

*The Story of*  
**OUR QUEEN**



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## **THE LITTLE PRINCESS**

Once upon a time, not so very long ago, a little Princess was born. She lay in her beautiful cot, a small golden-haired baby, her big blue eyes watching the sunbeams that shone through the window.

The King of her country came to see her, a kindly, bearded man. The stately Queen came too, beautiful Queen Mary, and together they bent over the blue-eyed child.

The little Princess was their grand-daughter, the child of their second son, George, and of his lovely wife, Elizabeth. What should they call her ?

" She shall be called Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor," said her parents. But the little Princess could not say such a long name as Elizabeth at first, and called herself Lilibet. It was a lovely pet name for the small, merry-eyed girl.



Her people loved their little princess. She seemed a " fairy princess " to them and they watched in delight when she was taken in her pram into the London parks. Sometimes she sat on her nurse's knee, riding in the carriage sent to bring her on a visit to the palace. Then she would wave her hand to the crowds, and they would wave back to the small girl with the curly head.

When she was hardly more than a baby her father and mother had to go to visit the great peoples of two far-off countries, Australia and New Zealand. Who would take care of their small daughter when they were so far away ?

Her two grandmothers would ! All grannies love to look after their grand-children, and Queen Mary and her other grandmother, the Countess of Strathmore, were glad to watch over the tiny girl.

The Queen showed the Princess a photograph of her mother. " Here is your Mummy's picture," she said. And the little Elizabeth reached out her hands for it, and said " Mummy ! " Each day that her mother was away the Queen brought her her mother's picture so that the little girl should not forget.

Now one day a great piece of news came to Elizabeth. " You have a little sister ! Her name is Margaret Rose."

The Princess was then four years old, and she listened in delight. Now she would not be an only child any longer ! A tiny sister ! Her very own sister, who would soon play with her, talk to her, and go out with her.

Her heart was filled with joy and love. Where was her new sister ? When could she see her ? What could she take to her ?



" She shall have some of my toys ! " said the small Elizabeth, and she set about collecting a whole armful. How wonderful to have a sister called Margaret Rose—to have another Princess to share her nursery, her toys, her books. It was the biggest and the best piece of news she had ever had in her short life.



## **CHILDHOOD DAYS**

The two little princesses grew up bonny, merry and good-hearted. One of the treats they loved best was going to see " Grandpa King " as they called King George V. They loved going out with their grandmother, too, for Queen Mary could tell them so many interesting things.

They could see the grey walls of Buckingham Palace from their nursery windows as they played together. \* That's where Grandpa King lives," they said. " Soon we will go to see him again."

When they played in their garden the Londoners watched them through the railings. " Look ! " said the watching people, " there are our little princesses ! Aren't they lovely ? "





Their mother was sometimes sad when she saw so many crowds watching her two small girls. She wanted them to be brought up in the same natural, unspoilt way that you are. Too much admiration and interest might spoil the little girls she loved so much.

She and "Alia," the children's chief nurse, would not let them be spoiled. "Alia" had been their mother's own nurse in her childhood, and, if the two princesses could be trained up to be as good and as kind as their mother, they would indeed be fine children.

They learnt not only the big things of life—kindliness, honesty, truthfulness, courage—but the smaller things as well. "Alia" insisted on tidiness and punctuality, two habits of great help to the princesses later on. They both had to clear up and put away their own toys and clothes just as you have to do.

One of the possessions the royal children loved best of all was their little "pretend" house. It was a tiny, but real house, beautifully built, which was given to Princess Elizabeth when she was six years old by the generous-hearted people of Wales.

There it stood in the garden of Windsor Castle, so small that surely the fairy-folk must have delighted to visit it at night! A grown-up could only squeeze through the little front door—but the two girls could get in easily. They loved their "Little House," and had many many games in it.

When they were old enough their mother began to teach the little girls many things. She told them stories from the Bible, and she taught them that most important thing—how to pray. She played the piano to them and sang songs just as many other mothers do for their children. She read them stories and played games with them. No wonder they loved being with her.

Elizabeth learnt to read sitting beside her mother's knee. She learnt other things, too, from her gracious mother—she learnt to take notice of other people's feelings, she was trained in such things as shaking hands with everyone, never leaving anyone out, sensing if people were hurt or troubled ; and always, always she must be patient and interested, because one day she would be a very important person, and her manners and behaviour must be perfect.







The two Princesses did lessons together when Margaret was old enough. They did not go to school but had a governess, whom they called "Crawfie" because her name was Crawford. They began lessons at half-past nine, and learnt much the same things as you do.

But, as you can imagine, a history lesson was always specially interesting and exciting to them. So very many famous names in history belonged to their own ancestors. There were pages and pages about their wonderful great-great-grandmother, Queen Victoria— and there had even been a great queen who bore the same name as the little Elizabeth.

Did they have pocket-money, as you do? Yes! For years they had only one shilling each week. As time went on it rose to five shillings a week, but not more. They managed to save up when they wanted to, just as all children do. So, you see, they did many of the things you love to do, and were happy, natural and unspoilt all through their childhood.



## HAPPY TIMES

The little princesses loved animals. They had two dogs of their own, Dookie and Jane. They were Corgis, a breed of old Welsh sheep-dogs. They loved to go and visit their father's kennels, and see the Labradors and Collies that he bred. They liked playing with puppies and they loved riding their ponies.

Elizabeth especially was fond of horses and, like so many girls nowadays, learnt a great deal about them. She is a fine horsewoman—but perhaps the fastest horses she ever had were a "pretend" team that she drove at night when she was in bed. She took the long cord off her dressing-gown, tied it to the foot of her bed, and with bounces and clicks drove her imaginary team of horses for miles and miles !

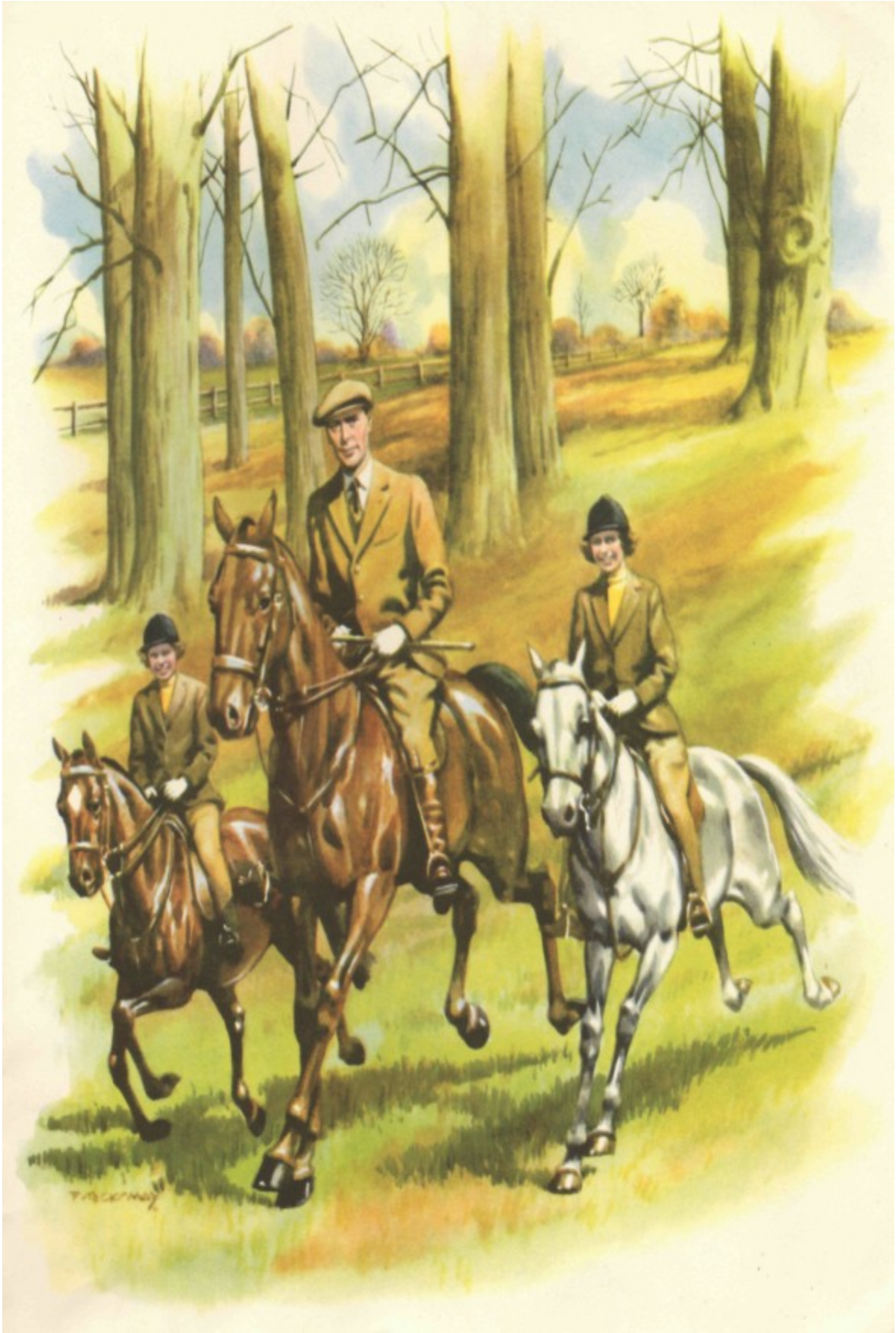


The Princesses rode bicycles, they learnt swimming, they galloped their ponies, they went for picnics. Soon their grandmother, Queen Mary, thought she would like to take them about, and show them many famous places and things. So, usually on Monday afternoons, she would take Elizabeth, and sometimes Margaret too, to see such grand sights as the Tower of London, the busy Docks, where great ships loaded and unloaded, and the Mint where all our money is made.

They went to the British Museum, where their grandmother explained many things to them. They went to see the wonderful paintings in the National Gallery—but perhaps one of the greatest excitements of all was when, for the very first time in their lives, they went on a Tube train. A train that ran through tunnels under the streets of London—how strange, and how marvellous !

But even more marvellous still were the moving stairways, the escalators, that went up and up and up—or down and down and down, without stopping ! The princesses were excited and amazed. They would have liked to do what many many children long to do—go down to the trains on one moving stairway, and then up again on the next stairway, and down again and up again for as many times as they liked.

Princess Margaret didn't want to give up her ticket. It was the first time she had ever had one, and she wanted to keep it. What a wonderful day that was !





Another day that the two princesses would never forget was the day their grandmother took them to see the toy village of Bekonscot. I saw them there that day. How they loved that little village, with its adorable houses that reached no higher than their waists, its church from which miraculously came the sound of organ and singing voices —and above all the model railway that still runs all round it, with the busy trains rushing along 'the lines, stopping at all the tiny stations !



## AN IMPORTANT LITTLE GIRL

Sad news came to the little princesses in the year 1936. Their much-loved " Grandpa King " had died. Then something happened that made the little Princess Elizabeth an even more important person than before.

Her uncle Edward, who was next to come to the throne, did not wish to reign, and gave up his rights as king ; and so his brother George, Elizabeth's father, became King instead, with her mother as his charming and loving Queen.

Elizabeth knew that she herself was next in line—she would be Queen of England when her father died ! It must have been a solemn and frightening thought—but even at that time the little girl was determined to serve her people well . . . and how she must have hoped that it would be very many years before she was called to the throne.

Now her family moved from their private house in Piccadilly, London, into magnificent Buckingham Palace—whose walls Elizabeth had so often seen from the windows of her old nursery. It was her own home now, and many exciting things were happening.





One of the most exciting was the coronation of her father and mother. Old customs, old rites, wonderful pageantry—all the history of her country seemed to come to life at her parents' coronation.

Elizabeth must have loved her coronation dress. She had always loved dressing-up, but this dressing-up was *real*. She wore a purple robe with triple bars of gold, embroidered with ermine. She looked more like a little fairy princess than ever in her own brightly-shining coronet. Margaret too was excited, and Elizabeth had to help her with her little train. It was a wonderful day for the two princesses.



And now, in this present year, 1953, *dl* the old grand customs and rites are taking place once again, at Elizabeth's own coronation. Once more she carries history on her shoulders and is part of the long long centuries that have seen our kings and queens come and go.

For a year or two longer the princesses lived in Buckingham Palace with their parents, going sometimes to Windsor, sometimes to Sandringham, sometimes to Balmoral in Scotland. Elizabeth joined the Girl Guides, and had her own company with head-quarters at Buckingham Palace. She became a Sea Ranger, and then Chief Ranger of the Empire.

But now a black shadow was over the country—the shadow of war with Germany. Like many other children the two princesses were sent out of London because of the fear of bombing. They stayed at Balmoral in Scotland, while their parents, the King and Queen, were in London. They must have missed them very much.

Then it was decided that Balmoral was too far away. Suppose the war went badly, and Elizabeth had to be sent to another country for safety, and Margaret too ? It was decided that they must be brought from Balmoral to somewhere near London, just in *case* such a thing should come to pass.

And so the two Princesses were brought secretly from Balmoral, and taken to Windsor Castle, where once more they lived with their father and mother.

But for five years that was a secret. Few people knew that their beloved little princesses were living safely during those war years within the great stone walls of stately Windsor Castle.



## **THE YEARS OF WAR—AND THE DAY OF VICTORY**

What did our princesses do in the black war years ? They did what many other children did—they knitted a great deal, they collected war salvage, they had parties for London children who had been sent into the country, they did stirrup-pump practice in case of fire, and they helped in many war concerts. There was always something to do.



I remember the first broadcast that Princess Elizabeth ever gave. She was fourteen years old. She was broadcasting to children who had been sent away to Canada or America. Her voice came over the radio, clear and lilting, exactly like her mother's.

" My sister Margaret and I feel so much for you," she said, " because we know from experience what it means to be away from those we love most of all."

When her broadcast came to an end, we heard her say :—" My sister is by my side and we are both going to say goodnight to you— come on, Margaret! "

And then a breathless little Margaret called " Goodnight ! ", and Elizabeth added, " Goodnight and good luck to you all!>!

They sounded so natural and friendly, and every child who heard the broadcast must instantly have loved the two sisters, and wished very much that they could see them.



The princesses were very busy each Christmas at Windsor Castle, writing and producing excellent pantomimes. They acted in them themselves, of course, and sang and danced remarkably well. They had great fun, and Elizabeth always gave a tea-party for the actors afterwards.

One of the most exciting things that happened to Princess Elizabeth during the war was when her father, the King, made her Colonel of the Grenadier Guards. Very proudly she inspected the Guards, and just as proudly they stood in their lines before their new young Colonel.



Another big moment came when Princess Elizabeth joined the A.T.S. and took a driving course. She drove army trucks and lorries, even in the black-out at nights, she oiled and greased trucks, took down engines, changed wheels, and did anything she was told. It was her own wish to do this and the nation was proud of her.

Then came victory, and on that great day the crowds went surging to Buckingham Palace, eager to share the evening of rejoicing with their Royal Family. The King and Queen, the Princesses too, came out on the balcony to acknowledge the cheers of the enormous crowd.

But the two princesses wanted to be even closer to the crowd— they wanted to mix with the people, to hear everything at first hand. So they put scarves over their\* heads, slipped out of a back door, and were soon lost in the crowds. Hardly anyone recognised them. How they must have enjoyed that secret mingling with their people !



## A PRINCE FOR A PRINCESS

Princess Elizabeth was no longer a little girl; she was growing up. Seventeen years old, eighteen, nineteen ! Now she was going about everywhere, taking her place in the world of grown-ups. She went to the theatre, to gay parties and to dances.

Twenty years old—twenty-one ! Her twenty-first birthday came while she was in South Africa, touring that fine country with her parents, and meeting its loyal people.

When she came back she knew she had found her Prince—for a lovely Princess must have her Prince, just as in the fairy-tales. We know who he was—our Prince Philip, tall, handsome and every inch a prince.

Elizabeth married Prince Philip in Westminster Abbey, a happy day in which everyone could join because the wedding was beautifully broadcast all over the world. Perhaps you are old enough to have heard it yourself.

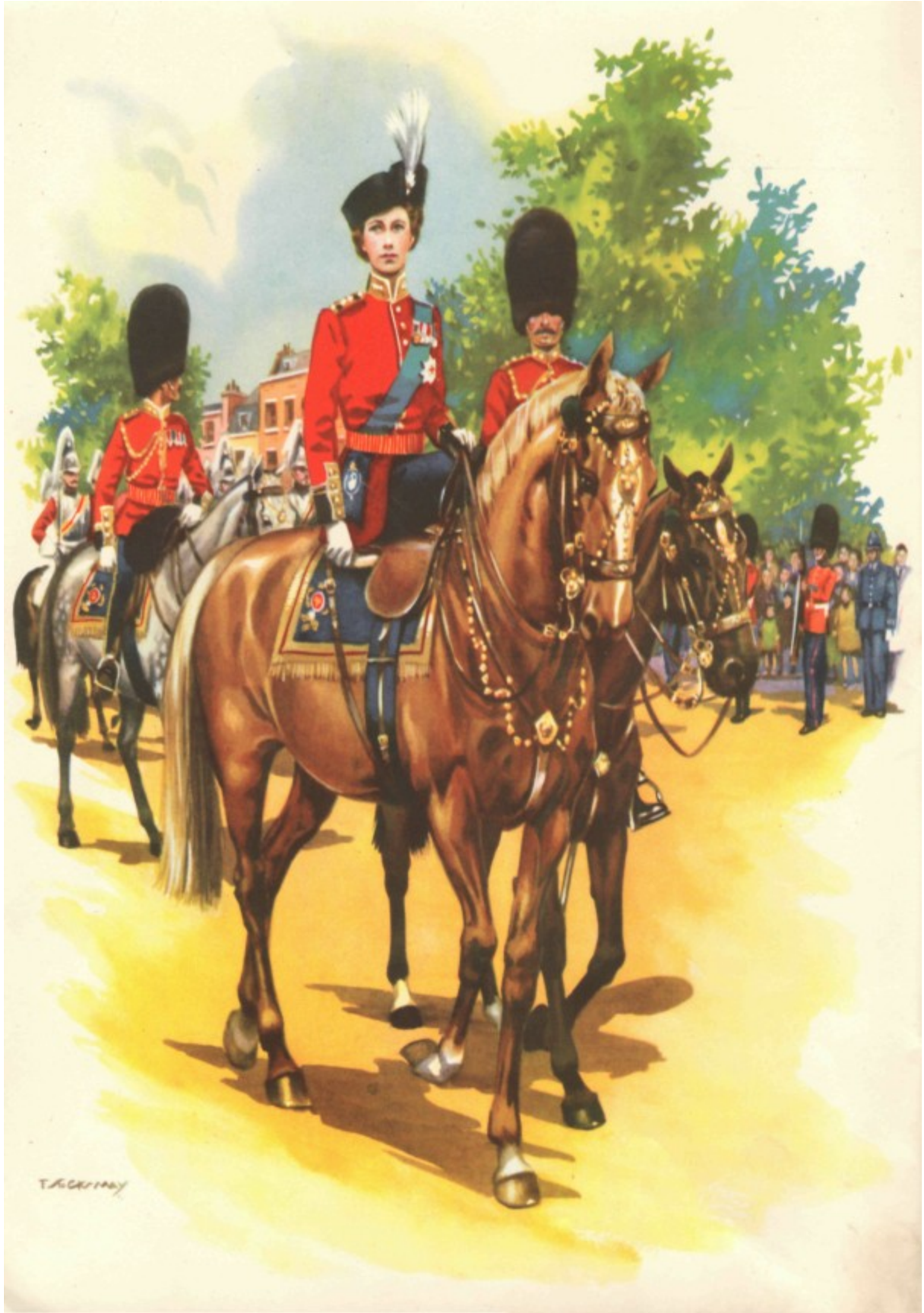




Next year our little Prince Charles was born and in no time at all he was " the little friend of half the world." If only there could be a small daughter too, a sister for the little prince !

She came two years later, a merry, charming little girl, our small Princess Anne. The nation had once watched Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret grow up, and had felt proud and happy to have such a pair to call their own. Now we are watching Prince Charles and Princess Anne, proud and happy again to have two such fine royal children for our country.

How did Princess Elizabeth manage to find time to be a mother and a Princess ? To care for her husband and children, and to serve her people too ? She does everything, as always, happily and well— but sometimes she must wish that she could be an ordinary mother, and have her children more to herself. You would be proud to have a Princess or a Queen for your mother—but what a lot of people you would have to share her with !





Prince Charles was very proud of his mother one day in June 1951. The King, her father, was ill, and so the Princess had been asked to take the salute at the Trooping the Colour Ceremony, in his place.

Every one of us felt as proud of her that day as did her little son. She sat on her magnificent horse, a truly royal figure. Look at the picture, and you will see how splendidly she rides her grand horse, Winston, as she goes to the great ceremony of the Colour.

Then, soon after that, away she went to Canada with Prince Philip to see her people there, and to capture their hearts with her fairy-tale loveliness. The President of the United States called her " The Fairy Princess " when he met her, and indeed she must have looked just like one, with her radiant face, her lovely dress and glittering tiara.

We were glad to see her safely back again—but gladdest of all was little Prince Charles who went with his grandmother to Huston Station in London to meet her !



## OUR BELOVED QUEEN

Christmas was a happy time for the Royal Family that year. They spent it at Sandringham Castle, and Princess Elizabeth, her husband and her two children joined her father and mother, the King and Queen. The King was happy to have them all round him.

Soon the Princess and Prince Philip were to begin another long tour—this time to Australia and New Zealand. But first they planned to go for a short holiday to a little house called Forest Lodge in Kenya, a wedding gift from the generous people of that country, in East Africa.

Here they would be quite alone, they could do what they liked, with no peering eyes on them all the time, as so often happened.



joyfully they flew to Sagana in Kenya and for four days spent a wonderful time together.

And then Prince Philip came to Elizabeth with grievous news. It must have been hard for him to bring news that would, in a few seconds, change a happy young girl into a sad-eyed woman.

The King, her father, was dead. When his servant had gone to awaken him that February morning, he was in too deep a sleep ever to wake again—his soul had slipped away with his dreams.

It was a happy Princess who had left us only a few days since. It was a Queen who came back to us, sorrowful in black—a Queen who spoke royally and nobly to her people when she was proclaimed Elizabeth the Second the next day.

" My heart is too full to say more to you today than that I shall always work, as my father did throughout his reign . . . to advance the happiness and prosperity of my peoples, spread as they are the world over."

You will remember the day of King George's funeral, when once more age-old ceremonies and rites brought our magnificent history to life—and we saw the pomp and grandeur of long-past days unrolling before our eyes. That was a day to make each one of us feel proud to belong to our race. King George, in his death, reached out to many peoples of the world, to every one of his loyal subjects, and we knew we were comrades and brothers, one with another.



And now we have yet another historic occasion to share in—a joyful one this time—the Coronation of our dearly beloved Queen Elizabeth. The Fairy Princess has grown to be a Queen with a heart of gold. She belongs to us, she is ours—and we are hers to command, whether we are grown-ups or boys and girls.

God Save our Gracious Queen !

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