

The Queen adds to stature with modernizing influence

By **MARGUERITE PEACOCKE** whose works include "The Story of Buckingham Palace" and "The Life of Queen Mary". Queen Elizabeth II has proved herself to be a modern monarch with a respect for tradition but not for outdated customs. In the process of modernizing the monarchy she has preserved the dignity and colourful pageantry of the more important State occasions, because this represents a heritage greatly valued not only by her, but also by the majority of her people.

In other respects court life has been greatly simplified, while the Queen and her husband have brought the private life of the Royal Family as far as possible into line with that of other households in Britain.

FEWER FORMALITIES
The Queen's personal wish, fully shared by her husband, to bring her family into closer contact with people in all walks of life, has inspired changes both in the organization of their public engagements and in the planning of Royal hospitality. The traditional methods of entertaining at Buckingham Pal-

ace have been adapted to enable the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to invite a much more representative selection of guests than was customary in the past.

From time to time they give informal parties to which they invite members of national organizations (the guests usually being chosen by ballot of the membership) or delegates to conferences meeting in London. They regularly give small semi-official lunch and dinner parties, choosing as their guests those who have made some significant contribution to national or Commonwealth life but who hold no appointment which would qualify them for inclusion in the official invitation lists. In this way they meet writers, artists, sportsmen, social workers and others who would not, in former times, have attended court functions.

It was the Queen's personal decision which brought about the abolition of the old presentation procedure whereby debutantes and others were summoned to make their brief courtesy to her as they passed in rapid succession before the royal dais.

Characteristically, the Queen led that ceremony which provided no opportunity for her to exchange a single word with those presented to her, and for which only a limited number of people was eligible, was out of keeping with the times. The ease of presentation parties has been followed by an increase in the number of more democratic and less formal receptions at which Commonwealth visitors are usually much in evidence.

LONG WORKING DAY
The Queen has a long working day which begins early and often continues until late at night. She has inherited all her father's love of thoroughness in everything which she does. The reading and signing of State papers forms an important part of her constitutional duties and keeps her occupied at her desk for many hours a day.

Throughout most of the year she is in residence at Buckingham Palace. The latter part of the morning is usually allocated to official audiences, which are one of the many ways by which she keeps in close touch with national and international life. Part of each day is devoted to interviews with members of her household, devoted to correspondence, planning her programme of public engagements and discussing the many problems involved in the running of her homes.

Despite her many official responsibilities, the Queen decides herself, or jointly with her husband, everything connected with their family life. Just as any other wife and mother would do, she chooses the clothes for her children, the menus for meals, the material for new curtains and all the other small domestic details which go to the making of a home. Her own tastes are simple: she eats sparingly, does not smoke, and likes as little formality as possible in her private life.

COUNTRY WEEKENDS
Like her husband, the Queen has a sociable nature and a wide circle of friends. Since her accession she has stayed in private homes more often than any recent British sovereign, paying brief weekend visits accompanied by her husband, and sometimes by their children as well.

She spends most of her weekends, like her longer holidays, at her own country homes. She is an excellent horsewoman and riding, often with her husband and the Prince of Wales and Princess Anne, is her favourite form of exercise. She enjoys country expeditions, driving, walking and presiding over picnic meals, often driving the family car herself.

Combining as she does the great responsibilities of her official position with the care of a young family and a great love



AN "ACTOR" in an excerpt from a Shakespearean play gets a pat of approval from Queen Elizabeth at London's famous theatre—the Old Vic.

ELIZABETH

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nickname, she replied: "Well, she's not a real rose yet, is she? She is only a bud."

The two girls frolicked happily together, Elizabeth's seriousness and sense of appropriateness an engaging contrast with Margaret's ingrained mischief.

They spent many hours in the "Little House," (Y Bwthyn Bach) a gift from the people of Wales. This was a miniature

of a real dwelling, faithful in detail down to boxes of matches and baking powder in the tiny kitchen drawers.

An early gift was a white parrot named Jimmy, which had to be banished because of its salty tongue and fondness for snapping at the fingers of the royal princesses.

SCOTS GOVERNESS
Presiding over the nursery was Mrs. Clara Knight, known affectionately as Alla. As classroom days approached, the future queen came increasingly under the guidance of her governess, Marion Crawford, a Scots-woman from Dunfermline.

But it was their mother who played the most important role in bringing up the two princesses. Insisting on personal oversight of every detail, she

excluded influences that might set Elizabeth and Margaret apart from other children.

Elizabeth studied languages, particularly French and German, and took special lessons in constitutional history from the

late Sir Henry Marten, provost of Eton.

Her studies covered a wide range. Louis Wulf, a court expert, wrote in "Queen of Tomorrow" that she was "never forced precociously in a household of royal learning, nor circumscribed in her studies and entertainment when she grew older."

She had a keen appreciation of art and music. She studied madrigal singing at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and took piano lessons from Mabel Lander, a pupil of Paderewski's teacher Leschetitzky.

FIRST BROADCAST
She made her first broadcast at 14. "It was perfectly done," wrote South African novelist Sarah Millin in her diary. "If there are still queens in the world a generation hence, this child will be a good queen."

Elizabeth carried out her first public engagement on her 18th birthday when she inspected the Grenadier Guards of which she was colonel-in-chief. Shortly after her 19th birthday she was appointed a counsellor of state during King

George VI's absence on a tour of Italian battlefields.

The princesses spent the Second World War in seclusion at Windsor Castle. Some thought they should be evacuated to Canada, as thousands of other British children were, but the Royal Family vetoed the idea. Prime Minister Churchill, asked to send a message to Prime Minister Mackenzie King of Canada through an evacuated child, said if he did send one it would be deploring any "stampede" from the old country.

In October, 1940, Elizabeth emerged briefly from seclusion to make her first broadcast. She ended it memorably by urging her sister, also in the studio, to "come along and say goodnight." The flash of spontaneity drew a large fan mail. In many ways, her early life was like that of most children.

Her pocket money was a shilling a week. She liked some strips, including "L'il Abner" and "Mutt and Jeff." Alphonse Daudet's "Lettres de mon Moulin" was one of her favorite books. She showed a flat for dramatics and with her sister organized annual Christmas pantomimes, which included the odd silly poke at royalty.




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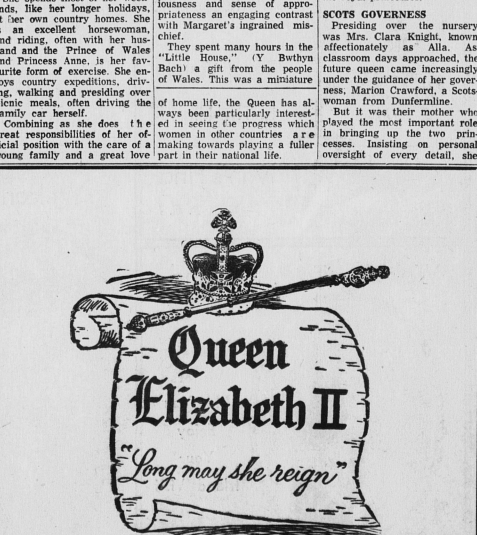


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