embarrassment;
2. Simply continue to be Mrs. Simpson, "his closest friend";
3. Become his morganatic wife;
4. Become his Queen Consort, his inferior and subject, thereby enjoying the following ancient prerogatives:
 - a. The making of grants, gifts, or contracts without the King;
 - b. Suing and being sued without the King;
 - c. Receiving by gift from her husband;
 - d. Having her courts and offices as if she were a sole person;
 - e. Holding for treason those who plot against her life;
 - f. Being tried by her own equals for offenses;
 - g. Receiving her ancient revenue of Queen Gold (personal revenue).

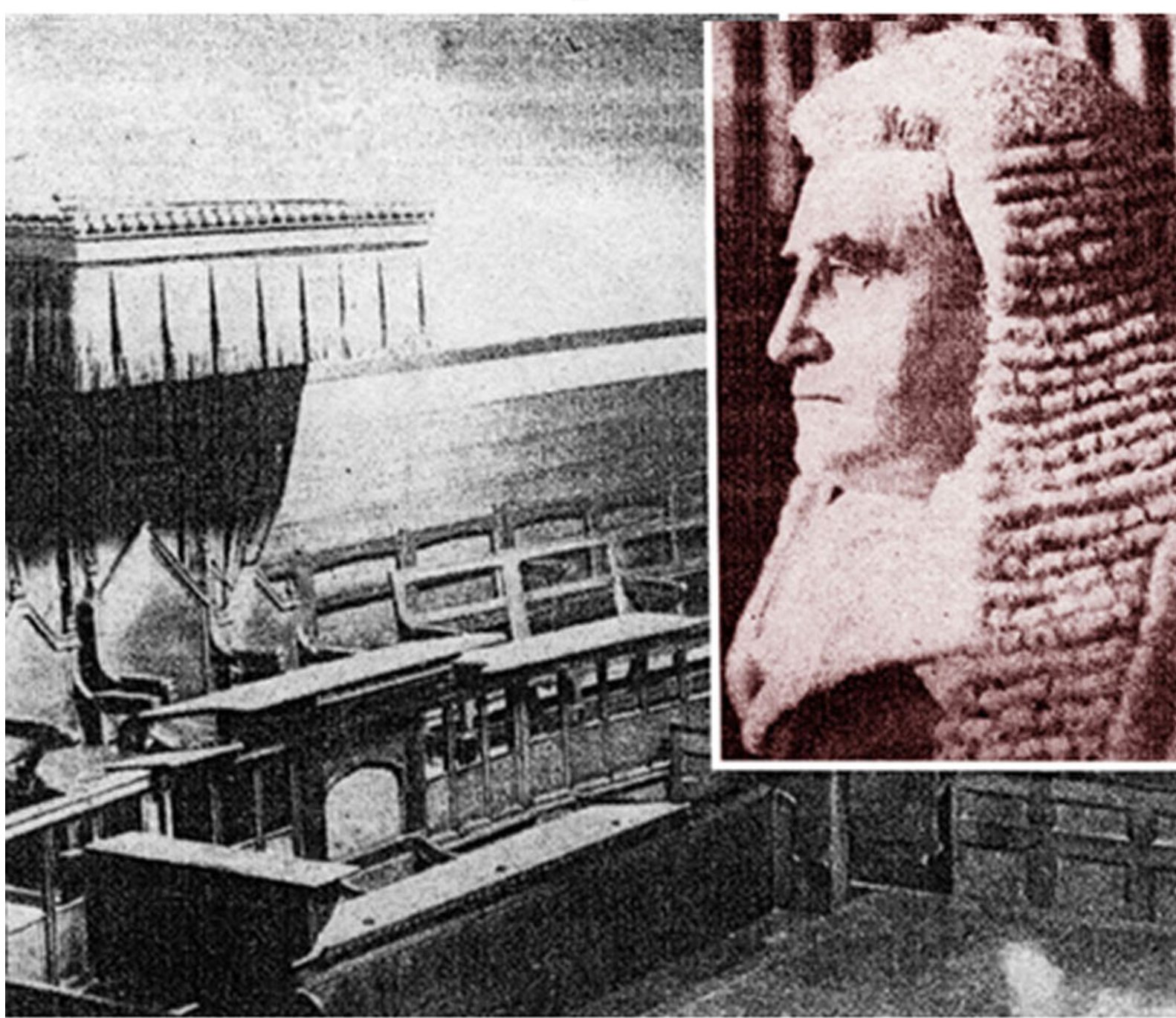
There is no law to prevent the King's making her his Queen, if he wishes. Even the established Church of England could perform the ceremony, for under the Divorce Laws of 1857, divorced people may remarry in church. A prelate or clergyman need not officiate if he objects, but he may not refuse the use of his church, or forbid another clergyman to officiate.

Inconsistency—In practise, the Church's attitude is contradictory: while refusing to admit there is such a thing as divorce, it takes a stand against it. Four years ago the Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England, close friend of the Queen Mother, and traditional officiating clergyman at a royal marriage ceremony, voiced his "desire that in the case of any person previously married, who has been separated by divorce from a husband or wife who is still alive, the marriage should not be solemnized in church."

Socially, too, British royalty frowns on divorce. Queen Mary refused to receive divorcees in court, following the example of her strong-willed mother-in-law. Queen Victoria, devoting her life to Prince Albert's sainted memory, even frowned on the remarriage of widows, altho she was the child of a widow's second union.

But times are changing under the new King, tradition after tradition is being shattered.

Whereas Parliament could not forbid the match, it could ban "Queen Wally's" children from the throne. Moreover, it could cut or abolish the King's public income of \$2,700,000 a year. At present, he does not receive \$600,000 of this amount—



Scene of Mrs. Simpson's divorce trial at Ipswich where Justice Sir John Hawke presided

\$200,000 destined for his bride, the remainder for a future Prince of Wales.

Dowagers and bewhiskered Colonials—thinking of the glories of the past, the dearth of monarchs, the solidity of England and the pitiable state of the world at the moment—hope that “the nice thing will be done.” But things like the friendship of the King and Mrs. Simpson haven't been happening with any great regularity of late, and memories are just a bit rusty on what the “nice thing” might be.

Edward could, of course, marry morganatically, like George IV, who, as Prince of Wales, made the twice-widowed, Roman Catholic Maria Fitzherbert his wife. Later, oppressed by debt, the “first gentleman of Europe” broke off the match and married Princess Caroline.

A morganatic marriage is one in which a person of high rank marries an inferior who can not share his title; the children forfeit any right of succession.

The term comes from *morgengabe*—the morning gift a husband gave his wife after their wedding. In Germanic countries, the “left-handed” wife's status varied with circumstances. When Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, married the Countess Sophie Chotek, old Emperor Franz Josef and his etiquette-bound court blackballed her. Then Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany impulsively placed her on his left at a dinner.

Thereafter, tho her children were banned from the throne, her social position in Austria was improved.

Status Quo—Friends of the King and Mrs. Simpson, uncertain of how the British people might react to a marriage, either regal or morganatic, feel that perhaps the best way would be to let things go on as they are—as friends. Memories of Edward's grandfather tend to condone any amatory alliances as long as they don't get in the way of affairs of state.

While the question of Edward's intentions tortured the entire American press British editors still declined to speculate. The *London Times* set the tone for the story with its head-line: “Undefended Divorce Suit: Case at Ipswich Assizes.”

Yet London society talked of nothing else.

Americans read and read and read. They shrugged their shoulders, joked, rather than talked.

In England, dowagers preferred to believe that the King and his American lady were merely good friends. Her influence, they argued, was “motherly,” rather than amorous.

