



*His Majesty King Faisal II of Iraq stands before a portrait of his Grandfather, His late Majesty King Faisal I.*

## *His Majesty King Faisal II of Iraq*

**H**IS MAJESTY KING FAISAL II, the only son of His late Majesty King Ghazi, was born at Qasr al-Zuhur, the Palace of Roses, on 2nd May, 1935. His early life was spent completely in Baghdad until the death of his father, King Ghazi, in April 1939, when he was proclaimed King of Iraq. That summer he went with the rest of the Royal Family to the Lebanon and this was the first experience His Majesty had had of travelling outside his own country. In the same year his uncle, His Royal Highness Prince Abdul Ilah, became Regent.

His Majesty was brought up under the care of his uncle and his mother, Her late Majesty the Queen, who exerted every effort and applied great wisdom in the task of preparing her son for the important responsibilities awaiting him.

In 1940 he began his formal education with an English governess who took care of him for two years. During this period the family was in the habit of going to the north of Iraq in the hot summer months—to a resort called Salahuddin near the ancient city of Erbil—as travelling abroad had been made impracticable by the War; but 1943 brought His Majesty his first real experience of foreign travel—he had been too young to remember his visit to the Lebanon—when in the Spring of that year, the Royal Family travelled through Jordan, Palestine and Egypt, spending a short time in each country.

By this time His Majesty's education had begun to encompass a wider field of subjects, as he was now being taught Arabic by an Iraqi tutor and taking his lessons at the Royal Bilat, the official palace of the Court—instead of at the Qasr al-Zuhur as before—so that he had the feeling of going to school every day at regular hours. Moreover, in order to get to know boys of his own age he took lessons with some five or six Iraqi boys, and in the afternoons children of his own age were invited to tea and to play with him—for without this the greater part of his life would have been spent with grown-ups.

The next year, 1944, brought yet another journey away from Iraq—to Alexandria, Egypt. This time His Majesty was able to spend four of the summer months at this Mediterranean resort, instead of at Salahuddin, as world conditions were less critical. Here, he had his first experience of swimming in the sea, for hitherto he had swum only in the pool in the gardens of the Qasr al-Zuhur.





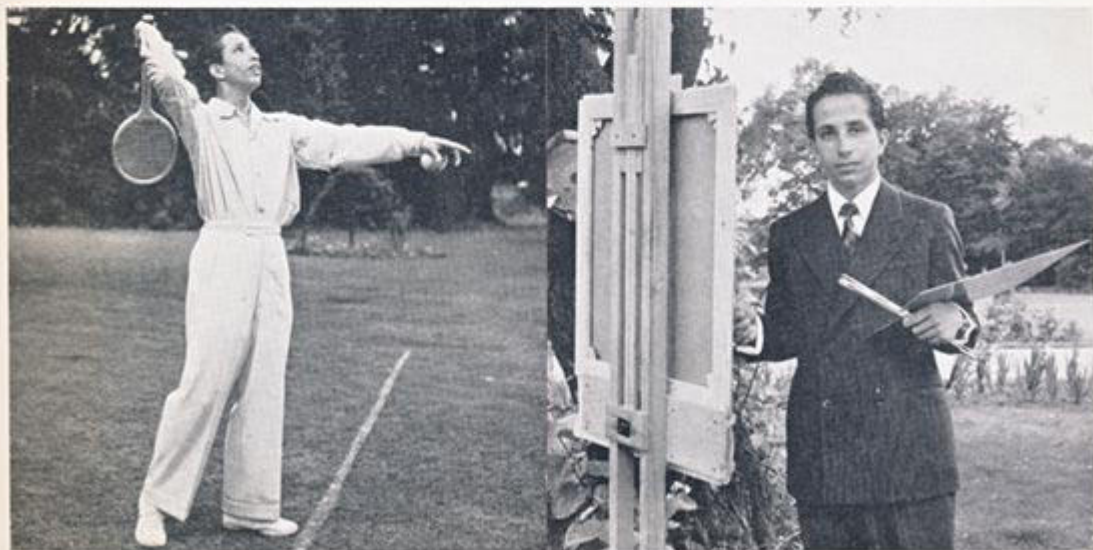
The year 1945 was fairly uneventful in the private life of the King : the war ended and his uncle, the Regent, paid official visits to Great Britain and the United States of America : but the following year may perhaps be considered as one of the most eventful of his life. It was decided that His Majesty was old enough to have a tutor in general education, and he began to study a range of subjects such as art, physics, chemistry, the history of Iraq and the Arab World, together with all those matters considered fundamental to the upbringing of an educated man. It was in 1946, too, that His Majesty paid his first visit to England. He left in May in order to be able to watch the Victory Parade which took place in June of that year, and the Royal Family took a palace in the country, but near enough to London to enable members of the Iraqi contingent taking part in the Victory Parade to visit their King on several occasions.

In 1947 the Royal Tutor went to England to decide upon a suitable preparatory school for His Majesty and, later the same year, the King joined Sandroyd Preparatory School, near Salisbury, while the Iraqi Embassy in Kensington Palace Gardens became his official residence.

In 1949 it was decided that His Majesty should go to Harrow School to continue his education, and he remained there until the summer of 1952 when he was awarded

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*Pictures that recall the childhood of His Majesty and (below) his days at Harrow School where he proved a keen and accomplished sportsman and very interested in art ; his own collection of paintings showing excellent taste.*





*His Majesty King Faisal II and H.R.H. the Crown Prince in Baghdad.*



the General Certificate of Education. He then returned to Iraq and was given a tumultuous welcome on his arrival in the capital.

Throughout his schooling His Majesty showed particular aptitude and ability, and more especially was he distinguished for his democratic and sportsmanlike spirit—a spirit which endears him to all with whom he comes in contact and which places him in such high regard among all his subjects. His perspicacity is evident in his masterly grasp of detail and his intelligence is shown to advantage in his lively conversations with an endless succession of visitors. His charm of manner and his power to attract people are extraordinary, and not only is he a young man of high principles and ideals, but he is possessed of a boundless capacity for work and an indomitable will. In private life he is instinctively orderly and he is affectionate towards both his family and his servants. He follows with avidity and appreciation contemporary accounts of modern scientific advance and international events.

His ideals he has often expressed in addressing his people. “It is my duty” he once said, “to act for the whole community, that I may secure glory and prosperity for it. The monarch is the first servant of the community.”

*His Majesty on returning to his capital after completing his education at Harrow.*

