



# The Woman Before Wallis: Prince Edward, the Parisian Courtesan, and the Perfect Murder

*Andrew Rose*

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**From the glittering dance halls of Paris during World War I to the *maisons de rendezvous*, luxurious châteaux in the French countryside, *The Woman Before Wallis* recounts the untold story of Prince Edward's tempestuous affair with a Parisian courtesan and the scandalous aftermath that has remained secret until now.**

Prince Edward was the King of England when he famously abdicated his crown over his love for the American divorcée Wallis Simpson. But two decades earlier, he was an inexperienced young man, stationed behind the lines during World War I, socializing with the elite aristocracy of Europe while fellow soldiers were being shelled in the trenches. Gradually, the awkward young man, who was desperate to see action, became involved in a very different sort of action—when his path crossed with the queen of the Paris demimonde.

Marguerite Alibert was a beautiful but tough Parisian who had fought her way up from street *gamine* to a woman *haut de gamme*, possibly the highest-ranking courtesan in Paris. She entertained some of the richest and most powerful men in the world—from princes to pashas. When the inexperienced Prince Edward was introduced to the alluring Marguerite, he was instantly smitten. After their tumultuous love affair ended, Edward thought he was free of Marguerite, but he was wrong. Several years later, Marguerite murdered her husband—a wealthy Egyptian playboy—by shooting him three times in the back at the Savoy Hotel in London. When Marguerite stood trial for murder, Edward was at risk of having his affair and behavior during the war exposed. What happened next was kept from the public for decades, uncovered thanks to exceptional access to unpublished documents held in the Royal Archives and private collections in England and France.

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