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... The Memory of Queens Regnant who have gone before her will be at once an example and an inspiration

By **CYRIL F. J. HANKINSON**, Editor of *Debrett*
who writes of Queens who have preceded our young Sovereign

SCOTLAND has had two Queens in their own right—Margaret, known as the Maid of Norway, and Mary, whose son, James VI., afterwards became James I. of England.

Margaret, Maid of Norway, was the daughter of Margaret, daughter of King Alexander III. Both King Alexander's sons and his daughter predeceased him. Margaret had married Eric II, King of Norway, and they had an only daughter, also named Margaret.

When, in 1283, all Alexander's children had died, the little Norwegian baby was recognised as his heir, although previously no woman had ever been Queen of Scotland, and many considered that it would be disgraceful for knights to obey the words of a woman.

When she was about three years old the Maid of Norway, who was in the care of her father, was proclaimed Queen of Scotland, and it was planned to marry her to the eldest son of King Edward I. of England.

It was only after lengthy negotiations that the King of Norway agreed that his little daughter should come to Scotland, and eventually she set sail in a Norwegian ship when she was about seven years old. Tragedy, however, overtook the little Maid of Norway

and she died on the voyage. Her body was taken back to Norway for burial. She had been nominally Queen of Scotland for five years without ever setting foot in that country.

Mary Queen of Scots was the great-granddaughter of King Henry VII. of England, and succeeded her father, King James V., in 1542, when less than a week old.

Long before she was of marriageable age the English were anxious to arrange a marriage between her and the boy King, Edward VI., but to escape this Mary was sent to France, where she was brought up by her mother's (Mary of Guise's) family, Mary of Guise herself remaining in Scotland to rule on behalf of her infant daughter.

In 1558 Mary married the French Dauphin, Francis, who succeeded to the throne as Francis II. in the following year, but died in 1560, and in the next year she returned to Scotland.

There were soon many suitors for her hand, and she eventually chose her cousin, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, whom she married in 1565. From this marriage sprang the Royal House of Stuart, which provided Britain with four Kings and two ruling Queens.

She was an undoubted inspiration

OF the forty English Sovereigns since the Conquest the present Queen is the sixth Queen Regnant.

Queen Anne is the only one of her five Queen predecessors who was married when she succeeded to the Throne, and Queen Victoria is the only one who left surviving children.

Four of the five Queens married—all of them to husbands to whom they were related. Queen Mary II. and Queen Victoria married first cousins; Queen Mary I. her first cousin once removed, and Queen Anne her second cousin once removed.

Only one of our Queens—Mary I.—can be said to have left the country in a worse state than at the time of her accession, and the reigns of three of the remaining four coincided with some of the most glorious periods in our history.

Anne, of course, ruled for only a short while, and she was not a woman of marked ability, but great names and great victories are contained in the records of her time. Regarding Elizabeth I. and Victoria, it would need some hard thinking to enable one to suggest a King who added more lustre to our history than they.

Her Absence

Queen Mary I. succeeded her half-brother, Edward VI., in 1553. At the time of Edward's death, Mary was living in Hertfordshire, and in her absence from London, her Protestant cousin, Lady Jane Grey, was proclaimed Queen. Mary, however, hurried to the capital, and within ten days of her brother's death was herself proclaimed amidst the enthusiasm of the populace. With the death of Mary in 1558, and the accession of Elizabeth I., England entered upon one of the most illustrious reigns in her history. Elizabeth in her young days was possessed of good

looks of a rather masculine order. She had something of her mother's coquetry and vanity, and of her father's keen intellect and haughty self-will. Unlike her sister, she was no religious fanatic and was unwilling to persecute people for their beliefs.

So many distinguished statesmen, sailors and adventurers, and men of literary genius, lived in the Elizabethan era that it is difficult to assess the amount of credit due for the greatness of the age as between the Queen and her subjects, but to her famous men she was an undoubted inspiration.

Unforgivable

Many consider the execution of Mary Queen of Scots an unforgivable crime on the part of Elizabeth, but the value of human life was held somewhat cheaply in those days, and it was only after the Scottish Queen had been in custody for twenty years that Elizabeth could be prevailed upon to sign her death warrant. This she did only because as a result of all the Catholic intrigue promoted by Spain she became convinced that it was in the interests of the nation. Elizabeth lived to be sixty-nine in an age when few reached the allotted span, and refused to die in bed. Up to the end she sat in her chair in the Audience Chamber fully dressed until death came to her.

In 1689 following upon the flight of her father, James II. to France, Mary Stuart was called to the Throne with her husband, William of Orange, thus providing the only instance in our history of joint Sovereigns.

Anne, who succeeded Mary, is one concerning whom many people's knowledge does not extend beyond the fact that she is dead. Nevertheless, as in the case of most of our Queens Regnant, her reign covered a great period in

British history, not only because of Marlborough's victories at Blenheim, Malplaque and other places, but also because of the literary genius of men like Defoe, Addison, Swift and others.

Although Anne had five children, who all died before she succeeded to the Throne, only one, the Duke of Gloucester, survived for more than a few months. He died at the age of eleven, and although it must have been a great blow to her, she bore his death with great resignation. Anne, herself, died in 1714 at the age of forty-nine, after having reigned for twelve years.

Now we come to a Queen who reigned for longer than any other Sovereign in our history and lived to a greater age—Victoria, great-great grandmother of our present Queen.

When I was born Victoria had still five years to live and scarce a soul who sang "God Save the Queen" had ever sung "God Save the King."

Child though I was, I can still vividly recall a dark winter's evening in January, 1901, when I heard the mournful tones of a church bell tolling across the valley, the sound of which was to many the first intimation that a little old lady who had seemed to be immortal had passed away.

Announced

Shortly afterwards my father put his hand round the door as my nurse was preparing me for bed, and solemnly announced, "The Queen is dead." Though my childish mind could not quite grasp it an era—the Victorian era—was at an end—one of the most glorious in our island story.

One of the most remarkable features about Queen Victoria is the manner in which she displayed her queenliness from the moment of her accession.

despite the fact that she was but a few weeks past her eighteenth birthday when she succeeded to the Throne.

At her Accession Council all were overcome with astonishment at the perfection of her queenly manner, and at the close of the meeting, in the words of Mr Strachey, "they saw a small figure rise and, with the same consummate grace, the same amazing dignity, pass out from among them, as she had come in, alone."

Victoria

The word "alone" has considerable significance as, up to the very day when she became Queen, Victoria was never allowed by her mother, the Duchess of Kent, to do anything "alone"—not even to sleep alone, for she had to share her mother's bedroom.

Like Elizabeth I., Victoria was fortunate in the great men and women who lived in her time, and more fortunate still in having a husband of the sterling qualities of Albert, the Prince Consort.

That he did much to guide her and to mould her character according to his own high ideals none can deny, but she survived his death by forty years and seemed to hold complete ascendancy over everyone with whom she was brought into contact—except that extraordinary character, John Brown, her privileged Highland attendant. Even Bismarck met his match in the Queen and knew it. When in the fullness of time, at the age of eighty-one, death claimed her, Queen Victoria left the Throne, which she had found in such disrepute, secure for her successors and the monarchy more popular than at any other time in our long history.

Now, once again we have a Queen, and the memory of the Queens who have gone before her will be at once an example and an inspiration.

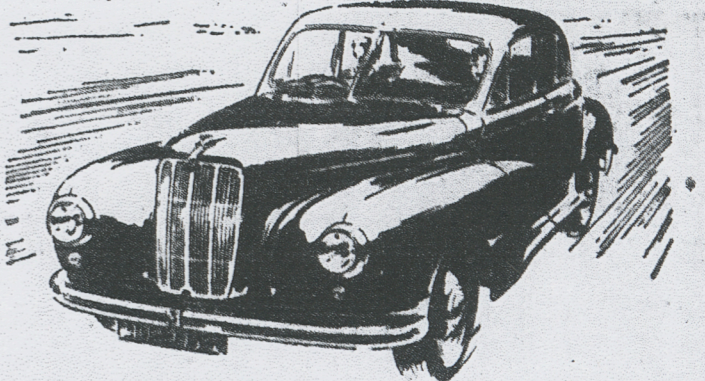


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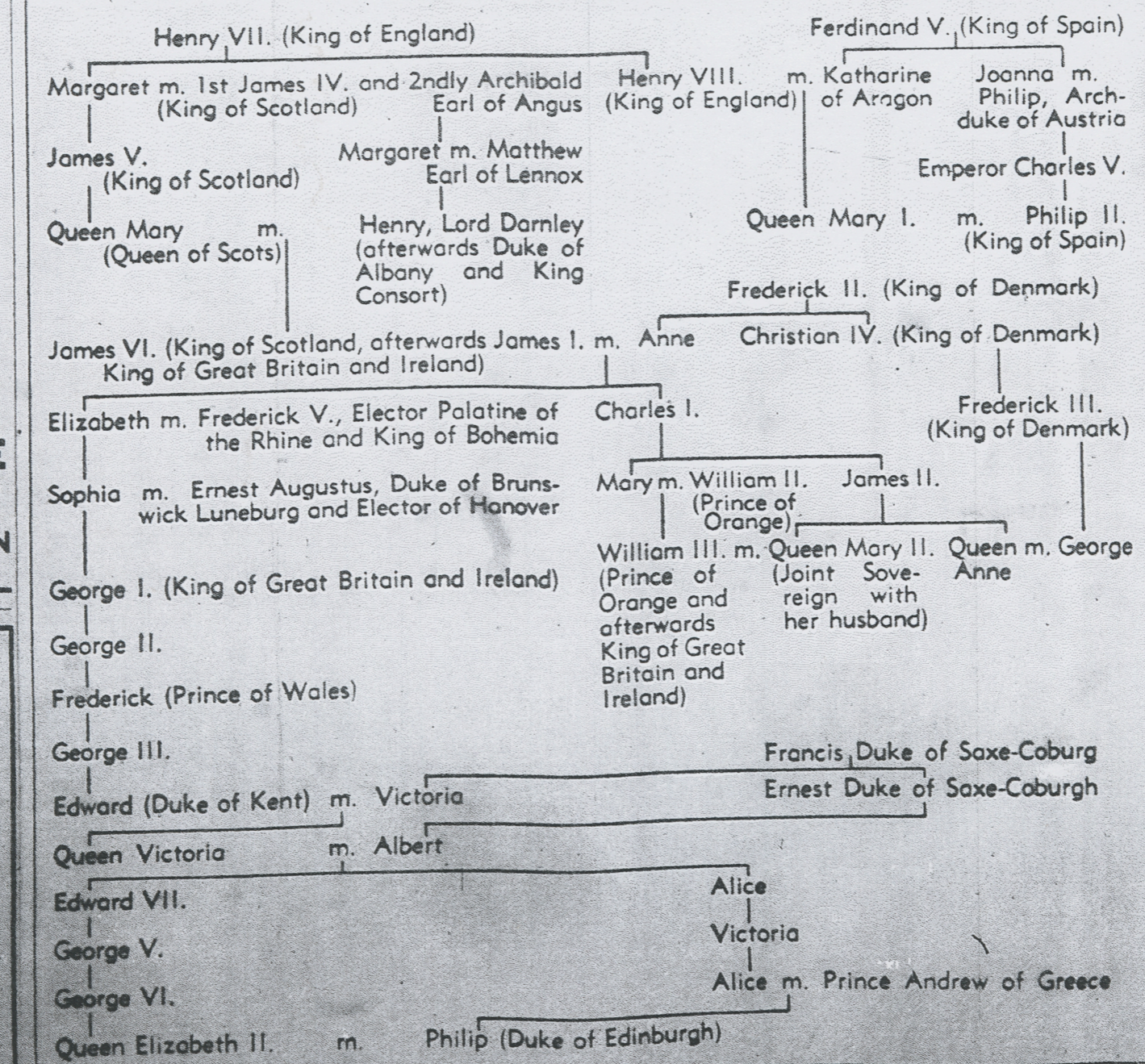
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