

# The Kaiser as I Knew Him for Fourteen Years

By ARTHUR N. DAVIS, D. D. S.—American Dentist to the Kaiser from 1904 to 1918

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## PREFACE

For 14 years the Kaiser was my patient. All I know of him and all that he told me came to me while the relation of patient and dentist existed between us. For that reason I felt at first that, no matter how vital to the allied cause might be the information I could give as to the Kaiser's viewpoint, ambitions and plans, the requirements of professional ethics must seal my lips and compel me to withhold it from the world at large. When, however, I considered the grave crisis that confronts the world and in which my own country is playing so important a part, and realized that what I knew of the Kaiser might prove of some value to civilization, I concluded that my patriotic duty was paramount and rose superior to any of the ordinary demands of professional ethics. In this conclusion I was strengthened by the urgent solicitation of the leaders of my profession who were most emphatic in their contention that my ethical qualms were entirely unwarranted in view of all the circumstances. ARTHUR N. DAVIS, D. D. S.

## CHAPTER I.

"America Must Be Punished!" When war broke out between the United States and Germany, on April 6, 1917, I was in Berlin. I had lived and practiced my profession as a dentist there for 14 years, and the Kaiser had been one of my patients during all that time.

I don't know exactly how many visits the Kaiser paid me professionally, but I know I am safe in saying they were not less than 100, and the probabilities are they were closer to 150. Almost invariably, after my work was done, the Kaiser remained anywhere from ten minutes to an hour and a half to discuss the topics of the hour with me.

When we declared war against Germany, therefore, while I was still an American citizen—as patriotic an American, I believe, as might be found anywhere—I had lived in Germany so long, had developed so many professional friendships in Germany's most favored circles and was so generally regarded as a particular favorite of the Kaiser himself, that I found it hard to realize that nevertheless I had become an alien enemy.

The same day the breaking off of diplomatic relations was announced, the German newspapers had published the provisions of an old treaty between Germany and the United States which gave Americans in Germany and Germans in America nine months after a declaration of war between the two nations within which to settle their affairs and leave the country.

"This treaty," the newspapers pointed out, "was made in the time of Frederick the Great. It has never been repealed. Germany will respect it." As there were so many more Germans in America than there were Americans in Germany, this prompt announcement of Germany's intentions regarding this treaty was quite understandable and it seemed most improbable that Germany would adopt any harsh measures toward Americans and thereby invite reprisals.

Had the situation been reversed, of course, the Germans would undoubtedly have thought it expedient to intern Americans no matter what happened to their own countrymen in America, and, in that event, this ancient treaty would have shared the fate of that which guaranteed Belgium's neutrality. One "scrap of paper" more or less would never have been allowed to interfere with Germany's "destiny."

Influential Germans who called to see me professionally during that period almost invariably expressed the hope that I was not planning to leave Berlin.

"No matter what happens, doctor," they declared—"even if the worst comes to the worst and war is declared between America and Germany—you may feel quite sure the Kaiser will never let anyone harm you."

I had not let the matter rest there, however. I had called at the American embassy, where it was pointed out to me that, while diplomatic relations had been severed, it was not at all certain that war would result and there was, therefore, no reason for me to leave Berlin precipitately.

Had the Kaiser been in Berlin at the time, I might, of course, have had an opportunity to put the question to him squarely as to what my fate might be if war were declared, but he was away. The court chamberlain had been appointed but a short time before and I did not know him personally, but his predecessor, Count August von Eulenburg, one of the wisest and most respected men in Germany, was one

of my oldest patients and I decided to discuss the situation with him. Unfortunately, however, I found him too ill to receive me. He was eighty years old and, although unusually well preserved, was in no condition on this occasion to receive visitors.

Another influential patient of mine whom I sought out at this time was ex-Ambassador von Sturm. Although he was now retired from official life, he had formerly been a powerful figure in German state circles and still kept more or less in touch with the new court chamberlain and others in high office. His nephew was under secretary of foreign affairs.

I found the ex-ambassador at his private apartment in the Adlon hotel. "What will happen to Americans," I asked, "if my country declares war against Germany?"

"That, doctor, will depend entirely upon how America treats our subjects," he replied, somewhat more coldly than I had expected of him. "If America interns Germans, of course, we shall undoubtedly treat Americans the same way, and you could hardly expect any special consideration, although, if you will write a letter to the court chamberlain, who is a personal friend of mine, I shall see that he gets it."

"But, excellency," I replied, "there is a treaty between Germany and America, I understand, which gives the subjects or citizens of one country who happen to be sojourning in the other when war is declared nine months within which to close up their affairs and leave. Would not that protect me?"

"Of course, doctor," he answered, "Germany will respect the treaty if America does, and then there will be no trouble. It seems to me you must await developments and, in the meantime you have no cause for worry."

"Suppose some of your subjects in America should act up and start blowing up bridges or munition factories and should be lynched, which they probably would be," I suggested, "what would Germany's course be?"

"What Germany would do then, doctor," he replied, slowly and thoughtfully, as though such a contingency had never occurred to him before—"really, doctor, I don't know what we would do!"

This somewhat unsatisfactory interview with Von Sturm might have worried me more, perhaps, had it not been for a visit I received only a day or two later from Prince von Pless, one of the Kaiser's closest friends and advisors, who called on me professionally. For a year and a half the Kaiser had had his great army headquarters at the prince's palace at Pless, in southeastern Germany, and I knew that he enjoyed his monarch's confidence.

When I asked him regarding the possible internment of Americans, he assured me that, come what might, I and my family had not the slightest reason for alarm.

"No matter what may befall other Americans, doctor," he asserted, in a confidential manner, "the Kaiser has gone on record to the effect that you and your family are not to be molested."

Another incident which made me feel that I could proceed with my preparations for leaving Berlin without undue haste was the receipt early in the year of a most extraordinary post card from the Kaiser which, it occurred to me, was quite significant as to his intentions regarding my welfare. On one side was his picture and on the other, written and signed in English in his own handwriting, was the message:

"Dear Doctor Davis:  
"Wishing you a very good year for 1917."  
WILLIAM I. R."

This was the first message of its kind that I had ever received from the Kaiser. Even in peace times, the picture postals which he had sent to me from time to time and which were autographed by him, were always signed in German. When, on February 1, the Germans resumed their ruthless submarine warfare—a move which was immediately followed by the breaking off of diplomatic relations—I felt that the Kaiser must have foreseen this consequence and had sent me the postcard as an intimation that he wanted me to remain in Berlin nevertheless.

When the Germans sank the Lusitania, living and practicing in Germany lost many of their attractions for me. I made up my mind then that I would rather return home and commence my professional career all over again, if necessary, than remain in a country which could sanction such a hideous form of warfare—the wanton destruction of women and children. To that end, I went to New York in the summer of 1915 to investigate the requirements for the practice of my profession in that state. I had an Illinois license, but I wanted to be in a position to practice in New York, and the following year I went to New York again and took the state dental examination. I returned to Germany late in the autumn of 1916 and later I learned that my certificate had been granted. Then I commenced active preparations

to dispose of my German practice and return home.

My second reason for wanting to get out of Germany as soon as possible was the fact that food conditions in Germany were becoming more precarious every day. My wife and I feared that our child, who was two years old, might suffer from lack of proper nourishment if we remained and I determined that no matter how long it might be necessary for me to remain in Berlin, my wife and child at any rate should leave at the earliest possible moment.

My third reason, however, was by far the most insistent of all.

I had become convinced that what I knew of the Kaiser and his plans, now that we were at war, ought to be communicated to America without delay and that the only way to do that adequately would be to get home as soon as I possibly could, no matter what personal sacrifice might be involved in abandoning my European practice and interests.

It is true that in the early years of my relationship with the Kaiser our conversations naturally embraced only the most general of subjects, but in later years, when he came to know me better, he cast aside all reserve and talked to me on whatever was uppermost in his mind at the time. After the war started that, of course, formed the principal subject of our discussions and the part that America was playing in the conflict was frequently brought up because of the fact that I was an American.

One memorable interview I had had with him influenced me perhaps more than any other single factor to hasten the settlement of my European affairs and return home.

It was in the fall of 1916. The Kaiser had come to me for professional attention, and after my work was completed he remained to discuss some of the aspects of the war. Perhaps the fact that I had just returned from a visit to America made him more than usually eager for a chat with me.

We had discussed various phases of the war, when the Kaiser changed the subject abruptly with the question:

"Davis, what's the matter with your country?"

"In what respect, your majesty?" I asked.

"Why is it that your country is so unfair to Germany? Why do you persist in supplying munitions and money to the allies? Why doesn't your president treat the European warring nations the same as he treated Mexico by putting an embargo on munitions and letting us fight this thing out ourselves? You do not ship munitions to us, why do you ship them to the other side?"

I was on such terms with the Kaiser that I did not hesitate to answer his question with another.

"I have always understood, your majesty, that during the Russian-Japanese war, Germany continually supplied munitions to Russia. Why was that any more justifiable than America supplying munitions to the allies? Then again, in the Spanish-American

"Davis, you surprise me!" the Kaiser interrupted, rising from the operating chair, in which he had remained, walking towards me, throwing back his shoulders and rising to his full height. "The cases are entirely different. When we helped Russia against Japan we were helping a white race against a yellow race, don't ever forget that—don't ever forget that. But with America, that is certainly not the case. Your country is acting from purely mercenary motives. It is a case of dollars, dollars, dollars!"—and each time he repeated the word he struck his partially helpless left hand violently with his powerful right.

"America values dollars more than she values German lives! She thinks it right to shoot down my people!"

He had worked himself up to a degree of indignation which I had seen him display only on two or three previous occasions, and I must confess I was reluctant to start a fresh outburst by answering his arguments. His eyes, usually soft and kindly, flashed fire as he advanced towards me and slowly and incisively declared: "Davis, America—must—be—punished—for—her—actions!"

In that expression, which he repeated on subsequent occasions in precisely the same words and with the same measured emphasis, I knew that he revealed most clearly what his attitude was and will ever be toward this country.

## CHAPTER II.

The Kaiser at Potsdam. Getting out of Germany proved to be a far more difficult proposition than I had imagined.

Realizing that it would probably be several months before I could finally settle up my affairs, and that my child, who was anemic, ought to be taken out of Germany with as little delay as possible because food conditions were fast going from bad to worse, I applied to the kommandantur for leave to have my wife and child go to Montreux, on Lake Geneva, Switzerland,

where I hoped to join them at the earliest possible moment and accompany them home. I did not relish the idea of their going across the ocean without me.

That was in May, 1917. Weeks passed while our application was going from one official to another, lying, perhaps for days at a time under a pile of other applications of a similar character or awaiting the investigation of our personal histories, and it was not until the end of June that we received any word regarding it. Then we learned that it had been denied.

This was my first intimation that we might have difficulty in getting out of Germany.

A day or two later the Kaiser called on me professionally and I told him of our plight, hoping that he would intercede for us. It was the only favor of a personal character I had ever asked of him.

"My child is ailing, your majesty," I said, "and I feel that she needs a change of climate. I applied to the kommandantur for leave for my wife and child to go to Montreux, but I have just heard that it has been refused!"

"Davis, I will see what I can do in the matter," he replied reassuringly, and as he was leaving my office he turned to me and said in the presence of his two adjutants: "Regarding that matter you spoke of, leave it to me and I will see what I can do!"

The Kaiser's influence would readily solve our problem, I thought, and I was very much relieved. Two days later, however, I received a letter from Count von Moltke, one of the Kaiser's adjutants, stating that the Kaiser had spoken to him regarding the Switzerland project, but, under the circumstances, it was out of the question. If, however, my child's condition were such as to make a change of climate really necessary, he added, the Kaiser suggested that a trip to the Austrian Tyrol might perhaps be arranged, as the climate there was just as good as that of Switzerland, but before permission would be granted for that trip it would be necessary to obtain a certificate from the district doctor stating that it was necessary.

As the food situation in Austria was just as bad as it was in Germany, if not worse, that idea didn't appeal to me at all, and I went immediately to the kommandantur and explained the situation to them.

When they saw Count von Moltke's letter the officer in charge threw up his hands.

"That's final," he declared. "That comes from a higher authority than ours. It is useless to pursue the matter any further. We received a communication from his majesty regarding your case, but the matter was left entirely to our discretion. It was not a command, only a request from his majesty. A command, of course, would have been different."

Then I applied for a pass for my wife, child and myself to go to America. They pointed out at the kommandantur that as my wife's application to leave Berlin preceded mine, it was possible she would be allowed to leave before me. I told the officer that that would suit me admirably, as I wanted the pass for Mrs. Davis and the child granted at the earliest possible moment regardless of what action might be taken on my own application.

Again there followed a long period of anxious waiting while the German red tape slowly unwound, but eventually, in September, we received word that Mrs. Davis and the child might leave Berlin for Copenhagen between October 10 and 12. They left on the tenth.

A day or two later commenced the German offensive against Riga, on the Baltic. Within three or four days the Germans captured successively the Oesel, Ruao, Obro and Moon islands in the Gulf of Riga and then carried their invasion to the mainland. Their apparent objective was Petrograd and on October 19 the Russians announced that the seat of the government would be removed from Petrograd to Moscow.

These successes on the Baltic failed to overcome the depression in Germany caused by the serious internal situation in Austria at this period. Munition factories were being wrecked by hunger-crazed and war-weary strikers and the populace was being shot down in great numbers in the food riots which developed in various parts of Austria. Not since the war began had the outlook been so discouraging for the Germans.

Then, on October 24, just as things were looking their blackest, the great German-Austro offensive against the Italians was started. In three days the Italians were swept out of Austria and the Teutons pressed forward to the Tassos west of the Isonzo river leading to the Venetian plains. By the end of October the Italian armies were in full retreat. Before this offensive was over the Germans captured, they claimed, no less than 300,000 prisoners and several thousand big guns, besides vast stores of munitions and supplies.

The exultation of the Germans over the triumph of their armies in Italy knew no bounds. While it was at its

height I had an interview with the Kaiser which will ever remain one of the most vivid in my memory.

It was about three-thirty one Sunday morning when I was aroused by a maid who, in an awe-stricken tone of voice, announced that the Neue Palais, the Kaiser's palace at Potsdam, was on the phone. I went to the telephone and was informed that the Kaiser was suffering from a bad toothache and would send his auto for me within an hour or so.

I got up at once and packed my instruments, and at six-thirty the car, a big gray Mercedes limousine, arrived. Besides the chauffeur there was an outrider carrying the bugle whose distinctive notes only the Kaiser may use.

While the Shell room and other state rooms were accessible to visitors before the war, no one was ever permitted to visit the private apartments of the Kaiser upstairs.

On this occasion, however, I was guided right through the Shell room, through a door opening on the left and up a wide staircase to the Kaiser's wardrobe, or dressing room.

There I found breakfast ready for me. It consisted of real coffee, real white bread, butter, marmalade, sugar, cream and cold meats. It was the first food of the kind I had eaten in some time and practically no one in Germany outside the royal family and the Junkers was any better off than I in that respect.

While I was breakfasting, the Kaiser was dressing. His valet entered several times, I noticed, to take out articles of clothing from the massive wardrobes which lined the room. I had just completed my meal when I received word that my patient was ready to receive me.

As I entered the Kaiser's bedroom he was standing in the center of the room, fully attired in an army gray uniform, but without his sword. He looked more haggard than I had ever seen him, except once in 1915. Lack of sleep and physical pain were two things with which he had had very little experience, and they certainly showed their effects very plainly.

He didn't seem to be in the best of humor but greeted me cordially enough and shook hands.

"In all my life, Davis," he said, "I have never suffered so much pain."

I expressed my sorrow and started to improvise a dental chair out of an upholstered armchair on which I placed some pillows and, as the Kaiser sat down, he laughingly remarked:

"Look here, Davis, you've got to do something for me. I can't fight the whole world, you know, and have a toothache!"

When I was through and his pain was relieved, his spirits seemed to revive appreciably, and he explained why it was he was so anxious to have his tooth trouble removed as quickly as possible.

"I must go down to Italy, Davis," he said, "to see what my noble troops have accomplished. My gracious, what we have done to them down there! Our offensive at Riga was just a feint. We had advertised our intended offensive in Italy so thoroughly that the Italians thought we couldn't possibly intend to carry it through. For three months it was common talk in Germany, you remember, that the great offensive would start in October, and so the Italians believed it was all a bluff and when we advanced on Riga they were sure of it. They thought we were so occupied there that we could pay no attention to them, and so we caught them napping!"

The Kaiser's face fairly beamed as he dwelt on the strategy of his generals and the successful outcome of their Italian campaign.

"For months Italy had been engaged in planting her big guns on the mountain-tops and gathering mountains of ammunition and supplies and food and hospital supplies in the valleys below, in preparation for their twelfth Isonzo offensive."

"We let them go ahead and waited patiently for the right moment. They thought that their contemplated offensive must inevitably bring our weaker neighbor to her knees and force her to make a separate peace!" By "our weaker neighbor" the Kaiser, of course, referred to Austria, and how accurate was his information regarding Italy's expectations and how easily they might have been realized were subsequently revealed by the publication of that famous letter from Kaiser Karl to Prince Sextus.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Home-Made Plaster. Holes in plaster walls may be stopped with a mixture of sand and plaster of paris mixed into a paste with water. When dry cover with a piece of paper to match the wall.

## TOPROTECTWIDOW

Egyptian Wrote First Will of Which There Is Record.

Papyrus on Which the Desires of Utah Were Recorded Has Recently Been Discovered in a Good State of Preservation.

Utah, the Egyptian, looked out from beneath his shaggy eyebrows across the Nile, where the eternal Pyramids shimmered in the heat against the cloudless sky. Gods of Egypt! How dim were those piles of stone! In the bright light of the sun god, Ra, he should have seen those man-made mountains clearly.

Shades of his ancestors! His eyes were dimming fast! He was getting old—very old, so he suddenly realized. He looked into the basin of the fountain in the courtyard. The image reflected made him conscious, for the first time, of his swiftly approaching end. He sank down upon the fountain's rim and mused upon the shortness of life, its varying fortunes and the prospects of the future life—according to the beliefs of himself and his fathers.

Ah, well, he was ready to die. He did not fear after death to take the journey with the sun god, Ra, in the Boat of a Million Years to the Fields of Peace. No, by Amen, the god of Thebes! Had not Utah led a good life?

Yes, he had always been just, merciful and kind to his servants and his household. They had lacked nothing while he lived, nor had his wife, Sheftu, the daughter of Sat Sepdu.

But, after he was gone—ah, Pharaoh, the great one who gives life to his people—would his memory be sufficient to keep her from want or mistreatment? Would she ever be set out of the great stone house as the widows of others had been in the past?

A chill, sharper even than the chill of old age, shook him. It was the chill of fear for his beloved.

Then a happy thought warmed his veins again.

The people of his household and his city ever had listened and obeyed his spoken and written word during his life. His words by voice or writing were considered authority and wholeheartedly respected. Doubtless, then, would his written words be followed when he was in the Fields of Peace. Strange, neither he nor anyone else had thought of such a thing before.

So with reeds, flud and papyrus he wrote in beautiful picture writing.

That happened more than 1500 years ago. However, the papyrus has kept in a good state of preservation all those centuries and was recently discovered by excavators. Translated, it proved to be the will or legacy of Utah, allowing his wife, "Sheftu, daughter of Sat Sepdu of Gesab," four Eastern slaves and "the right to dwell in my house without allowing her to be put forth on the ground by any person."

The "will" is considered by authorities to be the first ever drawn.

## Buttons and the War.

Buttons are not generally regarded as one of the great articles of commerce, yet a report issued by the federal tariff commission presents some astonishing figures regarding the magnitude of the button industry and the capital invested therein.

There are more than 500 button-manufacturing establishments in this country, representing a capital of approximately \$20,000,000 and an annual payroll of \$8,000,000. The annual value of the products is more than \$20,000,000. New York has almost half the factories, but the middle West supplies most of the fresh water pearl.

The war has put up the price of buttons, owing to the advance in the cost of metals used in button manufacture, and the increased price of celluloid sheets and all subsidiary raw materials, such as dyes, chalk, acids and canvas. It is interesting to learn that the war has stimulated the business in this country and has led to the manufacture of glass buttons, which formerly were imported—another instance of beating Germany at her own game.

## She Saves Fuel.

A little old woman, wearing a woolen dress, a black silk jacket and a little round hat, entered a surface car at a transfer station yesterday, her arms so filled with a great bundle of crumpled newspapers that she could barely keep her balance. "We've got to conserve," she said cheerfully to another woman who held a seat for her, as she tumbled into a seat, making a dive at the same time for an evening paper that some one had left lying there. "Is this yours? No? Well, the government says we've got to save paper," she continued, as she added this last one to her already big package; "and I'll tell you it saves a lot of wood when I make my coffee in the morning."—New York Times.

## Model Village in Belgium.

At the initiative of M. F. Malfat, director of the architectural works of the city of Brussels, specialists are studying at present a project looking toward the creation, on the boundary of Great Brussels, of a large village for workmen which will be, as far as the authorities permit, annexed to Brussels city. It will be a garden city, conceived after the most recent esthetic ideas of cities and especially destined for workmen and small shopkeepers. Special installations will be provided for work at home.—From Belgian Bulletin.

In the next installment, Doctor Davis tells of the Kaiser's dual personality, showing how the war, while not changing, uncovered the emperor's true character. Don't miss this interesting study of the German "war lord."