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FRANZ FERDINAND AT SPOKANE—1893

According to the *Spokane Chronicle* of September 19, 1893, the people of the city were anticipating an interesting event that was to take place that afternoon. The seven companies of United States soldiers encamped near the city were getting ready to take part in a parade and review; citizens were arranging committees to meet the distinguished visitor who was soon to appear and to tender him every courtesy that might add to his comfort or pleasure; Northern Pacific employees were making ready the train that was to bear him on his way East. The ladies, in the words of the *Chronicle*, "were bargaining for windows along Riverside Avenue and wondering what kind of a Prince this is who is thirty years old, isn't married, and doesn't want to be."<sup>1</sup>

For a Prince of ancient and royal blood was to pass through the ambitious little city that had grown up in a dozen years by the falls of the Spokane. The Archduke, Franz Ferdinand von Oesterreich-Este<sup>2</sup>, heir to the imperial and royal thrones of Austria-Hungary, was making a tour around the world. Crossing the Pacific he had landed at Vancouver and then by way of the Canadian Pacific and upper Columbia lakes would reach Northport, the terminus of the railroad at that time. From Northport the Corbin railroad would bring the famous tourist to Spokane on his way to Yellowstone National Park and to Chicago where the Columbian Exposition was to be visited.

Franz Ferdinand, who was born December 18, 1863, is described in the *Chronicle* as "a well built, handsome young man whose erect and shapely figure is usually clad in a military uniform." His education was briefly characterized as militaristic and his inclinations autocratic in governmental matters, his life before the suicide of Prince Rudolf as careless and pleasure-loving and since so changed that his haughty reserve was now resented by the Austrian people.

Evidently the commonplace doings of princes made as good

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<sup>1</sup> Franz Ferdinand was married July 1, 1900, to the Countess Sophia Chotek, who was also assassinated at Sarajevo June 28, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> The Archduke traveled under the name of Count von Hohenberg.

newspaper stories in 1893 as in 1924 for this account appears of the trip South from Northport: "It was known at various points along the line that a special bearing a number of the scions of the Austrian nobility would pass through today and at several stations large crowds assembled to get a glimpse of His Highness. The Archduke was not inclined to gratify the curiosity of the public.

"He occupied over an hour and a half in making his toilet after the party was installed in the private car which would take them to the Yellowstone National Park and to Chicago. When he entered the reception room all the disagreeable evidences of travel had disappeared. He was dressed in a dark suit elaborately decorated with emblems of his military rank. A light lunch was served, after which His Highness chatted pleasantly with the various members of his party. The lunch finished, he indulged himself in a cigar from which he knocked the ashes in a flippant manner. His bearing was dignified and his appearance dashing in the extreme."

At Loon Lake a copy of the *Chronicle* containing an account of the attempt on the life of the Emperor Franz Josef was obtained. It was noted that although the other members of the party were greatly interested the Archduke himself was seemingly indifferent.

Besides Franz Ferdinand there were six members in the party. They brought a large amount of baggage—a circumstance that inspired the following facetious query in the editorial column of the *Chronicle*: "If the archduke travels with 75 pieces of baggage now what will he have to carry on his wedding journey?"

At this time a detachment of the United States regulars was encamped near Spokane. On the previous day (September 18, 1893), the soldiers and the camp had been inspected by General Carlin. On the invitation of the military authorities the officials of the city were present and popular interest had been shown by a large number of visitors. It was hoped that Governor McGraw of Washington and Governor McConnell of Idaho would visit the camp on the day following—the 19th, the day Franz Ferdinand was to pass through the city.

The United States War Department had been informed some weeks before of the places to be visited by the Archduke and instructions had been sent to army officers in the Northwest to receive him with the honors due his rank as representative of a Eu-

ropean monarch. Acting under these instructions Colonel Cook, of the Fourth United States Infantry, sent the following telegram:

"Spokane, September 19,—To the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary. Three troops of cavalry and five companies of infantry, United States troops, are encamped about two miles from the City of Spokane. I extend to you an invitation to inspect and review this command at your pleasure. The time of your arrival in and departure from Spokane will enable you to visit the camp. Should you desire to inspect or review the troops, will be pleased to have you visit the camp under escort that will meet your train on arrival if you so desire. Please signify your wishes.

"H. C. COOK, *Lieut.-Colonel Fourth Infantry.*"

The telegram reached the Archduke at Northport about 10 o'clock in the morning. The reply was signed by General Count Leo Wurmbrand, who had charge of the details of the tour:

"Northport, Washington, September 19th.—Lieut. Col. Cook: Thanks very much but His Imperial Highness regrets very much not to be able to accept your kind invitation of inspecting troops and visiting camp. Travelling in strict incognito.

GENERAL COUNT WURMBRAND,

"Head Chamberlain in waiting."

The refusal of Franz Ferdinand put an end to the plan to escort him to Camp Carlin and there to tender the salute of 21 guns and to hold a review of the troops. A considerable number of citizens gathered at the station on the arrival of the train; a "little cheer" went up and some attempts seem to have been made by committees to extend the usual courtesies but there were no formal demonstrations of welcome.

The imperial party continued on its way and no further comment is found in the *Chronicle* but the *Spokane Review* in an editorial entitled "Austrian Politics" that appeared in the issue of September 25th takes the Archduke to task: "It has become generally understood that the Austrian emperor had a wise and patriotic purpose in sending the Archduke Franz Ferdinand on a tour of the world. It is feared however that the royal tour will fail of its purpose. Instead of passing his time in observation and comparison of the nations and governments of the different countries visited, the Archduke holds himself aloof and exclusive. He

failed to inspect the important British defenses at Esquimalt. He positively refused to review a considerable number of United States troops in this city. He persistently declines to put himself in touch with the officials and people and in consequence will learn little that will be of value when he shall be called to the Austrian throne."

We have an opportunity to get the Archduke's point of view in the matter because he published in Vienna in 1896 a massive two volume work describing his world tour. The title is *Tagebuch meiner Reise um die Erde, 1892-1893*. At Northport the Archduke says that they were so fortunate as to secure a Pullman which he immediately reserved for the rest of the trip. This car had among other advantages the merit "of securing our privacy and preventing contact with undesirable fellow passengers." He gives the following account of the Spokane affair and of Spokane itself:

"When at Northport I had received a telegram from Colonel Cook who invited me to inspect his regiment which was encamped in the vicinity of Spokane since we had to delay two hours there. I declined the rather peculiar invitation with thanks on account of my travelling 'incognito' but my refusal was the cause of a slanderous editorial<sup>3</sup> in the Spokane evening paper which was brought to us in our car. The article had the laconic heading 'Franz is Here', was adorned with my likeness and bristled with malicious untruths which however failed to achieve the desired effect which was to arouse my anger. On the contrary I thought this journalistic gem only amusing, especially since a number of passages of unintentionally comical effect had crept in. For instance the ill-natured reporter made fun of our rather numerous pieces of baggage and wondered what would be the situation if I were married; then he criticized the nonchalance with which I shook the ashes from my cigar and similar nonsense.

"Instead of viewing the parade I utilized the time in seeing the town of Spokane which with its monotonous buildings painted either red or green presented no refreshing sight. The center of a rich agricultural district, Spokane was founded in 1878 and after a big fire was rebuilt in 1889; vestiges of the latter are still perceptible in the center of the town. The streets displayed an un-

<sup>3</sup> Not an editorial—the usual newspaper story. Unquestionably the Archduke was mistaken; no offense was intended as a careful reading of the newspaper accounts will show. These indicate a frank, unabashed curiosity but nothing of wilful impertinence.

usual amount of mud<sup>4</sup> which reminded me of conditions in small localities in Asia Minor.

"The two waterfalls which are within the precincts of the town, the Spokane Falls, are praised as wonders of nature but are in reality only mill dams over which the water falls from a height of 45 meters, the power being utilized for a lighting system and factories."<sup>5</sup>

A certain tragic interest attaches to Franz Ferdinand; in the great world tragedy he is the actor who reads the prologue. His death and the Austrian ultimatum that followed heralded the Great War and the ruin both of the political system for which he stood and of the class to which he belonged whose shortcomings in some particulars seem to have been exemplified in the Archduke himself.

Franz Ferdinand did not like Spokane and said so with frank superciliousness but of this opinion Spokane neither knew nor cared. So completely did the visit of the imperial party fade out of the minds of the people that at the time of the Sarajevo assassination (June 28, 1914) there is no mention of his visit of twenty-one years before, either in comment or in the biographical sketches of the Archduke in the *Chronicle* and the *Spokesman-Review*.

C. S. KINGSTON.

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<sup>4</sup> September, 1893, was an unusually wet season. Many old settlers in the Palouse still remember it as the year when much wheat spoiled in the sack after threshing.

<sup>5</sup> Translation by Louise M. Spaeth.