

## CHAPTER 5

### *Life after St Andrews*

Most young princes in the royal family spend some time in the armed forces. After university William decided to go for forty-four weeks of long, hard training at the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst, Berkshire. He already knew about life here from Prince Harry. Prince Harry started training at the Academy the year before.

Before he went to Sandhurst, William worked for a few weeks with an RAF\* rescue team in the mountains in North Wales. He loved everything about this work. He also returned to New Zealand for another royal visit, this time alone. To many people there, he seemed more and more like his mother. He looked like her, of course. But he also showed his kind side when he visited children in hospital.

Around this time, Kate went with him to have dinner with Prince Charles, the Queen and her husband, Prince Philip. It was quite scary for Kate, but the evening went well. William's grandparents were 'very friendly,' she said.

The two had one last holiday before William went to Sandhurst. They went back to a favourite place, Switzerland. A photographer got a photo of them together. They were kissing. Now everyone was waiting to hear about the engagement.

William's training started soon after. The course was long and hard. Many of the days were eighteen hours long. Trainees like William had to wake at 5.30 in the morning. William started to sleep on the floor – then it wasn't so difficult to wake up! For the first five weeks, he couldn't see friends or family. After that he was able to spend some evenings with Kate at her parents' house.

\* RAF = the Royal Air Force



Kate started her first job in the fashion business. She helped to choose the clothes that went in the shops. Her new work friends said that she worked hard and even made cups of tea! But some newspapers did not agree and started to ask questions. Was she just waiting for William to marry her?

After William finally finished Sandhurst in December, the two enjoyed spending more time together again. They went to restaurants and bars with friends, and they loved going dancing. Often they travelled together.



But it wasn't all easy being the girlfriend of a prince ... and a prince in the armed forces. William was soon away on more training and he enjoyed spending time with his new friends.

William was away, but all the newspapers still wanted photos of Kate. There were usually photographers outside her flat in London. On the morning of her twenty-fifth birthday, about fifty photographers waited for her. Photos in one German magazine showed the flat's exact address.



It all became too much. In April 2007, William and Kate decided to split up. The news was a very big surprise to many people. Some people say that William just wasn't ready for marriage. Certainly, Kate was very upset. Now she says that she learned a lot during this time away from William.

# THE RING

And, in fact, it was not for long. In July of the same year, William and Harry worked at a pop music concert. Money from the concert went to some of Princess Diana's favourite charities. Kate came to the concert. She didn't sit with William, but friends say they were back together again.

In 2008 William spent some time in the RAF and in September started training to work in a rescue team. By now Kate was working for her parents' company and was able to stay away from the cameras in London. To everyone that saw them, it was clear that they were in love again.

Late in 2010, they went to Kenya on holiday. Kate didn't know it, but in his bag, William had a very special engagement ring. It was his mother's. On holiday William was worried about losing his bag – and the ring with it!

The couple spent the first part of the holiday with friends. But when the two were alone, at a beautiful house by the mountains, the time was right. William asked Kate to marry him and, of course, the answer was yes!

Back in the UK, William invited Kate's parents to Balmoral, the Queen's house in Scotland. He wanted to do the right thing. He asked Kate's father, 'Can I marry your daughter?'

'I asked Kate first – so her dad couldn't say no!' William later said.

Of course, both families were very happy at the news. William's brother Harry said, 'It means I get a sister.'

After some difficult times, Kate and William were now excited about their future together. In the television interview, William said: 'It is just really easy being together. It is really fun.'



In William and Kate's engagement photos, Kate is wearing a beautiful engagement ring. It was Diana's ring nearly thirty years before. Diana chose the ring herself. It has a beautiful sapphire with fourteen diamonds around it.

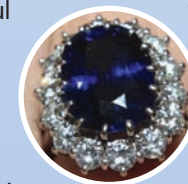
William wanted Kate to have the ring. For him, it was a nice way to remember his mother. 'This was my way of keeping my mother close to it all,' he explained.

'The ring is very, very special,' said Kate in their television interview.

'If she loses it, she's in big trouble!' joked William.

The day after the engagement, people could buy copies of the ring in shops. The owner of one shop says that before the engagement he was selling about ten rings like this every day. After the engagement, he was selling between fifty and seventy-five rings every day!

And yes, there is even a ring like this on the website of Party Pieces, the Middletons' company!



**What do these words mean?**

**You can use a dictionary.**

**sapphire diamond**