

Earl Marshal Of England, Duke Of Norfolk Responsible For Details Of Great Ceremony

On the eve of June 2nd, 1953, the eyes of the world will be focussed upon Westminster Abbey and the historic ceremony to be enacted there. Hyde Park will be crowded with sleepers (there were 50,000 last time) determined to be first in place along the procession route. The annexe to the Abbey will have been built, the precious tickets entitling the bearers to enter the Abbey will have been issued, and everyone will have been assigned a place in the coronation procession itself. The Crown Jewels will be in the Abbey under guard.

Everything will be in readiness, and within a few hours the spectacle, with all its incredible complexity and colour, will begin to unfold.

There will be mounting excitement, but one man will be calm through it all. He is the Earl Marshal of England, His Grace the Duke of Norfolk, who by hereditary right is responsible for every detail of great ceremonial occasions. Although only 44, he has carried out his duties since the age of 27. These have included arrangements for the funeral of King George V, the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth in 1937, the wedding of our present Queen and the funeral of King George VI.

On the last occasion he had only ten days in which to make the immensely detailed preparations, yet the disciplined solemnity of that sad occasion won him high praise. In his vivid scarlet tunic, crossed with the blue sash of the Order of the Garter, and carrying his golden baton, the emblem of his ancient office, he was an impressive figure.

The Duke is head of the College of Arms and of the Kings-of-Arms, Herald and their Pursuivants; some of their titles, such as Rouge Dragon and Blue-mantle Pursuivant, are as romantic as their uniforms. He is a multi-millionaire, has estates in Sussex (Arundel Castle is his favourite home), Sheffield, Dumfriesshire (Caerlaverock Castle), Suffolk and Oxfordshire. His family plate is said to weigh a ton. He is a Roman Catholic, and has four daughters but no son.

Masterly Organizer

The Earl Marshal's habitual expression is one of quiet, unruffled attention. He is a masterly organizer, and likes economy in words, clear thinking and action. Whether as a farmer, magistrate, soldier or state official, these qualities have all been remarked upon by those who work with him. Even so, nobody has envied him his burden. He has planned the route of the procession and co-ordinated with the police plans for security and order. These were consultations with the heads of Service departments on the contingents and representatives of the various services in the procession, and for the lining of the route. The most precise arrangements were made with the Constable of the Tower of London for the transport and guarding of the priceless crown jewels.

The biggest headache, undoubtedly, was the allocation of tickets for the ceremony itself. Normally the Abbey holds about 2,500 people

but at the last Coronation the seating capacity was increased to 7,700, tiers and galleries being erected within the Abbey. Hundreds of workmen erected the scaffolding, laid protective covering on the stone floor, and arranged temporary openings for ingress and egress. Glass was removed from some windows so that spectators can go straight to their seats.

Many Problems

Among the most difficult decisions to make were those regarding the guest lists. Who should be invited and where should they be placed? Nobody must be offended, but there just isn't room for everyone. Every Dominion, Colony, Dependency and the representatives of every foreign power had to be considered. Such was also the case in the claims of heredity. Canada is important, but tiny San Marino had to be remembered also. Nor could the limited seating be allocated solely on the basis of Empire unity, diplomatic precedence or historic precedent; for public service must also be considered. At the last Coronation ordinary working people, the widows or dependents of some who had fallen in war, had seats which were refused to the rich or high-ranking.

Timing Important

The timing of everything is supremely important. "Norfolk,



The Duke of Norfolk taken in uniform as Earl Marshall at the Proclamation at St. James' Palace.

E. M." as he signs himself, tells bishops and ambassadors, knights and newspapermen, where to put themselves and when to arrive. The contingents of the procession must know where to be and when to join up. And there are numberless physical details—the laying of an immense carpet, 173 feet long, the preparation and placing of all the equipment used in the ritual.

Works With Commission

Much of the advance planning was done by the Coronation Commission, of which the Duke of Edinburgh is chairman and the Earl Marshal his deputy. It includes 36 representatives of Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New

Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan and Ceylon (India, being a Republic within the Commonwealth and not, unlike other Dominions, acknowledging Queen Elizabeth as Queen of India, has no member on the Commission). It also includes the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Fisher, prominent ministers and representatives of the main political parties.

Numberless matters of delicacy are involved in the arrangements. There were raised eyebrows at the last Coronation for instance when the Russian and German ambassadors were placed next to each other.

The Earl Marshal's vast experience was needed at sessions of

Leisurely View Of Coronation Coach For Many Britons

Few people are ever able to take a leisurely and detailed view of the Coronation Coach and its escort. They see it only as it passes on the crowded Coronation route. But a pre-view is to be provided this year—three months before the Queen is crowned. A replica in full colour and exact detail on a two-thirds scale was made by artists and sculptors for presentation at the Ideal Home Exhibition at Olympia, London, March 3-28).

This representation—which includes the eight grey-horses, outriders, walking men, Yeomen of the Guard, and the escorting officers of the Household Cavalry—has cost many times the amount of the original coach when it was built in 1762.

The British Council of Industrial Design has announced a competition for designs of outdoor seats for parks, beaches, bus-stops, and so on. Since many local authorities plan to commemorate the Coronation by providing new public seats, the Council hopes to assist by fostering a high standard of design.

The Court of Claims, an ancient tribunal which, ever since the accession of Richard II in 1377, has met to consider claims to perform certain services for the Sovereign. The Court usually meets in the Privy Council Office in Whitehall with either the Lord Chief Justice or Lord Chancellor as president.

The most prominent of citizens concerned with the Coronation presented their claims in the normal way. Thus the claim from the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey was "to instruct the Queen in the Rites and Ceremonies and to assist the Archbishop of Canterbury..." There was another claim "...to carry the Royal Standard of Scotland as Hereditary Royal Standard Bearer for Scotland."

All claimants trace their rights through ancestry or historic precedent. But not all claims are easy to resolve. Should there, for instance, be a Queen's Champion? The King's Champion used to be one of the most interesting features of the Coronation. A banquet at Westminster Hall once followed the Coronation, at which, before food was served, the Lord High Constable and Earl Marshal, accompanied by the King's Champion, entered on horseback. The Herald would then proclaim that "if any person, of what degree soever, high or low, shall deny or gainsay our sovereign lord... here is his Champion, who saith that he lieth, and is a false traitor, being ready in person to combat with him..." The King's Champion then threw down the gauntlet, which lay there until the Herald picked it up and returned it to him. Three times the glove was thrown (nobody in history ever accepted the challenge) and then the King drank the Champion's health.

A pleasant custom, but it went into disuse in 1821. A claim to exercise the right of Champion may be made and heard, however.

Not Remunerative

What pay will the Earl Marshal get for arranging the greatest and solemn pageant in history? His salary is £20 a year. Being a rich man, 19s 6d in every £1 goes in income tax, so in fact he will receive ten shillings for his year's gruelling labour.

shown in public demands upon the Queen.

The Queen, however, has taken up her duties with unruffled enthusiasm and great understanding. She has a mission which, though well within her capacities, few people in this world could undertake successfully.

There was an exhibition of Westminster Abbey's treasures in St. James's Palace during February and March. Plate, vestments, historic objects and works of art were shown, including a portrait of Richard II which is believed to be the earliest painted portrait of an English sovereign.

Queen's Busy Day

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to take up his duties. India's new High Commissioner in London must be received. The president and secretary call to submit the business of the Royal Academy of Arts.

Grasps Essentials Readily

A host of official documents must be examined; the cabinet agenda, the contents of those red-leather covered despatch boxes from the Foreign Office; the minutes and proceedings of defence committees. There will be correspondence or visits from her personal representatives abroad, such as ambassadors and governors-general. The state documents which go to the Prime Minister go also to the Queen, and she has already astonished those about her by her ready grasp of essentials.

These constitutional duties are not purely formal because if things are done in the name of the Queen, she must keep well informed about them. Every day, for instance, she reads a detailed summary of the Commonwealth newspapers.

Many Documents to Read

Documents are usually dealt with in the morning. The Queen sees her private secretary as soon as she has read the newspapers, consults cabinet papers and then goes over the business of the day. Various other documents come for consideration, and then correspondence is answered. There is Hansard—the

Song Competition

For Coronation Year the Uist and Barra Association of Glasgow, Scotland, is organizing a competition for a new song by a bard from the islands of Uist or Barra, or for a new song composed in honour of either island.

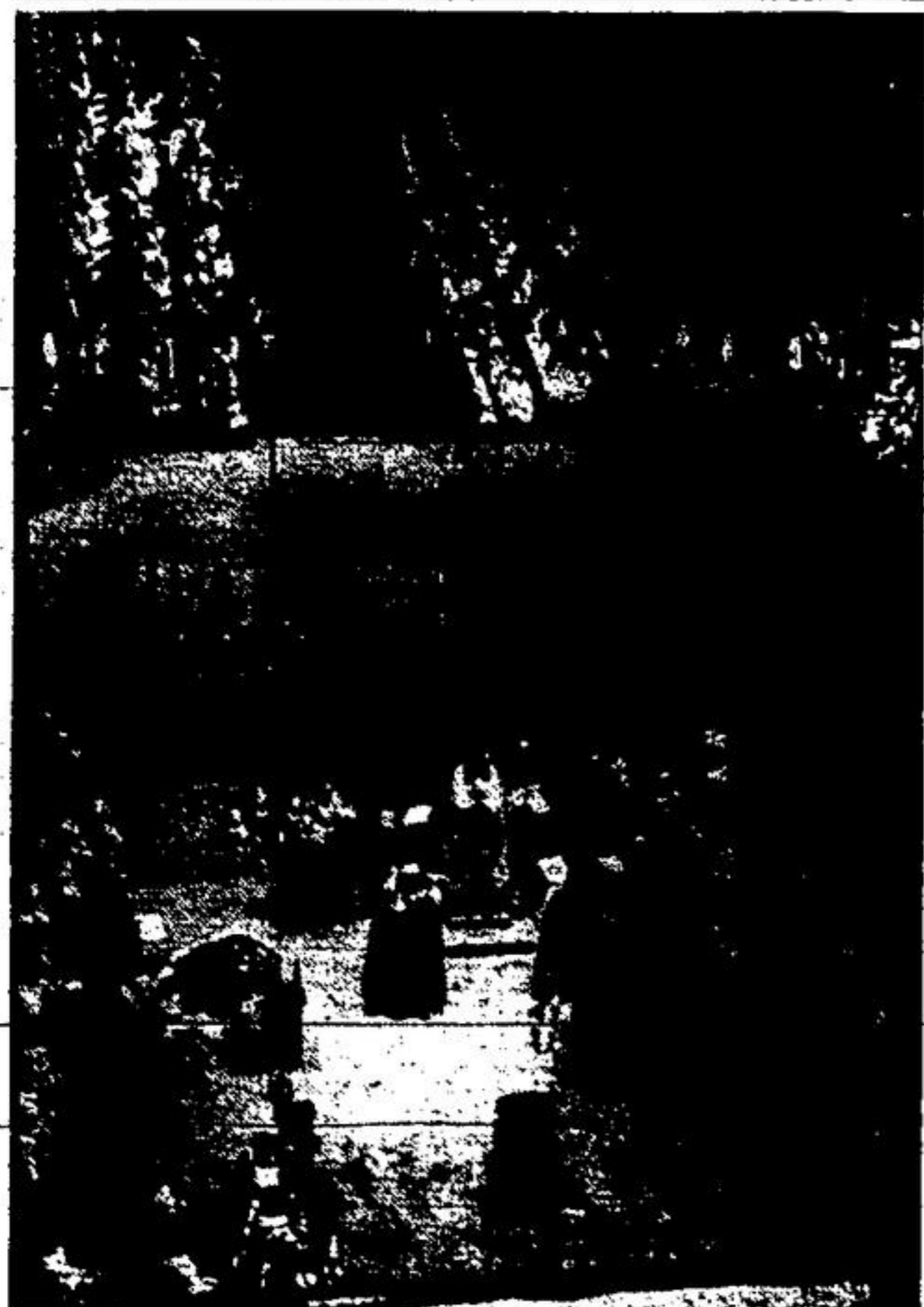
verbatim proceedings of the House of Commons and the House of Lords—to be read. There will be appeals from municipalities, charities and public institutions of all kinds, hoping that she can grace their proceedings.

At lunch there is usually some important visitor. Afterwards there may be public duties, often necessitating a long journey by train. There may be discussions with the Keeper of the Privy Purse on the details of management of the royal estates. There are details of the Coronation to discuss with the Earl Marshal of England; perhaps the new designs for postage stamps or the new coinage will have to be examined, or the arrangements for some state function approved.

Heavy Correspondence

Correspondence is often very heavy, and Buckingham Palace has, naturally enough, its own post office. And on special occasions, such as the death of King George VI, the incoming mail can be enormous; on that occasion over 15,000 letters and telegrams were received in a single day.

The duties of a monarch have increased immensely during the last 50 years, mainly because participation in public life as distinct from constitutional and ceremonial life, has grown as civilization has become more complex. Remembering the strain to which the late King was subject, and with an uneasy feeling that his uncomplaining acceptance of heavy burdens may have blinded us to the fact that they were too heavy, even for a robust man, hopes have been expressed that moderation will be



Scene in Westminster Abbey during the Coronation of King George VI. This will be re-enacted when Queen Elizabeth II is crowned June 2nd.