

Dear Mother and Father:

Well, what do you think! I've been to Buckingham Palace and met the Royal Family!

About a hundred American officers, plus a handful of Nurses and Red Cross workers, a few British Army, Navy and R.A.F. officers, were invited to tea on Nov. 26th (Thanksgiving) by his majesty the King. And yours truly was included -- through the good offices of our Commanding General, a pal of mine, who suggested my name. He likewise attended, as did a Major Fearing from our outfit.

We arrived en masse at the Palace at 3:15 PM -- were introduced to the Royal Family -- King, Queen and the two little Princesses. No one else was in the reception line -- though Winston Churchill and a good many other notables were there. Each of the Family shook our hands and exchanged greetings. As we passed the line we were ushered into another room, where sandwiches, cakes, tea and scotch were spread on long tables -- buffet style.

As I entered this room, Commander Junius Morgan, son of J.P. Morgan, and Naval Attache in London, grabbed me and said: "Lieutenant, you are supposed to attend the King." I said: "OK, but what do I do?" He then explained that six or eight persons would be expected to converse with the King after he entered the room.

What a break! I had about a half hour's talk with King -- along with the other five or six Americans. But I was almost floored right at the start when the King turned to me and said: "Haven't we met before?" He asked a lot of questions -- wanted to know by what means I had come to England -- what part of America I came from -- where I am stationed, etc. Also asked me a lot of questions about the insignia of American officers. Thought I might get stumped but fortunately I knew the answers.

Of course we were the center of all eyes while this was going on -- and our General complimented me on the way I handled the situation -- said I stole the party.

For Mother's, Kay's, Kathie's, Martha's, Ruth's and Ante's benefit: The Queen wore a very simple sort of coffee-colored dress. The two little Princesses were also extremely simply dressed -- and looked, talked and acted like two normal, regular little girls. The King wore his Navy uniform.

Needless to say, the Palace is very beautiful inside -- though not lavish. The furniture, of course is exquisite and many beautiful paintings and statues adorn the place.

Ambassador Winant was there -- and a good many Court hangers-on -- mostly titled. The Master Of The Household announced at the very beginning that the King wished everyone to consider himself introduced to all others present and to feel free to converse with each other. Most of the military personnel present were very high-ranking indeed, Generals all over the place -- as well as Colonels & Lt. Colonels. Don't think there were more than five or six other Lieutenants.

The King does not have an impediment of speech. He does over the air, you know, and I have heard it said that he stutters all the time -- 'taint so.

Anyhow it was all very exciting -- and I have the engraved invitation as a souvenir. It reads:

" Buckingham Palace  
The Master Of The Household is  
Commanded by Their Majesties to invite  
Robert R. Egan  
First Lieutenant A.C.  
to an Afternoon Party on Thursday  
the 26th November, 1942, at 3:15 o'clock PM "

We had strict instructions to release nothing to the Press re the tea, so warn Jay.

Love to all

Bob