

Priceless Treasures

Crown Jewels Housed In Tower Of London

In the Wakefield Tower, a vaulted chamber of the Tower of London where Henry VI was imprisoned and murdered, are housed the Crown Jewels which will figure in the Coronation ceremony.

Visitors gaze spellbound at the lustrous gold orbs, the Royal Sceptre containing the largest cut diamond in the world and the fabulous Imperial State Crown which contains 2,783 diamonds, 277 pearls, 17 sapphires, 11 emeralds and 5 rubies.

These however are only a few of the items constituting the Royal Regalia, which include St. Edward's Staff, the Spoon and Ampulla, the Golden Spurs, the State Swords, the Orb, Ring, Sceptres and the Crowns.

Their value cannot be stated because obviously they would never be put up for sale, but certainly they are worth, intrinsically, many millions of dollars. A fine haul for a burglar, if he was rash enough to risk electrocution or decapitation—two penalties which, it is rumored, would have to be faced by a prospective thief.

The Crown Jewels have had their vicissitudes. Once the Regalia were housed in Westminster Abbey, but bits and pieces had a habit of disappearing. Following an attempt to rob the Abbey in the reign of Henry III the jewels were removed to the Tower of London, the Impregnable stronghold by the River Thames, which took nearly 200 years to build (between 1078 and 1272).

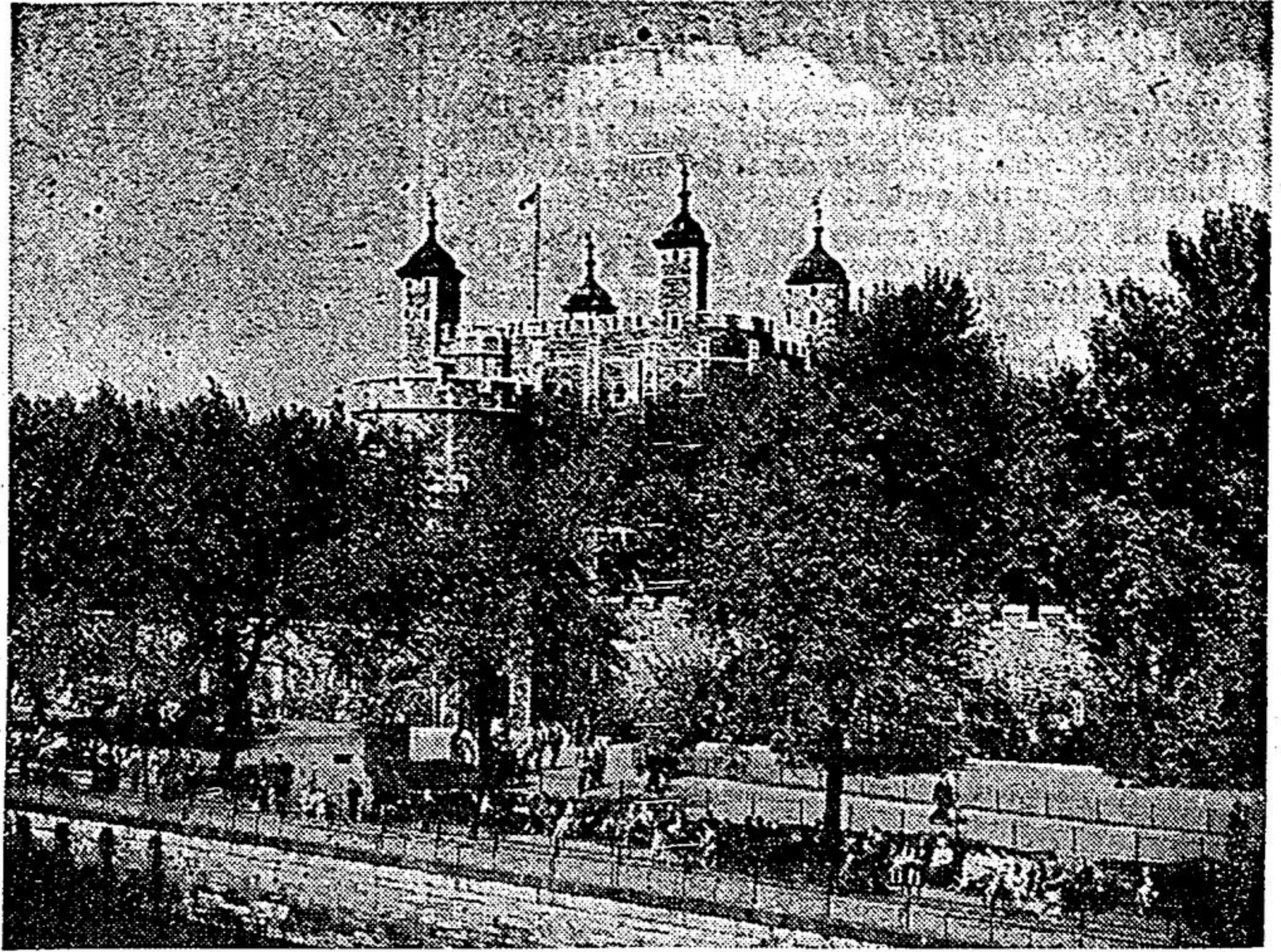
Thief Rewarded
Even at the Tower of London the jewels were still a temptation. An Irish adventurer, Colonel Blood, wheedled his way into the confidence of the assistant keeper, overpowered him with the help of two accomplices and nearly got away with the State Crown and Orb. The sequel was strange, for instead of being executed the thief was rewarded by King Charles II with a pension of £500 a year—a large sum in those days.

Most people assume that all the regalia are of great antiquity. This, however, is not the case. During the Commonwealth regime of Oliver Cromwell, from 1649 to

the Sovereign after the anointing, as an emblem of chivalry, but since the Coronation of Queen Anne it has been the custom of the Lord Great Chamberlain simply to touch the Sovereign's heels with them.

The four swords of State are among the most beautiful examples of workmanship in the world. Each sword has a separate symbolical significance. For instance the Jewelled Sword of State, which at State openings of Parliament is carried point upwards before the Sovereign, symbolises office.

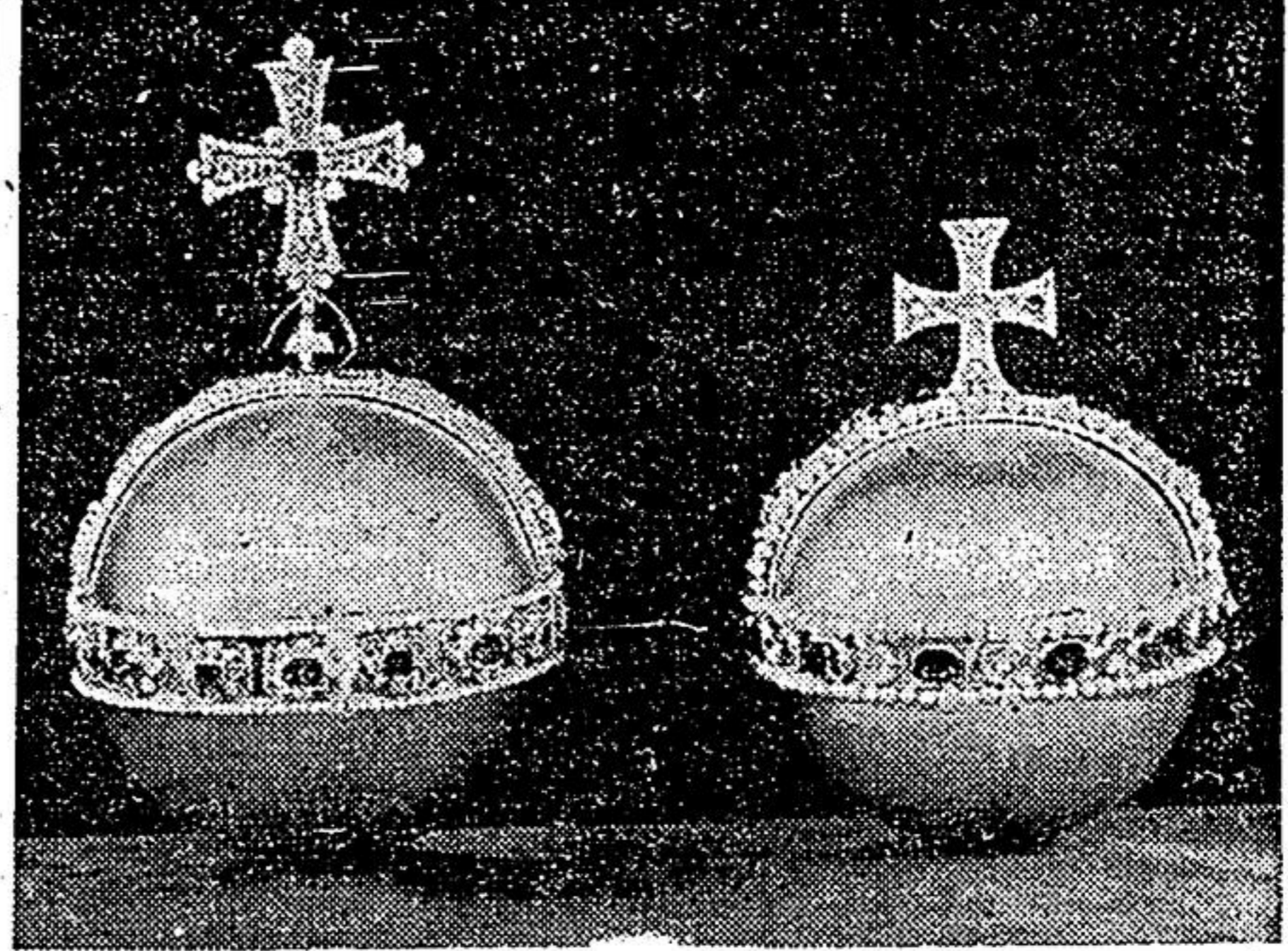
Gold-Encased Eword
This sword was made for the Coronation of George IV in 1821 at a cost of £6,000. Its gold scabbard is covered with emblems of the United Kingdom—the Rose of England, the Thistle of Scotland, the Shamrock of Ireland, beauti-



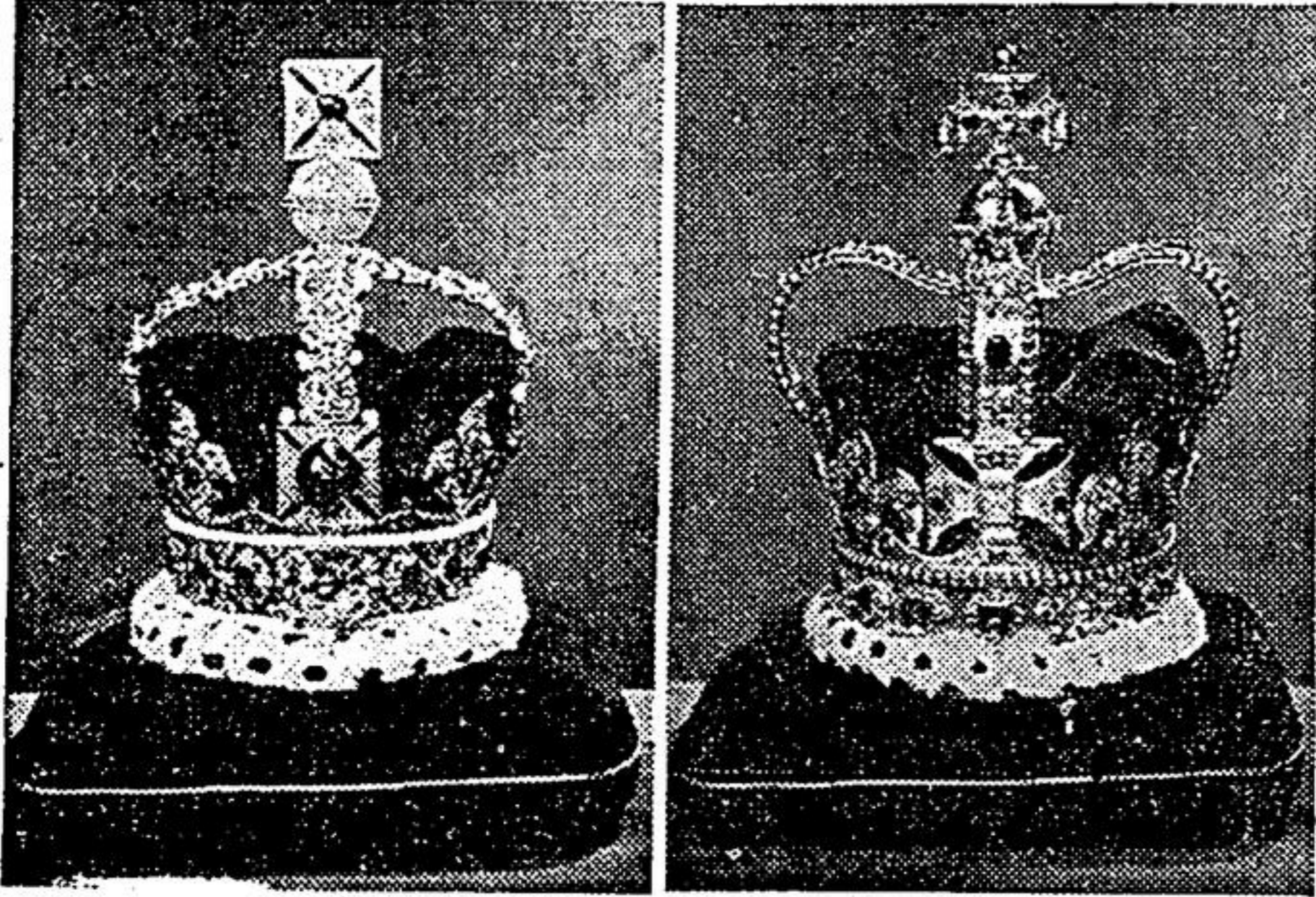
The Crown Jewels are housed in the Tower of London, the great medieval fortress on the banks of the Thames which has been the scene of more dramatic and stirring episodes in England's history than any other single building. —British Travel Association Photo

Justice," sometimes called the Baculum. As a symbol of sovereignty it is older than the Crown itself. As a work of art, it is of breathtaking beauty. Originally made for Charles II and since added to and improved, it is nearly three feet long and heavily studded with jewels, though the centre is of plain gold to form a grip. Its pear-shaped stone, the largest cut diamond in the world, weighs 516½ carats and was cut from the Cullinan diamond presented to King Edward VII by the Transvaal Government in 1907. The original diamond weighed 1½ pounds.

King Edward's Crown
The final act in the Coronation is the placing of King Edward's crown upon the Queen's head. It is so large and heavy, consisting of over 7 pounds in weight of pure gold and gems, that it is doubtful if the Queen will wear it for more than a few minutes before exchanging it for the lighter Imperial Crown of State. King George VI, with characteristic patience, suffered it for 30 minutes of the coronation service, though his father, King George V found



THE ORBS
There are two Orbs, one for the King and the other for the Queen. The Queen Orb owes its origin to Mary, wife of William of Orange, who insisted on a joint occupation of the Throne. The King's Orb is the larger, and is of polished gold studded with large pearls, rubies, sapphires and emeralds. It is placed in the King's right hand immediately after the King has put on the Royal Robe. —British Travel Association Photo



THE IMPERIAL STATE CROWN THE CROWN OF ENGLAND

After the Coronation Ceremony the Imperial State Crown is worn by the Reigning Monarch on all State occasions such as the Opening of Parliament. The existing Crown was made for Queen Victoria in 1838 and embodies many historical gems, the Black Prince's ruby, sapphire from the ring of Edward the Confessor, Queen Elizabeth's earrings and many other ancient gems. In front is the Second Star of Africa, weighing 309½ carats, cut from the great Cullinan Diamond. In all the Crown contains 2,783 diamonds, 277 pearls, 17 sapphires, 11 emeralds and five rubies. St. Edward's Crown, copied in the time of Charles II from the ancient Crown worn by Edward the Confessor, is the Crown of England and is the Crown with which all our Monarchs since that time have been crowned.

1660, the priceless relics which for six centuries had figured in the crowning of England's monarchs were broken down. On the restoration of the Monarchy in 1660 strenuous efforts were made to track down and re-assemble such pieces as had not been broken or defaced. A few gems were recovered undamaged, including the Black Prince's ruby and St. Edward's Sapphire, which adorn the Imperial Crown today.

Ancient Regalia
The only pieces of the present regalia which have featured in the crowning of English monarchs before 1660 are those two gems, Queen Elizabeth's pearl ear-drops and the Stuart Sapphire from the Crown of Charles II. The Spoon and Ampulla, which will be used in the Coronation ceremony for the solemn moment of anointing, date from the pre-reformation days.

The spoon has been used, it is thought, in Coronation ceremonies for nearly 800 years, for its workmanship is in the style of the late 12th or early 13th century. The Ampulla is a gold vessel shaped like an eagle, through whose beak the sacramental oil is poured into the spoon. The Archbishop of Canterbury will dip two fingers into this spoon and anoint the Sovereign with the sign of the Cross. The Golden Spurs, of solid chased gold, used to be buckled on to

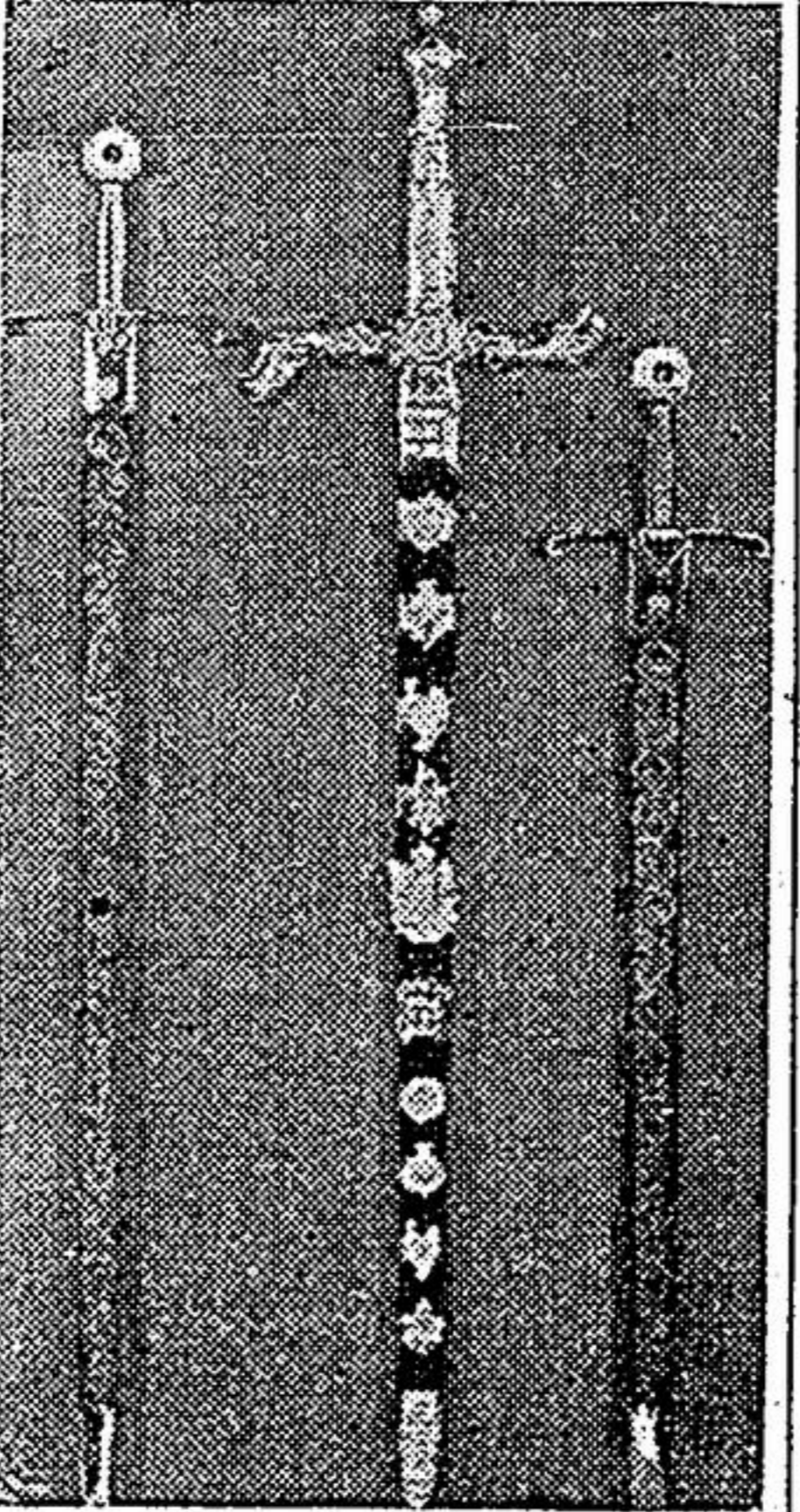
fully worked in rubies, diamonds and emeralds. The hilt and grip are thickly studded with diamonds and other gems.

Symbols of Justice
The second and third swords represent spiritual and temporal justice and together with the Curtana, which has a broken-off point and symbolises mercy, are carried on the ceremony before the Sovereign. It has been the custom to carry three swords of this type ever since the time of Richard I in 1189.

The Orb of State, delivered into the Queen's hands during the Coronation, represents independent sovereignty under the cross. The Orb used today was made for King Charles II, and consists of a globe of gold heavily encrusted with gems. The Archbishop, placing it in the Queen's right hand, will remind her of the significance of the cross surmounting it: "When you see this Orb . . . remember that the whole world is subject to the power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer."

Coronation Ring
When the Orb has been handed over, the Keeper of the Jewel House then hands the coronation Ring to the Archbishop, who slips it on to the third finger of the Sovereign's right hand.

Next comes the Sceptre, the "Ensign of Kingly Power and



THE THREE STATE SWORDS

The Sword of State (in the centre) is a two-handed sword, the length of blade being 32 inches. The handle is of gilt metal, the cross-pieces representing the lion and the unicorn. The scabbard is decorated with diamonds, rubies and emeralds in designs of the Rose, the Thistle and the Shamrock. At the Coronation the Peer who carries the Sword of State delivers it up to the Lord Chamberlain who, in exchange, gives him the Jewelled Sword. The second sword is known as the Sword of Justice to the Spirituality, and the third sword as the Sword of Justice to the Temporality.

a few minutes quite enough. King Edward VII, who was in a poor state of health at the time of his coronation, was actually crowned with the lighter version and did not wear the heavy Crown at all.

Murdered For Jewel
The great glowing ruby in the larger crown has a bloody and interesting history. Two inches by one and a half in size, in 1367 it was owned by a King of Granada in Spain who was murdered by a neighbouring prince who wanted to possess the stone. In turn he gave it to the Black Prince, who wore it in battle. Later, it saw the tumult and slaughter of Agincourt when carried by Henry V, and the carnage of Bosworth field, when carried by Richard III.

When Richard was killed the crown was found in a bush. Cromwell's vandals, when breaking up the Crown jewels, valued this fabulous gem at a mere £4. How it was recovered after the restoration of the Monarchy in 1660 it is not known, but even then its adventures were not at an end. For when Colonel Blood tried to steal the Crown jewels the ruby fell from its setting and was found in the pocket of one of his accomplices.

Stolen Gem Returned
The sapphire in the cross surmounting the Crown is said to have come from the ring worn by Edward the Confessor at his coronation in 1042, which would make it over 900 years old. It was buried with him in Westminster Abbey, lost when his tomb was desecrated and, in a mysterious way, found its way back to the Royal Regalia. Perhaps a priest who connived at its theft, and had hidden it, was later stricken with remorse and restored it to its proper place.



—British Travel Association Photo
The head of the Royal Sceptre, containing the Great Star of Africa, cut from the Cullinan Diamond.