

# Elizabeth - Enjoyed A Happy Home Life

The greatest blessing bestowed upon Her Royal Highness the Princess Elizabeth is that she grew up in a happy home. Her parents were devoted to each other and to their daughters and this warm affection is evident for all to see, whenever the Royal family appear together in public.

During her girlhood, Princess Elizabeth was never allowed to accept any of the gifts sent to her by private individuals. This is one of the rules of the Royal family, and the gifts were always returned to the senders with a kind note of thanks and a few words of explanation. When Elizabeth married, gifts poured in from all parts of the world and the King was so touched by the spontaneous demonstration of affection for his daughter that he relaxed the rule and allowed her to keep the gifts. Elizabeth saw them all, read all the thousands of letters and ensured personally that replies went to all the senders.



Family Group at Balmoral Castle

**Childhood Days**

Most of Elizabeth's childhood was spent at her parents' London home, 145 Piccadilly, a house which, though comfortable was by no means sumptuous. When they were not busy with public duties, the then Duke and Duchess of York led quiet lives. Their favorite way of spending an evening was to sit in armchairs before the fire, reading. The Duke liked detective stories, or books on hunting or shooting. He is a keen hunter and fisherman, and a good shot, though not so good as his father, who was said to be one of the best shots in Britain.

From her birth, the Duke kept his own private record of Elizabeth's life in photographs. He is an enthusiastic amateur photographer and has a movie camera and projector. When the family were gathered together, he loved to show films of his daughters when they were young, and sometimes, for fun, he would put a film in reverse and show them running backwards, or diving out of water instead of into it.

When Elizabeth was four, her sister Margaret was born.

Margaret is a Scottish princess; she was born at Glamis Castle in the Scottish Highlands and her sister Elizabeth was staying there at the time on a visit to her grandparents, the Earl and Countess of Strathmore.

her mother chose a governess for her.

**Scottish Governess**

Naturally admiring the solid virtues and the sensible educational methods of her Scottish homeland, the Duchess of York chose a 22-year-old girl, Marion Crawford, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, as her children's governess. The Duchess wanted some one who was modern in outlook and young enough in years to have a natural enthusiasm. In Miss Crawford she made a wise choice: she remained 17 years with the family. To both princesses she became the beloved "Crawfie", and is one of their best friends.

Queen Mary took a keen interest in her granddaughter's education. Her comments on the curriculum suggested that more time should be given to history than to arithmetic, that Elizabeth should be taught the detailed geography of the Dominions and India, and that not enough time was given to Bible reading.

About this time, a fairly frequent visitor to the house in Piccadilly was the children's golden-haired Uncle David. Then he was the debonair Prince of Wales, idol of the public. He played games with them and the two Princesses adored him. Elizabeth already had the childish name of

Lilibet, acquired in the nursery. It was a pet name which persisted until recent years when the King thought it time that it was changed. It was changed, but in Princess Margaret's case it has only been shortened to the diminutive "Lilibet".

**Grandfather's Favorite**

Another visitor was the children's grandfather, the bearded King George V. He loved Elizabeth. As a former naval officer of the old school, he had an abrupt, quarter deck manner of speaking, but with the little golden-haired girl he was gentle. She was, perhaps, the only person who could speak to the bearded monarch in a familiar and patronizing manner without running the risk of a sharp reproof. So devoted was King George to his little granddaughter that when he was convalescing from his first serious illness the royal physicians prescribed her company as part of his cure, and she was sent with him to the seaside where he went to recuperate. In this way did Elizabeth first glimpse the sea.

Elizabeth's childish name for King George was "Grandfather England."

The happy years at the house in Piccadilly sped swiftly by; they were varied by occasional holidays in Scotland and very infre-

quent appearances in public, sometimes with her grandmother, Queen Mary. The story of one of these visits has been remembered. Queen Mary has little patience with affected airs, and as she was about to enter an exhibition with her tiny granddaughter, she overheard Lilibet say in a pleased voice that people were waiting "to see me." Elizabeth didn't see the exhibit. Instead, she was sent home by her grandmother in a taxi.

Lessons such as this were part of her upbringing and Elizabeth soon realized the modesty and the invariable courtesy which royal persons must practise, whatever the circumstances.

**At Buckingham Palace**

In 1936, King George V died. Elizabeth was nearly 10 years old then and she was taken to the royal lying-in-state where her father and his brothers kept vigil around the coffin of the dead King.

A few brief months and the

reign of her uncle, Edward VIII, ended in his abdication. Elizabeth and Margaret saw their father leave their home on his way to his proclamation as King. The happy days at the house in Piccadilly were over. Now they were to have a new home—Buckingham Palace.

The routine for the royal children did not change much when their father became King. Of course they moved to Buckingham Palace and had a new school room, but lessons went on just the same. Not for many years had Buckingham Palace been the permanent home of royal children, and now its corridors echoed with girlish laughter and there was an atmosphere of youth such as it had never known before.

At her father's coronation she carried herself with a dignity surprising in one so young, and at the same time managed to keep a motherly eye on her younger sister. Her chief dread was that Margaret would go to sleep during the elaborate ceremonial and "disgrace them all". For the occasion the King had a special little coronet made for Elizabeth.

**Their Majesties In Canada**

The next great event in the King's reign was the Royal visit to Canada in 1939. Elizabeth was deeply disappointed that she could not accompany them. Without being pushed forward by her parents she had managed to become the most-photographed little girl in the world, and Canadians shared her disappointment. But the King wisely kept her at home to continue her education. Every day, Elizabeth followed her parents' brilliant progress across Canada and laughed when she read that her father was eating hot dogs and liking them. The Queen, an anxious and devoted mother, telephoned daily from Canada to Buckingham Palace. On their return there was a rapturous reunion with much hugging and kissing. The King's eyes were constantly on his elder daughter, shining with pride and fatherly love for her.

A few weeks later the war came. During it, Elizabeth was to grow to young womanhood, to join the services, to share the dangers of

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**Different Personalities**


Towards her young sister Elizabeth has always had a feeling of responsibility. It soon became evident that the personalities of the two sisters were entirely different, and Elizabeth's sense of responsibility sprang from a desire to guide and help her younger sister—a feeling quite common to older sisters.

Elizabeth, a slim, nervous and retiring child was grave beyond her years. Like her father, she was not demonstrative, but when she gave her affection it was deep and enduring. She had her father's rather serious mien but was not at all lacking in her mother's sense of humour and although her smile was slow in appearing, when it did, it was broad and unaffected and lit her whole face.

The King's dislike of the stuffy kind of traditionalism extended to his daughter's education; not for them the old fashioned tyranny of the subject, with endless hours of studying dreary text books. When Elizabeth graduated from the nursery where she had been in the care of a devoted, motherly nurse,



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