

Queen Mother's Stoical Conduct Greatly Strengthened Monarchy

Before the departure of the 1st Battalion, the Black Watch, for active service in Korea, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother inspected and addressed the Battalion at Crail Camp, Fife. It was May, 1952, less than four months after the loss of her husband, King George VI, but she had insisted on bidding Godspeed to the famous Battalion of which she is Colonel-in-Chief.

The men on parade saw the same gracious lady who had come on three previous occasions when they had left to take up arms in a distant land. Here was the same poise, the same quiet, open smile, the same encouragement and interest in the regiment; no hint of the almost intolerable strain she had undergone. Here was the same charming lady who was able, during the war, to visit Londoners with her husband to comfort them after the air raids, cool and unruffled after a deliberate bombing of Buckingham Palace which had almost cost their lives.

Ten days later the Queen Mother, with her daughter Princess Margaret, made a four-hour flight in a de Havilland Comet jet airliner, travelling a distance of 1,850 miles and flying over France, Switzerland and Italy. Much of the flight was at a height of 40,000 feet at a speed of 500 miles an hour. During the flight the Queen Mother took over the controls as first pilot.

Her Majesty the Queen Mother was born on August 4th, 1900. Her father was the late Earl of Strathmore, who died in 1944. Her mother, Cecilia, died just before the war at the age of 76. Most of Her Majesty's early days were spent at Glamis.

Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, as a young woman, was petite, full of vitality and of quite extraordinary beauty—a very Scottish type of beauty with her bright blue eyes, splendid complexion, jet black hair and easy, aristocratic carriage. A lively interest in everything about her and a frank, friendly manner were the main features of her temperament.

Met Young Duke

She had met the man who was to become her husband, when he was a boy of six, at a children's party. He was a frail boy, and before he became Duke of York his strength had been over-taxed in the Navy and the Royal Air Force. As a youth, he was shy, kindly, religious and keen, but with little appetite for public life. He was afflicted with a defect of speech which caused him embarrassment and frustration. He proposed three times before Lady Bowes-Lyon was able to accept his hand, but from the outset their marriage, which took place at Westminster Abbey on April 26, 1923, was supremely happy.

Given Royal Title

Their marriage was a precedent insofar as she was not of royal birth, though her family is, of course, of very ancient lineage. In fact she has royal blood in her veins, dating back to the time when Sir John Lyon of Glamis married Princess Jean, daughter of King Robert II, in 1377. At the wedding breakfast King George V conferred upon the Duchess of York the dignity and title of Royal Highness.

The royal couple spent their honeymoon at a beautiful country house in Dorking, Surrey, which once belonged to the playwright Sheridan. She was now a public figure, and at 22 was still as sweet and sedate as the villagers at Glamis and St. Paul's Walden Bury in Hertfordshire (a friendly home where she had spent so much time with her brothers and sisters) always remembered her.

War Blighted Happiness

By this time her life hadn't been altogether care-free. The First World War had blighted her happiness by the death of her brother Fergus, killed at Loos, and by the sufferings of Michael, at first reported killed but in fact a prisoner. But in marriage she found a perfect outlet for her genius as a mother and head of a family. The birth of a daughter, Elizabeth, on April 21, 1926, saw her radiantly happy.

Travelled Widely

Even as Duchess of York, however, and without there seeming any chance that her husband would ever be King, the round of public duties was onerous enough. The Duke and Duchess visited Kenya Colony and Uganda in 1924, returning via the Sudan and Egypt, and a year later visited Ulster. In 1927 they sailed in H.M.S. Renown for a tour of Australia and New Zealand. Two years later they visited Scandinavia. In all their travels they were noted as the ideally-matched couple; and her smile, that pleasant, genuine smile, became world-famous.

Her favorite pastime is reading, the works of Sir Walter Scott, J. M. Barrie and Jane Austen being her main preference. She likes flowers and dogs. She rode to

hounds occasionally but on the whole was not over-fond of sport, except, perhaps, angling.

The abdication and her husband's accession to the throne meant immense responsibilities for her. King George VI was not robust, and his Consort's support, as he so often remarked, meant a great deal to him. With loving patience she helped him to surmount his speech defect. The happy family life she was able to provide and the keen personal interest she showed in all his duties, did much to sustain him, especially through the war years.

Remained In London

That famous smile meant a lot during the war. Bombed-out families saw it when the Royal Couple appeared, as if by magic, after a heavy air-raid. Once in East London another air-raid started when they were out comforting the homeless, and they were forced to



—British Travel Association photo

The Queen Mother

take shelter; the people remember their calm behavior on that occasion and admired greatly their decision to stay in London during the blitz, despite the all-too-real hazards.

Those war years had been an immense strain on the King, and she knew it. She did her best in the years to follow to spare him physical fatigue, and throughout his illnesses she never once betrayed the anxiety she must of necessity have been feeling. But the nation knew, as it knows now, how much it owes to her patient

good humor and acceptance of duty.

So now, although her daughter is now Queen Elizabeth the Second, and although the Queen Mother, in terms of precedence, plays a secondary role, the Commonwealth's affection for her is undiminished. During her 29 years of marriage she strengthened still further the unifying influence of the British monarchy. The assurance of our new Queen, and the loyalty her name invokes are the fruits of the Queen Mother's example and service.

The Historic Court Of Claims

In the panelled offices of the Privy Council in Whitehall meets one of the strangest courts in the whole of the British Commonwealth. Nine of the highest dignitaries in the land, appointed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth to hear and determine claims of services to be performed at the Coronation, hold court.

The Court of Claims, as it is called, meets before every Coronation to hear and decide appeals from the numberless people who wish to perform some service in connection with the Coronation.

The Lord Chancellor, Lord Simonds, presided over the Court, and the other commissioners were Lord Woolton, Lord President of the Council; the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of England; Lord Clarendon, the Lord Chamberlain; Lord Jowitt, a former Lord Chancellor; Lord Porter, Lord of Appeal Ordinary; Lord Goddard, Lord Chief Justice of England; Lord MacDermott, Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland; Sir Raymond Evershed, Master of the Rolls.

The Court of Claims was constituted in 1377 because Richard II, who had only recently come to the throne, was a boy of ten, and the arrangements for his Coronation had to be arranged by his uncle, John of Gaunt. To him came people seeking permission to perform services at the ceremony. These rights included acting as a constable, being King's Champion (offering to fight any disloyal subject before the commencement of the coronation banquet) and carrying the canopy over the King during the service.

Dealt With Petitions

The Court of Claims last year made an early decision on the procedure by which it would judge claims. All were made by petition sent to the Court. Those who made claims did not have to appear in person unless summoned; some were represented by counsel, solicitors or agents, and if a previous claim at the last Coronation was admitted by the Court, and the same person made it again on this occasion, it was customary for the claimant to mention that.

Restricts Claims

If no counter claim was made by somebody else, a person granted

rights at the last Coronation, and after proving to the Court that he was in fact that person, was allowed his claim without further fuss.

Claims in the case of this Coronation related to the ceremony in Westminster Abbey only. Not since the crowning of George IV in 1821 have the banquet and state procession been features of the Coronation. The great banquet, which used to be held in Westminster Hall, was discontinued through the parsimony of William IV, who even wanted to abolish the Coronation ceremony itself!

This meant that the lord of the

400 Choristers Blend Voices For Coronation Service

A choir of 400 voices will take part in the Coronation Service in Westminster Abbey. The choral ensemble will consist of the complete choirs of Westminster Abbey, H.M. Chapels Royal, St. Paul's Cathedral and St. George's Chapel, Windsor, together with representatives of a number of other choirs, including some choristers from the Commonwealth. The orchestra of 60 players will be drawn from the leading English orchestras, and the fan fares will be played by the trumpeters of the Royal Military School of Music (Kneller Hall). The Director of Music for the service is Dr. William McKie, organist of Westminster Abbey.

Queen Elizabeth Gave Approval To Invitation Design

Design of the invitation card sent to guests who attend the Coronation ceremonies in Westminster Abbey were personally approved by the Queen. Miss Joan Hassall, R.E., well-known illustrator and wood-engraver, designed the card, and Mr. S. B. Stead, the official Artist and Scribe of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, was responsible for the lettering.

to appoint a deputy to carry out the duty on their joint behalf; and by two single claimants, Lord Hastings and Lord Churston. The last two were, eventually, granted the privilege.

One ancient tradition will certainly be retained, though in modified form, and that is the right of the Barons of the Cinque Ports (five famous ports which in the long ago rendered service to the Crown) to carry a canopy over the Queen. Centuries ago this fine canopy, in cloth-of-gold or purple silk and with a silver-gilt bell on each corner, and supported by four silver-covered staves, was borne aloft in the procession from Westminster Hall to the Abbey, and then inside the Abbey as far as the dais where the Coronation took place.

Barons, Lords Share Honor

At the last Coronation the Barons' claim was allowed, but could only be enacted within the Abbey, the procession being no longer a feature of the ceremonies. But as things turned out, canopies were only held over the King and Queen during the anointing, when the Barons, according to ancient custom, should be waiting at the foot of the dais. As a compromise the King's canopy was held by four Knights of the Garter and the Queen's by four peeresses. As the various standard bearers passed to their places they handed their staves to the Barons.

An Unusual Case

One curious precedent will be set during this Coronation. Many privileges are vested in the ownership of land, because centuries ago Kings granted tenures in return for personal services rendered. But in the course of time, land necessarily changes hands. For instance, the Duke of Newcastle, who is the Lord of the Manor of Worksop, Nottinghamshire, inherits the right to present the glove for the Queen's right hand at the Coronation. But the Duke has merged the manor into a limited liability company.

So for the first time in history a commercial concern requested the Court of Claims to grant it the privilege, asking that the Duke of Newcastle be permitted to act as the company's deputy.

Canadian Wrote Anthem

Among the music to be heard in Westminster Abbey during the Coronation service is an anthem, specially composed for the event by Dr. Healey Willan, distinguished Canadian composer.

Riverbank Concerts

Orchestral and band concerts will be held twice daily on the South Bank of London's river Thames during Coronation Week.