Monarchy of the United Kingdom

The monarchy of the United Kingdom (commonly referred to as the British monarchy) is the constitutional monarchy of the United Kingdom and its overseas territories. The present monarch, Elizabeth II, has reigned since 6 February 1952. She and her immediate family undertake various official, ceremonial and representational duties. As a constitutional monarch, the Queen is limited to non-partisan functions such as bestowing honours, dissolving Parliament and appointing the Prime Minister. Though the ultimate executive authority over the government of the United Kingdom is still by and through the monarch's royal prerogative, in practice these powers are only used according to laws enacted in Parliament or within the constraints of convention and precedent.

The British monarchy traces its origins from the Kings of the Angles and the early Scottish Kings. By the year 1000, the kingdoms of England and Scotland had developed from the petty kingdoms of early medieval Britain. The last Anglo-Saxon monarch (Harold II) was defeated and killed in the Norman invasion of 1066 and the English monarchy passed to the Norman conquerors. In the thirteenth century, the principality of Wales was absorbed by England, and Magna Carta began the process of reducing the political powers of the monarch.

From 1603, when the Scottish King James VI inherited the English throne as James I, both kingdoms were ruled by a single monarch. From 1649 to 1660, the tradition of monarchy was broken by the republican Commonwealth of England that followed the War of the Three Kingdoms. The Act of Settlement 1701, which is still in force, excluded Roman Catholics, or those married to Catholics, from succession to the English throne. In 1707, the kingdoms of England and Scotland were merged to create the Kingdom of Great Britain and, in 1801, the Kingdom of Ireland joined to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The British monarch became nominal head of the vast British Empire, which covered a quarter of the world[1] at its greatest extent in 1921.

In 1922, five sixths of Ireland seceded from the Union as the Irish Free State, but in law the monarch remained sovereign there until 1949. In 1931, the unitary British monarchy throughout the empire was split into legally distinct crowns for each of the Commonwealth realms. After World War II, former colonies and dominions became independent of Britain, bringing the British Empire to an end. George VI and his successor, Elizabeth II, adopted the title Head of the Commonwealth as a symbol of the free association of the independent countries comprising the Commonwealth of Nations.

At present, 15 other independent Commonwealth countries share with the United Kingdom the same person as their monarch. The terms British monarchy and British monarch are frequently still employed in reference not only to the extranational person and institution shared amongst all 16 of the realms,[2][3] but also to the distinct monarchies within each of these countries, often at variance with the different, specific, and official national titles and terms for each jurisdiction.

The Royal Family

At present the British royal family is headed by Queen Elizabeth. When the Queen was born on the 21st of April 1926, her grandfather, King George V, was on the throne and her uncle was his heir. The death of her grandfather and the abdication of her uncle brought her father to the throne as King George VI.

As a child she studied constitutional history and law as well as art and music. In addition she learned to ride and acquired her enthusiasm for horses. As she grew older she began to take part in public life, making her first broadcast at the age of 14.

The marriage of the young Princess Elizabeth to Philip, Duke of Edinburgh took place in November 1947. She came to the throne after her father's death in 1952 and was crowned in Westminster Abbey in June 1953.

Among Queen Elizabeth's many duties are the regular visits she makes to foreign countries, and especially those of the Commonwealth, whose interests and welfare are very important to her. The Queen has allowed the BBC to make a documentary film about the every day of the royal family. She also started the tradition of the "walkabout", an informal feature of an otherwise formal royal visit, when she walks among the public crowds and stops to talk to some people.

The annual Christmas broadcast made by the Queen on radio and television has become a traditional and popular feature of the season, and there were widespread celebrations and special programmes of events in 1977 to mark her Silver Jubilee.

The Queen's husband, Duke of Edinburgh, was born in 1926 and served in the Royal Navy. He takes a great deal of interest in industry, in the achievements of young people (he founded Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme in 1956) and in saving raise wild animals from extinction.

The Queen's heir is Charles, Prince of Wales, who was born in 1948, married Lady Diana Spencer and has two children, Prince William and Prince Harry. The Prince of Wales is well-known as a keen promoter of British interests.

In recent years he has become outspoken on such controversial topics as modern architecture, violence in films and on television, and the standard of English teaching in schools. His wife Diana, Princess of Wales (often called in mass media Princess Di), won the affection of many people by her modesty, shyness and beauty. Unfortunately, she died in a car accident in August, 1997.

The Queen's other children are Princess Anne (born in 1950), Prince Andrew (born in 1960) and Prince Edward (born in 1964). Anne, Princess Royal, has acquired a reputation for being arrogant, but in recent years has become quite popular with the general public.

The Queen is widely known for her interest in horses and horse-racing. She is now president of the Save the Children Fund, Chancellor of the University of London and carries out many public engagements.

Prince Andrew, Duke of York, served as a helicopter pilot in the Royal Navy. In 1986 he married Miss Sarah Ferguson (Fergie, for short) and has two daughters.

Prince Edward is keen on the theatre. This interest began while he was at university. He quit the Royal Marines, and is now pursuing a career with a theatrical company.

The Queen Mother, the widow of the late King George VI, celebrated her one hundred birthday in 2 000 and died in 2002. The Queen's only sister, Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, is well-known for her charity work.

Королевская семья

В настоящее время британскую королевскую семью возглавляет королева Елизавета. Когда королева родилась 21 апреля 1926 г., на троне был ее дедушка король Георг V, а ее дядя был наследником. После смерти ее дедушки и отречения от престола дяди ее отец взошел на трон как король Георг VI.

В детстве Елизавета изучала историю и право наряду с искусством и музыкой. К тому же она училась верховой езде и проявляла большой интерес к лошадям. Когда она подросла, то начала принимать участие в общественной жизни, выступив впервые по радио в возрасте 14 лет.

В ноябре 1947 г. состоялась свадьба молодой принцессы Елизаветы и Филиппа, герцога Эдинбургского. Она взошла на трон после смерти отца в 1952 г. и была коронована в Вестминстерском аббатстве в июне 1953 г.

Среди многочисленных обязанностей королевы Елизаветы — регулярные посещения иностранных государств, особенно стран Содружества, чьи интересы и благосостояние важны для нее. Королева позволила Би-би-си снять документальный фильм о буднях королевской семьи. Она также положила начало традиции королевских прогулок неофициального характера, непохожих на официальные визиты, когда она прогуливается среди людей, останавливается и разговаривает с некоторыми из них.

Ежегодные рождественские передачи по радио и телевидению стали традиционной и популярной приметой сезона. А в 1977 г. были проведены большие празднования и специальные представления по случаю серебряного юбилея правления королевы.

Муж королевы, герцог Эдинбургский, родился в 1926 г., служил в Королевском военно-морском флоте. Он проявляет большой интерес к промышленности, достижениям молодежи и спасению диких животных от вымирания.

Наследник королевы — Чарльз, принц Уэльский, который родился в 1948 г, женился на леди Диане Спенсер, имеет двоих детей: принца Уильяма и принца Гарри. Принц Уэльский известен как ярый защитник интересов Британии.

В последние годы он откровенно высказывался по таким спорным вопросам, как современная архитектура, насилие в кино и на телевидении, нормы обучения в английских школах. Его жена Диана, принцесса Уэльская (в средствах массовой информации ее часто называют принцесса Ди), завоевала любовь многих людей своей скромностью и красотой. К сожалению, в августе 1997 года она погибла в автокатастрофе.

Другие дети королевы — принцесса Анна (родилась в 1950 г.), принц Эндрю (родился в 1960 г.) и принц Эдвард (родился в 1964 г.) Принцесса Анна завоевала репутацию высокомерного человека, но в последнее время стала более популярна в народе.

Королева широко известна своим интересом к лошадям и верховой езде. Сейчас она является президентом Фонда защиты детей, ректором Лондонского университета и занимается общественной деятельностью.

Принц Эндрю, герцог Йоркский, служил пилотом вертолета в Королевском военно-морском, флоте. В 1986 г. он женился на Саре Фергюсон (сокращенно Ферджи) и имеет двоих детей.

Принц Эдвард любит театр. Этот интерес появился еще в университете. Он оставил Королевскую морскую пехоту и сейчас делает карьеру в составе театральной труппы.

Королева-мать, вдова последнего короля Георга VI, отметила свой столетний юбилей в 2000 г. и умерла в 2002 году. Единственная сестра королевы, принцесса Маргарет, графиня Сноудона, хорошо известна своей благотворительной деятельностью.

The British Royal Family is the group of close relatives of the monarch of the United Kingdom. The term is also commonly applied to the same group of people as the relations of the monarch in his or her role as sovereign of any of the other Commonwealth realms, thus sometimes at variance with official national terms for the family.[1] Members of the royal family belong to, either by birth or marriage, the House of Windsor, since 1917, when George V changed the name of the royal house from Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

Although in the United Kingdom there is no strict legal or formal definition of who is or is not a member of the Royal Family,[2] and different lists will include different people, those carrying the style His or Her Majesty (HM), or His or Her Royal Highness (HRH) are always considered members, which usually results in the application of the term to the monarch, the consort of the monarch, the widowed consorts of previous monarchs, the children of the monarch, the male-line grandchildren of the monarch, and the spouses and the widows of a monarch's sons and male-line grandsons.

Members and relatives of the British Royal Family historically represented the monarch in various places throughout the British Empire, sometimes for extended periods as viceroys, or for specific ceremonies or events. Today, they often perform ceremonial and social duties throughout the United Kingdom and abroad on behalf of the UK, but, aside from the monarch, have no constitutional role in the affairs of government. This is the same for the other realms of the Commonwealth though the family there acts on behalf of, is funded by, and represents the sovereign of that particular state, and not the United Kingdom

the coronation

The Coronation of the British Monarch is a ceremony (specifically, initiation rite) in which the monarch of the United Kingdom is formally crowned and invested with regalia. It corresponds to coronation ceremonies that formerly occurred in other European monarchies, which have currently abandoned coronations in favour of inauguration or enthronement ceremonies.

The coronation usually takes place several months after the death of the previous monarch, as it is considered a joyous occasion that would be inappropriate when mourning still continues. This also gives planners enough time to complete the elaborate arrangements required. For example, Elizabeth II was crowned on 2 June 1953, despite having acceded to the throne on 6 February 1952, the instant her father died. British law states that the throne is not left vacant and the new monarch succeeds the old immediately.

The ceremony is performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the most senior cleric of the Church of England. Other clergy and members of the nobility also have roles; most participants in the ceremony are required to wear ceremonial uniforms or robes. Many other government officials and guests attend, including representatives of foreign countries.

The essential elements of the coronation have remained largely unchanged for the past thousand years. The sovereign is first presented to, and acclaimed by, the people. He or she then swears an oath to uphold the law and the Church. Following that, the monarch is anointed with oil, crowned, and invested with the regalia, before receiving the homage of his or her subjects.