

Early Life Of Gracious Princess Taught Responsibilities Dramatic Turn Of Events Resulted In Accession To Throne

In the dim, early hours of April 21, 1926, a girl was born to the gracious young Duchess of York, and the World rejoiced. Few suspected that the baby Princess—baptized Elizabeth Alexandra Mary—would ever become the second Elizabeth to sit on England's throne.

Nobody at that time even though it probable that the Duke of York would ever become King. King George V, strong, soldierly and upright, gave promise of living for many years to come. His eldest son Edward, Prince of Wales, was next in line of succession and was immensely popular. The shy, retiring Albert, Duke of York, was only second in the line of succession.

Yet there were some who realized that there was a possibility that Elizabeth might some day become Queen, although they could hardly have foreseen the dramatic turn of events which was to lead to her succession.

The Princess's initiation into the limitations of Royal life began when she was only eight months old; her mother and father had to be separated from her for six months while they went to Australia to inaugurate the new capital.

Her early years were spent at 145 Piccadilly, into which her parents moved shortly after their arrival home. It was a happy environment—spacious rooms, quiet but elegant period furniture; a courtyard just large enough to shut out the noise of the Piccadilly traffic; a small garden at the back facing directly the undulating greensward of Hyde Park.

When learning to talk, the Princess mispronounced her name "Lilibet", a mistake which sounded so attractive that it was at once adopted and retained.

Lilibet was a great favorite with her grandparents and especially with her grandfather, King George V. She was a lovely child, but it was her odd mixture of impish candor and seriousness which endeared her to him. He laughingly told her—with truth—that she was the only person in the world ever to order him to "shut the door."

When she was four, her sister Margaret was born, and thereafter they were inseparable. Most of her early childhood years were spent in the country, at one of the family houses—at historic Glamis Castle, complete with its ghost, or the Royal Lodge at Windsor.

Private Tutoring

Lilibet's upbringing was strict but not repressive. She was taught at home, because a princess at school attracts too much attention. Her mother taught her to read and private tutors took over, teaching her French and German by the time she was 10, in addition to music, history and other subjects. She had her first piano lesson at the age of four, disliked geography but was fascinated by history in which, had she chosen, she could have earned an honours degree.

And underlying it all—discipline. She saw examples everywhere around her. She saw her parents cope with the never-ceasing round of duties, the endless correspondence, the constant callers. There were charities to be encouraged, new projects to be inspected, important visitors to entertain from all parts of the world. These crushing demands she saw accepted with grace, good humour and genuine interest. Duty came first; self last.

Her grandmother, Queen Mary, once gave her a salutary lesson in this. Girlishly, she enjoyed being

photographed, being cheered by waiting crowds and having kisses blown at her. On her visit to Olympia with her grandmother she said, "Won't the people be pleased to see me when we leave?" Lilibet was packed straight off home with a nurse—by a side door, where the crowds couldn't see her.

Move To Buckingham Palace

Then, at the age of 10, the Princess' childhood was virtually ended. Grandfather had died. The abdication of King Edward VIII shook the English-speaking world. Her father became King George VI.

From that day her upbringing was even more exacting. She moved with her family to Buckingham Palace. Direct in line of succession, she was trained in all she must know—the relations between various Commonwealth governments and the home country; the constitutional status of a King; the workings of the immensely complicated royal household.

Calmly and good-humouredly she took it all in her stride. She found time for plenty of reading, enjoying the works of E. M. Forester, Alexander Woolcott, H. G. Wells and Somerset Maugham. She developed musical preferences, playing Beethoven's Fifth Symphony whenever she could. Yet until 1945 she had never been to a cinema, ridden on a bus or been in a subway train.

Served With A.T.S.

In March, 1945, the Princess was gazetted honorary second subaltern in the A.T.S. (Auxiliary Territorial Service). By the age of 18 she was appointed a Councillor of State during the King's absence in the field of battle. She was an efficient driver in the war and had insisted on joining the A.T.S., although her father wondered at the



—British Travel Association photo

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

wisdom of the heir to the throne exposing herself to the risks of active service.

In the Forces they found the Princess cool, cheerful and willing.

Gradually, however, she emerged as a public figure. Her broadcast to the children of the Empire during the Battle of Britain, so clear and spirited, began it all.

Royal Duties

A visit to Northern Ireland to launch a ship; the proclamation of peace; the tremendous ovation given to her family outside Buckingham Palace; her first journey outside the British Isles, with her parents on their visit to South Africa and Rhodesia—and back to London and romance. Rumor had long linked her name with Prince Philip of Greece. The little golden-haired girl was now in the full bloom of womanhood; Philip, the handsome sailor whom she had known since they were children, shared her love of music, interests and hobbies. She made her choice, it was a love match and her parents gave it their blessing. The nation rejoiced.

She had enjoyed a short era of adult freedom: theatres and cinemas, dances and parties. Now her

public duties multiplied and were added to the cares of a home. But everyone who saw her during her trip to Canada, representing her father at the Trooping of the Colour in 1951 and taking the salute, knew that she had achieved full stature. Here, we knew, was somebody who could be Queen.

Then, tragically, His Majesty King George VI succumbed to the intolerable burdens he had endured without complaint for his people's good. For Lilibet the freedom of childhood was now far behind, for "with one voice and Consent of Tongue and Heart" the "High and Mighty Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary" was proclaimed Queen Elizabeth the Second.

The Queen's Busy Day

One Of The World's Busiest People In Role Of Monarch, Wife, Mother

By any computation the present Queen is one of the—if not actually the busiest—women in the world.

It could be said that all lines of communication in an Empire covering nearly a quarter of the world's land surface meet at a central point known as Buckingham Palace. The Queen is not only the personification of the State. In law she is the supreme authority, an integral part of the legislature. This makes her the head of the judiciary in England and Wales, and Scotland, head of the Army, Navy and Air Force and the sole representative of the nation in international affairs.

Of course, in process of history, many of these prerogatives have become restricted. Today the Queen acts on the advice of her ministers—advice which she cannot constitutionally ignore. And the supreme legislative authority is the House of Commons and the House of Lords, which between them represent all elements of the nation.

But this does not mean that the Queen's duties are nominal; far from it. They are onerous and they are important. The Queen reigns, if she does not rule. She summons, prorogues and dissolves Parliament; she opens the new session with a speech from the throne; a Bill which has been passed by both legislative Houses requires her consent before it becomes law. The jurisdictions of the Courts derive from her; she makes appointments of peerages, knight-hoods and suchlike honours; as head of the established Church of England she is concerned with appointments within it. Her approval is required for a minister to assume office or a Cabinet to be formed.

Add to these duties of the Queen the manifold demands of participation in the ceremonial and public life of the nation, and one sees, to quote Mrs. Roosevelt, how heavy a burden lies on such young shoulders.

The Queen's diary is invariably crowded. Britain's new Ambassador to Turkey must be received before departing

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Britons To See Religious Play In Abbey

Westminster Abbey, for the first time in history, will be the scene of a religious play shortly after the Coronation. First performance is June 15. This will be the first chance for the public to see the Abbey in its Coronation setting.

Composer Sir Wm. Walton Writes Coronation March

Orb and Sceptre is the title of a march which the Arts Council of Great Britain has commissioned from the composer, Sir William Walton, in honour of the Coronation. The march will be played for the first time on Coronation Day—June 2—in the program of music to be performed in Westminster Abbey, London, before the ceremony begins. The first public concert performance will be given in the Royal Festival Hall on June 7, by the London Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Sir John Barbirolli.

Acorns From Royal Oaks For Northern Ireland

In connection with Northern Ireland's plans for celebrating the Coronation, a novel scheme has been launched by the Ulster Society for the Preservation of the Countryside. Fifteen thousand acorns will be obtained from the royal oak trees in Windsor Great Park, England, and planted throughout Northern Ireland. Most of the acorns will be distributed through the schools and remainder will be issued to private individuals.

The spirit of Coronation Year is reflected in the new colours issued for the spring and summer of 1953 by the British Colour Council (13, Portman Square, London, W.1). The colours are for knitwear, wool, silk and rayon, cotton and leather. The 33 colours on the wool card have been arranged to give alternative suggestions for harmonizing and contrasting colours. There are 36 colours for silk and rayon, 22 for cotton, and 18 for leather.



CORONATION OF HER MAJESTY
QUEEN ELIZABETH II

By Command of The Queen
the Earl Marshal is directed to invite

to be present at the Abbey Church of
Westminster on the 2nd day of June 1953

W. Norfolk
Earl Marshal