

end of life. And for that very reason we love them all the more, and find their call more sublime. Our secret heart's desire is that our end shall be on them." It seems the final irony of his short life, with all its broken promise, that he should have met the death he did.

E. K.

### THE DUKE OF THE ABRUZZI 1873-1933

In the death of our Honorary Member, His Royal Highness Prince Luigi Amedeo Guiseppe Maria Ferdinando Francisco di Savoia-Aosta, Duke of the Abruzzi, one of the most romantic figures of our times has been lost, not only to the American Alpine Club, but to the world. Sailor, navigator, oceanographer, sea-fighter, polar explorer, big game hunter, topographer, land explorer, geologist, botanist, zoologist, financier and mountaineer, he has been one of the outstanding figures of our day.

Born of royal parents, apparently into the lap of luxury, one might have thought that the young man would become a dilettante and nothing more. Not so, however. From early youth he was given a strict schooling and drilled in the fundamentals of learning. Thus were shaped the building blocks which enabled him to construct a life of masterful adventure.

Certain of his accomplishments are well known, and neither space nor time now permit of more than an inadequate sketch of his remarkable career. The Prince, third son of Amedeo, Duke of Aosta, and Princess Marie del Pozzo della Cisterna, was born in Madrid January 29th, 1873. At the time of his birth his father was Amedeo I, King of Spain. Almost immediately his father lost the throne and was expelled from the country. His mother died when he was three. At six he became a cabin boy and attended the Naval College in Leghorn. At eleven he received his first instruction on a warship. At sixteen he cruised the shore of South America in the warship *Amerigo Vespucci* and at twenty commanded the gunboat *Volturno* on a punitive expedition to Somaliland. At twenty-one he started a cruise around the world in the *Christopher Columbus* which lasted two years. At thirty-one he made another world cruise for three years as commander of the ship *Liguria*. During this cruise he made extensive observations in oceanography. He visited the Jamestown Exposition in 1907 in command of the cruiser *Varese*

as an official representative of his country. He commanded a squadron in the Tripoli war. In 1913 he became fleet commander of the Italian Mediterranean forces and in 1914 commander-in-chief of the Italian Navy so that when Italy joined the Allies in 1915 he was the ranking officer in the Adriatic.

In the late months of 1915 he rescued 240,000 troops of the Serbian army from the coast of Dalmatia, whither they had been driven by the Austrians against the sea, and transferred them to Italy. This was one of his greatest feats and was accomplished under fire. He was in command at the first Italian attack of the Dardenelles.

In 1917 he gave up his naval command because of a disagreement with Admiral Thaon di Revel, his chief of staff. He was, however, nominated admiral in February, 1918. After the war he explored Abyssinia and Somaliland, organized sugar and fruit companies, and in 1932 became president of The Italian Steamship Company. In the latter years of his life he devoted much time to colonization efforts in Somaliland where he died at the village of Mogdishu on March 18th, 1933.

He was a Prince of the House of Savoy, Knight of the Order of the Annunziata, of the Seraphim and of the Black Eagle, a Senator of the Kingdom, and Harvard University conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. Mussolini personally nominated him for membership in the Italian Royal Academy.

A career such as this indicates the possession of extraordinary talents. And his energy was indefatigable. In his leisure moments on duty he turned to the study of his avocations, and on his vacations and furloughs he put his plans for their accomplishment into effect.

Only his outstanding achievements in the field of mountaineering and polar exploration may be mentioned here. At the age of twenty-four he organized an expedition for the ascent of Mt. St. Elias which he accomplished. He named Mt. Bona. In 1899, in the ship *Stella Polare*, he undertook his North Pole expedition which went by way of Franz Joseph Land and spent the winter in Teplitz Bay. Frostbite kept the Duke at the base but his aide, Capt. Umberto Cagni went northward by sledge to Lat. 86° 33', 239.15 miles from the pole, a new record, bettering Nansen's. He determined the north coast of Franz Joseph Land

and the non-existence of Petermann Land. In September, 1900, on account of injury to his ship, he was forced to return prematurely to Christiania. In 1906 he climbed Ruwenzori and named the twin summits Margherita and Alexandra. Perhaps his most remarkable expedition was that to the Karakoram in 1909. In this year also he climbed Mt. Kenya in Africa. On the Himalayan expedition he established a new altitude record for climbing on Bride Peak after several attempts on Mt. Godwin-Austen, then the famous K2, had failed. The altitude reached was 24,600 feet under extremely trying and dangerous weather and climbing conditions.

The Duke's expeditions were noted particularly for their completeness in equipment both of material and personnel—even to the point of luxury. The casual observer was not infrequently heard to remark that success was bound to come because of the richness of his resources. But those who have had experience in the field have realized too often that success is not attained merely by material and money.

He is spoken of with respect and admiration by Alaskans today. The following anecdote is told of his Mt. St. Elias expedition. In going in to Mt. St. Elias most of the work had to be done by back-packing, sleds being used for only part of the distance. The packers were chiefly lumbermen recruited from Seattle. Among them was a great bully. He became troublesome. There was only one of the packers who dared stand up to him but the bully refused to fight him, stating that he would not fight unless there was a purse in it. Whereupon the Duke handed the bully a purse and also a good thrashing with his own bare fists.

Perhaps most of the Duke's success in his expeditions was due to his training and character. He was a man among men. His years of apprenticeship in the naval ranks gave him a sympathy with and understanding of the point of view of the personnel he later commanded. An astute observer, he became a good picker of men. Much that he accomplished was due to the loyal support and the untiring efforts of those who accompanied him. His real affection and admiration for his companions was returned by them. Much of what he did has been given us by the accomplished pen of Filippo de Filippi, his historian, and by the remarkable photography of Vittorio Sella.

His expedition into the Karakoram might be taken as a model of organization. Although his resources were great, so were the difficulties—both of route and of terrain. On the inward journey, with a great caravan of 272 persons and ninety-five baggage ponies, they covered 293 miles in twenty-two days, lost not a single load of supplies, and maintained a cheerful, vigorous and enthusiastic outlook among the personnel. Only two porters deserted on the higher glacier work. The Duke was his own paymaster and used with effectiveness the brass check identification system for the porters.

His palace in Turin became a museum filled with the trophies of his sport and specimens of scientific value which he had collected. He was honored and beloved by its people and the medal which they voted him was among his most cherished possessions.

Among the publications which the Duke sponsored and took part in producing are: "The Ascent of Mount Saint Elias," 1900; "On the Pole Star in Arctic Seas," 1903; "Ruwenzori," 1908; "Karakoram and Western Himalaya," 1909; "Relations of the House of Savoy with the Court of England," 1932.

W. S. L.