

Line of Succession

From Victoria to Edward VII in pen and ink



fine **Sim** art

Line of Succession

From Victoria to Edward VII in pen and ink

An elderly Queen Victoria - in her familiar mourning - is about to be helped from a carriage by her flamboyantly liveried Indian servant, Abdul Karim. In the foreground, some French soldiers stand rigidly to attention. The scene is atmospherically conveyed, in gouache, from a respectful distance.

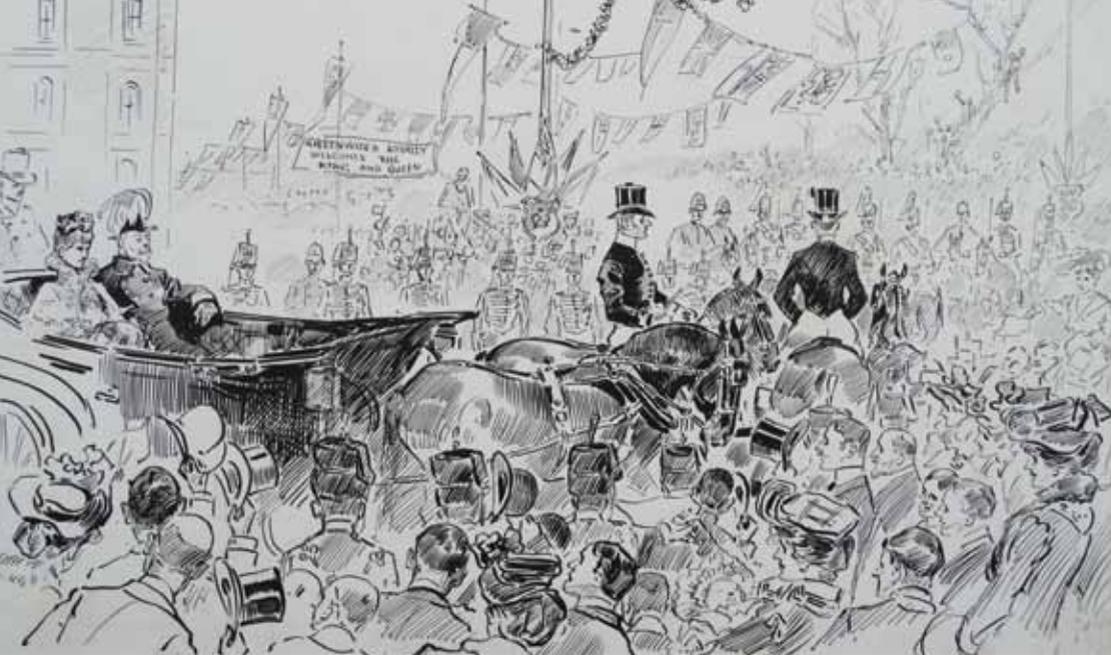
The Queen is beginning what would be her last holiday at the Grand Hotel at Cimiez near Nice and one of the leading illustrators of the day, Frank Dadd, is on hand, to record the event in gouache for the readers of *The Graphic*.

Arrival of the Queen at Cimiez - Frank Dadd



Prince & Princess at Cowes - William Small (after S.P.Hall)

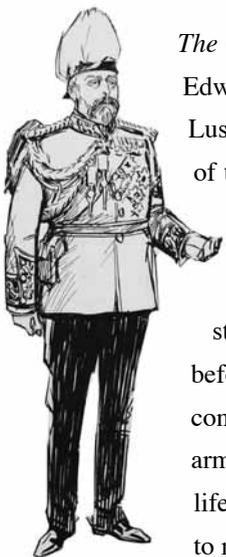
A year later, the scene has switched to Cowes, the Royal yacht and a very different holiday: a blanketed Prince of Wales is at the centre of a notably informal family scene with Princess Alexandra in the foreground, busily engaged in taking a photograph with her Box Brownie. This time, the artist, Sydney Hall, has been allowed right into the centre of the action.



Greenwich welcomes the King - Oliver Paque

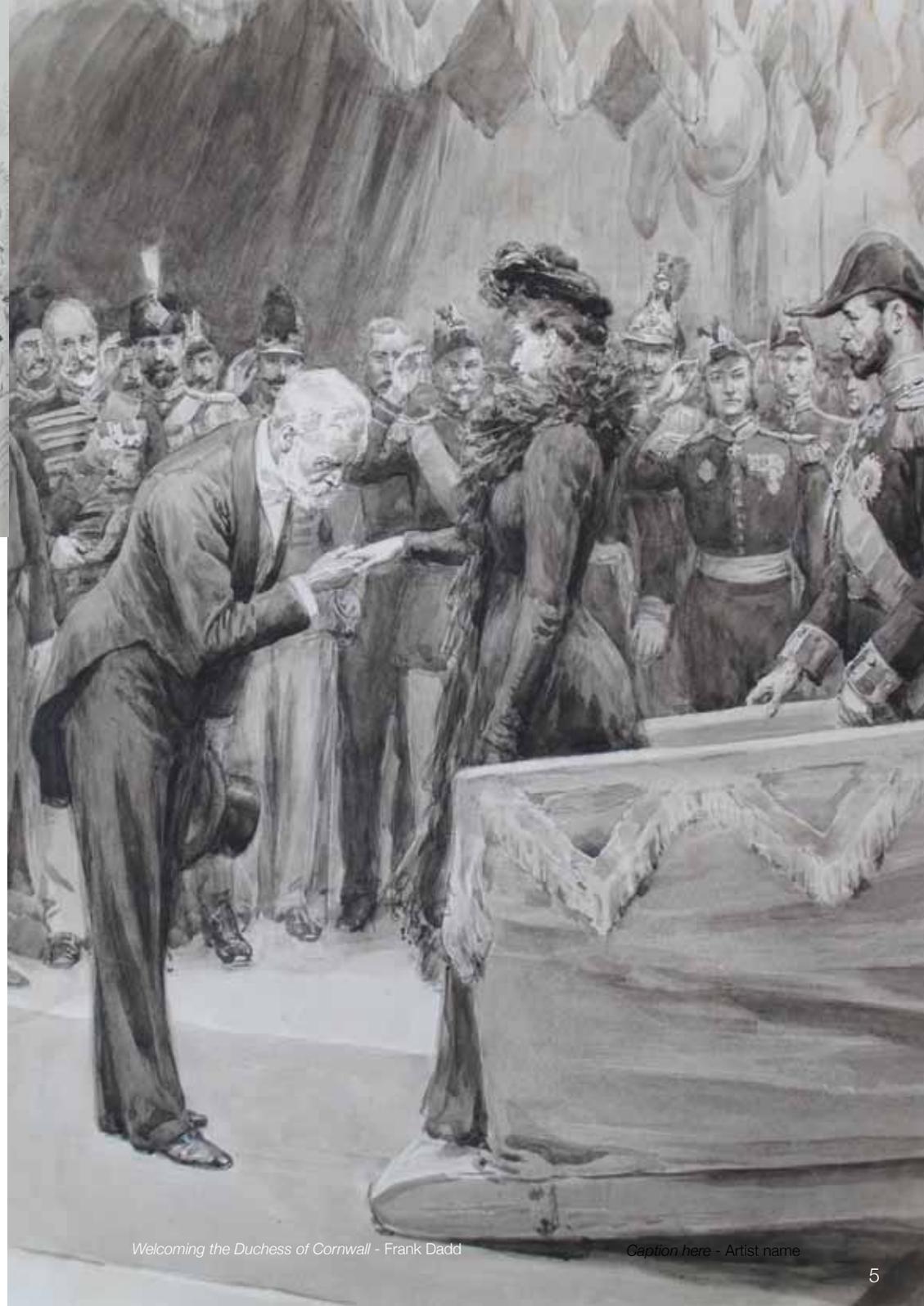
Changing face of the British Monarchy

The changing face of the British monarchy has been captured in two very different pen portraits that encapsulate the shift from the Victorian monarchy to what would become the Edwardian, but one thing remains constant: *The Graphic* is there to record it.



The Graphic was the leading illustrated paper of Victorian and Edwardian England. Founded by an artist engraver, William Luson Thomas, in 1869, in its heyday, the paper sold hundreds of thousands of copies weekly and employed over a thousand people.

The number and quality of the artists employed on the staff of *The Graphic* was unprecedented on any periodical before or since. Although photography existed and developed considerably during the paper's history, the ability of its small army of artist reporters and engravers to capture the detailed life & atmosphere of a scene meant that pen and ink continued to reign supreme in illustrated periodicals until the late 1920s.



Welcoming the Duchess of Cornwall - Frank Dadd

Caption here - Artist name

Unprecedented number of artists

This was achieved with a concerted artistic and logistical effort that is almost unimaginable today: teams of reporter sketchers, like legendary special correspondent Sydney P. Hall, worked in tandem with office-based fine artists, who would work up the sketches to a high finish and pass them on to engravers who in turn would transfer their work to the printed page. The skill involved at every level was phenomenal and yet, because of the ephemerality of the medium, the achievement of these sketchers, artists and engravers is barely recognised today.

The artwork itself became a mere cog in the remorseless engine of the periodical: a sheet of paper or board hastily received by editors, who scrawled instructions on its back in preparation for the next stage of production. Given the scale of that production, very little of this original material has survived. The few isolated drawings that turn up have, more often than not, become divorced from the context in which they were produced, the equivalent of anonymous holiday snaps in a forgotten album.



Posting the last bulletin at Osborne House - T.S.C. Crowther



Queen's funeral train returns to Windsor - George Kingston Jones

Just occasionally, however, a coherent enough body of material becomes available to provide an insight not only into the social mores of the period, but also into the working practices of one of the greatest artistic and journalistic enterprises in recent British social history.



Finsbury Circus - Henry William Brewer



Edward VII on board the Victoria & Albert - Arthur Kemp Tebby (after S.P.Hall)

A remarkable time capsule

The material featured in this booklet is precisely that: a remarkable time capsule of pen and ink mastery. What makes this collection particularly interesting is that the material isn't simply random; it provides a fascinating snapshot of one of the most important periods in the paper's history: the death of Queen Victoria and the long-awaited accession of Edward VII.

It is not known why this artwork has been preserved intact for so long. Perhaps the succession was considered to be of such importance that somebody felt that the material ought to be retained and preserved?

What is certain is that special events had long been the key to *The Graphic's* commercial success; disasters, weddings, crime scandals but above all royal events were its perennial best sellers. An earnest desire for social reform had started out as the paper's *raison d'etre*, but by 1900, the lure of glamour and high society had become commercially irresistible.



The Grosvenor Club at Henley - Arthur Kemp Tebby

Plus ça change

Looking at *The Graphic's* coverage of royalty from a distance of more than a century, one is struck not so much by the difference but by its eerily unchanging character. Take for instance the coverage of an international royal tour by the then Duke and Duchess of Cornwall (as the future George V & Queen Mary were briefly styled in 1901). *The Graphic* records the couple staring dutifully, if somewhat glassy-eyed, at a so-called 'Buddha's tooth'. Adjust the costumes a little and change the scene to a children's nursery and the subjects could so easily be William and Catherine.



The Buddha's Tooth - Henry Marriott Paget

The pageantry, of course, is utterly unchanging and nobody valued pageantry more than the Edwardians. Henry Marriott Paget, one of *The Graphic's* star turns, was particularly deft at investing a formal State occasion with a sprinkling of fairy dust. He had been a pre-Raphaelite follower in his youth and it is almost as if he saw his job as mythologising the mundane. A simple 'Three cheers for the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall' as the pair leave H.M.S Ophir after a trip looks like a scene from Arthurian legend.



Farewell to H.M.S. Ophir - Henry Marriott Paget



Bank Station - Henry William Brewer

A scene from Arthurian legend

Paget's work - like those of his fellow star contributors, Frank Dadd and William Small - is always impressively highly finished; the gouache portraits in ensemble pieces are invariably lifelike for instance, but he could also impart a mood extremely effectively.



Prime Minister Balfour at Mansion House - H. M. Paget



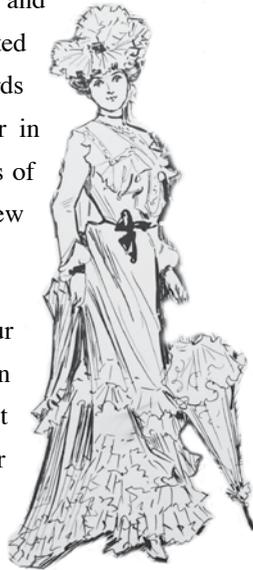
The Queen's death is announced at Buckingham Palace - Henry Marriott Paget

Never more so than in his memorable depiction of the news of Victoria's death being posted on the gates of Buckingham Palace. A grief-stricken woman turns away, having read the notice and a feverish crowd clamber over one another to read the formal announcement. Paget's brother, Sidney, was the first illustrator to depict Sherlock Holmes, and there is almost a flavour of narrative fiction about Henry's version of realism.

Bravura sketches

The *Graphic's* artists also developed a wonderfully deft pen and ink shorthand designed to convey a scene in a lively, abbreviated style that is both informative and stylish. A brigade of Guards raising its bearskins on bayonets to salute its Commander in Chief; the Shah of Persia on a State visit ; the craning necks of a crowd on the corner of the Mall – all are captured with a few elegant, economical strokes of the pen.

Talented and undeservedly forgotten names such as Arthur Kemp Tebby in London and Maurice Bonvoisin (aka Mars) in Paris, were masterful exponents of this now almost entirely lost art of capturing political and social events in a drawing. Their work is at the very least breezy and invigorating graphic art but with the passage of years, it has also become an important slice of our social history.



Andrew Sim 2014



Sunday in Paris - The King at Church - MARS (aka Maurice Bonvoisin)



Shah of Persia's State Visit - Oliver Paque



Highlanders salute the King at Dalkeith - Stephen T. Dadd



The King returns to his Capital - Oliver Paque



fine **Sim** *art*

www.simfineart.com

07919 356150