

Happy & Glorious

6 February 1992



Five stamps under the title "Happy & Glorious" will be issued on 6 February; they mark the 40th anniversary of The Queen's accession to the throne. The stamps – all at 24p (first class inland and EEC basic rate) – portray Her Majesty in her various roles as Head of State, of the Church of England, of the Royal Family, of the Armed Forces, and of the Commonwealth. The portraits show The Queen in state robes, Garter robes, with baby Prince Andrew (now Duke of York), in military uniform, and on one of Her many Commonwealth tours. All stamps include the dates "1952 1992" and the inscription FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ACCESSION.

Her Majesty was born, as Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary, on 21 April 1926, first child of TRH The Duke and Duchess of York. At the time few would have expected that the baby

Her father's reign was largely one of wartime austerity and post-war reconstruction. The Princess's marriage, in 1947, to Prince Philip (son of Prince Andrew of Greece) brought joy to a Britain still suffering from shortages and rationing. Their first child, Prince Charles, was born in November 1948. In January 1952 the Princess and the Duke of Edinburgh set off on a tour of Africa, deputising for the King who was in poor health. However it is unlikely that when she took leave of her father, the Princess expected to return as Queen. Early on 6 February, George VI died in his sleep at Sandringham. His daughter was at that time staying at the Treetops Hotel in Kenya; the sad news was broken to her by Prince Philip. After the necessary diplomatic messages had been despatched, The Queen and the Duke set off for London. The Queen was



princess would ever reign as Queen. The then heir to the throne, the Prince of Wales, was single, but expected to marry and produce an heir. Nor would anyone have predicted that a decade later the Prince of Wales, then Edward VIII, would abdicate in favour of his brother, the Duke of York. In December 1936 the Duke became King George VI and Princess Elizabeth automatically became heir presumptive.

From her father, and her grandfather (George V, whom she called "Grandpapa England"), the young princess learned devotion to duty and the dignified way she has carried out the responsibilities of monarchy since 1952 has earned The Queen worldwide respect.

met on arrival by her uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, her Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, and Leader of the Opposition, Clement Attlee.

The first stamps of the new reign were issued on 5 December 1952 – 1½d and 2½d definitives, covering the basic inland postal rates. The background story of the "Wilding" definitives was published here in April 1986.

The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, heralding the start of the "new Elizabethan Age", took place at Westminster Abbey on 2 June 1953. A set of four special (commemorative) stamps and a Coronation aerogramme went on sale the following day. A slogan

postmark LONG LIVE THE QUEEN was used nationally from 3-30 June. Coronation stamps were issued by Empire countries, mostly in a common design, but with non-standard designs from Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Head of the Commonwealth

The first of many overseas tours was undertaken in 1953-4, commemorated by special stamps from Aden, Australia, Bermuda, Ceylon, Fiji, Gibraltar, Jamaica, Kenya Uganda & Tanganyika, Malta, and New Zealand. Another omnibus series of Royal Visit stamps marked The Queen's tour of the West Indies in 1977. Other Royal Visit stamps have been issued by Australia in 1970, Canada in 1959, 1964, and 1973. Last October The Queen visited Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia) and Namibia (South West Africa). Her last visit to Southern Rhodesia (and other African countries), with her parents and sister, in 1947, was commemorated by special stamps.

Many Commonwealth countries have participated in stamp issues marking the Queen's silver jubilee in 1977, the 25th anniversary of the coronation in 1978 and her

tapestry background. One of the many studies of the Queen taken at her Coronation is being used on one of the "Happy & Glorious" stamps. Numerous Commonwealth stamps have featured scenes from the Coronation; this is the first British stamp to reproduce a portrait from that event.

As head of state The Queen plays host to visiting fellow heads of state - monarchs and presidents - and undertakes state visits overseas. She has visited the USA on several occasions, and has entertained US presidents at Buckingham Palace and Windsor. Amongst many memorable overseas tours was that to China in 1986. State duties include the opening of each session of Parliament, meetings of the Privy Council, receiving ambassadors and high commissioners, and giving a regular audience to the Prime Minister. Since 1952 Her Majesty has been served by nine British premiers (Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, Harold Macmillan, Alec Douglas Home, Harold Wilson, Edward Heath, James Callaghan, Margaret Thatcher, and John Major) as well as numerous Commonwealth Prime Ministers, such as Robert Menzies, John Diefenbaker, and Keith Holyoake.



60th and 65th birthdays in 1986 and 1991.

The Queen takes a great interest in Commonwealth matters, witness her visits to the Commonwealth Games. At the 1958 Empire & Commonwealth Games, in Cardiff, she announced the creation of Prince Charles as Prince of Wales. Britain issued three stamps commemorating the Cardiff Games, with sets for the Edinburgh Games in 1970 and 1986.

Head of State

The Coronation stamps of 1953 show the trappings of Royalty, particularly fine is the 1s3d stamp, by Edmund Dulac, portraying The Queen, crowned and robed, against a Tudor

Head of the Family

The portrait on the third "Happy & Glorious" stamp shows The Queen with Prince Andrew, from a series of photographs by Cecil Beaton, one of which was used on a magnificent £1 definitive stamp from St Helena in 1961. The first British stamps, of the present reign, to show a member of the Royal Family other than The Queen herself, were issued in 1972 - 3p and 20p stamps showing The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to celebrate their silver wedding anniversary. Stamps commemorating the marriages of Princess Anne, the Prince of Wales, and Prince Andrew (Duke of York) were issued in 1973, 1981 and 1986. Stamps honouring The



Queen Mother on her 80th and 90th birthdays were issued in 1980 and 1990. An informal, family album, portrait of The Queen, wearing a headscarf, taken at the Badminton Horse Trials in 1973, featured on 60th birthday stamps in 1986. Since 1980 Australia has issued an annual single Queen's Birthday stamp, making a delightful series.

Head of the Armed Forces

The Queen's long association with the armed services is recalled by another of the six studies used on the 60th Birthday stamps. She is shown aged 16, shortly after becoming Colonel of the Grenadier Guards. As Princess, she carried out her first public engagement when she inspected the regiment on her sixteenth birthday. Another portrait on the 60th Birthday stamps shows The Queen on the balcony of Buckingham Palace after the annual Trooping the Colour ceremony to mark her official birthday. A similar portrait, in military dress, is used on one of the "Happy & Glorious" stamps.

Head of the Church

The Queen takes seriously her role as Head of the Church of England and the vows taken at her Coronation. On the second stamp in the "Happy & Glorious" strip, she is shown in the robes of the Order of the Garter at the annual Garter ceremony in St George's Chapel, Windsor. Each year, at a cathedral, The Queen distributes Royal Maundy money; the number of recipients matching the sovereign's age. Her Majesty's faith is expressed in her annual Christmas broadcast to the Commonwealth; extracts from some of her messages are given in the "Happy & Glorious" presentation pack. Since her accession, The Queen has been served by five Archbishops of Canterbury: Dr Fisher, Dr Ramsey, Dr Coggan, Dr Runcie and currently Dr Carey. Dr Fisher and Dr Ramsey (as Bishop of Durham) officiated at the Coronation. Indicative of the age of greater Christian unity, The Queen greeted Pope John Paul II at Buckingham Palace during the Papal Visit to Britain in 1982.

The Designers

The stamps were designed by Why Not Associates and feature photographs by Cecil Beaton, Camera Press (stamps 1 and 3); Tim Graham, London (stamp 2); and Anwar Hussein (stamps 4 and 5).

Printing Details

The stamps, printed in offset-lithography by

ROYAL MAIL MINT STAMPS

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royal mail first day cover

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