by Richard Hough

Edwina, Countess Mountbatten of Burma

Edwina Cynthia Annette Mountbatten (Ashley), Countess Mountbatten of Burma (1901 – 1960) was an English heiress, socialite, relief worker and the last Viceroy of India. She was married to Lord Louis Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India, and was a member of the royal family. Edwina's life was marked by a combination of glamour, duty, and tragedy. She was a key figure in the history of India, and her story remains a fascinating example of a life lived at the crossroads of politics, society, and royalty.

Edwina was born on November 28, 1901, in London, England. She was the daughter of Sir Edward Ashley and Lady Cynthia Ashley. Her father was a wealthy landowner, and her mother was a socialite. Edwina was educated at Harrow School and Newnham College, Cambridge, where she studied history and economics.

Edwina married Lord Louis Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India, in 1922. The couple had two children, Lady Patricia Victoria Mountbatten and Lord Nicholas Knatchbull, 2nd Earl Mountbatten of Burma. Edwina was a prominent socialite and relief worker during World War II, serving with the White Cross in France and later with the Voluntary Aid Detachment in India. She was known for her work in relief efforts and her efforts to support the British war effort.

Edwina's life was marked by tragedy. In 1940, her sister, Princess Alice, died in a Japanese prison camp in Malaya. In 1941, her father, Sir Edward Ashley, was killed in a fishing accident. In 1942, Edwina was taken prisoner by the Japanese in Singapore, and in 1943, her sister-in-law, Princess Alice, died in a Japanese prison camp in Singapore.

After World War II, Edwina continued to work as a relief worker and as a socialite. She was known for her love of the arts, and she was a patron of the arts. She was also known for her political activism, and she was a member of the British relief organization in India.

Edwina died on February 21, 1960, in Rome, Italy. Her death was caused by a heart attack. Edwina was buried in the Mountbatten family mausoleum in Harley Street, London. She is remembered as a key figure in the history of India, and her legacy continues to be studied and celebrated.

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