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**Bakalářská práce**

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Královská aféra a abdikace Edwarda VIII. a její odrazy v dobovém  
českém tisku

The Royal Affair and Abdication  
of Edward VIII and Its Reflections in Contemporary Czech Press

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## **Abstrakt**

Bakalářská práce se zabývá tématem královské aféry a následnou abdikací Edwarda VIII. v roce 1936. Ambicí této práce je odhalit, jak událost století novodobé britské historie mohl vnímat čtenář dobového českého tisku. Historická fakta k tématu čerpá práce z odborné literatury a ze zahraničních zdrojů. Analyzuje archivované a dostupné dobové novinové články. Práce bere v potaz, že výklad problematiky v tehdejším tisku je ovlivněn postojem autorů dobových článků k této události. Hlavním cílem bakalářské práce je zjistit na základě interpretace královské aféry a abdikace krále Edwarda VIII. českým dobovým tiskem, jaké bylo povědomí tehdejších českých čtenářů o této historické události a zrekonstruovat, jaký postoj si mohli k anglickým reáliím na základě prezentovaných informací vytvořit a porovnat ho s postojem britským. Hlavním úkolem při realizaci tohoto výzkumu je zjistit, jak královskou aféru a následnou abdikaci krále Edwarda VIII. reflektoval současně dostupný český dobový tisk.

## **Klíčová slova**

Edward VIII., Wallis Simpson, královská aféra, abdikace, český dobový tisk

## **Abstract**

The bachelor's thesis deals with the topic of the royal affair and the subsequent abdication of Edward VIII in 1936. The aim of this work is to reveal how the event of the century of modern British history could be perceived by a reader of the contemporary Czech press. The historical facts in this work are based on professional historical literature and foreign sources. The thesis is based on an analysis of archived and available newspaper articles. The thesis considers that the interpretation of the issue in the press at the time was influenced by the attitude of the authors to the articles elucidating this event. The main goal of the bachelor's thesis is to find out the fundamentals of the interpretation of the royal affair and the abdication of King Edward VIII in contemporary Czech press, what was the awareness of the Czech readers at the time about this historical event and to reconstruct what attitude they could have towards English realities based on the presented information and comparison of it with the British attitude. The main task of this research is to find out how the royal affair and the subsequent abdication of King Edward VIII reflected the currently available contemporary Czech press.

## **Key words**

Edward VIII, Wallis Simpson, royal affair, abdication, Czech contemporary press

### **Prohlášení**

*Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracoval samostatně a výhradně s využitím odborné literatury uvedené v seznamu literatury bakalářské práce.*

V Olomouci dne \_\_\_\_\_

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Podpis autora práce

## **Poděkování**

Na tomto místě bych chtěl poděkovat panu Mgr. Pavlovi Neumeisterovi, Ph.D. za odbornou pomoc, trpělivost a cenné rady při psaní této bakalářské práce.

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## Introduction

Events in the British royal family are attractive and currently often publicized topic that arouses interest in the study of the modern history of the British monarchy. It is undoubtedly worth noting the personality of King Edward VIII, who was the only monarch in the history of Great Britain who has abdicated. He had ruled for less than a year, was never crowned, but still contributed to a radical change of the image of the British royal dynasty. He sacrificed the prestige associated with the royal crown the love of a woman, Wallis Simpson, a twice-divorced American with controversial personal life. "Simpson's affair" is a situation leading to the abdication of Edward VIII in the year 1936, that represents a fascinating topic for bachelor's thesis entitled "The Royal Affair and Abdication of Edward VIII and Its Reflections in Contemporary Czech Press". It is also worth noting the development and change of views on the royal affair associated with the abdication of Edward VIII from 1936 to the present. The fact that in the context of the current problems of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, the story of King Edward VIII is again recalled, the media and the public are looking for parallels.

In the 30's the international policy of the Czechoslovak Republic was focused on the Small Agreement between Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia, which was a part of the system of French allies. The Czechoslovak Republic thus focused its interests on republican France rather than on Great Britain with its constitutional monarchy. The existing alliance agreement between the world powers of France and Great Britain then stimulated at least marginal and mediated interest of Czechoslovakia in the contemporary events in the British monarchy. The perception of British realia by contemporary Czech readers was affected also by Letters from England by Karel Čapek from the year 1924, which presented life in Britain and the English nature and brought comparisons with Czech conditions by engaging reading of travel columns.

The main goal of the bachelor's thesis is to find out based on the interpretation of the royal affair and the abdication of King Edward VIII, what was the awareness of the Czech readers about this historical event and reconstruct the attitude on English realities it could create.

The Czech view about the process of monarch's resignation from the royal throne due to the intended marriage to a divorced woman was formed based on the information



provided by the contemporary Czech press. According to the available sources, some differences can be expected from the British view, which was based on English traditions and conventions. The British perceived the king as the head of the Anglican Church, it took an uncompromising stance on divorce considering the specifics of Edward VIII's personality such as his lifestyle, political orientation and sympathy with Germany. The Royal Affair was contrary to the British value orientations, hence the abdication of Edward VIII and transfer of power to his younger brother, George VI, was perceived by the British as the only possible and logical solution to the arisen crisis.

Within the bachelor's thesis, several goals are set. The first goal is to present the history of the British royal dynasty using foreign, especially English literature by collecting, analysing and comparing the obtained data. The second research goal is to find a Czech view on the royal affair and subsequent abdication of King Edward VIII by collecting, analysing and evaluating Czech contemporary newspaper articles. The third goal is to reconstruct the knowledge of British realities by the Czech reader based on content analysis of the obtained texts. The last research goal is to find out the attitude of the authors of newspaper articles towards the interpreted events in Great Britain. The degree of objectivity of mediation of those events fundamentally influenced the formation of the reader's opinions. The above-mentioned aims form pillars of research aimed at determining the level of knowledge of the Czech reader about the royal affair and abdication of Edward VIII, obtained from the Czech periodical press. For the purposes of the research data collection and comparison techniques within the context of qualitative analysis are used.

The bachelor thesis is written in English according to the field of study of English with a focus on education. The theoretical part is mostly drawn from foreign sources written in English. In particular, the theoretical part of the thesis is made so that it can be used as a supplementary educational material for teaching English realities in Czech schools. The benefit of the practical use of the work lies in its potential to develop the ability of pupils and students to actively work with professional foreign language literature within their evaluation process.

# **1 Theoretical part**

For a correct understanding of the events related to the royal affair and the abdication circumstances of King Edward VIII, it is necessary to get acquainted with the history of the British monarchy. It was rich in strong stories and interesting personalities who are worth of attention and deserve precise elaboration. In the historical context it is also possible to better understand British traditions and conventions, which played a key role in perceiving the emerging government crisis and greatly influenced its resolution. Especially a closer understanding of the Windsor dynasty may help to understand the sequence of causes and consequences of the resignation of Edward VIII to the post of the king. The theoretical part of the thesis provides a brief cross-section of the history of the British monarchy with a focus on the current ruling family of Windsor. It pays special attention to the personality of Edward VIII, to the causes, circumstances and consequences of his abdication. The theoretical part is divided into seven chapters, which briefly describe the history of the British monarchy with a focus on the Windsor dynasty. Other chapters focus on the personality of Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson and describe the circumstances that preceded the abdication of King Edward VIII. The focus of the theoretical framework of the bachelor's thesis is the chapter devoted to the royal affair and abdication. The last chapter briefly discusses the life of Edward and Wallis together after the abdication and concludes their life story.

## **1.1 Brief cross-section of the British monarchy history**

The roots of the British monarchy can be traced back to the Ice Age, that was when the first people from today's Europe came to Britain. Around 500 BC, the Celts settled in this area, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD it was occupied by the Romans until 410 AD. Culture of ancient Rome brought into this territory mainly Christianity and Latin. The Celtic tribes were pushed to the north. They replaced by Germans, Angles, Saxons, Germans and Jutes. The 7<sup>th</sup> century was significant for the creation of the first Anglo-Saxon kingdom. In the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century the Germans faced the invasions of the Vikings

(Norwegian and Danish tribes). They settled here until the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The unification of the English kingdom was followed by the attack of Normans.<sup>1</sup>

In 1066 William I the Conqueror invaded this area and defeated the last Anglo-Saxon king Harold II (Battle of Hastings). Harold II died, and William I the Conqueror seized the English throne. He was crowned on 25<sup>th</sup> December 1066. This established the English royal dynasty. The Anglo-Saxon culture was replaced by the Norman culture which dominated until 1154. The Norman Dynasty was replaced by the Plantagenet dynasty (1154–1485).<sup>2</sup> At the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Ireland was conquered. It was in 1254 Wales. In 1215 King John signed the document Magna Charta (the first important charter of rights and freedoms, it limits the powers of the monarch to the subjects). The charter laid the foundation for the establishment of the Grand Council (parliament). During the reign of Edward I (1239–1307), the first parliament probably met.<sup>3</sup>

Between 1337 and 1453 there was a conflict between England and France called “Hundred Years’ War”. It was a struggle for supremacy in Flanders. English troops were eventually pushed out of French territory. The dispute continued and it ended with so called “Wars of the Roses” (family of York versus family of Lancaster, including the Plantagenet genus lines). As a consequence the Tudors (1485–1603) led by Henry VII Tudor (1457–1509) were accessed to the throne. Henry VIII (1491–1547) broke away from the Roman Catholic Church in 1533. The Anglican Church was founded, led by this monarch. The pope resolved the situation by imposing curse on Henry VIII. He was famous for his six marriages, his cruelty to opponents of the new church and the execution of Sir Thomas Moore, The most famous lawyer and scholar of his time.<sup>4</sup>

After the death of Henry VIII Edward VI (1537–1553) ascended the throne. He appointed “Nine Days’ Queen” Jane Grey (grandniece of Henry VIII). After nine days of reign she was executed by the (future) Queen Mary (the so-called “Bloody”) for treason. Queen Elizabeth I (1533–1603), daughter of Henry VIII, was the last Tudor on the throne.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> PRYOR, D. F. *History - Ancient History in depth: Overview: From Neolithic to Bronze Age, 8000 - 800 BC*. 2011. Dostupné z: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/...tor\\_y\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/...tor_y_01.shtml)

<sup>2</sup> History: *Normans*. 2014. [cit. 2021-03-8] Dostupné z: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/normans/>

<sup>3</sup> STENTON, D. M. *Magna Carta*. 2018. [cit. 2018-03-12] Dostupné z: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Magna-Carta>

<sup>4</sup> NĚMEC, V. *Stoletá válka (1337 – 1453)*. 2016. [cit. 2021-03-8] Dostupné z: <http://www.dejepis.com/ucebnice/stoleta-valka-1337-1453/>

<sup>5</sup> ORAM, K. *The Stuarts*. 2016. [cit. 2021-03-01] Dostupné z: <https://www.royal.uk/stuarts>

The Tudor era was referred as the so-called “Elizabethan Golden Age” or “the end of the Middle Ages in England” for the development of culture, trade, education and seafaring. England was stabilized mainly by the reign of Elizabeth I (45 years on the throne), which laid the foundation for the so-called colonial empire. After her death in 1603 the Stuarts (1603–1714) succeeded.<sup>6</sup> During the reign of James I Stuart (1566–1625), King of Scotland, the "golden" era of theatre and literature continued in England. James I Stuart ruled Scotland, England and Ireland for 22 years.<sup>7</sup> During the reign of Charles I (1600–1649) in the years of 1642-1648 there was a civil war. He was executed in 1649, and at the same time the Republic of England was proclaimed, headed by a parliament elected Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell. He had the authority of a ruler. In 1658, after Cromwell's death, the Stuart dynasty returned to the throne, Charles II (1630–1685) ascended. Anna Stuart (1665–1714) was Queen of Scotland and the last Queen of England. In 1707, the Act of Union merged English and Scottish Parliaments. Thus arose the United Kingdom of Great Britain with the capital London.<sup>8</sup>

In 1714, the Hanoverian dynasty (1714–1901) came to power. They conquered territories all over the world, for example in India. The British monarchs also ruled as electors in Hanover and dukes in Brunswick-Lüneburg. George I (1660–1727) was the first Hanoverian monarch on the British throne, then his son George II (1683–1760) ruled, who was the last British monarch born outside Great Britain.<sup>9,10</sup>

In 1751, George III (1738–1820) ascended the throne. In 1800 the Irish Kingdom was joined by the Act of Union. The Act created the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1763 this monarch bought the so-called Buckingham House (today's Buckingham Palace), which became the official residence of the British monarchs. He was succeeded by George IV (1762–1830). After William IV (1765–1837), Queen Victoria (1819–1901) took over the throne, and in 1837 the so-called “Victorian Period” began. Great Britain has become a political power of the world, seized the territory of Australia, Hong Kong and New Zealand.<sup>11, 12</sup> Victoria was the daughter of Edward, Duke

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<sup>6</sup> BERRY, C. *The Tudors*. 2016. [cit. 2021-03-15] Dostupné z: <https://www.royal.uk/tudors>

<sup>7</sup> ORAM, K. *The Stuarts*. 2016. [cit. 2021-03-01] Dostupné z: <https://www.royal.uk/stuarts>

<sup>8</sup> ORAM, K. *The Stuarts*. 2016. [cit. 2021-03-01] Dostupné z: <https://www.royal.uk/stuarts>

<sup>9</sup> Britannica, T. E. *House of Hanover*. 2018a. [cit. 2021-02-15] Dostupné z:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/House-of-Hanover>

<sup>10</sup> BRITROYALS.

<sup>11</sup> BRITROYALS. *Kings & Queens of England, Scotland, Wales & United Kingdom*. Neuedeno. [cit. 2021-03-14] Dostupné z: <https://www.britroyals.com/rulers.asp>

of Kent, the fourth son of King George III and Mary Louisa from the Saxony-Coburg-Gotha family.<sup>13</sup> She married her cousin Albert of the Saxony-Coburg-Gotha dynasty in 1840 and had nine children with him. Victoria was Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the first Empress of India until her death. She was famous for her funeral dresses, which she wore constantly after the death of her husband (who died from typhus in 1861). After her death, the eldest son Edward VII (1841–1910) ascended the throne.<sup>14</sup> George V, son of Edward VII was the founder of the Windsor dynasty, which currently reigns. The dynasty was artificially created as a new one. The intention of this step was to hide German roots.<sup>15</sup> In 1915 King George V came to power. He spoke English without a German accent, unlike many of his German-speaking predecessors. He was considered British despite his Saxon-Coburg-Gotha roots.<sup>16</sup> The Windsor dynasty is discussed in more detail in the following chapter of this work.

## 1.2 Windsor dynasty

The history of the Windsor dynasty dates back to the end of the Hanoverian dynasty, from the death of Queen Victoria at the beginning of 1901, when her sixteen years old son Edward VII ascended the British Empire. He had no experience as a statesman, but he travelled and had connections to other European statesmen. However, he did not have a good relationship with his nephew, the German emperor Wilhelm II.<sup>17</sup>

**Edward VII** was born at Buckingham Palace on November 9, 1841. He did not yet belong to the Windsor dynasty in essence, he belonged to the Saxon-Coburg-Gotha dynasty. Alexandra of Denmark, the daughter of Christian IX King of Denmark and Louisa of Hesse-Kassel became his wife in 1863. The most prominent of their descendants were the eldest son Albert Victor Christian Edward Duke of Clarence and his younger brother George V. The first heir to the throne was the Duke of Clarence, but after his sudden death from pneumonia in January 1892, the younger brother

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<sup>12</sup> Britannica, T. E. *House of Hanover*. 2018a. [cit. 2021-02-15] Dostupné z:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/House-of-Hanover>

<sup>13</sup> ORAM, K. *VictoriF Demokratické a (r. 1837–1901)*. 2018a. [cit. 2021-03-14] Dostupné z: <https://www.royal.uk/queen-victoria>

<sup>14</sup> ORAM, K. *Victoria (r. 1837–1901)*. 2018a. [cit. 2021-03-14] Dostupné z: <https://www.royal.uk/queen-victoria>

<sup>15</sup> SPOTO, D. *Sestup a pád rodu Windsorů*. Praha: Ikar. 1997.

<sup>16</sup> SPOTO, D. *Sestup a pád rodu Windsorů*. Praha: Ikar. 1997.

<sup>17</sup> MAUROIS, A.: *Dějiny Anglie*. Praha: Lidové noviny, 1993. s. 417.

George V unexpectedly became the heir to the throne.<sup>18</sup> King Edward VII died at Buckingham Palace in 1910 and is buried with his wife in St. George's chapel at Windsor Castle. After his death George V ascended the throne.<sup>19</sup>

**George V** (full name George Frederick Ernest Albert) was born on June 3, 1865 in London.<sup>20</sup> In 1917 King George V was responsible for changing the name of the dynasty from the Saxon-Coburg-Gotha dynasty to the Windsor dynasty. The reason was an attempt to hide German roots due to negative public attitudes towards Germany.<sup>21</sup> The royal family came from Britain, but they were related to Germany by kinship. The renaming affected not only the dynasty, but also aristocratic families. For example, the princess and the prince of Teck assumed the name Cambridge, and the Battenberg family became the Mountbatten.<sup>22</sup> George V married Victoria Mary Augustus Louis Olga Pauline Claudia Agnes, known as Mary of Teck, who was the great-granddaughter of George III in St. James Palace in 1893. Mary was originally engaged to the brother of George V, Duke of Clarence, who died a month before their wedding. Victoria herself chose her as a suitable next queen. Mary of Teck died in 1953 and was buried with her husband George V at Windsor Castle in St. George Chapel. George V and his wife had a dignified life and exemplary behaviour, thereby raising the prestige and importance of the monarchy. Their most famous children were Kings Edward VIII and George VI.<sup>23</sup> George V served in the Royal Navy before the death of his brother, the Duke of Clarence. This service influenced him for the rest of his life and was reflected in the upbringing of his descendants, which led to discipline from a young age.<sup>24</sup> George V died at Sandringham House in Norfolk County on January 20, 1936. After his death the eldest son, Edward VIII, ascended the throne and abdicated after less than a year of rule. His personality and the circumstances of his abdication are covered in the next chapter of this work.<sup>25</sup>

**George VI** (full name Albert Frederick Arthur George) came to rule after the abdication of his brother Edward VIII. George VI was born on December 14, 1895 in York Cottage,

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<sup>18</sup> WEIR, A.: *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy*. 3. vyd. London: Pimlico 2002, s. 318–320.

<sup>19</sup> WEIR, A.: *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy*. 3. vyd. London: Pimlico 2002, s. 320.

<sup>20</sup> WEIR, A.: *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy*. 3. vyd. London: Pimlico 2002, s. 320.

<sup>21</sup> WEIR, A.: *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy*. 3. vyd. London: Pimlico 2002, s. 316.

<sup>22</sup> WEIR, A.: *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy*. 3. vyd. London: Pimlico 2002, s. 316–317

<sup>23</sup> WEIR, A.: *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy*. 3. vyd. London: Pimlico 2002, s. 316–317

<sup>24</sup> WINDSOR, E.: *A King's Story: The Memoirs of H. R. H. The Duke of Windsor*. London: Prion, 1998, s. 6–7.

<sup>25</sup> WEIR, A.: *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy*. 3. vyd. London: Pimlico 2002, s. 325

Sandringham.<sup>26</sup> George VI used the name Bertie among his family and close friends. He did not count on the role of king and did not care about it. He fulfilled his duty in place of his older brother Edward VIII, who resigned due to his intended marriage to the twice divorced American Wallis Simpson.<sup>27</sup> A career in the Navy was planned for Bertie. He suffered from separation from home at the navy school. He was haunted by peer bullying because he was weak in body constitution, speech-impaired and prone to seasickness. His academic results were also not outstanding. His beloved grandfather, King Edward VII, died during this period. Being compared to his older brother Edward VIII, who had a healthier appearance and strong charisma, did not add to Bertie's self-confidence. However, his father appreciated Bertie's sense of duty, and so he became his father's favourite.<sup>28</sup> However, the future king had to struggle all his life with his shyness and speech impediment. He was in the care of speech therapist Lionel Logue because he was tormented by the many speeches he had to make as an important member of the royal dynasty. George VI's wife was Elizabeth Angela Marguerite Bowes-Lyon, born April 4, 1900. He was married to her for more than thirteen years at the time of his accession to the throne. The coronation ceremony took place at Westminster Abbey on May 12, 1937. After the death of George VI, Elizabeth received the title of Her Majesty The Queen, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. She was a beautiful woman who never longed for the role of queen, did not even wish to be the wife of the king's brother, so she declined her husband's first marriage proposal, then the duke. Nevertheless, Elizabeth was a great support to her husband all her life. They had two daughters, the current Queen Elizabeth II and her younger sister Margaret Rose, who was born in Scotland in 1930 and died in London in 2002. Her ashes were stored at Windsor Castle. World War II was the biggest complication he had to face during his reign. In 1952 he lost his battle with cancer and was buried in St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle.<sup>29</sup>

**Elizabeth II**, full name Elizabeth Alexandra Mary, was born on April 21, 1926 in London, and ascended the British throne after the death of her father

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<sup>26</sup> WEIR, A.: *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy*. 3. vyd. London: Pimlico 2002, s. 327.

<sup>27</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 53

<sup>28</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 56–69.

<sup>29</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 64–65.

George VI in 1952. She struggled with politicians' fears whether the young woman could handle the role of queen. She succeeded in this respect beyond expectations. Her personal life went without scandals, and she exceeded Queen Victoria, her great-grandmother, by the length of her reign. At the time of her coronation, Elizabeth II was married to Prince Philip, Prince of Greece and Denmark, who had received the title of Duke of Edinburgh. The wedding took place on November 20, 1947 uniting the Windsor and Mountbatten family from which Prince Philip came. For the marriage to take place Prince Philip had to give up his Greek citizenship and become a British subject. Their harmonious coexistence ended with the death of Prince Philip on April 9, 2021. The Duke of Edinburgh and Queen Elizabeth II are the parents of four children. The eldest son and heir to the throne is Prince Charles Philip Arthur George (November 14, 1948). The second-born child is Princess Anne (August 15, 1950), followed by Prince Andrew (February 19, 1960) and Edward (March 10, 1964). Prince Charles is the father of Prince William and Harry, who were born as a result of his relationship with his former wife Princess Diana Spencer, who tragically deceased in 1997.<sup>30</sup> In 2005, Prince Charles married his long-time girlfriend Camilla Parker-Bowles, who holds the title Duchess of Cornwall.<sup>31</sup> The second heir to the throne is William Arthur Philip Louis (June 21, 1982) the eldest son of Charles, Prince of Wales, and Diana, Princess of Wales. In April 2011, Prince William married Catherine Middleton, who was named Duchess of Cambridge. They raised three children together – Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louise.<sup>32</sup> William's younger brother Prince Harry, the full name Henry Charles Albert David (September 15, 1984), married Rachel Meghan Markle in 2018. Prince Harry is the fifth heir to the throne.<sup>33</sup> Meghan and Harry have now become independent, left London and the current situation in the royal family is inexorably reported in various media. As a part of the comments on their attitudes and decisions, their royal ancestor Edward VIII is mentioned, to whom the following chapter is devoted.

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<sup>30</sup> WEIR, A.: *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy*. 3. vyd. London: Pimlico 2002, s. 329–331.

<sup>31</sup> [Charles, princ z Walesu – Wikipedie \(wikipedia.org\)](https://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles,_princ_z_Walesu)

<sup>32</sup> Oram, K. *The Duchess of Cambridge*. 2018b. [cit. 2021-03-10] Dostupné z: <https://www.royal.uk/the-duchess-of-cambridge>

<sup>33</sup> Britannica, T. E. *Prince Harry, duke of Sussex*. 2018b. [cit. 2021-03-09] Dostupné z: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Prince-Harry-of-Wales>



## 1.3 Personality of Edward VIII

Edward VIII (see Annex Figure 1) was born 23 June 1894 in England county of Surrey at White Lodge in Richmond Park. He was then the third successor to the British throne.<sup>34</sup> The most pleased by his birth was Queen Victoria, who was one of his twelve godparents. The prince was baptised Edward Albert Christian George Andrew Patrick David. The name Edward is traditional for a British king, the name Albert was given after his grandfather, Christian - after his great-grandfather, the Danish king Christian IX. The rest of the following names are after the four patron saints of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. He was called by the name David among his family and close friends.<sup>35</sup> His great-grandmother Victoria called him Albert for the rest of her life.<sup>36</sup>

### 1.3.1 Childhood and student years

Prince Edward received great attention from his birth. Apparently, the fact that three male heirs to the throne in a straight line, the future British monarchs Edward VII, George V and Edward VIII, faced for the first time also played a part in this.<sup>37</sup> A lot of pressure was put on little Edward because it was clear that in some time, he would ascend the British throne. His upbringing and education were adapted according this fact. Edward and his siblings spent the better part of their childhood at York Cottage. They were spending their time in a "full-day kindergarten" with governesses and educators that were in charge of them.<sup>38</sup> Life at York Cottage was very restrictive and sometimes rude for little Edward.<sup>39</sup> Edward's mother, Mary of Teck, was cold to her children, they were suffering from emotional deprivation, lack of kisses and hugs.<sup>40</sup> Edward had a close relationship with his grandmother Queen Alexandra and with his grandfather King Edward VII. They lovingly cared of him and his siblings for many months when their

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<sup>34</sup> WINDSOR, E.: *A King's Story: The Memoirs of H. R. H. The Duke of Windsor*. London: Prion, 1998. s. 1.

<sup>35</sup> WINDSOR, E.: *A King's Story: The Memoirs of H. R. H. The Duke of Windsor*. London: Prion, 1998. s. 3–4.

<sup>36</sup> HEPPENSTALL, P. G.: *His Majesty Edward VIII*. Exeter: A. Wheaton & Co., 1936. s. 9.

<sup>37</sup> DONALDSON, F.: *Edward VIII: The Road to Abdication*. 2. vyd. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978. s. 13.

<sup>38</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 54–55.

<sup>39</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 55.

<sup>40</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 6.

parents were on a business trip.<sup>41</sup> The beginning of Edward's and Bertie's schooling did not take place in a traditional school, but under the guidance of a home teacher Henry Hansell. He was very rigorous, and George V blamed the poor study results directly on his sons and enrolled them in a normal school after some time.<sup>42</sup> Edward was inquisitive and astute, had a brilliant memory. But Edward was not passionate about geography, history and literature. Later he stated that he preferred a "school of life".<sup>43</sup> From 1907 Edward attended the Naval School in Osborne on the Isle of Wight in the south of England, as well as later did his younger brother Bertie. Life in Osborne was not easy, he experienced rigorous discipline, corporal punishment and psychological intimidation. Thanks to his slim figure, he earned the nickname "Sardine".<sup>44</sup> Emphasis in teaching was placed on mathematics, engineering, navigation and sailor's skills. He excelled in French, but was weak in mathematics, because of that he finished as one of the ten worst students.<sup>45</sup> Staying in Osborne was beneficial to Edward – he matured, gained confidence and learned to get along with his peers.<sup>46</sup> In 1909 Edward transferred to the Royal Naval College in Dartmouth.<sup>47</sup> Despite hard discipline, he was happier in Dartmouth feeling more freedom.<sup>48</sup> He excelled in German and English, did well in French, but did not catch up with mathematics. The education was aimed at expanding the prince's mental abilities.<sup>49</sup> In 1910, after the death of Edward VII's grandfather, his father, George V, ascended the throne, and Edward became the Prince of Wales on his sixteenth birthday. This post brought with it several responsibilities, as well as greater respect for his person and financial gain.<sup>50</sup> Edward began training for the role of king in Oxford in October 1912. However, he did not enjoy his studies, nor did they heighten his interest in culture, for example, ballet

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<sup>41</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 56.

<sup>42</sup> WINDSOR, E.: *A King's Story: The Memoirs of H. R. H. The Duke of Windsor*. London: Prion, 1998. s. 19.

<sup>43</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 7

<sup>44</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 9.

<sup>45</sup> WINDSOR, E.: *A King's Story: The Memoirs of H. R. H. The Duke of Windsor*. London: Prion, 1998. s. 62–63.

<sup>46</sup> ZIEGLER, P.: *King Edward VIII*. 2. vyd. Stroud: Sutton, 2001. s. 23.

<sup>47</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 9.

<sup>48</sup> ZIEGLER, P.: *King Edward VIII*. 2. vyd. Stroud: Sutton, 2001. s. 23.

<sup>49</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 9.

<sup>50</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 10.

bored him.<sup>51</sup> In 1913 he moved to Germany to improve his language skills. He spent almost all his time in the company of his German relatives, who helped to strengthen his sympathy with Germany. He returned from Germany to Oxford in great physical condition and became more involved in student life.<sup>52</sup> However, he completed his studies at the University of Oxford prematurely in June 1914. After the holidays, he returned to Oxford as a member of the Second Training Battalion and joined the Army in November. This ended his university education.<sup>53</sup>

### **1.3.2 Military career and overseas business trips**

After training in Oxford, Edward joined Lifeguards for a short time in July 1914 to improve his horse-riding skills. His reaction to the horror of the war was such that he wanted to take part in it. However, it was risky, with a chance of death, injury and kidnapping, so he waited in London for a suitable location at his father's command.<sup>54</sup> He became a junior officer in the infantry at Grenadier Guards. But he still longed to go to the front. Later he joined the regiment in France and became an adjutant to the French lord.<sup>55</sup> Edward was appointed as a captain in 1916 and became a member of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. He went to Egypt, where he met Australian troops and reached Khartoum. He also militated against the Italian front. Edward received a military cross. In November 1917 he was promoted to major of the Welsh Guard and soon to colonel of the Cadet Corps of the United Kingdom. At the beginning of 1918 he became a member of the House of Lords and therefore left the Western Front.<sup>56</sup> Edward served in the Great War together with soldiers from Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Africa. Therefore, he was warmly welcomed in dominoes during his post-war travels. Thanks to his excellent memory of faces, he met and identified some soldiers on these trips, and his popularity grew as a result. His meeting in Dover with eight hundred prisoners of war was also a significant achievement. He paid attention to the terminally ill. He considered his service as a young officer to be the most valuable life experience.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 4.

<sup>52</sup> DONALDSON, F.: *Edward VIII*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974. s. 44.

<sup>53</sup> BOLITHO, H.: *King Edward VIII: His Life and Reign*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1937. s. 38.

<sup>54</sup> DONALDSON, F.: *Edward VIII*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974. s. 49–50.

Also: HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 7.

<sup>55</sup> GORMAN, J. T.: *Edward VIII, King and Emperor*. London: W. & G. Foyle, 1937. s. 8.

<sup>56</sup> GORMAN, J. T.: *Edward VIII, King and Emperor*. London: W. & G. Foyle, 1937. s. 10–11.

<sup>57</sup> GORMAN, J. T.: *Edward VIII, King and Emperor*. London: W. & G. Foyle, 1937. s. 12–15.

Through his participation in the battlefields, Edward became a model of heroism, enthusiasm and energy for the English people.<sup>58</sup>

Prince Edward returned from the war as a national hero under the age of 25 years. He was friendly, full of confident demeanour and natural charm. The question of application of Edward after returning from hostilities was being decided. Prime Minister Lloyd George suggested that the prince will travel to the Commonwealth to pay tribute to them for their contribution to the British victory and to strengthen their relationship with Britain. The prince moved from his parents to the royal residence in York House.<sup>59</sup>

After the war, Edward VIII travelled to several important foreign places. In August 1919 he went to **Canada**, where he visited about fifty cities and gave several speeches. He visited North American Indians, war veterans and scouts. He bought a ranch in Calgary and became Canadian. This led to the rise of Calgary's status to a royal city. He also visited other cities in Canada, such as Montreal.<sup>60</sup> After Canada, he also briefly visited the **United States** and met President Wilson. The trip to Canada was successful, it was appreciated also by British politicians.<sup>61</sup> The trip to **New Zealand and Australia** followed immediately after returning from Canada. Edward VIII arrived in Auckland, New Zealand on April 24, 1920 and visited Fiji and Barbados along his way. In Canada he met with retired soldiers and sailors. He visited about two tens of cities before arriving to Wellington.<sup>62</sup> His ship Renown arrived in Melbourne, Australia on May 26, 1920.<sup>63</sup> Prince Edward was welcomed in Melbourne enthusiastically. Crowds of people were trying to touch him causing negative effect on prince's psyche and caused exhaustion. Therefore, the prince stayed in London until the autumn of 1921 after returning from this journey.<sup>64</sup> The visit to **India** in November 1921 was marked by a boycott of the prince journey by Gandhi and the Indian Congress, due to the Amritsar massacre in 1919.<sup>65</sup> The prince felt a tense atmosphere in Mumbai, some Indians ignored him, others welcomed him. This journey was very stressful for Edward. The visit to India did not deter him from further trips,

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<sup>58</sup> DONALDSON, F.: *Edward VIII*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974. s. 53.

<sup>59</sup> DONALDSON, F.: *Edward VIII: The Road to Abdication*. 2. vyd. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978. s. 44.

<sup>60</sup> BOLITHO, H.: *King Edward VIII: His Life and Reign*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1937. s. 89–92.

<sup>61</sup> BOLITHO, H.: *King Edward VIII: His Life and Reign*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1937. s. 92–94.

<sup>62</sup> DONALDSON, F.: *Edward VIII*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974. s. 78.

<sup>63</sup> DONALDSON, F.: *Edward VIII*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974. s. 79.

<sup>64</sup> BOLITHO, H.: *King Edward VIII: His Life and Reign*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1937. s. 116.

<sup>65</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 28.

for example he visited Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore. Edward's popularity in Britain reached an enormous level due to his abroad travels. He became society favourite after his return in June 1922.<sup>66</sup>

### 1.3.3 The Prince's Destiny Women

Due to his popularity and abilities, Prince Edward had a rich love life and knew a lot of women. Some of them affected his life more, others less. Only three women can be considered as his *femmes fatale* – Freda Dudley Ward, Thelma Furness and Wallis Simpson. Edward leaned toward the wealthy and often married ladies. For example, he fell under the spell of Portia Cadogan, Marion Coke and Rosemary Leveson-Gower. **Freda Dudley Ward** (Winifred Dudley Ward) was Edward's first true love. She was a small, spirited, intelligent and funny girl. Freda **was** a daughter of Colonel Charles Birkin. She was married at nineteen sixteen years older William Dudley Ward, with whom she had lived jointly since 1918. The prince was attracted to Freda. After a four-year passionate relationship with her, he could not be with her anymore and was writing to her three times a day.<sup>67</sup> Freda Dudley had a good influence on the prince and provided him a home. Edward loved her and had a great relationship with her two daughters. The prince's parents did not want this relationship, they were looking for a more suitable girl for him. Over time Freda's relationship cooled and Edward could hardly stand it. Freda remained the prince's friend and confidante for a long time.<sup>68</sup> It is ironic that Freda could be a suitable wife for a prince in many ways. She supported him, listened to him, understood him, always stood by him.<sup>69</sup> Another important woman in Edward's life was **Thelma Furness**. Their relationship lasted just a short time. Thelma was married to a great shipping magnate Viscount Furness. Thelma had a bad influence on the prince, she was not too important to the prince compared to Freda. Thelma is responsible for Prince Edward's connection with **Wallis Simpson**.<sup>70</sup> She became a "femme fatale" for the prince.

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<sup>66</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 29

<sup>67</sup> ZIEGLER, P.: *King Edward VIII*. 2. vyd. Stroud: Sutton, 2001. s. 94–96.

<sup>68</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 22.

<sup>69</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 22.

<sup>70</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 23.

## 1.4 The personality of Wallis Simpson

Wallis was born at the Blue Ridge Summit in Pennsylvania, Maryland. The exact date of her birth is unknown, the year 1896 is assumed. Her father Teackle Wallis Warfield soon died from tuberculosis. The mother, Alys (christened Alice) Montague, became dependent on the kindness of her relatives, especially Teackle's older brother Solomon.<sup>71</sup> The uncle was annoying and greedy, but he provided Wallis the opportunity for education in the best schools. Wallis was ashamed of her poverty and financial dependence, so she decided to become rich.<sup>72</sup> She first married a naval air force officer Earl Winfield Spencer at the age of nineteen. He had a reputation as an alcoholic and a rapist. Therefore, they lived separately for some time and in 1924 they travelled together to China. She had an abortion, the child's father was probably an Argentine diplomat. In China the marital crisis culminated and Wallis returned to America and filed for divorce, which took place in 1927.<sup>73</sup> Her second husband was Ernest Aldrich Simpson, who was shy, quiet and ordinary with English roots. His main interest was the arts. He graduated from Harvard and in 1923 married Dorothea Dechert, the daughter of the highest judge in the state of Massachusetts, and had a daughter Audrey. Wallis met Ernest as his marriage went through a crisis and Wallis took advantage of the situation. Although they were both married, they began planning their life together.<sup>74</sup> Ernest and Wallis married in July 1928 in London. In 1929 they bought a spacious apartment not far from Marble Arch with four servants.<sup>75</sup> Wallis had a rich social life. She actively participated in various parties and celebrations where she met important Americans

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<sup>71</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 42.

Also: HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 25.

Also: KING, G.: *The Duchess of Windsor: The Uncommon Life of Wallis Simpson*. London: Aurum Press, 1999. s. 3.

Also: WINDSOR, W. W.: *The Heart has its Reasons*. 2. vyd. London: Landsborough Publications, 1959. s. 7.

<sup>72</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 26.

<sup>73</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 42.

Also: HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 28.

Also: LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 102.

<sup>74</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 28.

Also: KING, G.: *The Duchess of Windsor: The Uncommon Life of Wallis Simpson*. London: Aurum Press, 1999. s. 68–69.

<sup>75</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 43

in the sphere of diplomacy and commerce. At one such party in 1931 to which she was invited by Thelma Furness, she personally met the Prince of Wales Edward VIII.<sup>76</sup> This meeting was the first of many others that gradually grew into a relationship that shook the British monarchy.

## 1.5 The relationship of Edward and Wallis

Prince Edward's relationship with Wallis Simpson grew stronger over time. At first it seemed like a friendship, but later turned into a deep relationship. The prince was fascinated by Wallis's unwavering confidence and her sagacity, which sometimes teased him. They took advantage of various social opportunities for further meetings together and stayed together until late at night. This created rumors about their relationship. In 1934 their relationship progressed to confidence, and Prince Edward stopped communicating with his former love Freda Dudley Ward. Gradually, Edward became more addicted to Wallis than he had ever been to Freda. He began inviting Wallis on trips, accompanied by her aunt Bessie, but without her husband. Edward even invited Wallis to the reception at Buckingham Palace, which caused the King's displeasure. The king kicked out her, and Edward tried to convince his angry father that he and Wallis were not lovers. At that time, he lied to the king. The prince was unspeakably happy with her, so he took Wallis to abroad holidays, wrote her love letters, and gave her expensive gifts. Sometimes she liked to abuse his emotional predispositions, even mocking or scolding him until she brought him to tears.<sup>77</sup> The British media did not write about the prince's relationship with Wallis because of great respect for the royal family. However, neither the Americas nor the European media observed forced secrecy. Therefore, compromising pages about the relationship between Prince Edward and Wallis Simpson in foreign newspapers coming to Britain were removed or blacked out. This was especially common during her divorce from Ernest Simpson.<sup>78</sup> When Edward VIII was proclaimed successor of the throne, two days after his father's death, at the official ceremony

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<sup>76</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 43.

<sup>77</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 44–47.

<sup>78</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 47.

at the College of Heralds, Wallis Simpson attended the event.<sup>79</sup> According to witnesses, the prince said that nothing could ever change his feelings for Wallis.<sup>80</sup> When in September 1936 under pressure from public opinion Wallis intended to return to her husband, the king refused to admit it. Wallis had to get a divorce first, so that she could marry the king. He removed the obstacle that prevented an unwanted marriage, which could have been the reason for the constitutional and political crisis.<sup>81</sup> Divorce in the UK in the 1930s was an expensive and two-step process. The first stage was a temporary divorce, when neither of the former spouses was allowed to have another relationship, the second stage was an absolute divorce. For women divorce was only available because of the husband's proven adultery.<sup>82</sup> The divorce took place at the end of October 1936 in Ipswich, Suffolk. The reason was Ernest Simpson's fictional adultery. He was caught in July 1936 with Miss Kennedy in a luxury hotel, he did it to protect his wife's honor.<sup>83</sup> A successful divorce opened the way for an official relationship between King Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson. King Edward VIII insisted on marrying the twice-divorced Wallis, this decision became the main cause of his abdication.

## 1.6 The Royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII

The royal affair or "Simpsons' affair" is called the abdication crisis in 1936, linked to the relationship between King Edward VIII and the twice-divorced American Wallis Simpson.

### 1.6.1 Atmosphere before abdication

Despite the secrecy of the British press, in autumn of 1936 information about the relationship between King Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson spread from abroad to Great Britain. Some Britons knew about this case even in November.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, on the evening of November 16, 1936, the King met with the Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin

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<sup>79</sup> SENCOURT, R.: *The Reign of Edward VIII*. London: Anthony Gibbs & Phillips, 1962. s. 56.

<sup>80</sup> SENCOURT, R.: *The Reign of Edward VIII*. London: Anthony Gibbs & Phillips, 1962. s. 56.

<sup>81</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 55–56.

<sup>82</sup> SEBBA, Anne, c. d., s. 131.

<sup>83</sup> BEAVERBROOK, M. A. – TAYLOR, A. J. P. (ed.): *The Abdication of King Edward VIII*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1966. s. 33.

<sup>84</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 106.



of that time. He told the king that Wallis would not be accepted by British as Queen. It was then that the King made his fateful decision that he intended to marry Mrs. Simpson and was ready to leave the throne.<sup>85</sup> Soon he undertook an important three-day business trip to South Wales.<sup>86</sup> Immediately after returning to London, on November 20, 1936, the King invited Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin and suggested the possibility of a morganatic marriage. Wallis would not be the Queen, she and their common children were not supposed to use any of Edward's titles. The successor of Edward VIII would be his younger brother Albert and his descendants. At a government meeting held on November 27, 1936, Stanley Baldwin began discussions on this possibility with representatives of the British government and the dominion. This proposal was unacceptable to the government.<sup>87</sup> The British press broke its silence based on a misinterpretation of Bishop Alfred Walter Frank Blunt's speech. The bishop's statement at a church meeting in Bradford about the need for God's grace for the King was explained as an allusion to the relationship between the King and Wallis.<sup>88</sup> From December 4, 1936 marvellous articles about the relationship between the King and Wallis Simpson filled the pages of British newspapers.<sup>89</sup> From the same day, speculation about abdication also began to appear, for example in the daily *Sheffield Independent*. There was also a mention of the need to adopt special legislation for abdication because it was still unprecedented in the United Kingdom and the dominions. At the same time, it stated that abdication was the only acceptable solution if the king did not give up his marriage to Wallis.<sup>90</sup> Renowned British dailies such as *Evening Standard*, *The Daily Express*, *Evening News*, and *The Daily Mail* were in opposition to Baldwin, allowing no solution for Edward VIII to cease to become king.<sup>91</sup> Unfortunately, neither the government

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<sup>85</sup> WHITE, J. L.: *The Abdication of Edward VIII: A Record with all the Published Documents*. 3. vyd. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1937. s. 35–36.

<sup>86</sup> WHITE, J. L.: *The Abdication of Edward VIII: A Record with all the Published Documents*. 3. vyd. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1937. s. 36.

<sup>87</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 106.

<sup>88</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 107.

<sup>89</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 107.

<sup>90</sup> King's Choice: Marriage or Crown. *Sheffield Independent*. č. 25 621, 4. 12. 1936, s. 1.

<sup>91</sup> WHITE, J. L.: *The Abdication of Edward VIII: A Record with all the Published Documents*. 3. vyd. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1937. s. 54.

of Britain nor the governments of the dominions found a suitable and diplomatic solution that would avert the abdication of the king.<sup>92</sup>

### **1.6.2 The influence of the political and international situation**

The main and well-known cause of Edward VIII's abdication was his decision to marry Wallis Simpson, who was unacceptable to the British monarchy as the future wife of the king.

However, there are speculations about other reasons that may have led to his decision to resign as king. He was raised from a young age as a future ruler, but the time in which he lived was not easy. He witnessed several monarchies fall and transform into a republic. He realized that this fate could affect Great Britain as well. His decision to abdicate could also be a form of escape from this situation.<sup>93</sup>

The situation was not entirely favorable for the king. His government, including the prime minister, was made up of senior and exhausted gentlemen. Edward was very reluctant to resolve disagreements with them. As a result, he disliked them and could not respect them. There was a tense and even hostile relationship between him and the Archbishop of Canterbury, which was further exacerbated by his addiction to Wallis Simpson. Therefore, he boycotted many joint sessions. This did not shed the best light on him as the highest representative of the Anglican Church. In general, he had an out-of-touch attitude with the government, and he was lacking someone with naval and war experience who could be his confidant or adviser.<sup>94</sup>

The international situation at that time was very complicated, the danger of World War II became more and more real and feared. Italy successfully attacked Ethiopia in 1935, and Adolf Hitler occupied the Rhineland in 1936. This led to an escalation of tensions, the world was on the brink of war.<sup>95</sup>

The interplay of the above adverse circumstances could also ultimately contribute to King Edward VIII's decision to abdicate.

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<sup>92</sup> WHITE, J. L.: *The Abdication of Edward VIII: A Record with all the Published Documents*. 3. vyd. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1937. s. 54.

<sup>93</sup> HEPPENSTALL, P. G.: *His Majesty Edward VIII*. Exeter: A. Wheaton & Co., 1936. s. 3.

<sup>94</sup> BOLITHO, H.: *King Edward VIII: His Life and Reign*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1937. s. 260.

<sup>95</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 52.

### 1.6.3 Abdication

The days preceding the abdication (see Appendix Figure 3) were not easy for the King. Next meeting with Prime Minister Baldwin held on December 5, 1936. Winston Churchill knightly defended the Interests of King Edward.<sup>96</sup> He stood openly for Edward in the House of Commons, pointing out that the King was not committing any crime and that he had been sworn an oath.<sup>97</sup> The King's possible abdication most affected his brother Albert, who was immediately confronted with the situation after returning from Scotland on 3 December. He tried unsuccessfully to make an appointment with his brother. Edward was in Fort Belvedere at Windsor on the turbulent days of December. Meanwhile, Wallis went to Cannes. Edward contacted his brother on December 7 and invited him to joint dinner with the Prime Minister. It took place at Fort Belvedere on December 8. At the meeting, Edward declared Wallis the most amazing woman in the world and announced his intention to leave the throne.<sup>98</sup>

In that situation the king had three options: to marry and remain king against the will of the government, give up marriage to Wallis Simpson or abdicate. Because morganatic marriage had no legislative basis and neither the British government nor the dominion government intended to pass a new law on the matter, he was forced to choose the last solution of abdication. The British and the government were annoyed more than a foreign nationality on Wallis that she was twice divorced. This fact conflicted with the value orientation of the most British society, including the government and the church.<sup>99</sup>

The abdication of *Edward VIII, King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominion Overseas and Emperor of India*, took place at ten a.m. of December 10, 1936, at Fort Belvedere with the participation of the King's brothers – the Duke of Kent, York and Gloucester. The request for abdication had three pages and was called the Instrument of Abdication. The document was handed to Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin and a spokesman who read it to parliament.<sup>100</sup> Stanley Baldwin subsequently stated that such

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<sup>96</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 64.

<sup>97</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 106.

<sup>98</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 107–108.

<sup>99</sup> LOGUE, M. – CONRADI, P.: *Králova řeč: Jak jeden muž zachránil britskou monarchii*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2011. s. 108–109.

<sup>100</sup> AMZV, PZZÚ, PZ Londýn, 1. 2. 1937

a difficult task had not yet been assigned to the Prime Minister and that Parliament had never adopted such an important report.<sup>101</sup> On December 11, 1936 Edward VIII addressed the nation by radio in a speech called *Prince Edward's Farewell to the Nations*.<sup>102</sup>

As there were no legal regulations for the act of abdication, a bill on abdication had to be discussed in both houses of parliament. On the same day (December 11, 1936) the law came into force.<sup>103</sup> His *Majesty's Declaration of Abdication*, which gave effect to Edward VIII's abdication, consisted of three clauses: a) Edward VIII ceases to be a ruler and the next successor on the list is appointed, b) it deprives Edward VIII and his lineage of succession to the throne, c) The Marriage Act of 1772 ceases to apply to Edward VIII.<sup>104</sup> Thereby, Edward VIII is not eligible to approve or refuse marriage to members of the Royal family, and also cannot demand marriage without the consent of a third party. Until then, he did not need as a King consent to marriage.<sup>105</sup> After the abdication, he retains the title of His *Royal Highness The Duke of Windsor*.<sup>106</sup>

Prince Albert was crowned as The King George VI on May 12, 1937. He subsequently announced the awarding of the title of His *Royal Highness the Duke of Windsor* to Edward.<sup>107</sup> After the abdication of Edward VIII, Elizabeth became the rightful heir to the throne. She and her family had to move to Buckingham Palace.<sup>108</sup>

## 1.7 The life of Edward and Wallis together after the abdication

Edward and Wallis lost their friends after the abdication. There was disappointment that the British people did not object to the abdication.<sup>109</sup> The press reported on the abdication and speculated about the future of Edward and Wallis. All were interested in the new king,

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<sup>101</sup> WHITE (1937: 89)

<sup>102</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 65.

<sup>103</sup> (EDWARD, R. I., CRONKITE, F. C., Canada and the Abdication. Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, Vol. 4, No. 2 (May, 1938), s. 184. <sup>73</sup> Act of Settlement, 1701.)

<sup>104</sup> His Majesty's Declaration of Abdication. A bill to give effect to His Majesty's declaration of abdication and for purposes connected therewith, Cmd. 1936-37 (48).

<sup>105</sup> WHITE (1937: 51)

<sup>106</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an Imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 65.

<sup>107</sup> SPOTO, D. *Sestup a pád rodu Windsorů*. Praha: Ikar. 1997.

<sup>108</sup> BRADFORD, S. Elizabeth. A Biography of Her Majesty the Queen. London. 2002.

<sup>109</sup> DONALDSON, F.: *Edward VIII*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974. s. 297–299.

the transcripts of speeches, and the cause of Edward's abdication.<sup>110</sup> The financial issue was significant to Edward. The Duke of Windsor requested £25,000 a year in exchange for giving up Sandringham House and Balmoral Castle. His assets were about ten times more than he admitted. His relations with King George VI cooled because of this lie. Wallis apparently longed for the title of *Her Royal Highness*. But it was clear to her that she would not get it.<sup>111</sup> The coming Christmas Edward spent in Austria with Baron Eugene de Rothschild and Wallis in Cannes, France. They waited for the six-month condition of Wallis's second divorce. Edward had no sense of responsibility for the first time in his life.<sup>112</sup> According to his statement, this condition suited him and even brought him happiness.<sup>113</sup> Wallis and Edward married without the participation of Edward's family at the Château de Candé in France on June 3, 1937.<sup>114</sup> An article about the wedding was published, for example in *The Staffordshire Advertiser*.<sup>115</sup> After the wedding (see appendix picture 2) the newlyweds spent some time in Austria, then moved to Paris. The duke wanted his exile to end. He wanted attention, and he wanted it to get to his wife. Edward's lack of royal duties and anonymity did not suit him. Therefore, he accepted an invitation mediated by Charles Bedaux in October 1937. The purpose of the invitation was apparently propaganda and manipulation for the Nazi regime. Officially, in Germany, Edward had to become acquainted with the social conditions of the workers.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Abdication of King Edward VIII. *Royal Leamington Spa Courier and Warwickshire Standard*. roč. 109, č. 18, 11. 12. 1936, s. 7.

Also: Abdication of King Edward. *West London Observer*. roč. 82, č. 4238, 11. 12. 1936, s. 1. BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an Imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 65.

Also: MCLEOD, K.: *Battle Royal: Edward VIII & George VI, Brother Against Arother*. London: Constable, 1999. s. 274.

<sup>111</sup> MCLEOD, K.: *Battle Royal: Edward VIII & George VI, Brother Against Brother*. London: Constable, 1999. s. 274

<sup>112</sup> MCLEOD, K.: *Battle Royal: Edward VIII & George VI, Brother Against Arother*. London: Constable, 1999. s. 269–271

<sup>113</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 74.

Also: MCLEOD, K.: *Battle Royal: Edward VIII & George VI, Brother Against Arother*. London: Constable, 1999. s. 271.

<sup>114</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 76.

Also: *Mrs. Simpson (Wallis Warfield) and Edward VIII (Duke of Windsor): The Story of Their Love. A Marriage Souvenir*. Lahore, 1937. s. 26.

<sup>115</sup> Marriage of the Duke of Windsor. *The Staffordshire Advertiser*. roč. 142, 5. 6. 1937, s. 7. <sup>192</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 71.

<sup>116</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 72.

During one visit, Edward accidentally saw maps of German power interests.<sup>117</sup> Edward's visit was not enthusiastically received by the British Royal family. In addition, Edward broke his promise to his brother to not cause trouble. Edward's attitude regarding Nazism was naive and underestimating, even in 1938 when World War II was coming.<sup>118</sup> Austria has been annexed to Germany, and execution of the Munich Agreement has begun.<sup>119</sup> Edward and Wallis lived in a residence in the Château de la Croe. After the outbreak of war, Edward, who was against it, felt obliged to offer Britain his help. Ultimately, he wanted his status back, including full rights and granting the status of the royal family member to the Duchess of Windsor. They were not welcomed by the family or members of the government upon arrival in England and had to take care of themselves.<sup>120</sup> Wallis posed a security risk with pro-Nazi stances. George VI, who was popular in Britain at that time, did not want to give Edward a higher position for fear of further problems. Edward eventually obtained the position of liaison officer in France. Wallis also went to France and helped the Red Cross. In 1940, Edward went to Spain, where General Franco sympathized with Germany and Italy. Germany intended to keep Edward in Spain for as long as possible, because Hitler wanted Edward on the British throne as the Britain's Nazi King. Britain intended to bring him back to power, which was contrary to Edward's intentions. He considered that Britain should negotiate peace with Germany. He moved from Spain to Portugal. Here he was caught by Winston Churchill's offer of receiving the position the governor of the Bahamas, which he eventually accepted. He left Portugal due to pressure from Churchill on August 1, 1940.<sup>121</sup> Edward became governor of the Bahamas and was aware that he and Wallis would not be able to leave the Bahamas for the duration of the war. Therefore they settled in Nassau.<sup>122</sup> Edward administered the islands scattered between Florida and Cuba. He received the governor's residence for use. The couple was positively perceived by the locals. However, their arrival was problematic because, despite the duke's support

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid, s. 73.

<sup>119</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 85.

<sup>120</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 85–86.

<sup>121</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 79.

Also: HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 86–87.

<sup>122</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 82.

Also: DONALDSON, F.: *Edward VIII*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974. s. 378. <sup>203</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 83.

for job creation, agriculture, investment, and other activities<sup>123</sup>, it was clear that the couple had racial prejudices against the locals. For example, Wallis has ordered a ban on dark-skinned residents from the canteens of its childcare centres. The Duke maintained an atmosphere of support for racial segregation as part of his employment.<sup>124</sup> During Edward's time as a governor, they were able to travel not only around the Bahamas but also to Canada and the United States. They were also accepted and welcomed by movie stars.<sup>125</sup> With the entry of the United States into the war, two American bases were built creating new job positions. A mass protest broke out in Nassau in 1942 resulting in human casualties. The duke concluded that the riots were caused by mutual racial hatred.<sup>126</sup> The Duke left Bahamas in 1945. In September he sailed with his wife to France, then they visited England. He also met with the Royal couple. But from mid-1946 it was clear that it is impossible to find an official representative position for the duke, so his public life was ended.<sup>127</sup> Brother George VI refused to recognize The *Her Royal Highness* title for Wallis, and thus to accept her into the Royal family. This decision worsened the relationship between the brothers. Edward and Wallis did not even receive an invitation to the wedding of Elizabeth and Philip. In 1952 Edward attended the funeral of George VI. Elizabeth did not take any measures to award the title to Wallis, so Edward did not participate in her coronation.<sup>128</sup> His mother Queen Mary died on March 24, 1953.<sup>129</sup>

In 1964 Edward underwent surgery. For the first time in many years, the Royal family reached out to him and Elizabeth sent him flowers. In 1965 she came to visit him in person after his next operation and she met Wallis for the first time. In 1967 they were both invited to the unveiling of the Queen Mary memorial plaque. This also was when also Wallis met the Queen.<sup>130</sup> In 1971 the duke was diagnosed with cancer. On May 18, 1972 he was visited by the Queen and her husband. The Duke died in pain on May 28, 1972 and Wallis died on April 24, 1986. Edward and Wallis had a very good

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid, s. 83–84.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 87–88.

<sup>126</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 88–89.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, s. 92–93.

<sup>128</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 105–106.

<sup>129</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 110.

<sup>130</sup> HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 111.

relationship until the very end of their lives. They are buried together in Frogmore, Windsor.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> BRENDON, P.: *Edward VIII: The Uncrowned King*. London: Allen Lane an imprint of Penguin Books, 2016. s. 105.

Also: HICHENS, M.: *Abdication: The Rise and Fall of Edward VIII*. Kibworth, Leicestershire: The Book Guild Ltd, 2016. s. 112–114.

Also: WEIR, A.: *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy*. 3. vyd. London: Pimlico 2002, s. 327.



## **2 METHODOLOGY**

The main goal in carrying out this research is to find out how the royal affair and the subsequent abdication of King Edward VIII was reflected in the currently available Czech periodical press, reconstruct the level of knowledge of Czech readers at the time about events related to the abdication and reveal the stances of Czech readers towards the events in Great Britain, their perception of the circumstances and the context of the Simpson affair. The empirical part of the thesis focuses on the analysis of Czech newspaper articles. The analysis will try to reconstruct the extent to which and in what way the reader of the periodical press was informed about the events in Great Britain and what stances towards the abdication of Edward VIII itself and related topics they could have taken.

### **2.1 Method**

The method used in the bachelor's thesis is the method of qualitative content analysis of currently available newspaper articles, which were published on the topic in the years 1936 to 1943.

The qualitative content analysis was used to study the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII and the reflections in the contemporary Czech press, which were included in selected published texts. It has shown us how the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII were interpreted by Czech journalists in available periodicals.

### **2.2 Qualitative research: The royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII and its reflections in the contemporary Czech press**

The empirical part of the work deals with how the royal affair and the subsequent abdication of King Edward VIII were reflected by the Czech press in the texts of the periodicals *Polední list*, *Národní listy*, *Polední vydání*, *Ranní vydání* and *Lidové noviny*. These were published and presented to the public like interpretations of the Great

Britain press in an effort to image the royal affair. In the thesis, we study how the available Czech period articles brought it.

### 2.2.1 Research samples

The research samples were selected from the articles published in the periodicals *Polední list*, *Národní listy*, *Polední vydání*, *Ranní vydání*, *Lidové noviny* in the years 1936 to 1943. The years 1936 - 1943 were chosen due to the availability of data (the data collection took place during the coronavirus crisis and the national state of emergency). The data from which the research sample was selected contained these key terms: Edward VIII, Wallis Simpson, abdication, The Simpson affair, and the date of publication 1936–1945. The list of texts which were published in available periodicals were important for the research. A total of 12 texts from the list of 14 available texts were used for qualitative purposes.

Articles were available in the periodicals *Polední list*, *Národní listy*, *Polední vydání*, *Ranní vydání*, *Lidové noviny*. Following search terms were included in articles: “Who is Mrs. Wallis Simpson” (November 22, 1936)<sup>132</sup>, “Throne or Marriage” (December 4, 1936)<sup>133</sup>, “The Decision on the King's Marriage is to Be Postponed” (December 6, 1936)<sup>134</sup>, “The Career of Mrs. Simpson” (December 6, 1936)<sup>135</sup>, “Edward VIII Abdicated” (December 11, 1936)<sup>136</sup>, “How the Abdication Occured” (December 11, 1936)<sup>137</sup>, “Abdication Accepted With Feelings of Deepest Remorse” (December 11, 1936)<sup>138</sup>, “Great Britain swears by the new King” (December 13, 1936)<sup>139</sup>, „The Victory and Defeat of Mrs. Simpson” (December 13, 1936)<sup>140</sup>, “The Truth About Mrs. Simpson” (December 20, 1936)<sup>141</sup>, “From the World” (August 10, 1936) 1938)<sup>142</sup> and “Fight for the Defense of European Culture” (3.9.1943)<sup>143</sup>. Due to the low number of available Czech period sources, all relevant

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<sup>132</sup> Kdo je Mrs. Wallis Simpson. *Polední list*. 1936, **9**(326), 2. ISSN 1804-8838

<sup>133</sup> Trůn nebo sňatek. *Polední list*. 1936, **9**(338).

<sup>134</sup> Rozhodnutí o králově sňatku má být odloženo. *Polední list*. 1936, **9**(340), 1.

<sup>135</sup> Kariéra Mrs. Simpsonové. *Polední list*. 1936, **9**(340), 1.

<sup>136</sup> Edward VIII. se vzdal trůnu. *Národní listy*. 1936, **76**(339), 1.

<sup>137</sup> Jak došlo k abdikaci. *Národní listy*. 1936, **76**(339), 1.

<sup>138</sup> Abdikace přijata s pocity nejhlubší lítosti. *Národní listy*. 1936, **76**(339), 1.

<sup>139</sup> Velká Británie přísahá novému králi. *Lidové noviny: Ranní vydání*. 1936, **44**(46).

<sup>140</sup> Vítězství a prohra paní Simpsonové. *Lidové noviny: Polední vydání*. 1936, **44**(46).

<sup>141</sup> Pravda o paní Wallis Simpsonové. *Polední list*. 1936, **9**(354), 9. ISSN 1804-8838.

<sup>142</sup> Ze světa. *Lidové noviny*. 1938, **46**(399), 2.

<sup>143</sup> Boj na obranu evropské kultury. *Lidové noviny*. 1943, **51**(241), 1.

information concerning the interpretation of the royal affair in the contemporary Czech press was used to the maximum for qualitative analysis.

### **2.2.2 Qualitative content analysis**

The method that was used for the empirical part of the work is a qualitative content analysis. Content analysis is generally considered to be one of the most productive techniques for gathering information and can be performed by a single researcher. One of the advantages of this technique is its wide applicability. Content analysis is also a technique suitable for comparing how the mass media reports on various events.<sup>144</sup>

This method was chosen mainly because it emphasizes the hidden meaning of the texts. In conducting research, it is one of the most widely used techniques that does not take frequencies and quantifications as a condition or reason for significance.<sup>145</sup>

Descriptions, aspects and manifestations of the royal affair and the abdication of King Edward VIII were sought after in the materials. The texts are encoded using the open encoding method. You can encode words, sentences or entire paragraphs. The codes put specific phenomena in the text into concepts or more general categories.<sup>146</sup>

## **2.3 Analysis of available Czech period newspaper articles**

As a part of the bachelor's thesis research, copies of First Republic articles, which were thematically related to the abdication of Edward VIII in 1936, were obtained through the services of various libraries. While collecting data, I came across the fact that there is a relatively small number of available relevant resources on the issue. While searching for sources, I found out that articles about the abdication were published in many periodicals at the time (e.g. *Český deník*, *Lidové noviny*, *Moravská orlice*, *Národní listy*, *Národní politika*, *Našinec*, *Pochodeň*, *Polední národní politika*), but most of them are not available to the public. During my research, I focused on the articles that were available.

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<sup>144</sup> DISMAN, Miroslav. *Jak se vyrábí sociologická znalost*. Praha: nakladatelství Karolinum, 2007. ISBN 978-80-246-0139-7.

<sup>145</sup> McQUAIL, Denis. *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Praha: nakladatelství Portál s.r.o., 1999. ISBN 978-80-7367-338-3.

<sup>146</sup> HENDL, Jan. *Kvalitativní výzkum: základní metody a aplikace*. 4. vyd. Praha: Portál, 2016. 251 s. ISBN 978-80-262-0982-9

### 2.3.1 Who is Mrs. Wallis Simpson

The article "Who is Mrs. Wallis Simpson" was published on 22 November 1936 in the tabloid newspaper *Polední list*, which was owned by First Republic Minister Jiří Stříbrný. This article is presented in response to disturbances from American and Parisian papers, which have been reporting for several weeks about a possible marriage of King Edward VIII to a civilian woman. The content of the article is focused on the convergence of Mrs. Wallis Simpson to Edward VIII and on the relationship between them. It also contains a discussion of possible consequences of their relationship, and the response to this situation among the English.

Mrs. Wallis Simpson is rated as a particularly beautiful lady. The article highlights her sense of elegance, her wit and sense of humor. It presents her as an interesting woman with a beautiful voice and a great dancer, as a woman who has ancestors from one of the old English aristocratic families. The article mentions her American origins (she was born in Baltimore) and describes previous marriages that have ended in a divorce but have provided her with a relatively luxurious life.<sup>147</sup>

The article further introduces her as a potential wife of King of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth Edward VIII. This is indicated by several clues. Wallis Simpson did not cease to belong to the circle of closest friends of Edward VIII for many years, the relationship continues and deepens, even though the King Edward VIII became Prince of Wales. Edward VIII broke many rules because of Wallis, and they were frequently seen together outside a wider circle of friends. After Edward VIII accessed the throne, he invited Wallis to his solemn lunch. The Article also highlights the fact that Edward VIII used to choose the circle of his friends at his own discretion and in his choice, he preferred personality and character traits to origin. The article mentions a secret and a rapid divorce upon order from inner circle, which outraged the English more than her American origin. There are statements about the possible planning of the marriage and its timing with respect to the coronation, and also about public opinion on the matter. The article speculates on whether the King's marriage to a woman of civil origin was legally possible.

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<sup>147</sup> Kdo je Mrs. Wallis Simpson. *Polední list*. 1936, 9(326), 2. ISSN 1804-8838.

In the conclusion, there was no legislative barrier that could prevent the marriage, and there was no known law that would prohibit it, which was taken care of by Henry VIII.<sup>148</sup>

Overall, the article describes Wallis Simpson's personality and role, largely on the basis of information provided by American and French newspapers. The information about the marriage of Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson was largely speculative. There were also mentions of British press secrecy about these events, and the English censorship in the form of torn pages from American newspapers.<sup>149</sup> Although the author approaches the royal affair as a sensation, he also informs relevant facts and asks logical rhetorical questions.

### **2.3.2 Throne or marriage**

On December 4, 1936, the article "Throne or Marriage" was published in the Polední list newspaper, which briefly summarized the events related to the royal affair and the abdication crisis. The subtitle of the article „*The uproar in England*“ informs about the king's decision to marry Wallis Simpson, the meeting with Prime Minister Baldwin, the impending constitutional crisis and the possible abdication of the king. The headline "*The King's Bride Past*" tells the life story of Mrs. Simpson as a lady from the King's social circle. The article contains speculation about a possible resignation of the government in the case of the king's marriage to an unwanted, albeit intelligent and charming American woman. The dissent of the Church is expressed here, especially the Bishop of Bradford and the Archbishop of Canterbury, who were to carry out the coronation. The article underlines the seriousness of the situation and emphasizes the question of whether the king, in the interests of the British Empire and the nation, will submit to the demand of ministers who do not agree with the marriage. An interesting passage in the article is an analysis of the response of large London papers to the King's intended marriage. Most of them express their disagreement with this marriage, with the exception of the newspaper "News Chronicle", which respects the king's civil right to free choice. The article also discusses Prime Minister Baldwin's evasive answers regarding the constitutional crisis. The article draws attention to the threat of the division of society into two camps as a result of a possible change in the throne, and to the fact that the king is loved by the people. It also highlights the House of Commons'

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

efforts to prevent the abdication, and importance of the oath of allegiance to King Edward VIII.<sup>150</sup>

The author of the article focuses mainly on the social and political context of the royal affair. He shares Britain's concerns about the possible developments and consequences of the situation. It creates tension in the reader in anticipation of how everything will turn out in the United Kingdom.

### **2.3.3 The decision on the King's marriage is to be postponed**

On 6 of December 1936, an article titled "The Decision on the King's Marriage Is To Be Postponed" was also published in *Polední list*, which brings up a surprising change in the British public's opinion on the marriage of King Edward. In a society divided by escalating tensions between the king and the government, more and more were content to accept Edward's plan to marry Mrs. Wallis. The article mentions the possibility of postponing the decision regarding the marriage until after the coronation and thus gaining time to find the optimal solution. These solutions would have been sought without the participation of Baldwin, who could be replaced by Winston Churchill or Lloyd George, who sympathized with the King. Prioritising the public opinion, Baldwin uncompromisingly confronts the King with the choice between a throne and marriage to Mrs. Simpson. The article also draws attention to the change in the property of King Edward VIII after the abdication, when he would be left with two estates, a state rent and about 400 million Czech crowns (for the conversion rate in the respective year). Furthermore, the article provides insights into the contradictory views of English newspapers on the King's marriage and speculation about the possible occurrence of a constitutional crisis.<sup>151</sup>

The way in which the author of the article speaks about the development of the situation in Great Britain in connection with the royal affair indicates his sympathies with the possibility of free choice of Edward VIII. The text traces the author's fear that the constitutional conflict between the government and the King will end in abdication according to the prediction of the London press.

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<sup>150</sup> Trůn nebo sňatek. *Polední list*. 1936, 9(338).

<sup>151</sup> Rozhodnutí o králově sňatku má být odloženo. *Polední list*. 1936, 9(340), 1.

### 2.3.4 Mrs. Simpson career

This article has more tabloid character. It brings a biography of Mrs. Wallis Simpson, informs about her origin, about her partial orphan childhood and her adolescence. There is a mention of her first marriage, causes of divorce, and her meeting with her second husband Ernest Simpson. The main focus of the article is on introducing Mrs. Wallis to the high society of the royal court and especially on her relationship with King Edward VIII, who intended to marry her after her divorce. The article concludes mentioning the Bishop of Bradford's statement that the King's life was not compatible with the blessing received during the coronation. The king was faced with a choice between the throne and his marriage to Wallis. Edward promised Wallis to announce a decision by her 40th birthday.<sup>152</sup>

The author's account of Wallis Simpson shows his critical view of her and her life events, especially with regard to two previous marriages and the selection of partners in order to gain social status and financial security. The author considers inappropriate the fact that before her second divorce and also during it, she was officially seen in the close company of the King. The article states that Mrs. Simpson is responsible for the government crisis and threatening Edward's coronation.

### 2.3.5 Edward VIII abdicated

The title "Edward VIII Abdicated" provides information about the abdication of Edward VIII already on the title page of the *Národní listy* issued on December 11, 1936 and further informs that the House of Commons was called to pass the abdication law, which immediately after approval also would come into force in dominions.<sup>153</sup>

The article conveys the full text of the King's hand-signed abdication message, which was read on 10 December 1936 in the House of Commons and House of Lords. In it, Edward VIII reported his definitive and irrevocable decision to resign to which he comes after careful deliberation. He expresses the belief that the citizens of Britain and the Dominions will understand that, given the circumstances surrounding his personal life and his feelings, he cannot responsibly play the role of King. He states that, in accordance

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<sup>152</sup> Kariéra Mrs. Simpsonové. *Polední list*. 1936, **9**(340), 1

<sup>153</sup> Edward VIII. se vzdal trůnu. *Národní listy*. 1936, **76**(339), 1.

with the public interest, he signed the abdication on the morning of 10 December 1936 in the terms following:

*„I, Edward VIII, of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the seas, King and Emperor of India, do hereby declare my irrevocable determination to renounce the throne for myself and for my descendants and my desire that effect should be given to this instrument of abdication immediately. In token whereof I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of December, 1936, in the presence of the witnesses whose signatures are subscribed.“<sup>154</sup>.*

Edward VIII further informs that the witnesses to the signing of this document are his three brothers, the Duke of York, the Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of Kent. In the abdication message, the King further thanks the respect shown to him when he ascended the throne and announced the name of his lawful successor, who became his younger brother the Duke of York.<sup>155</sup>

The author reflects on the facts of the abdication published by English press. The text shows a hint of understanding the abdication under the circumstances and under the influence of the British view of the situation as the most appropriate solution to the conflict.

### **2.3.6 How the abdication took place**

This paper, printed on the title page of *Národní listy* on December 11, 1936, brings Prime Minister Baldwin's remarks on what preceded the King's abdication and how it was reached. He pronounced it on December 10, 1936, after reading the king's message. Baldwin spoke of reports from American newspapers in the autumn of 1936 that prompted inquiries by North American, British, and dominion citizens about the circumstances of the King and Mrs. Simpson relationship. Baldwin talked about feeling the pressure on himself. He talked about meetings with the King on November 16 and November 27, 1936, during which he discussed people's disagreement with Wallis Simpson as the future Queen. He recalled the debates about the King's proposal for a morganatic marriage, which was eventually rejected by the government and the dominion. He also describes the decision of Edward VIII not to back down from marrying Wallis Simpson and his intent to leave with dignity. Baldwin expressed his respect for the King's choice to have the wife of his heart and payed tribute to his gentlemanly conduct, refusing to judge the King's

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<sup>154</sup> Edward VIII. se vzdal trůnu. *Národní listy*. 1936, 76(339), 1.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.



decision. He calls on the assembly to grip the arrangement for the adoption of the abdication law, to preserve the inviolability of the monarchy as a guarantee of freedom, and to support the new King.<sup>156</sup>

The article mentions the praise of King Edward by Winston Churchill and also the appreciation to Baldwin he did that the King accepted the volition of the people voluntary without coercion. It recalls the draft of the abdication law, according to which Edward VIII will stop being King of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth once the abdication law is approved by both Houses and signed by Edward VIII. The article draws attention to the provision that the law on the royal family members' marriages from 1772 does not apply to Edward VIII or his descendants after the abdication. This law stipulates that members of the royal family can marry only with the agreement of the reigning king.<sup>157</sup>

In this paper, the author essentially reproduces Baldwin's account of the conversations, events, and actions immediately of following Edward VIII's abdication. Prime Minister Baldwin is presented as a moral authority that is diligently looking for the most appropriate solution for the King, the British monarchy, and its people. The author leaves an evaluation of results of his diplomatic mission to the reader.

### **2.3.7 Abdication accepted with feelings of deepest regret**

The article "Abdication Accepted With Feelings of Deepest Regret" published on December 11, 1936, tells of the fact that Edward VIII, who has renounced the throne, was losing all his royal titles at the same time. There was a presumption that he will be awarded the high rank of Duke by the new king for his services to the British Empire.<sup>158</sup> It is important to mention the wave of deepest regret that the United Kingdom and the British Empire responded to the resignation of King Edward VIII, although some church dignitaries considered this act to be the right solution. The public shared the king's internal struggle and suppressed the aspect of the constitutional problem. There was an overwhelming silence in the crowd in front of the parliament when King Edward VIII resigned and was replaced by the Duke of York. Abdication became a sad sensation. The article mentions the planned declaration of the Duke of York as the king. It informs that immediately after the approval

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<sup>156</sup> Jak došlo k abdikaci. *Národní listy*. 1936, **76**(339), 1.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Abdikace přijata s pocitý nejhlubší lítosti. *Národní listy*. 1936, **76**(339), 1.

of the abdication law, Edward VIII left England and would take refuge in an unspecified location.<sup>159</sup>

It is clear that the author of the article shares the public's regret over the resignation of Edward VIII from the way he conveyed the information from the British newspapers. The reader can feel the disappointment that, despite the King's popularity, responsibility for traditions and concern for the future of the monarchy prevailed before Edward's civic happiness. It was not understood not only by the government and the Church, but also by British citizens.

### **2.3.8 Great Britain swears to the new King**

This article was published in the morning issue of *Lidové noviny* on December 13, 1936. It focuses on the accession of King George VI to the throne and describes a demanding ceremony that lasted all day. Succession Council appointed the Duke of York George VI as the King on December 12 in St James's Palace. The crowd gave great applause to the new king. The document declaring George VI as the King was signed by the Privy Council, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the King's younger brothers, the Prime Minister and cabinet members. In the spirit of medieval traditions, the accession of George VI to the throne was solemnly proclaimed. The ceremonies were accompanied by volleys of cannons. There was a joyful atmosphere in London despite the cloudy sky. The text further states that George VI agrees that his coronation should take place on the day of the planned coronation of Edward VIII, May 12, 1937.<sup>160</sup>

The article also pays attention to the former English King Edward VIII. It announces that his new title will be Duke of Windsor and he would be referred to as His Royal Highness the Duke of Windsor. His wife would be awarded the title of Duchess of Windsor after the wedding. The article also informs about the secret departure of the former king from England. Edward VIII departed at night, accompanied by a police inspector, personal servant and Colonel Megh by car to the port of Portsmouth, from which the destroyer *Fury* sailed with the former king on board in the morning.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Velká Británie přísahá novému králi. *Lidové noviny: Ranní vydání*. 1936, **44**(46).

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

In this article, the author expresses the atmosphere of the accession ceremony of the new King George VI to the English throne, as described by the London press. The text clearly agrees with this pragmatic solution and shows support of the new king, who responsibly took over the duty of succession for his brother. The way in which the author describes Edward's departure from the country has a strong effect on the reader's emotions, arousing a feeling of sadness over the final and perhaps unnecessary end of a royal career. The article contrasts the joy of celebrating the new king and the regret of saying goodbye to the previous king.

### **2.3.9 Mrs. Simpson's victory and defeat**

The headline "Mrs. Simpson's Victory and Defeat" features a paper published in the noon issue of *Lidové noviny* on December 13, 1936. It acquaints readers with the fact that British readers have long missed the information about King Edward VIII's favourite companion Mrs. Wallis Simpson, due to the secrecy of the English press. Information about the King and his girlfriend slowly penetrated the ranks of the British despite the censorship of the British press. As late as mid-October the public was unaware of who Mrs. Wallis Simpson was. Although Edward VIII officially opposed censorship, he considered his friendship with Wallis a private matter. European countries sympathizing with Great Britain were similarly unaware of the king's romance.<sup>162</sup>

Mrs. Simpson's victory can be seen in the fact that she conquered the King. She accompanied him on official occasions and in private, on holiday cruises, in the theatre, she was his companion on a yacht, dancing, on holiday in Yugoslavia. Even with great effort, it was not possible to find a picture of the King, which would not capture Mrs. Simpson.<sup>163</sup> The American press did not maintain confidentiality, so the gradual penetration of information into Britain and European states was inevitable. Mrs. Simpson's defeat is considered to be the fact that the King's relationship with the divorced American provoked dissent among the church and the government, leading to a scandal that was the main cause of Edward VIII's abdication.<sup>164</sup>

In this article, the author is critical of the person of Wallis Simpson. He points to the embarrassment of the joint meetings between the King and Wallis at public and private

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<sup>162</sup> Vítězství a prohra paní Simpsonové. *Lidové noviny: Polední vydání*. 1936, **44**(46).

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Vítězství a prohra paní Simpsonové. *Lidové noviny: Polední vydání*. 1936, **44**(46).

events. Based on this presentation, the reader subconsciously accepts the view that the development of the situation has inevitably led to the crisis and the subsequent abdication, for which Wallis Simpson bears much of the responsibility. Author indirectly judges Edward for a recklessness he could not afford as a king.

### **2.3.10 The Truth About Mrs. Simpson**

This article is printed in the newspaper *Polední list* on December 20, 1936. It outlines a brief biography of Mrs. Wallis Simpson, including the first meeting with the Prince of Wales in 1920 at a ball in San Diego and their acquaintance in 1931. It recalls the origins of Mrs. Simpson and mentions her two marriages, the second of which is considered to be a ticket to British aristocratic circles.<sup>165</sup>

A more interesting passage in the article describes Mrs. Simpson's appearance and qualities. Author represents her as a woman of an ideal, very slender to boyish figure, with stronger arms and a distinctive face with a high forehead. She is not perceived as a beautiful woman, but as a charming woman who highlights her charm with a sense of elegance. She is characterized by a mild, sincere and friendly nature. She likes cooking, she cooks great, but she eats little. She does not practice any sport.<sup>166</sup>

The article attributes Mrs. Simpson's beneficial influence on Edward VIII, who thrived in her company. He became interested in social issues and unemployment. This worried the government and Baldwin.<sup>167</sup>

The author of the article was focused again on Wallis Simpson. In addition to her biography, he was interested in her personality, appearance and character. In this text, a positive evaluation prevails over criticism. The author approaches Mrs. Simpson in a different light, as an attractive, hard-working woman with a social mindset who has had a positive effect on Edward's mental state. It is stated in the article that it was her interest in the status of the poor that was uncomfortable for the government and its politics. The author suggests that this may have been one of the reasons why she was unacceptable as the king's wife, in addition to her turbulent past.

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<sup>165</sup> Pravda o pí Simpsonové. *Polední list*. 1936, 9(354), 9. ISSN 1804-8838.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

### **2.3.11 From the world**

In the article "From the World", published on August 10, 1938 in *Lidové noviny* is a brief mention of Edward VIII in connection with the publication of the English book *The Windsor Tapestry* by the author Compton MacKenzie, which deals with the circumstances of Edward VIII's abdication. According to the article, Baldwin and the Archbishop of Canterbury are sharply criticized in the book. The author of the Book takes a favourable view of Edward VIII.<sup>168</sup>

In a short article, which was published after two years, the author shows a new historical view of the circumstances of the abdication of Edward VIII. The author of these lines interprets the view that the king's resignation may have been the result of manipulation in the interests of the policies of Baldwin and the Anglican Church. He sees this revelation as a breakthrough sensation in understanding the royal affair.

### **2.3.12 The fight to defend European culture**

The article "Fight for the Defense of European Culture" published in 1943 in *Lidové noviny* reflects on the abdication of Edward VIII with respect to social issues. The article points out that Edward VIII had to leave the throne not because of Mrs. Wallis Simpson, but because of the interests of the thousand-headed consortium. After visiting the working-class neighbourhood and learning about local conditions, Edward VIII warned the government that the duty to the socially needed and weak wasn't fulfilled enough. With this attitude Edward VIII became uncomfortable with the government and its interests. They transferred the real reason for his resignation to a relationship with Wallis Simpson, and used it as an excuse to abdicate a disagreeable king.<sup>169</sup>

The author of this article expresses a critical view on British government policy as the main culprit of abdication. And he resolutely presents the opinion that the relationship between Wallis and Edward was only an abused pretext for the constitutional crisis. The author of the article used the abdication of Edward VIII as an argument against British ruling circles in an article published in 1943. His point of view may have been influenced by the fact that Europe was in the middle of a war conflict, and the content of the official Czech press had corresponded to this.

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<sup>168</sup> Ze světa. *Lidové noviny*. 1938, **46**(399), 2.

<sup>169</sup> Boj na obranu evropské kultury. *Lidové noviny*. 1943, **51**(241), 1

## **2.4 Results and interpretation of data**

The bachelor's thesis aims to find out how well-informed the average Czech reader of the periodicals was of historical events in Great Britain in the second half of the 1930s. The response to the royal affair and the subsequent abdication of British King Edward VIII in 1936 was the focus of the research. It was one of the most historically significant events of that time period, which was also reflected in the Czech press.

The main research question is: What was the Czech reader's awareness of Edward VIII's abdication circumstances on the basis of information provided by the Czech period press? What image of the royal affair and abdication events could have been formed by the Czech public of the time on the basis of information available from the press? To understand the broader context of the reflection of British events to the Czech reader, a secondary research question was formulated: What happened in the UK in connection with the abdication of Edward VIII and how was the affair perceived by the public? In order to answer the secondary research question, it was necessary to gather information about the royal affair and the King's abdication studying selected, mostly foreign, quoted literature that dealt with this topic. The answer to the main research question was provided by the collection and subsequent content analysis of Czech period newspaper articles and reports. The research focused on the British and Czech perception of the royal story and a comparison of the attitudes of British and Czech citizens to this issue. The theoretical basis of the research was selected from available literature. The empirical part of the thesis focuses on the analysis of Czech period articles.

The answer to the research questions and the results of the research can be interpreted as follows.

### **2.4.1 The British view of the royal affair and the Edward VIII abdication**

The British monarchy has historically deep roots and is the strongest European monarchy. It has always been a guarantee of stability, prosperity and international prestige for the British. It is closely associated with the Anglican Church. The British monarch has also been the head of the Anglican Church since the reign of Henry VIII. The development of the monarchy position has changed over the years. Today, it plays a representative rather than a political role. In the past, the British Empire occupied

almost a quarter of the world and was spread over four continents due to numerous colonies. Surely members of the royal family rose the interest of the British and world public. The same was true of the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII. From the study and subsequent analysis of the available (especially British) literature, a British view of this historical event can be deduced.

In the 1930s, the British opinion was shaped by deep respect for the royal family and especially to British traditions. The opinion of the British public was also influenced by the Anglican Church and the overall conservative attitude in society. The value system of the British society at the time was based on traditions, morals, conventions and relied on the church headed by the British monarch. The King's marriage to a twice-divorced American of civil origin fundamentally contradicted these values. In addition, the Anglican Church forbade marriage to divorced people while their former partners were alive. Both of Wallis Simpson's previous spouses Earl Winfield Spencer and Ernest Aldrich Simpson were alive at the time of the royal affair. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that divorce in England was considered an extreme and non-standard solution. The divorce had two rounds, the first temporary one, when none of the divorced people could have another relationship, and the second final divorce. A representative of the British government conservative Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin found it unacceptable for Edward VIII to marry a divorced woman while ruling The United Kingdom. The archbishop and the dominions of Great Britain also opposed this marriage. Edward's proposal for a morganatic marriage that denied Wallis the title of queen and possible common descendants of the throne was not approved. Officially the Baldwin-led government did not consider Wallis Simpson a woman the British public could respect as its Queen. Prime Minister Baldwin gave Edward VIII an ultimatum under threat of government resignation. He uncompromisingly presented the King with a choice between a throne and the marriage with Mrs. Simpson. Indignant Edward could not give up Wallis and has chosen to abdicate.

Other possible reasons that can be traced from literary sources are why the abdication of Edward suited the government led by Baldwin. These include his own personality and lifestyle. Edward VIII was free-spirited and not very conservative by British standards. He was brought up as a future ruler. He liked the glory and attention associated with the post of the King, but at the same time he feared his duties. He was attracted to the luxurious life of a rich nobleman more than the British throne. Edward can be considered the first of a series of "rebels" in the recent history of the British royal family. He was considered a national hero

due to his bravery and commitment to the war. He gained great popularity among the British public by personally meeting ordinary citizens, workers, war veterans and taking an interest in the social issues of the unemployed. Edward VIII had the status of a media star due to his manner, elegance and charismatic appearance. He was a sought-after and often photographed celebrity. His popularity grew and speculations began that he as a King wanted to strengthen his power and pursue his own policy rather than be influenced by the opinion of the government. In the interwar period of intensifying fascist tendencies, Edward's sympathy for Germany and Hitler personally appeared to be very controversial. Wallis was also in close contact with Hitler's Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, the later German ambassador to Great Britain. The set of these aspects raised legitimate concerns in the government led by Baldwin. Edward VIII's abdication apparently had a broader political context. The government used the relationship between the King and Wallis to advance higher political interests. Under the circumstances, abdication seemed to the British to be a logical solution to the situation. And they accepted that the more appropriate ruler of Great Britain would be the uncomplicated and orderly younger brother of Edward VIII the Duke of York. He in the position of King George VI would be a more convincing representation of the British monarchy and entrenched traditions.

Although the British public sympathized with Edward VIII and his love on a human level, in a spirit of respect for British traditions and conservative values, the public internally accepted the abdication of Edward III and subsequently celebrated the new king.

#### **2.4.2 Presentation of the royal affair and the abdication of King Edward VIII in the Czech periodical**

The events related to the abdication of King Edward VIII were reflected to the European public by the international media. Due to the attractiveness of the topic, it did not go unnoticed in the Czech press either. The research part of this work is dedicated to a thorough study of the reflection of the royal affair in the Czech periodical press, which was the main source of information about this event for the Czech reader. Czechoslovak foreign policy at the time was oriented towards the states of the Little Entente and France. Events in Great Britain were more on the margins of public interest. This fact influenced the amount and scope of published information on what was happening in England. Only a limited number of saved and available resources were available for research. Limited coverage was also due to voluntary secrecy on issues related



to King Edward VIII's relationship with Wallis Simpson which lasted until the fall of 1936 and resulted in the censorship of infiltrated information from American newspapers. Because of respect and reverence for the British royal family, most ordinary British readers for a long time had no objective information about the royal affair and did not know the name of Wallis Simpson. There was a similar level of information among readers of most European countries, including Czechoslovakia. Several interesting period articles were obtained from the archives of Czech libraries, which dealt with the royal affair, the abdication and its main actors. Based on the keywords, a list of 14 articles was created, from which 12 were selected for this research. These articles were collected, chronologically arranged and subjected to content analysis. The open coding method was used. The evaluation of the analysis made it possible to answer the main research question.

Czech period articles can basically be divided into two groups. The first group consisted of articles that were more tabloid. These articles reflected on the royal affair in connection with the person of Mrs. Wallis Simpson ("Who is Mrs. Wallis Simpson", "Career of Mrs. Simpson", "Mrs. Simpson's Victory and Defeat", "The Truth About Mrs. Simpson!"). The author's point of view played a major role in this type of article. They are mostly tinted with emotion, the principle of a neutral attitude does not apply here. Events are mediated as perceived and understood by the author of the article. They are supposed to satisfy the sensationalism of the Czech reader. The articles present a biography of Mrs. Simpson, in this section the information is more or less identical and relatively objective. From the passages that describe the appearance, character traits, and interests of Mrs. Simpson it is possible to sense the author's relationship to her as a person. The passages that describe the relationship between Wallis and Edward are influenced by the obvious attitude of the article's authors to the situation. The author tries in the form and style in which the article was formulated not only to inform the reader about the facts, but also to influence his opinion on the issue. Although these articles were predominantly tabloid, they can be considered fair and respectful of journalistic ethics. Direct comments of Mrs. Simpson's are mainly positive or neutral ones. Criticism can only be sensed between the lines of the style in which the article was written.

The second group consists of articles that pragmatically inform about the circumstances of the abdication of Edward VIII ("Edward VIII Abdicated", "How the Abdication Took Place", "Abdication Accepted with Feelings of Deepest Regret", "Great Britain Swears by the New King"). For this group it is typical to draw information mainly from foreign sources

and to objectively approach described issues as seen in the original sources. The articles are minimally influenced by opinions of the editors. It is obvious that they respect the original sources. This type of article is published mainly immediately after the reflected event and fills the title pages of periodicals. They try to convey a relatively objective picture of events, and use the current interest of the masses. By comparison with professional historical sources, these articles can be considered sufficiently relevant in the mediation of contemporary realities. The articles "Throne or Marriage" and "The decision on the king's marriage is to be postponed" can also be assigned to this group of articles. They were published in tabloids, but focus mainly on facts and political contexts.

The third and least represented group consists of period articles, which bring a brief mention of the royal affair and abdication in connection with other issues ("From the world", "Fight to defend European culture"). They are usually published in intervals and purposefully look for parallels with other events or arguments to support the presentation of another related problem.

Today's media also frequently mention the royal affair of Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson in connection with the current scandals of some members of the royal family.

### **2.4.3 The level of awareness of Czech reader about the royal affair and the King Edward VIII abdication**

Due to the geographical distance of England and the political organization of Europe, the Czech reader's awareness of events in Great Britain was largely dependent on their presentation in the periodical press. It is possible to deduce the level of awareness of the Czech public about the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII based on the analysis of available period articles.

The individual researched articles differ in the way they are processed. The style in which each article was written depends on what kind of newspaper it was created for and what the author wanted to convey in it. Some articles have sought to convey the facts faithfully. Others provided information about the royal affair and abdication in the form of a story, the presentation of which was influenced by the author's attitude to events. However, this fact does not mean, that the texts did not tell about known facts.

The results of the research are summarized in the following overview table (Table 1) and the obtained categories are described in the text.

**Table 1 List of obtained codes and categories within open coding**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Category</b>	
8/1, 8/7, 8/9, 8/12	Exposure (seen together)	<b>A ROYAL AFFAIR</b>	
9/1, 9/7, 9/9, 9/10, 9/11	London Britain England		
10/1, 10/6, 10/7, 10/10	Wallis' influence on the King		
11/1, 11/6, 11/7, 11/10, 11/12	Meetings		
12/4, 12/7, 12/9	Reflections on Europe and abroad		
20/1, 20/3	Reactions to American letters		
25/1, 25/6, 25/7	First contact, the first meeting		
26/7, 26/8, 26/9, 26/10, 26/11, 26/12	Journalist story, actors		
27/1, 27/7, 27/8, 27/12	Sensation		
32/1, 32/10	Public opinion		
34/1, 34/6, 34/12	The circumstances of the meeting		
41/1, 41/6, 41/9, 41/12	Liberal- minded Edward		
29/1, 29/7, 29/10, 29/12	Origin of Wallis		<b>PERSONALITY OF WALLIS SIMPSON</b>
30/1, 30/7, 30/10, 30/12	Marriages of Wallis		

35/1, 35/7, 35/12	Divorce	
38/1, 38/7, 38/10	Appearance of Wallis	
40/1, 40/7, 40/10	Marriage Wallis (social level)	
39/1, 39/7, 39/10	Properties of Wallis	
42/1, 42/7	Wallis skills and hobbies	
17/1, 17/10	Speculation about marriage	<b>THRONE OR MARRIAGE</b>
18/1, 18/3	Doubts, conjectures, questions	
16/1, 16/2, 16/6	Potential obstacles	
21/1, 21/3, 21/10	Citizens against marriage	
44/2, 44/3, 44/11	Morganatic marriage	
22/3, 22/10, 22/11	Intention to get married	
6/2, 6/3, 6/10, 6/11	Critics, opponents of marriage	
28/2, 28/7, 28/10	“Crack” on the throne	
33/6, 33/7	The silence of the British press	
36/1, 36/4, 36/10, 36/11	Promotion of free choice (right to marry)	
7/2, 7/4, 7/6, 7/10, 7/11, 7/12	Church, believers (attitudes and role)	

45/3, 45/6, 45/11	Support from Churchill	
43/1, 43/10	Edward and Wallis' silence on the relationship	
13/2, 13/4, 13/7, 13/9, 13/10	Abdication	<b>CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE ABDICATION</b>
19/2, 19/4	King's speech, decision	
3/3, 3/4, 3/5	Regret of the public	
4/1, 4/4, 4/5, 4/10	Parliament	
37/3, 37/8, 37/10, 37/11	Attitudes and role of Baldwin	
1/4, 1/5, 1/11	Titles	
2/2, 2/4, 2/5	The new King	
5,1, 5/2, 5/5, 5/11	Coronation, the crown - a symbol of power	
23/2, 23/4, 23/5	Accession to the throne of George VI	
14/4, 14/5	Citizens' reactions to the new King	
24/4, 24/5	Sequel of the abdication	
31/8, 31/9	Another look at the affair	

**Source:** own

45 codes and 5 different categories were identified during open coding. These are described in the following text.

A qualitative analysis of the content of the above-mentioned press shows that the average reader could obtain the following information.

- a) **What is the royal affair and its consequences for Great Britain?** Newspaper articles introduced the public to the direct actors involved in the event. These are Edward VIII, Wallis Simpson, Prime Minister Baldwin, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the King's successor the Duke of York. They draw attention to the threat of the constitutional crisis in The United Kingdom and the discrepancy of the social opinion.
- b) **Who is Wallis Simpson?** Primarily in the tabloid press, there were articles devoted to her person and her biography. Newspaper posts gave details of her two previous marriages which ended in divorce, her desire for social prestige and wealth. Opinions on her nature, appearance, behaviour and pictures were also published. Special attention was paid to her acquaintance and relationship with Prince Edward, the future British King Edward VIII. Wallis Simpson's personality and her influence on the king were among the most frequent topics in the press.
- c) **About King Edward VIII's choice between the throne and his marriage to Wallis Simpson.** The Czech press reflects the conflict between Edward VIII's personal and civic interest in marrying Mrs. Simpson and the political and ecclesiastical interests of the British Empire represented by Prime Minister Baldwin and the Archbishop of the Anglican Church. Edward had three options: to give up his marriage to Wallis, to marry against the will of the government or to abdicate. The government of Britain and the dominions was not accepting the divorced American woman as the future Queen. Edward VIII refused to give Wallis up and proposed a morganatic marriage. This plan failed in the government and the dominions. The growing pressure of the government and public opinion on the King to give marriage up resulted in his abdication.
- d) **About the circumstances of the abdication and how it took place.** Articles on this topic are mainly from British sources. They inform readers about the course of Prime Minister Baldwin's meeting with Edward VIII, the King's decision to abdicate and the urgent adoption of the abdication law. The articles bring the form and wording of the abdication document. The abdication speech of Edward VIII was transmitted via radio to the whole world and became very popular. The press interprets the public's regret over the resignation of the beloved King.
- e) **What followed the abdication?** The media that time announced that Edward VIII would be replaced by his younger brother the Duke of York

King George VI, who would be crowned on the day of Edward's planned coronation on May 12, 1937. George VI according to public opinion was found to be a more appropriate representative of British traditions. In the year 1936 press reported about the secret departure from the country of former King Edward VIII immediately after his abdication. There were also mentions the new title of Duke of Windsor, which will belong to Edward, and informs about the change of his property rights.

By comparing the basic information presented in the historical sources which dealt with the theoretical part of this work and the key information presented in the available Czech period articles, it was found that these sources are almost adequate. Compliance can be traced in data and biographical information. They differ only in the wording and style presentation of facts. The author's emotional attitude towards the reported information is evident in the tabloid articles. The topic of Edward VIII's sympathies for Germany is absent in the available Czech articles and this fact was analysed in this work. They do not place such an emphasis on the perception of the royal affair in the spirit of British traditions. The concerns about the consequences of a possible marriage on the stability and prestige of the monarchy were not fully covered. Edward's free will and his fears of royal duties, which were mentioned in other historical sources, are suppressed In Czech materials including tabloid articles.

Although a small amount of articles in press were available for research, based on their analysis, it can be stated that thanks to the periodical press the average Czech reader's awareness of the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII was at a relatively good level. The reader was able to obtain most of the relevant and key information available at that time. Despite fact that Czech readers were not at the centre of events, they were informed in a comparable way to British readers. It is necessary to consider the fact that the English press has long concealed the relationship between the King and Mrs. Simpson due to the voluntary secrecy of the King's personal affairs in the spirit of the then British journalistic ethics. The reflection of the royal affair by the Czech period press testifies to the attractiveness of the topic and to the ability of the media of that time to obtain, process and share essential information about current events.

#### **2.4.4 Attitudes of the articles' authors to the royal affair and to the Edward VIII abdication**

It was possible to get an idea of what facts and to what extent the ordinary reader was informed about this topic by analysing the reflection of the royal affair and the Edward VIII abdication in the available Czech periodical press. It was able to assess the credibility of the presented information by comparing articles with the historical literature. It was interesting to try to reconstruct the attitudes of the articles' authors to Great Britain events since they had potential to significantly influence public opinion in Czech Republic. The press had and has great power not only by choosing the presented information, but also by the way of its interpretation. Considering these facts, it is clear that the formation of the Czech reader's attitudes to the problem was greatly influenced by the press of that time and the approach of the authors of the texts.

Articles of a more tabloid nature mostly reflected the author's opinion on events related to the royal affair and abdication and their thinking about the main actors. The authors paid the greatest attention to Mrs. Wallis Simpson. In addition to data from her life, the articles also provided opinions on her character and personal role in the whole affair. The authors avoided direct attacks in the spirit of First Republic morality, but their often-critical attitude could be read between the lines. The authors used expressively tuned formulations, apt phrases, rhetorical questions, and comparisons as a tool to express a personal point of view. For example, the texts on Wallis Simpson presented her as a charming, bright, kind and friendly lady, and at the same time evoked the impression of a slightly thrifty, ambitious and domineering woman with a questionable past. Her divorce was also not a desirable phenomenon in Czech society, it was in conflict with the general morality of that time.

Edward VIII was described as a nation-loved king and a world-famous celebrity. The texts of the articles acknowledged his heroism, social feelings, relation to the common people, his charisma and popularity. Particularly, he was portrayed by the articles' authors as a victim of his emotions, as a monarch who gave up the throne for his love, for a woman, so as not to betray traditions and thus jeopardize the political stability and prestige of the British monarchy. Contemporary texts evaluated his difficult choice basically on two levels. He was the winner on the human and moral level, and he was the loser on the political level.



From the above presentation of the royal affair and abdication, it is possible to track the probable attitude of the then Czech public to this event, the same as interpreted by the articles' authors.

Above all, it was understood as the love story of the century, when the monarch made a huge sacrifice in the form of his royal career so that he could marry his beloved woman. The King's sacrifice all the larger and perhaps barely understandable, because this woman was not a model of virtues, was not of extraordinary beauty or youth.

Czech perspective was able to appreciate the responsibility for British traditions presented by the press. Due to another political arrangement and value system of the Czech citizen, British conventions and traditions could also be considered as one of the causes of the crisis. Therefore, it can be assumed that the Czech view would prefer the possibility of the King's free choice over the worship of traditions.

Under the influence of information presented by the periodical press, Czech society perceived the royal affair as a complicated love story with a serious political and power struggle in the form of the abdication of Edward VIII. They sympathized with the King's emotions and were touched by his determination to marry the woman of his heart. However, they felt reservations about the object of the King's love at the same time. They shared regret over the King's resignation to the throne and his departure with the British. They overlooked the political significance of this event compared to the English approach.

#### **2.4.5 Comparison of English and Czech approach to the royal affair and abdication**

Based on the study of literary sources and the interpretation of the analysis results of available Czech period articles, it is possible to compare the British and Czech approaches to the royal affair and the subsequent abdication of Edward VIII.

The British approach was based on a deep-rooted respect for tradition. The setting of the British value scale is based on this fact. Respect for the monarchy, which was a guarantee of democracy, prosperity, political force, international prestige and power, has always been at the forefront of this hierarchy. The members of the royal family were analysed through the same lens. The British then took a conservative approach to the royal affair and the subsequent abdication of Edward VIII. From a people's point of view, they admitted the King's freedom to civil life. Their approach to events

was influenced by concerns about the stability of the monarchy as a result of the government crisis, which marriage to a twice-divorced American woman would unleash as a result of the impending resignation of the government. The very critical view of society and the church on divorce, supported the British in the belief that Wallis Simpson was not suitable either as a queen or as the wife of a monarch. Public opinion thus leaned towards abdication as the lesser evil in this situation. Although Edward VIII was a very popular monarch, convention, respect for the monarchy, traditions and the current political order prevailed in the British over recognition of the King's right to personal liberty.

The Czech approach was freed from the fascination with the traditions associated with the British monarchy. The Czech readers were acquainted with the British point of view on the royal affair and abdication. They perceived Great Britain as a great power, but the political orientation of then Czechoslovakia was not primarily directed to the United Kingdom. This stems from the fact that the Czech approach to this event was not much influenced by fears of the political and social consequences of the royal affair and abdication. Due to different historical events respect for the British monarchy was shaped indirectly. The Czech citizens logically approached the events in Great Britain with foresight and at a distance. They were not personally interested in the course of events. They did not fear the immediate consequences of Edward VIII's choice between marriage and abdication. They obtained information about the royal scandal mainly from the press and perceived it as a mediated significant foreign event. The Czech view, as compared to the British, was less political and less burdened with respect for traditions. Czech readers perceived the royal affair more as a love story, and they were more tolerant to its actors, especially Mrs. Wallis Simpson. Respect of the Czech approach to the right to free choice and greater understanding for other solutions than abdication could be traced. The Czech approach to the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII was to a large extent influenced by the presentation of these events in the Czech periodical press and the attitude of individual authors of period articles. The interpretation of this event as a love story and sensation ultimately aroused the interest of a wide readership in developments in Great Britain in a social, cultural, historical and political context.

## Conclusion

One of the questions defined by the modern British history is how other countries perceived the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII, and to what extent the awareness of their citizens about this event was influenced by the press. The press interpretation of this issue also has an impact on the international image of the British royal family. In addition, the continuing interest in this topic is confirmed by the fact that in connection with the scandals surrounding Meghan Markle and Prince Harry's media. All repeatedly recall the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII and seek various parallels.

Thesis examined whether and in what way the Czech press reflected the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII. In order to properly understand these events, it was necessary to get acquainted with the historical context based on the study of selected literature. By comparing information from different sources, it was possible to create an image that corresponded to the British view of the whole situation. The search in the archives of Czech libraries led to the acquisition of Czech period texts, which served as a research sample to fulfil the aim of the work.

The theoretical part summarizes a cross-section of the history of the British monarchy, the Windsor dynasty, the personality of Edward VIII, including his childhood and student years, military career and foreign travels, the prince's femme fatale. It also discusses the personality of Wallis Simpson, the relationship between Edward and Wallis, the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII, and the atmosphere before the abdication. Thesis also deals with the influence of the political and international situation, the abdication and the joint life of Edward and Wallis after the abdication.

Research showed that the Czech period press reflected events related to the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII. Although there were relatively few available press articles, their content analysis could be roughly reconstructed to understand at what level and how the Czech reader was informed about British realities. The authors of the available Czech press articles were particularly interested in the personal level of these events. This was probably the reason why most of the available articles were published in the tabloid press. These articles provided objective information spiced up with a journalistic story focused on Wallis Simpson's personality and her relationship with the King. In connection with the actual abdication, articles were also published in the Czech press that really described

its causes, course and consequences. It can be assumed that the First Republic Czech reader had a good level of awareness of British realities based on the evaluation of the analysed articles. The formation of readers' attitudes towards them was influenced by the presentation of events in the press at the time and the way they were interpreted by the authors of the individual articles.

The research was limited by a small number of Czech press sources. So, its results cannot be generalized. A more comprehensive understanding of the reflection of the royal affair and the abdication of Edward VIII in the contemporary Czech press would be provided by the perspective of other sources, such as sources obtained from family archives or contributions from fans of this story. Due to the interest of the world public in the fate of the members of the British royal family, the topic of the so-called "Simpson affair" and its consequences did not lose its attractiveness. The image and response of this event in the Czech press deserve more extensive and detailed follow-up research.

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## Appendix

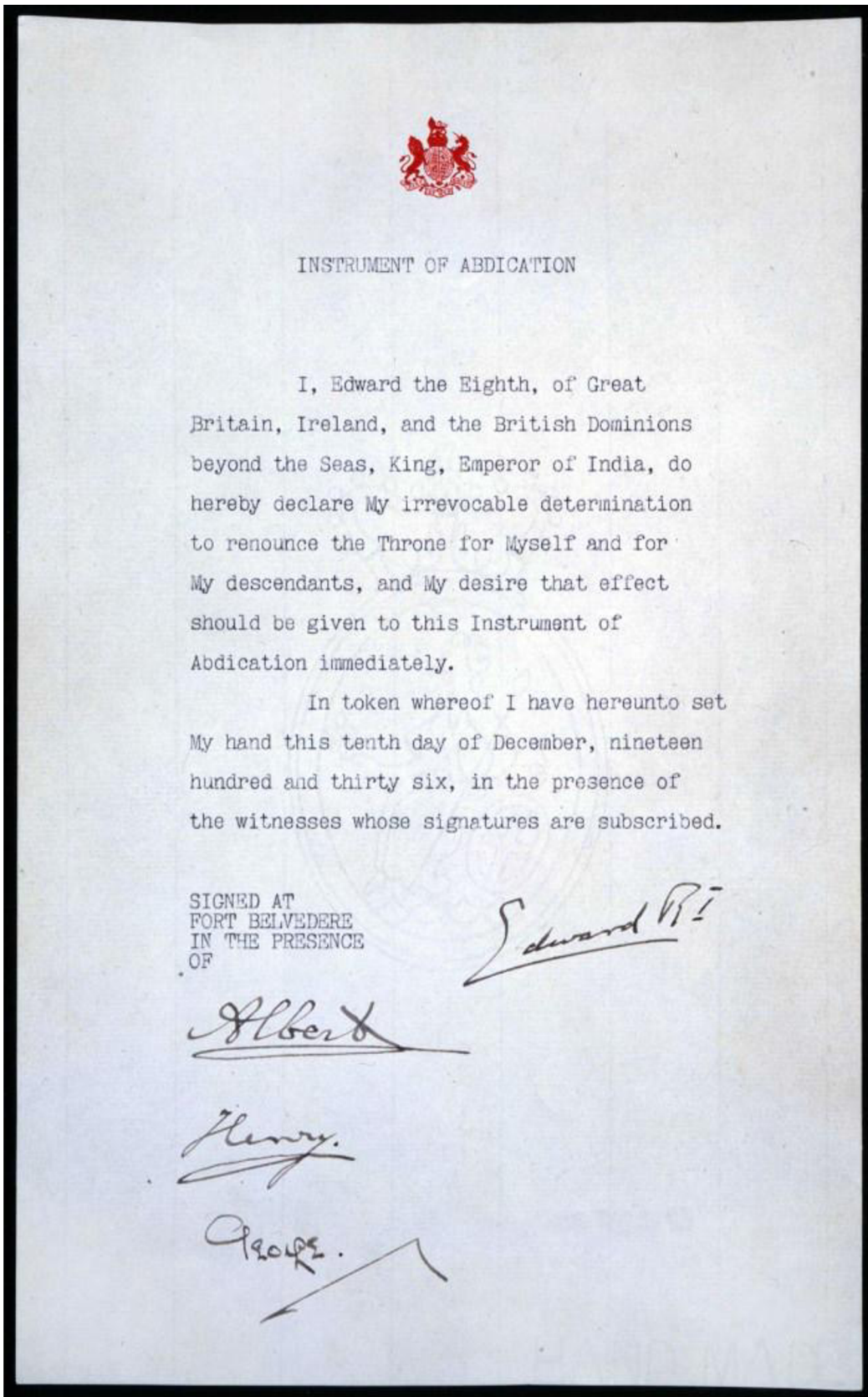
Figure 1 Edward VIII The Prince of Wales



Figure 2 The Duke and Duchess of Windsor



Figure 3 Instrument of abdication signed by Edward VIII and his three brothers, Albert, Henry and George, 10 December 1936



## ANOTACE

<b>Jméno a příjmení:</b>	Jiří Klein
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<b>Vedoucí práce:</b>	Mgr. Pavel Neumeister, Ph.D.
<b>Rok obhajoby:</b>	2021

<b>Název práce:</b>	Královská aféra a abdikace Edwarda VIII. a její odrazy v dobovém českém tisku
<b>Název v angličtině:</b>	The Royal Affair and Abdication of Edward VIII. and Its Reflections in Contemporary Czech Press
<b>Anotace práce:</b>	Hlavním cílem bakalářské práce je zjistit na základě interpretace královské aféry a abdikace krále Edwarda VIII. českým dobovým tiskem, jaké bylo povědomí tehdejších českých čtenářů o této historické události a zrekonstruovat, jaký postoj si mohli k anglickým realitám vytvořit a porovnat ho s postojem britským.
<b>Klíčová slova:</b>	Edward VIII., Wallis Simpson, abdikace, český dobový tisk
<b>Anotace v angličtině:</b>	The main goal of the bachelor's thesis is to find out on the basis of the interpretation of the royal affair and the abdication of King Edward VIII. Czech contemporary press, what was the awareness of the Czech readers of the time about this historical event and to reconstruct what attitude they could have formed towards English realities and compare it with the British attitude.
<b>Klíčová slova v angličtině:</b>	Edward VIII, Wallis Simpson, abdication, czech contemporary press
<b>Přílohy vázané v práci:</b>	3 obrázky
<b>Rozsah práce:</b>	67 s. + 3 s.