

Colourful Coronation Ceremony

Every Detail Of Stately Ritual Has Its Special Significance

No ceremony in the world is so colourful, so complex and so impressive as the crowning of an English Sovereign. The sense of occasion inspired by the presence of the most distinguished people in the world; the majesty of Westminster Abbey itself, its grey stones steeped in the history of centuries; the brilliant robes and uniforms; tiaras, medals and orders scintillating in the mellow light . . . the stately ritual, the prayers, the music and singing . . . it is a symphony in sight and sound.

But it is, of course, very much more than that. It is a service of dedication, evolved over a thousand years. It is rich in symbolism—meanings conveyed by signs, gestures, rituals and objects. And there are innumerable survivals from the ceremonies of long ago.

Queen "Recognized"

One of the oldest is probably the ceremony of "recognition", a direct survival of the old custom, in Anglo-Saxon times, of the election of kings by the bishops and people. As the royal procession moves up the Church and the national anthem is played, the Queen reaches a raised dais between the high altar and the choir. The Archbishop of Canterbury moves, together with the Lord Chancellor, Lord Great Chamberlain, Lord High Constable and the Earl Marshal, to first one side of the stage and then another, so that the waiting throng are addressed from every direction. Then he makes his declaration and appeal:

"Sirs, I here present unto you Queen Elizabeth, the undoubted Queen of this Realm: Wherefore, all you who are come this day to do your homage and service, are you willing to do the same?"

Dramatic Moment

While these words are spoken, the Queen stands by the chair and, turning shows herself to the congregation, in all four directions. This is a dramatic moment, and one that seldom fails to bring a lump to the throat of a visiting spectator, for the concourse signify their approval with the fervent cry of GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!

The cheers ring out, the trumpets blare, and we are taken back over fifteen hundred years, when kings were elected by the spoken votes of their people.

Now the real ceremony of Coronation begins, for when the bishops and choir have sung the Litany, Holy Communion is celebrated.

Solemn Oath

The Coronation Oath, which is next administered, has changed in wording over the centuries. In its earliest form the king has three main duties: to maintain the peace of the Church, and civil peace, to prevent wrong-doing and to uphold justice with mercy. "Their office", wrote Professor Trevelyan, "was sacred, a commission from God, not to do their own pleasure but to enforce the law, by and through which they reigned. In the past there has been dis-

pute as to whether the oath bound the king to accept future parliamentary legislation. Charles the First was disabused by losing his head, James the Second, who wanted to make laws as well as uphold them, was driven from his throne by the revolution of 1688. When William and Mary were welcomed by parliament as joint sovereigns, a new oath was worded, and except for minor changes has remained substantially the same ever since.

Amendments Necessary

The Union with Scotland, the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland and the changing constitutional status of the member countries of the Commonwealth have, of course, necessitated amendments. Because of constitutional changes which have taken place since the Coronation of King George VI, some alterations will probably have to be made in the wording of the oath taken by the new Queen. If the oath follows the form observed at the last Coronation, the Archbishop of Canterbury will demand of the Queen:

Archbishop: Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the peoples of Great Britain, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Union of South Africa . . . according to their respective laws and customs?

The Queen: I solemnly promise so to do.

Archbishop: Will you to your power cause Law and Justice, in Mercy, to be executed in all your judgements?

The Queen: I will.

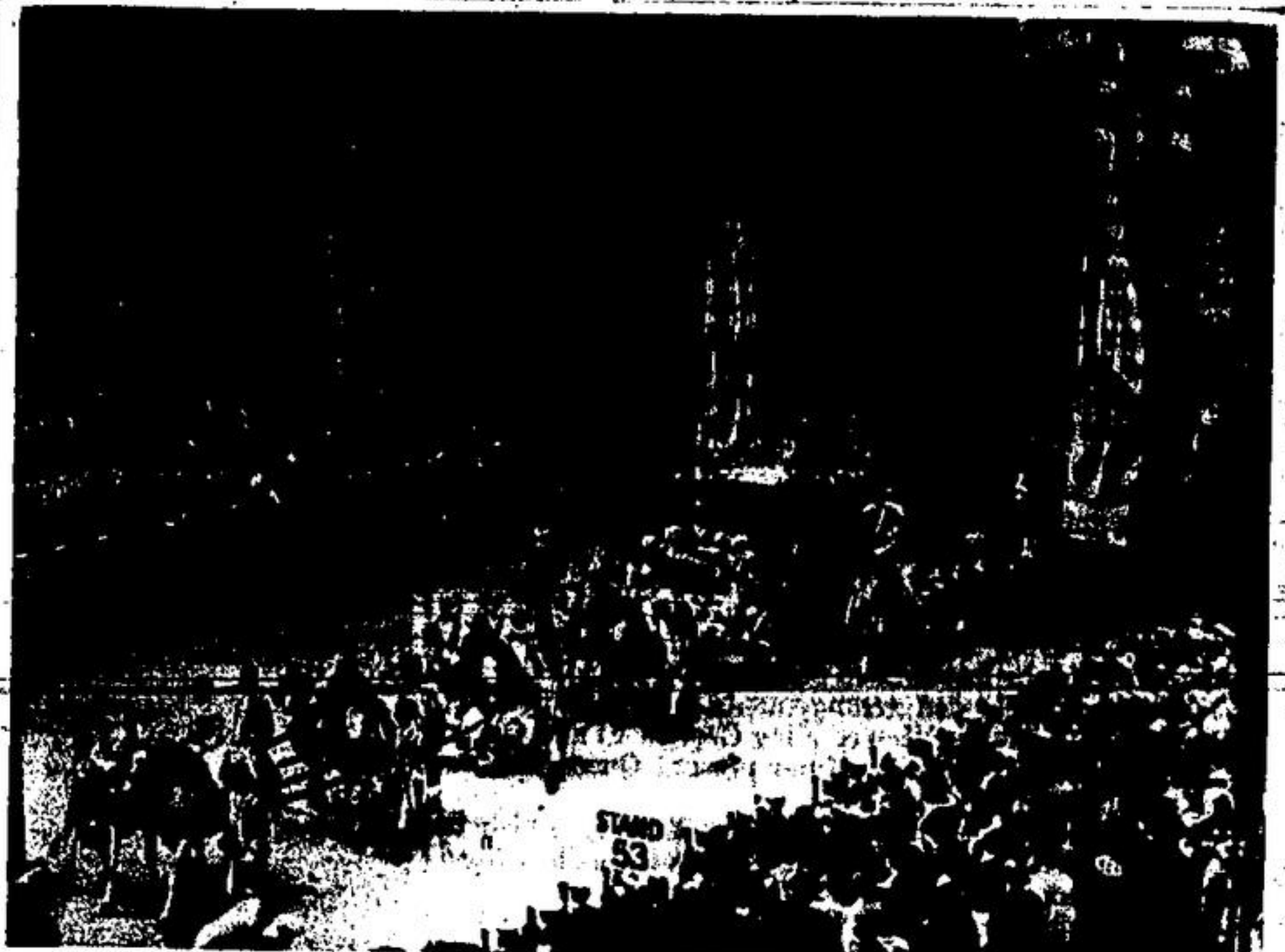
She next promises to maintain the "Protestant Reformed Religion" established by law and preserve the settlement of the Church of England. Next follows the most solemn moment of the Coronation Service—the anointing. The choir sings the hymn "Veni, Creator Spiritus", after which the Archbishop, in a prayer, will say:

"O Lord, Holy Father, who by anointing with oil didst of old make and consecrate kings, priests and prophets . . . Bless and sanctify thy chosen servant ELIZABETH, who by our office and ministry is now to be anointed with this Oil, and consecrated Queen of this Realm."

Anointing Ceremony

The Queen will discard her outer robes and seat herself in the ancient Coronation Chair, containing the Stone Stone, on which kings were crowned over eight hundred years ago. The chair itself was finished in 1301, and has been used continually ever since. The holy Oil is poured into a silver-gilt spoon from the ampulla, a gold vessel shaped like an eagle, and the Queen will be anointed on the head, the breast and the palms of both hands by the Archbishop. "As Solomon was anointed king by Zadok . . . so be you anointed, blessed and consecrated Queen over this people . . ."

The significance of these words is that by the ceremony of anointing, evidence was given of the Di-



As the procession will appear to Coronation visitors, passing under Admiralty Arch on the way to Westminster Abbey. Above is pictured that of the late King George VI.

vine selection of the Kings of Israel; similarly, the sovereigns of Britain are blessed to their responsibility.

Symbolic of Power

Now come the emblems of temporal power. The golden spurs, emblems of chivalry, are removed from the altar by the Dean of Westminster and handed to the Lord Chamberlain, who touches Her Majesty's heels with them. The magnificent State Sword, made for £6,000 for the Coronation of George IV in 1821, is handed to the Queen by the Archbishop with the admonition to . . . do justice, stop the growth of iniquity, protect the holy Church of God, help and defend widows and orphans . . . At the head of the hilt is a huge diamond hedged in with rubies. The rest is heavily encrusted with diamonds, while the scabbard is pure gold.

This sword is girt about a king, but will be placed in the Queen's right hand. It is heavy, and will later be "redeemed" for 100 shillings after the Queen has placed it herself on the altar. (The point here is that at the moment of handing over to the sovereign the sword becomes the property of the Church, but is later recovered by the Keeper of the Jewel House from the Archbishop.)

Regal Ornaments

The emblems of royalty follow: the beautiful Imperial Robe in rich cloth-of-gold, embroidered in purple silk and enriched with coronets, eagles, Tudor roses and other emblems. Its shape is meant to symbolise the four corners of the world. The Royal Orb, a globe of solid gold six inches in diameter, surmounted by a diamond cross set in a large amethyst, is next handed to the Queen.

"And when you see this Orb set under the Cross", the Arch-

bishop says, "remember that the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer."

It is a symbol of the Faith she has sworn to defend.

The ring is next placed on the third finger of the Queen's right



British Travel Association Photo

The Ampulla in the form of a golden eagle with outspread wings; the Anointing Spoon, parts of which date from the 13th century; and St. George's bracelets. The bracelets, which are of solid gold, are not used in the Coronation ceremony.

hand. This is "the ensign of Queenly dignity, and of defence of the Catholic Faith". The scepter, one with a cross and another with a dove, follow.

Long-Awaited Moment

Now comes the moment for which the world has waited. The putting on of the Crown. It is not the most important feature of the Coronation, which is primarily a religious ceremony with the anointing as its most solemn moment. But the crowning is a climax. The placing of St. Edward's Crown on the Queen's head is the signal for tremendous cheering. The grey stones of the Abbey will echo to the simple but inspiring words: GOD SAVE THE QUEEN! The peers don their coronets, the trumpets sound, and at the Tower of London the ancient cannon boom their salute.

The Queen will then receive from the Archbishop the Bible, Chalice and Paten. Of the Bible, he will tell her that . . . it is the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is wisdom; this is the Royal Law. The Chalice and Paten, of pure gold, are the communion cup and plate used for Holy Communion.

The Coronation ceremony will be over. Princes and peers will pay homage. The stately procession will line up and leave, and a hush of expectancy will spread through the crowded streets outside, where the Queen's loyal subjects await to pay their own personal tribute to a young and lovely sovereign.

History Unfolds

Along Route Of Royal Procession Are Famous Buildings, Monuments

In her Coronation Progress Queen Elizabeth II will be seen by a vast concourse of people in the Mall—one of London's very few straight leafy avenues—in five of its famous streets—Whitehall, Pall Mall, St. James's Street, Piccadilly and Regent Street—and in others, in Trafalgar Square and Hyde Park and on the Embankment. The Procession will not go within a mile of the City of London (as the once walled city, over which the Lord Mayor presides, St. Paul's Cathedral arises, and the Bank of England broods, is still called), nor will it pass near the hall of the London County Council, the centre of London government. But the Houses of Parliament will be toweringly in the picture.

Years Alter Route

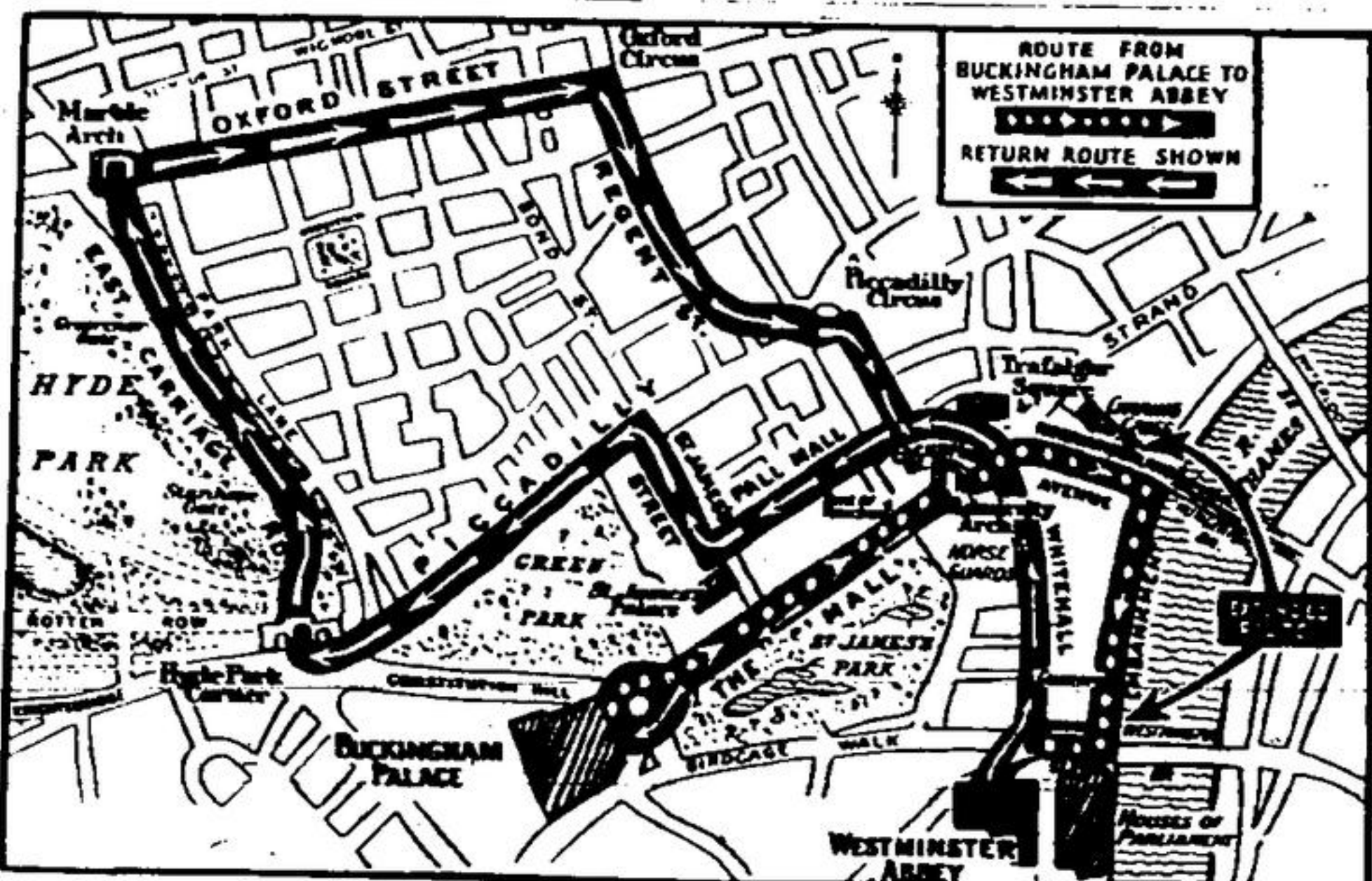
Much of the route of the Procession has a changed look to those who can remember the Coronation of Edward VII. Buckingham Palace itself in 1912 had its face lifted from plaster to Portland stone, the Victoria Memorial with the great queen sitting high over marble fountains, seeming on occasions such as this to review the comings and goings of her descendants, was erected in King Edward's time, and the new Mall with the pillars and statuary, the gift of the Commonwealth, were all part of the plan for a processional approach to the

Palace carried out in the reigns of Edward VII and George V. The Quadriga on Wellington Arch at Hyde Park Corner—it symbolises Peace and was just there when Zeppelins dropped bombs on London in World War I and the Admiralty Arch at the east end of the Mall were part of the same scheme. In World War II bombs fell on the royal apartments of the Palace; Whitehall was unscarred, but the House of Commons was destroyed (now rebuilt) and the Abbey damaged.

London's Best Statue

The Procession in the Mall passes Marlborough House, built by the founder of the Churchill greatness and now the home of the Queen Mother, passed Henry VIII's St. James's Palace where Charles II, Queen Anne, James II and George IV were born and Queen Victoria married; passes brightly painted Carlton House Terrace where Palmerston, Gladstone and Curzon lived; and on to Trafalgar Square. There Nelson on his column has long presided over the open-air meetings of every conceivable party and crowd. At the top of the Square in front of the National Gallery are Grinling Gibbons's statue of James II and Houdon's of George Washington. At Charing Cross is London's best statue, Le Sueur's Charles I. Then

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Route of the Coronation procession. The Processional route will leave Buckingham Palace on the way to Westminster Abbey, and will proceed via Trafalgar Square, Northumberland Avenue, Victoria Embankment, Bridge Street, Parliament Square, Broad Sanctuary, to the annex at the West entrance of the Abbey. The return route will be by way of

Whitehall, Cockspur Street, Pall Mall, St. James's Street, Piccadilly, Hyde Park Corner, East Carriage Road, Marble Arch, Oxford Street, Regent Street, Piccadilly Circus, Haymarket to Trafalgar Square and through Admiralty Arch into the Mall and then to Buckingham Palace.