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# Elizabeth II

**Elizabeth II** (Elizabeth Alexandra Mary; born 21 April 1926)<sup>[a]</sup> is Queen of the United Kingdom and 14 other Commonwealth realms.<sup>[b]</sup>

Elizabeth was born in Mayfair, London, as the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth). Her father acceded to the throne in 1936 upon the abdication of his brother, King Edward VIII, making Elizabeth the heir presumptive. She was educated privately at home and began to undertake public duties during the Second World War, serving in the Auxiliary Territorial Service. In November 1947, she married Philip Mountbatten, a former prince of Greece and Denmark, and their marriage lasted 73 years until Philip's death in 2021. They had four children: Charles, Prince of Wales; Anne, Princess Royal; Prince Andrew, Duke of York; and Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex.

When her father died in February 1952, Elizabeth—then 25 years old—became queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon, as well as Head of the Commonwealth. Elizabeth has reigned as a constitutional monarch through major political changes such as the Troubles in Northern Ireland, devolution in the United Kingdom, the accession of the United Kingdom to the European Communities, the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, Canadian patriation, and the decolonisation of Africa. The number of her realms has varied over time as territories have gained independence, and as realms, including South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon (renamed Sri Lanka), have become republics. Her many historic visits and meetings include a state visit to the Republic of Ireland in 2011 and visits to or from five popes.

Significant events have included the Queen's coronation in 1953 and the celebrations of her Silver, Golden, Diamond, Sapphire and Platinum jubilees in 1977, 2002, 2012, 2017 and 2022 respectively. Elizabeth is the longest-lived and longest-reigning British monarch, the longest-serving female head of state in history, the oldest living and longest-reigning current monarch, and the oldest and longest-serving incumbent head of state. Elizabeth has occasionally faced republican sentiment and press criticism of the royal family, particularly after the breakdown of her children's marriages, her *annus horribilis* in 1992, and the death in 1997 of her former daughter-in-law Diana, Princess of Wales. However, support for the monarchy in the United Kingdom has been and remains consistently high, as does her personal popularity.

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### Elizabeth II

*Head of the Commonwealth*



Elizabeth II in 2015

**Queen of the United Kingdom and the other Commonwealth realms**

<b>Canada</b>	1952– <i>present</i>
<b>Australia</b>	1952– <i>present</i>
<b>New Zealand</b>	1952– <i>present</i>
<b>Jamaica</b>	1962– <i>present</i>
<b>The Bahamas</b>	1973– <i>present</i>
<b>Grenada</b>	1974– <i>present</i>
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	1975– <i>present</i>
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	1978– <i>present</i>
<b>Tuvalu</b>	1978– <i>present</i>
<b>St Lucia</b>	1979– <i>present</i>
<b>St Vincent and the Grenadines</b>	1979– <i>present</i>
<b>Belize</b>	1981– <i>present</i>
<b>Antigua and Barbuda</b>	1981– <i>present</i>
<b>St Kitts and Nevis</b>	1983– <i>present</i>
<b>Pakistan</b>	1952–1956
<b>South Africa</b>	1952–1961
<b>Ceylon</b>	1952–1972
<b>Ghana</b>	1957–1960
<b>Nigeria</b>	1960–1963
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	1961–1971
<b>Tanganyika</b>	1961–1962
<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>	1962–1976
<b>Uganda</b>	1962–1963
<b>Kenya</b>	1963–1964
<b>Malawi</b>	1964–1966
<b>Malta</b>	1964–1974
<b>The Gambia</b>	1965–1970
<b>Guyana</b>	1966–1970
<b>Barbados</b>	1966–2021
<b>Mauritius</b>	1968–1992
<b>Fiji</b>	1970–1987

<b>Reign</b>	6 February 1952 – present
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## Early life

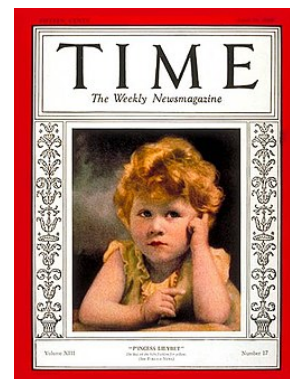
Elizabeth was born at 02:40 (GMT) on 21 April 1926, during the reign of her paternal grandfather, King George V. Her father, the Duke of York (later King George VI), was the second son of the King. Her mother, the Duchess of York (later Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother), was the youngest daughter of Scottish aristocrat Claude Bowes-Lyon, 14th Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne. She was delivered by Caesarean section at her maternal grandfather's London house: 17 Bruton Street, Mayfair.<sup>[2]</sup> She was baptised by the Anglican Archbishop of York, Cosmo Gordon Lang, in the private chapel of Buckingham Palace on 29 May,<sup>[3][c]</sup> and named Elizabeth after her mother; Alexandra after her paternal great-grandmother, who had died six months earlier; and Mary after her paternal grandmother.<sup>[5]</sup> Called "Lilibet" by her close family,<sup>[6]</sup> based on what she called herself at first,<sup>[7]</sup> she was cherished by her grandfather, George V, whom she affectionately called "Grandpa England",<sup>[8]</sup> and during his serious illness in 1929 her regular visits were credited in the popular press and by later biographers with raising his spirits and aiding his recovery.<sup>[9]</sup>

Elizabeth's only sibling, Princess Margaret, was born in 1930. The two princesses were educated at home under the supervision of their mother and their governess, Marion Crawford.<sup>[10]</sup> Lessons concentrated on history, language, literature, and music.<sup>[11]</sup> Crawford published a biography of Elizabeth and Margaret's childhood years entitled *The Little Princesses* in 1950, much to the dismay of the royal family.<sup>[12]</sup> The book describes Elizabeth's love of horses and dogs, her orderliness, and her attitude of responsibility.<sup>[13]</sup> Others echoed such observations: Winston Churchill described Elizabeth when she was two as "a character. She has an air of authority and reflectiveness astonishing in an infant."<sup>[14]</sup> Her cousin Margaret Rhodes described her as "a jolly little girl, but fundamentally sensible and well-behaved".<sup>[15]</sup>

## Heir presumptive

During her grandfather's reign, Elizabeth was third in the line of succession to the British throne, behind her uncle Edward and her father. Although her birth generated public interest, she was not expected to become queen, as

Coronation	2 June 1953
Predecessor	George VI
Heir apparent	<span>Charles, Prince of Wales</span>
Born	<div>Princess Elizabeth of York</div> 21 April 1926 <div>Mayfair, London, United Kingdom</div>
Spouse	<span>Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh</span> (m. 1947; died 2021)
Issue	<span>Charles, Prince of Wales</span>
Detail	<span>Anne, Princess Royal</span>
	<span>Prince Andrew, Duke of York</span>
	<span>Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex</span>
Names	Elizabeth Alexandra Mary
House	Windsor
Father	George VI
Mother	Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon
Signature	<span></span>



On the cover of *Time*, April 1929



Portrait by Philip de László, 1933

Edward was still young and likely to marry and have children of his own, who would precede Elizabeth in the line of succession.<sup>[16]</sup> When her grandfather died in 1936 and her uncle succeeded as Edward VIII, she became second in line to the throne, after her father. Later that year, Edward abdicated, after his proposed marriage to divorced socialite Wallis Simpson provoked a constitutional crisis.<sup>[17]</sup> Consequently, Elizabeth's father became king, taking the regnal name George VI. Since Elizabeth had no brothers, she became heir presumptive. If her parents had had a later son, he would have been heir apparent and above her in the line of succession, which was determined by male-preference primogeniture at the time.<sup>[18]</sup>

Elizabeth received private tuition in constitutional history from Henry Marten, Vice-Provost of Eton College,<sup>[19]</sup> and learned French from a succession of native-speaking governesses.<sup>[20]</sup> A Girl Guides company, the 1st Buckingham Palace Company, was formed specifically so she could socialise with girls her own age.<sup>[21]</sup> Later, she was enrolled as a Sea Ranger.<sup>[20]</sup>

In 1939, Elizabeth's parents toured Canada and the United States. As in 1927, when they had toured Australia and New Zealand, Elizabeth remained in Britain, since her father thought her too young to undertake public tours.<sup>[22]</sup> She "looked tearful" as her parents departed.<sup>[23]</sup> They corresponded regularly,<sup>[23]</sup> and she and her parents made the first royal transatlantic telephone call on 18 May.<sup>[22]</sup>

## Second World War

In September 1939, Britain entered the Second World War. Lord Hailsham suggested that Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret should be evacuated to Canada to avoid the frequent aerial bombings of London by the Luftwaffe.<sup>[24]</sup> This was rejected by their mother, who declared, "The children won't go without me. I won't leave without the King. And the King will never leave."<sup>[25]</sup> The princesses stayed at Balmoral Castle, Scotland, until Christmas 1939, when they moved to Sandringham House, Norfolk.<sup>[26]</sup> From February to May 1940, they lived at Royal Lodge, Windsor, until moving to Windsor Castle, where they lived for most of the next five years.<sup>[27]</sup> At Windsor, the princesses staged pantomimes at Christmas in aid of the Queen's Wool Fund, which bought yarn to knit into military garments.<sup>[28]</sup> In 1940, the 14-year-old Elizabeth made her first radio broadcast during the BBC's *Children's Hour*, addressing other children who had been evacuated from the cities.<sup>[29]</sup> She stated: "We are trying to do all we can to help our gallant sailors, soldiers, and airmen, and we are trying, too, to bear our own share of the danger and sadness of war. We know, every one of us, that in the end all will be well."<sup>[29]</sup>



In Auxiliary Territorial Service uniform, April 1945

In 1943, Elizabeth undertook her first solo public appearance on a visit to the Grenadier Guards, of which she had been appointed colonel the previous year.<sup>[30]</sup> As she approached her 18th birthday, parliament changed the law so she could act as one of five Counsellors of State in the event of her father's incapacity or absence abroad, such as his visit to Italy in July 1944.<sup>[31]</sup> In February 1945, she was appointed as an honorary second subaltern in the Auxiliary Territorial Service with the service number of 230873.<sup>[32]</sup> She trained as a driver and mechanic and was given the rank of honorary junior commander (female equivalent of captain at the time) five months later.<sup>[33][34][35]</sup>

At the end of the war in Europe, on Victory in Europe Day, Elizabeth and Margaret mingled anonymously with the celebratory crowds in the streets of London. Elizabeth later said in a rare interview, "We asked my parents if we could go out and see for ourselves. I remember we were terrified of being recognised ... I remember lines of unknown people linking arms and walking down Whitehall, all of us just swept along on a tide of happiness and relief."<sup>[36]</sup>

During the war, plans were drawn up to quell Welsh nationalism by affiliating Elizabeth more closely with Wales. Proposals, such as appointing her Constable of Caernarfon Castle or a patron of Urdd Gobaith Cymru (the Welsh League of Youth), were abandoned for several reasons, including fear of associating Elizabeth with conscientious objectors in the Urdd at a time when Britain was at war.<sup>[37]</sup> Welsh politicians suggested she be made Princess of Wales on her 18th birthday. Home Secretary Herbert Morrison supported the idea, but the King rejected it because he felt such a title belonged solely to the wife of a Prince of Wales and the Prince of Wales had always been the heir apparent.<sup>[38]</sup> In 1946, she was inducted into the Welsh Gorsedd of Bards at the National Eisteddfod of Wales.<sup>[39]</sup>

Princess Elizabeth went on her first overseas tour in 1947, accompanying her parents through southern Africa. During the tour, in a broadcast to the British Commonwealth on her 21st birthday, she made the following pledge: "I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong."<sup>[40]</sup> The speech was written by Dermot Morrah, a journalist for *The Times*.<sup>[41]</sup>



Elizabeth (far left) on the balcony of Buckingham Palace with her family and Winston Churchill on 8 May 1945, Victory in Europe Day

## Marriage

Elizabeth met her future husband, Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark, in 1934 and 1937.<sup>[42]</sup> They were second cousins once removed through King Christian IX of Denmark and third cousins through Queen Victoria. After another meeting at the Royal Naval College in Dartmouth in July 1939, Elizabeth—though only 13 years old—said she fell in love with Philip, and they began to exchange letters.<sup>[43]</sup> She was 21 when their engagement was officially announced on 9 July 1947.<sup>[44]</sup>



Elizabeth and Philip, 1950

The engagement was not without controversy; Philip had no financial standing, was foreign-born (though a British subject who had served in the Royal Navy throughout the Second World War), and had sisters who had married German noblemen with Nazi links.<sup>[45]</sup> Marion Crawford wrote, "Some of the King's advisors did not think him good enough for her. He was a prince without a home or kingdom. Some of the papers played long and loud tunes on the string of Philip's foreign origin."<sup>[46]</sup> Later biographies reported Elizabeth's mother had reservations about the union initially, and teased Philip as "The Hun".<sup>[47][48]</sup> In later life, however, the Queen Mother told biographer Tim Heald that Philip was "an English gentleman".<sup>[49]</sup>

Before the marriage, Philip renounced his Greek and Danish titles, officially converted from Greek Orthodoxy to Anglicanism, and adopted the style *Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten*, taking the surname of his mother's British family.<sup>[50]</sup> Just before the wedding, he was created Duke of Edinburgh and granted the style *His Royal Highness*.<sup>[51]</sup> Elizabeth and Philip were married on 20 November 1947 at Westminster Abbey. They received 2,500 wedding gifts from around the world.<sup>[52]</sup> Because Britain had not yet completely recovered from the devastation of the war, Elizabeth required ration coupons to buy the material for her gown, which was designed by Norman Hartnell.<sup>[53]</sup> In post-war Britain, it was not acceptable for Philip's German relations, including his three surviving sisters, to be invited to the wedding.<sup>[54]</sup> The Duke of Windsor, formerly King Edward VIII, was not invited either.<sup>[55]</sup>

Elizabeth gave birth to her first child, Prince Charles, on 14 November 1948. One month earlier, the King had issued letters patent allowing her children to use the style and title of a royal prince or princess, to which they otherwise would not have been entitled as their father was no longer a royal prince.<sup>[56]</sup> A second child, Princess Anne, was born in 1950.<sup>[57]</sup>

Following their wedding, the couple leased Windlesham Moor, near Windsor Castle, until July 1949,<sup>[52]</sup> when they took up residence at Clarence House in London. At various times between 1949 and 1951, the Duke of Edinburgh was stationed in the British Crown Colony of Malta as a serving Royal Navy officer. He and Elizabeth lived intermittently in Malta for several months at a time in the hamlet of Gwardamanga, at Villa Guardamangia, the rented home of Philip's uncle, Lord Mountbatten. The children remained in Britain.<sup>[58]</sup>



Princess Elizabeth with her son Prince Charles, 1948

## Reign

### Accession and coronation

During 1951, George VI's health declined, and Elizabeth frequently stood in for him at public events. When she toured Canada and visited President Harry S. Truman in Washington, D.C., in October 1951, her private secretary, Martin

Charteris, carried a draft accession declaration in case the King died while she was on tour.<sup>[59]</sup> In early 1952, Elizabeth and Philip set out for a tour of Australia and New Zealand by way of Kenya. On 6 February 1952, they had just returned to their Kenyan home, Sagana Lodge, after a night spent at Treetops Hotel, when word arrived of the death of the King and consequently Elizabeth's immediate accession to the throne. Philip broke the news to the new queen.<sup>[60]</sup> Martin Charteris asked her to choose a regnal name; she chose to remain Elizabeth, "of course";<sup>[61]</sup> thus she was called Elizabeth II, which annoyed many Scots, as she was the first Elizabeth to rule in Scotland.<sup>[62]</sup> She was proclaimed queen throughout her realms and the royal party hastily returned to the United Kingdom.<sup>[63]</sup> She and the Duke of Edinburgh moved into Buckingham Palace.<sup>[64]</sup>

With Elizabeth's accession, it seemed probable the royal house would bear the Duke of Edinburgh's name, in line with the custom of a wife taking her husband's surname on marriage. The Duke's uncle, Lord Mountbatten, advocated the name *House of Mountbatten*. Philip suggested *House of Edinburgh*, after his ducal title.<sup>[65]</sup> The British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, and Elizabeth's grandmother, Queen Mary, favoured the retention of the House of Windsor, and so on 9 April 1952 Elizabeth issued a declaration that *Windsor* would continue to be the name of the royal house. The Duke complained, "I am the only man in the country not allowed to give his name to his own children."<sup>[66]</sup> In 1960, after the death of Queen Mary in 1953 and the resignation of Churchill in 1955, the surname *Mountbatten-Windsor* was adopted for Philip and Elizabeth's male-line descendants who do not carry royal titles.<sup>[67]</sup>

Amid preparations for the coronation, Princess Margaret told her sister she wished to marry Peter Townsend, a divorcé, 16 years Margaret's senior, with two sons from his previous marriage. The Queen asked them to wait for a year; in the words of Charteris, "the Queen was naturally sympathetic towards the Princess, but I think she thought—she hoped—given time, the affair would peter out."<sup>[68]</sup> Senior politicians were against the match and the Church of England did not permit remarriage after divorce. If Margaret had contracted a civil marriage, she would have been expected to renounce her right of succession.<sup>[69]</sup> Margaret decided to abandon her plans with Townsend.<sup>[70]</sup>

Despite the death of Queen Mary on 24 March, the coronation on 2 June 1953 went ahead as planned, as Mary had asked before she died.<sup>[71]</sup> The ceremony in Westminster Abbey, with the exception of the anointing and communion, was televised for the first time.<sup>[72][d]</sup> Elizabeth's coronation gown was embroidered on her instructions with the floral emblems of Commonwealth countries.<sup>[76]</sup>

## Continuing evolution of the Commonwealth

From Elizabeth's birth onwards, the British Empire continued its transformation into the Commonwealth of Nations.<sup>[77]</sup> By the time of her accession in 1952, her role as head of multiple independent states was already established.<sup>[78]</sup> In 1953, the Queen and her husband embarked on a seven-month round-the-world tour, visiting 13 countries and covering more than 40,000 miles (64,000 kilometres) by land, sea and air.<sup>[79]</sup> She became the first reigning monarch of Australia and New Zealand to visit those nations.<sup>[80]</sup> During the tour, crowds were immense; three-quarters of the population of Australia were estimated to have seen her.<sup>[81]</sup> Throughout her reign, the Queen has made hundreds of state visits to other countries and tours of the Commonwealth; she is the most widely travelled head of state.<sup>[82]</sup>

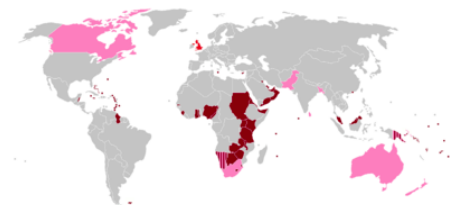
In 1956, the British and French prime ministers, Sir Anthony Eden and Guy Mollet, discussed the possibility of France joining the Commonwealth. The proposal was never accepted and the following year France signed the Treaty of Rome, which established the European Economic Community, the precursor to the European Union.<sup>[83]</sup> In November 1956, Britain and France invaded Egypt in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to capture the Suez Canal. Lord Mountbatten said the Queen was opposed to the invasion, though Eden denied it. Eden resigned two months later.<sup>[84]</sup>



Coronation of Elizabeth II, 1953



Coronation portrait of Elizabeth II with Philip, 1953



Elizabeth's realms (light red and pink) and their territories and protectorates (dark red) at the beginning of her reign in 1952



Elizabeth II and Commonwealth leaders at the 1960 Commonwealth Conference

The absence of a formal mechanism within the Conservative Party for choosing a leader meant that, following Eden's resignation, it fell to the Queen to decide whom to commission to form a government. Eden recommended she consult Lord Salisbury, the Lord President of the Council. Lord Salisbury and Lord Kilmuir, the Lord Chancellor, consulted the British Cabinet, Churchill, and the Chairman of the backbench 1922 Committee, resulting in the Queen appointing their recommended candidate: Harold Macmillan.<sup>[85]</sup>

The Suez crisis and the choice of Eden's successor led, in 1957, to the first major personal criticism of the Queen. In a magazine, which he owned and edited,<sup>[86]</sup> Lord Altrincham accused her of being "out of touch".<sup>[87]</sup> Altrincham was denounced by public figures and slapped by a member of the public appalled by his comments.<sup>[88]</sup> Six years later, in 1963, Macmillan resigned and advised the Queen to appoint the Earl of Home as prime minister, advice she followed.<sup>[89]</sup> The Queen again came under criticism for appointing the prime minister on the advice of a small number of ministers or a single minister.<sup>[89]</sup> In 1965, the Conservatives adopted a formal mechanism for electing a leader, thus relieving her of involvement.<sup>[90]</sup>

In 1957, she made a state visit to the United States, where she addressed the United Nations General Assembly on behalf of the Commonwealth. On the same tour, she opened the 23rd Canadian Parliament, becoming the first monarch of Canada to open a parliamentary session.<sup>[91]</sup> Two years later, solely in her capacity as Queen of Canada, she revisited the United States and toured Canada.<sup>[91][92]</sup> In 1961, she toured Cyprus, India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Iran.<sup>[93]</sup> On a visit to Ghana the same year, she dismissed fears for her safety, even though her host, President Kwame Nkrumah, who had replaced her as head of state, was a target for assassins.<sup>[94]</sup> Harold Macmillan wrote, "The Queen has been absolutely determined all through ... She is impatient of the attitude towards her to treat her as ... a film star ... She has indeed 'the heart and stomach of a man' ... She loves her duty and means to be a Queen."<sup>[94]</sup> Before her tour through parts of Quebec in 1964, the press reported extremists within the Quebec separatist movement were plotting Elizabeth's assassination.<sup>[95][96]</sup> No attempt was made, but a riot did break out while she was in Montreal; the Queen's "calmness and courage in the face of the violence" was noted.<sup>[97]</sup>

Elizabeth's pregnancies with Princes Andrew and Edward, in 1959 and 1963, mark the only times she has not performed the State Opening of the British parliament during her reign.<sup>[98]</sup> In addition to performing traditional ceremonies, she also instituted new practices. Her first royal walkabout, meeting ordinary members of the public, took place during a tour of Australia and New Zealand in 1970.<sup>[99]</sup>

## Acceleration of decolonisation



In Queensland, Australia, 1970

The 1960s and 1970s saw an acceleration in the decolonisation of Africa and the Caribbean. Over 20 countries gained independence from Britain as part of a planned transition to self-government. In 1965, however, the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith, in opposition to moves towards majority rule, unilaterally declared independence while expressing "loyalty and devotion" to Elizabeth, declaring her "Queen of Rhodesia".<sup>[100]</sup> Although the Queen formally dismissed him, and the international community applied sanctions against Rhodesia, his regime survived for over a decade.<sup>[101]</sup> As Britain's ties to its former empire weakened, the British government sought entry to the European Community, a goal it achieved in 1973.<sup>[102]</sup>

In February 1974, the British Prime Minister, Edward Heath, advised the Queen to call a general election in the middle of her tour of the Austronesian Pacific Rim, requiring her to fly back to Britain.<sup>[103]</sup> The election resulted in a hung parliament; Heath's Conservatives were not the largest party, but could stay in office if they formed a coalition with the Liberals. Heath only resigned when discussions on forming a coalition foundered, after which the Queen asked the Leader of the Opposition, Labour's Harold Wilson, to form a government.<sup>[104]</sup>

A year later, at the height of the 1975 Australian constitutional crisis, the Australian Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, was dismissed from his post by Governor-General Sir John Kerr, after the Opposition-controlled Senate rejected Whitlam's budget proposals.<sup>[105]</sup> As Whitlam had a majority in the House of Representatives, Speaker Gordon Scholes appealed to the Queen to reverse Kerr's decision. She declined, saying she would not interfere in decisions reserved by

the Constitution of Australia for the Governor-General.<sup>[106]</sup> The crisis fuelled Australian republicanism.<sup>[105]</sup>

## Silver Jubilee

In 1977, Elizabeth marked the Silver Jubilee of her accession. Parties and events took place throughout the Commonwealth, many coinciding with her associated national and Commonwealth tours. The celebrations re-affirmed the Queen's popularity, despite virtually coincident negative press coverage of Princess Margaret's separation from her husband, Lord Snowdon.<sup>[107]</sup> In 1978, the Queen endured a state visit to the United Kingdom by Romania's communist leader, Nicolae Ceaușescu, and his wife, Elena,<sup>[108]</sup> though privately she thought they had "blood on their hands".<sup>[109]</sup> The following year brought two blows: one was the unmasking of Anthony Blunt, former Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, as a communist spy; the other was the assassination of her relative and in-law Lord Mountbatten by the Provisional Irish Republican Army.<sup>[110]</sup>



Leaders of the G7 states, members of the royal family and Elizabeth (centre), London, 1977

According to Paul Martin Sr., by the end of the 1970s the Queen was worried the Crown "had little meaning for" Pierre Trudeau, the Canadian prime minister.<sup>[111]</sup> Tony Benn said the Queen found Trudeau "rather disappointing".<sup>[111]</sup> Trudeau's supposed republicanism seemed to be confirmed by his antics, such as sliding down banisters at Buckingham Palace and pirouetting behind the Queen's back in 1977, and the removal of various Canadian royal symbols during his term of office.<sup>[111]</sup> In 1980, Canadian politicians sent to London to discuss the patriation of the Canadian constitution found the Queen "better informed ... than any of the British politicians or bureaucrats".<sup>[111]</sup> She was particularly interested after the failure of Bill C-60, which would have affected her role as head of state.<sup>[111]</sup> Patriation removed the role of the British parliament from the Canadian constitution, but the monarchy was retained. Trudeau said in his memoirs that the Queen favoured his attempt to reform the constitution and that he was impressed by "the grace she displayed in public" and "the wisdom she showed in private".<sup>[112]</sup>

## Press scrutiny and Thatcher premiership

During the 1981 Trooping the Colour ceremony, six weeks before the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer, six shots were fired at the Queen from close range as she rode down The Mall, London, on her horse, Burmese. Police later discovered the shots were blanks. The 17-year-old assailant, Marcus Sarjeant, was sentenced to five years in prison and released after three.<sup>[113]</sup> The Queen's composure and skill in controlling her mount were widely praised.<sup>[114]</sup>



Elizabeth riding Burmese at the 1986 Trooping the Colour ceremony

Months later, in October, the Queen was the subject of another attack while on a visit to Dunedin, New Zealand. New Zealand Security Intelligence Service documents, declassified in 2018, revealed that 17-year-old Christopher John Lewis fired a shot with a .22 rifle from the fifth floor of a building overlooking the parade, but missed.<sup>[115]</sup> Lewis was arrested, but never charged with attempted murder or treason, and sentenced to three years in jail for unlawful possession and discharge of a firearm. Two years into his sentence, he attempted to escape a psychiatric hospital in order to assassinate Charles, who was visiting the country with Diana and their son Prince William.<sup>[116]</sup>



The Queen and President Reagan riding at Windsor, June 1982

From April to September 1982, the Queen's son, Prince Andrew, served with British forces in the Falklands War, for which she reportedly felt anxiety<sup>[117]</sup> and pride.<sup>[118]</sup> On 9 July, she awoke in her bedroom at Buckingham Palace to find an intruder, Michael Fagan, in the room with her. In a serious lapse of security, assistance only arrived after two calls to the Palace police switchboard.<sup>[119]</sup> After hosting US President Ronald Reagan at Windsor Castle in 1982 and visiting his California ranch in 1983, the Queen was angered when his administration ordered the invasion of Grenada, one of her Caribbean realms, without informing her.<sup>[120]</sup>

Intense media interest in the opinions and private lives of the royal family during the 1980s led to a series of sensational stories in the press, not all of which were entirely true.<sup>[121]</sup> As Kelvin MacKenzie, editor of *The Sun*, told his staff: "Give me a

Sunday for Monday splash on the Royals. Don't worry if it's not true—so long as there's not too much of a fuss about it afterwards."<sup>[122]</sup> Newspaper editor Donald Treford wrote in *The Observer* of 21 September 1986: "The royal soap opera has now reached such a pitch of public interest that the boundary between fact and fiction has been lost sight of ... it is not just that some papers don't check their facts or accept denials: they don't care if the stories are true or not." It was reported, most notably in *The Sunday Times* of 20 July 1986, that the Queen was worried that Margaret Thatcher's economic policies fostered social divisions and was alarmed by high unemployment, a series of riots, the violence of a miners' strike, and Thatcher's refusal to apply sanctions against the apartheid regime in South Africa. The sources of the rumours included royal aide Michael Shea and Commonwealth Secretary-General Shridath Ramphal, but Shea claimed his remarks were taken out of context and embellished by speculation.<sup>[123]</sup> Thatcher reputedly said the Queen would vote for the Social Democratic Party—Thatcher's political opponents.<sup>[124]</sup> Thatcher's biographer, John Campbell, claimed "the report was a piece of journalistic mischief-making".<sup>[125]</sup> Belying reports of acrimony between them, Thatcher later conveyed her personal admiration for the Queen,<sup>[126]</sup> and the Queen gave two honours in her personal gift—membership in the Order of Merit and the Order of the Garter—to Thatcher after her replacement as prime minister by John Major.<sup>[127]</sup> Brian Mulroney, Canadian prime minister between 1984 and 1993, said Elizabeth was a "behind the scenes force" in ending apartheid.<sup>[128][129]</sup>

By the end of the 1980s, the Queen had become the target of satire.<sup>[130]</sup> The involvement of younger members of the royal family in the charity game show *It's a Royal Knockout* in 1987 was ridiculed.<sup>[131]</sup> In Canada, Elizabeth publicly supported politically divisive constitutional amendments, prompting criticism from opponents of the proposed changes, including Pierre Trudeau.<sup>[128]</sup> The same year, the elected Fijian government was deposed in a military coup. As monarch of Fiji, Elizabeth supported the attempts of Governor-General Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau to assert executive power and negotiate a settlement. Coup leader Sitiveni Rabuka deposed Ganilau and declared Fiji a republic.<sup>[132]</sup>

## Turbulent 1990s and *annus horribilis*

In 1991, in the wake of coalition victory in the Gulf War, the Queen became the first British monarch to address a joint meeting of the United States Congress.<sup>[133]</sup>

In a speech on 24 November 1992, to mark her Ruby Jubilee on the throne, Elizabeth called 1992 her *annus horribilis* ('horrible year').<sup>[134]</sup> Republican feeling in Britain had risen because of press estimates of the Queen's private wealth—which were contradicted by the Palace—and reports of affairs and strained marriages among her extended family.<sup>[135]</sup> In March, her second son, Prince Andrew, and his wife, Sarah, separated, and Mauritius removed Elizabeth as head of state; in April, her daughter, Princess Anne, divorced Captain Mark Phillips;<sup>[136]</sup> during a state visit to Germany in October, angry demonstrators in Dresden threw eggs at her;<sup>[137]</sup> and, in November, a large fire broke out at Windsor Castle, one of her official residences. The monarchy came under increased criticism and public scrutiny.<sup>[138]</sup> In an unusually personal speech, the Queen said that any institution must expect criticism, but suggested it be done with "a touch of humour, gentleness and understanding".<sup>[139]</sup> Two days later, Prime Minister John Major announced reforms to the royal finances planned since the previous year, including the Queen paying income tax from 1993 onwards, and a reduction in the civil list.<sup>[140]</sup> In December, Prince Charles and his wife, Diana, formally separated.<sup>[141]</sup> The year ended with a lawsuit, as the Queen sued *The Sun* newspaper for breach of copyright when it published the text of her annual Christmas message two days before it was broadcast. The newspaper was forced to pay her legal fees and donated £200,000 to charity.<sup>[142]</sup> The Queen's lawyers had taken action against *The Sun* five years earlier for breach of copyright, after it published a photograph of the Duchess of York and Princess Beatrice. The case was solved with an out-of-court settlement that made the newspaper pay \$180,000.<sup>[143]</sup>



Philip and Elizabeth in Germany, October 1992

In the years to follow, public revelations on the state of Charles and Diana's marriage continued.<sup>[144]</sup> Even though support for republicanism in Britain seemed higher than at any time in living memory, republicanism was still a minority viewpoint, and the Queen herself had high approval ratings.<sup>[145]</sup> Criticism was focused on the institution of the monarchy itself and the Queen's wider family rather than her own behaviour and actions.<sup>[146]</sup> In consultation with her husband and the Prime Minister, John Major, as well as the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, and her private secretary, Robert Fellowes, she wrote to Charles and Diana at the end of December 1995, saying a divorce was desirable.<sup>[147]</sup>

In August 1997, a year after the divorce, Diana was killed in a car crash in Paris. The Queen was on holiday with her



extended family at Balmoral. Diana's two sons by Charles—Princes [William](#) and [Harry](#)—wanted to attend church and so the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh took them that morning.<sup>[148]</sup> Afterwards, for five days the Queen and the Duke shielded their grandsons from the intense press interest by keeping them at Balmoral where they could grieve in private,<sup>[149]</sup> but the royal family's silence and seclusion, and the failure to fly a flag at [half-mast](#) over Buckingham Palace, caused public dismay.<sup>[129][150]</sup> Pressured by the hostile reaction, the Queen agreed to return to London and do a [live television broadcast](#) on 5 September, the day before [Diana's funeral](#).<sup>[151]</sup> In the broadcast, she expressed admiration for Diana and her feelings "as a grandmother" for the two princes.<sup>[152]</sup> As a result, much of the public hostility evaporated.<sup>[152]</sup>

In October 1997, Elizabeth and Philip made a state visit to India, which included a controversial visit to the site of the [Jallianwala Bagh massacre](#) to pay her respects. Protesters chanted "Killer Queen, go back",<sup>[153]</sup> and there were demands for her to apologise for the action of British troops 78 years earlier.<sup>[154]</sup> At the memorial in the park, she and the Duke paid their respects by laying a wreath and stood for a 30-second [moment of silence](#).<sup>[154]</sup> As a result, much of the fury among the public softened and the protests were called off.<sup>[153]</sup>

In November of that year, the Queen and her husband held a reception at [Banqueting House](#) to mark their golden wedding anniversary.<sup>[155]</sup> She made a speech and praised Philip for his role as a consort, referring to him as "my strength and stay".<sup>[155]</sup>

## Golden Jubilee



Greeting [NASA](#) employees at the [Goddard Space Flight Center](#), [Maryland](#), May 2007

On the eve of the new millennium, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh boarded a vessel from [Southwark](#), bound for the [Millennium Dome](#). Before passing under [Tower Bridge](#), the Queen lit the National Millennium Beacon in the [Pool of London](#), using a laser torch.<sup>[156][157]</sup> Just before midnight, the Queen officially opened the Dome.<sup>[158]</sup> The Queen and the Duke joined [Tony](#) and [Cherie Blair](#), in singing *[Auld Lang Syne](#)*, during which the Queen held hands with Philip and Tony Blair.<sup>[159][160]</sup>

In 2002, Elizabeth marked her [Golden Jubilee](#), the 50th anniversary of her accession. Her sister and mother died in February and March respectively, and the media speculated whether the Jubilee would be a success or a failure.<sup>[161]</sup> She again undertook an extensive tour of her realms, which began in Jamaica in February, where she called the farewell banquet "memorable" after a power cut plunged the [King's House](#), the [official residence](#) of the [governor-general](#), into darkness.<sup>[162]</sup> As in 1977, there were street parties and commemorative events, and monuments were named to honour the occasion. A million people attended each day of the three-day main Jubilee celebration in London,<sup>[163]</sup> and the enthusiasm shown by the public for the Queen was greater than many journalists had expected.<sup>[164]</sup>

Though generally healthy throughout her life, in 2003 the Queen had [keyhole surgery](#) on both knees. In October 2006, she missed the opening of the new [Emirates Stadium](#) because of a strained back muscle that had been troubling her since the summer.<sup>[165]</sup>

In May 2007, *[The Daily Telegraph](#)*, citing unnamed sources, reported the Queen was "exasperated and frustrated" by the policies of Tony Blair, that she was concerned the [British Armed Forces](#) were overstretched in Iraq and Afghanistan, and that she had raised concerns over rural and countryside issues with Blair.<sup>[166]</sup> She was, however, said to admire Blair's efforts to achieve peace in [Northern Ireland](#).<sup>[167]</sup> She became the first British monarch to celebrate a diamond wedding anniversary in November 2007.<sup>[168]</sup> On 20 March 2008, at the Church of Ireland St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh, the Queen attended the first [Maundy service](#) held outside England and Wales.<sup>[169]</sup>



The Queen meeting with [Vladimir Putin](#) alongside [Tony Blair](#) in 2005

Elizabeth addressed the UN General Assembly for a second time in 2010, again in her capacity as Queen of all Commonwealth realms and Head of the Commonwealth.<sup>[170]</sup> The UN Secretary General, [Ban Ki-moon](#), introduced her as "an anchor for our age".<sup>[171]</sup> During her visit to New York, which followed a tour of Canada, she officially opened a memorial garden for British victims of the [September 11 attacks](#).<sup>[171]</sup> The Queen's 11-day visit to Australia in October 2011 was her 16th visit to the country

since 1954.<sup>[172]</sup> By invitation of the Irish President, Mary McAleese, she made the first state visit to the Republic of Ireland by a British monarch in May 2011.<sup>[173]</sup>

## Diamond Jubilee and longevity



Visiting Birmingham in July 2012 as part of her Diamond Jubilee tour

The Queen's 2012 Diamond Jubilee marked 60 years on the throne, and celebrations were held throughout her realms, the wider Commonwealth, and beyond. In a message released on Accession Day, Elizabeth wrote:

In this special year, as I dedicate myself anew to your service, I hope we will all be reminded of the power of togetherness and the convening strength of family, friendship and good neighbourliness ... I hope also that this Jubilee year will be a time to give thanks for the great advances that have been made since 1952 and to look forward to the future with clear head and warm heart.<sup>[174]</sup>

She and her husband undertook an extensive tour of the United Kingdom, while her children and grandchildren embarked on royal tours of other Commonwealth states on her behalf.<sup>[175][176]</sup> On 4 June, Jubilee beacons were lit around the world.<sup>[177]</sup> While touring Manchester as part of her Jubilee celebrations, the Queen made a surprise appearance at a wedding party at Manchester Town Hall, which then made international headlines.<sup>[178]</sup> In November, the Queen and her husband celebrated their blue sapphire wedding anniversary (65th).<sup>[179]</sup> On 18 December, she became the first British sovereign to attend a peacetime Cabinet meeting since George III in 1781.<sup>[180]</sup>

The Queen, who opened the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal, also opened the 2012 Summer Olympics and Paralympics in London, making her the first head of state to open two Olympic Games in two countries.<sup>[181]</sup> For the London Olympics, she played herself in a short film as part of the opening ceremony, alongside Daniel Craig as James Bond.<sup>[182]</sup> On 4 April 2013, she received an honorary BAFTA for her patronage of the film industry and was called "the most memorable Bond girl yet" at the award ceremony.<sup>[183]</sup> On 3 March 2013, Elizabeth was admitted to King Edward VII's Hospital as a precaution after developing symptoms of gastroenteritis. She returned to Buckingham Palace the following day.<sup>[184]</sup> A week later, she signed the new Charter of the Commonwealth.<sup>[185]</sup> Because of her age and the need for her to limit travelling, in 2013 she chose not to attend the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting for the first time in 40 years. She was represented at the summit in Sri Lanka by Prince Charles.<sup>[186]</sup> She underwent cataract surgery in May 2018.<sup>[187]</sup> In March 2019, she opted to give up driving on public roads, largely as a consequence of a car crash involving her husband two months earlier.<sup>[188]</sup>

The Queen surpassed her great-great-grandmother, Queen Victoria, to become the longest-lived British monarch on 21 December 2007, and the longest-reigning British monarch and longest-reigning queen regnant and female head of state in the world on 9 September 2015.<sup>[190][191][192]</sup> She became the oldest current monarch after King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia died on 23 January 2015.<sup>[193][194]</sup> She later became the longest-reigning current monarch and the longest-serving current head of state following the death of King Bhumibol of Thailand on 13 October 2016,<sup>[195][196]</sup> and the oldest current head of state on the resignation of Robert Mugabe on 21 November 2017.<sup>[197][198]</sup> On 6 February 2017, she became the first British monarch to commemorate a Sapphire Jubilee,<sup>[199]</sup> and on 20 November, she was the first British monarch to celebrate a platinum wedding anniversary.<sup>[200]</sup> Philip had retired from his official duties as the Queen's consort in August 2017.<sup>[201]</sup>

On 20 April 2018, the government leaders of the Commonwealth of Nations announced that she will be succeeded by Charles as Head of the Commonwealth. The Queen stated it was her "sincere wish" that Charles would follow her in the role.<sup>[202]</sup>



The Queen opening the Borders Railway on the day she became the longest-reigning British monarch. In her speech, she said she had never aspired to achieve that milestone.<sup>[189]</sup>

## COVID-19 pandemic

On 19 March 2020, the Queen moved to Windsor Castle and sequestered there as a precaution, as the COVID-19 pandemic hit the United Kingdom.<sup>[203]</sup> Public engagements were cancelled and Windsor Castle followed a strict sanitary protocol nicknamed "HMS Bubble".<sup>[204]</sup> On 5 April, the Queen addressed the Commonwealth in a televised broadcast, in which she asked people to "take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return". She added, "we will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; we will meet again".<sup>[205]</sup> The broadcast was watched by an estimated 24 million viewers on television in the United Kingdom.<sup>[206]</sup>

On 8 May, the 75th anniversary of VE Day, the Queen addressed the nation again, at 9 pm, the exact time at which her father George VI broadcast in 1945, in which she asked people to "never give up, never despair".<sup>[207]</sup> In October, the Queen carried out her first public engagement since March, and visited the UK's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory to officially open its new Energetics Analysis Centre.<sup>[208]</sup> On 4 November, she appeared masked for the first time, during a private pilgrimage to the tomb of the Unknown Warrior at Westminster Abbey, to mark the centenary of his burial.<sup>[209]</sup> The same month, due to the rise in the risk of COVID infection, the Queen and Prince Philip returned to Windsor Castle, where they celebrated their 73rd wedding anniversary.<sup>[210]</sup> On 9 January 2021, Buckingham Palace announced that the Queen and Prince Philip had received their first dose of the vaccine against COVID-19.<sup>[211]</sup> She received her second dose in April, before her first in-person public appearance of 2021.<sup>[212]</sup>

After 73 years of marriage, Prince Philip died on 9 April 2021, making Elizabeth the first British monarch to reign as a widow or widower since Victoria.<sup>[213][214]</sup> She remarked in private that his death "left a huge void".<sup>[215]</sup> Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Queen sat alone at Philip's funeral service, and images of her sitting alone drew sympathy from people around the world.<sup>[216][217]</sup> Despite the pandemic, the Queen took part in the 2021 State Opening of Parliament,<sup>[218]</sup> and hosted a reception for G7 leaders in Cornwall, as part of the 47th G7 summit.<sup>[219][220]</sup> On 5 July 2021, the 73rd anniversary of the founding of the NHS, the Queen announced in a personal handwritten message that the NHS would be awarded the George Cross to "recognise all NHS staff, past and present, across all disciplines and all four nations".<sup>[221]</sup>



The Queen in a virtual meeting with Dame Cindy Kiro during the COVID-19 pandemic, October 2021

In October 2021, Elizabeth began using a walking stick for comfort during public engagements for the first time since her operation in 2004.<sup>[222]</sup> On 19 October, she declined *The Oldie's* Oldie of the Year Award, telling nominator Gyles Brandreth in a letter: "You're only as old as you feel".<sup>[223]</sup> She was briefly hospitalised on 20 October, after cancelling a visit to Northern Ireland on health grounds, but left hospital the following day.<sup>[224]</sup> The Queen's hospitalisation was only confirmed by the Palace after *The Sun* ran the story as a front-page exclusive.<sup>[225]</sup> The same week, she cancelled her plans to travel to the COP26 summit in Glasgow following advice from her doctor to rest, instead delivering her address via video message.<sup>[226]</sup> The Queen was also unable to attend the 2021 National Service of Remembrance after spraining her back; this was said to be unrelated to previous medical advice for rest.<sup>[227]</sup> On 21 November, after returning to public duties, she attended a rare joint christening of two of her great-grandchildren at the Royal Lodge in Windsor Great Park, Berkshire.<sup>[228][229]</sup> On 30 November, Barbados

removed the Queen as head of state, becoming a republic.<sup>[230]</sup> In her 2021 Christmas broadcast, the Queen paid a personal tribute and spoke movingly of her "beloved Philip", saying, "That mischievous, inquiring twinkle was as bright at the end as when I first set eyes on him".<sup>[231][232]</sup>

On 20 February 2022, Buckingham Palace announced that the Queen had tested positive for COVID-19 and was experiencing "mild cold-like symptoms", but is expected to continue "light duties" at Windsor. "She will continue to receive medical attention and will follow all the appropriate guidelines," the statement added.<sup>[233]</sup> At around the same time, a number of other cases were diagnosed at the Windsor Castle and among family members of the Queen.<sup>[234]</sup>

## Platinum Jubilee

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee began on 6 February 2022. It marks 70 years since she acceded to the throne upon her father's death. She held a reception for pensioners, local Women's Institute members and charity volunteers on the eve of the date at Sandringham House.<sup>[235]</sup> In her Accession Day message, Elizabeth renewed her commitment to a lifetime of public service, which she originally made in 1947.<sup>[236]</sup>

She does not intend to abdicate,<sup>[237]</sup> though Prince Charles and other family members began to take on more of her

duties when she entered her nineties and began carrying out fewer public engagements.<sup>[238]</sup>

## Public perception and character

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Since Elizabeth rarely gives interviews, little is known of her personal feelings. She has not explicitly expressed her own political opinions in a public forum, and it is against convention to ask or reveal her views. During the miners' strike of 1984–85 *Times* journalist Paul Routledge asked the Queen for her opinions on the strike, to which she replied that it was "all about one man" (a reference to Arthur Scargill), which Routledge disagreed with.<sup>[239]</sup> Routledge was widely criticised in the media for asking the question; he said he was not initially due to be present for the Queen's visit and was unaware of the protocols.<sup>[239]</sup> After the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, Prime Minister David Cameron said that she was pleased with the outcome.<sup>[240]</sup> She had arguably issued a public coded statement about the referendum by telling one woman outside Balmoral Kirk that she hoped people would think "very carefully" about the outcome. It emerged later that Cameron had asked the Queen to register her concern.<sup>[241]</sup>

Elizabeth has a deep sense of religious and civic duty, and takes her Coronation Oath seriously.<sup>[242]</sup> Aside from her official religious role as Supreme Governor of the established Church of England, she is a member of that church and also of the national Church of Scotland.<sup>[243]</sup> She has demonstrated support for inter-faith relations and has met with leaders of other churches and religions, including five popes: Pius XII, John XXIII, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis.<sup>[244]</sup> A personal note about her faith often features in her annual Christmas Message broadcast to the Commonwealth. In 2000, she said:

To many of us, our beliefs are of fundamental importance. For me the teachings of Christ and my own personal accountability before God provide a framework in which I try to lead my life. I, like so many of you, have drawn great comfort in difficult times from Christ's words and example.<sup>[245]</sup>

She is patron of over 600 organisations and charities.<sup>[246]</sup> The Charities Aid Foundation estimated that Elizabeth has helped raised over £1.4 billion for her patronages during her reign.<sup>[247]</sup> Her main leisure interests include equestrianism and dogs, especially her Pembroke Welsh Corgis.<sup>[248]</sup> Her lifelong love of corgis began in 1933 with Dookie, the first corgi owned by her family.<sup>[249][250]</sup> Scenes of a relaxed, informal home life have occasionally been witnessed; she and her family, from time to time, prepare a meal together and do the washing up afterwards.<sup>[251]</sup>

In the 1950s, as a young woman at the start of her reign, Elizabeth was depicted as a glamorous "fairytale Queen".<sup>[252]</sup> After the trauma of the Second World War, it was a time of hope, a period of progress and achievement heralding a "new Elizabethan age".<sup>[253]</sup> Lord Altrincham's accusation in 1957 that her speeches sounded like those of a "priggish schoolgirl" was an extremely rare criticism.<sup>[254]</sup> In the late 1960s, attempts to portray a more modern image of the monarchy were made in the television documentary *Royal Family* and by televising Prince Charles's investiture as Prince of Wales.<sup>[255]</sup> Her wardrobe developed a recognisable, signature style driven more by function than fashion.<sup>[256]</sup> She dresses with an eye toward what is appropriate, rather than what is in vogue.<sup>[257]</sup> In public, she took to wearing mostly solid-colour overcoats and decorative hats, which allow her to be seen easily in a crowd.<sup>[258]</sup> Her wardrobe is handled by a team that includes five dressers, a dressmaker, and a milliner.<sup>[259]</sup>

At her Silver Jubilee in 1977, the crowds and celebrations were genuinely enthusiastic,<sup>[260]</sup> but, in the 1980s, public criticism of the royal family increased, as the personal and working lives of Elizabeth's children came under media scrutiny.<sup>[261]</sup> Her popularity sank to a low point in the 1990s. Under pressure from public opinion, she began to pay income tax for the first time, and Buckingham Palace was opened to the public.<sup>[262]</sup> Discontent with the monarchy reached its peak on the death of the former Princess of Wales, Diana, although Elizabeth's personal popularity—as well as general support for the monarchy—rebounded after her live television broadcast to the world five days after Diana's death.<sup>[263]</sup>

In November 1999, a referendum in Australia on the future of the Australian monarchy favoured its retention in preference to an indirectly elected head of state.<sup>[264]</sup> Many republicans have credited Elizabeth's personal popularity with the survival of the monarchy in Australia. Prime Minister Julia Gillard said in 2010 there was a "deep affection" for the Queen in Australia and said another referendum on the monarchy should wait until after her reign.<sup>[265]</sup> Her successor, Malcolm Turnbull, who led the republican campaign in 1999, similarly believes that Australians would not vote to become a republic in her lifetime.<sup>[266]</sup> "She's been an extraordinary head of state", Turnbull said in 2021, "and I think frankly, in Australia, there are more Elizabethans than there are monarchists".<sup>[267]</sup> Similarly, referendums in