

Lord Lexden

Conservative peer and historian

Making her literary debut in fine style, Jane Marguerite Tippet has turned Edward VIII's previously unseen jottings into a first-rate biographical study

Once a King

The Lost Memoir of Edward VIII

By Jane Marguerite Tippet
Publisher Hodder & Stoughton

King Edward VIII, later duke of Windsor, is remembered today for two things above all: his

suspected fascist leanings, symbolised by his visit to Hitler in 1937; and of course his sudden abandonment of his throne in December 1936, 11 months after he had ascended it, in order to marry his divorced American lover who was unacceptable

as queen to the Tory government of Stanley Baldwin and to much of the country.

The many (unproven) allegations against Mrs Simpson included a sexual liaison with the leading Nazi, Joachim von Ribbentrop, who was hanged at Nuremburg after the Second World War.

Many people say that if the Nazis had defeated Britain during the war, the exiled ex-monarch would have happily returned to his country as a Nazi puppet ruler. A recent biography of him by Andrew Lownie is entitled *Traitor King*.

Is his historical reputation destined to remain at a low ebb for ever? If it rises, the material in this important new book will make a major contribution to his rehabilitation.

Despite its title, it is not a

memoir at all. Jane Marguerite Tippet, a new author making her literary debut in fine style, retells the story of the unfortunate king's life, stressing his worldwide popularity and success as prince of Wales before his accession. In 1931 he delivered a speech entirely in Spanish in Buenos Aires, earning much praise for his "crisp and clear" enunciation.

Into this first-rate biographical study, Tippet inserts separate, extra sections

containing many fascinating, hitherto unknown facts and insights written in the late 1940s as the duke of Windsor worked on what would become his widely acclaimed book, *A King's Story*, published in 1951. Many of these intriguing additions come from Charles Murphy, the leading ghost writer of his

"He wrote with painful honesty about the abdication crisis"



1952 Duke and duchess of Windsor

New York 1966 Waldorf Astoria Hotel



Paris 1953
Watching the coronation of Elizabeth II on television

time who oversaw the project. But some of the best of them come from the duke himself.

Andrew Lownie and others who mock the duke mercilessly will be astonished to find that he was capable of writing extremely well. He had a sharp eye for unusual aspects of life's rich drama.

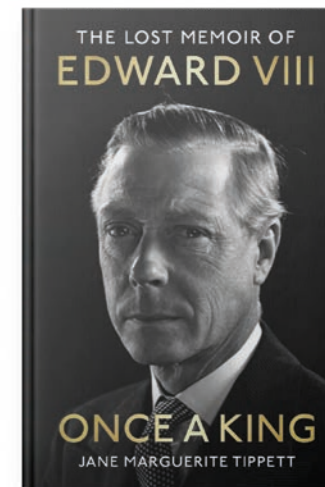
Aboard the royal train in Bulgaria in 1936 as the

guest of its King Boris, he observed how his host would "excuse himself from the drawing room, to reappear fully equipped with coal-smearing overalls, engineer's goggles and a bright kerchief around the neck. The train would stop, Boris would mount the cab, and the train would proceed with Boris at the throttle, proclaiming

his progress through his realm with prolonged joyous toots on the steam whistle."

In these autobiographical jottings, published here for the first time, he wrote with painful honesty about the abdication crisis. A cabinet minister, Duff Cooper, urged him to postpone his marriage until after his coronation in May 1937. "You should then be able to marry on your own terms." But the king could not agree. "I could not bring myself to adopt the course of action he recommended. For one thing I did not possess the subtlety and patience to play so tricky a game, and not only with Baldwin but with the British people."

This valuable book allows a tragic king to speak with frankness across the years. But



his newly discovered words are unlikely to silence the rumours of fascist sympathies, to which cables between various Nazis during the war appear to lend some credibility. The truth, however, is that the duke was guilty of naivety, not treachery.

A CENTURY OF LABOUR

JON CRUDDAS

Hardback
978-1-5095-5834-6
£25.00
January 2024

35% off using code CRU35 at PolityBooks.com

Valid until Jan 18th 2024

"If the Labour Party is to win office and govern effectively, it should study *A Century of Labour*, and embrace the deep lessons it offers about success built on tolerance, respect and pluralism."
Neal Lawson, Director of Compass

"Cruddas' clear-eyed analysis gets to the very heart of the ideas and the personalities that have united and divided the Labour Party. A must read from one of Labour's most insightful and original thinkers."
Lisa Nandy MP

"Quite simply the best history of the Labour Party I have read. Cruddas' retrieval of the ethical tradition will serve as a guide to the Labour Party's future."
Lord Glasman, Labour Peer