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Editorial

This year is my tenth at the helm of the journal of the Monarchist League. It is an appropriate time to look back over the past decade, both on the monarchy and the League.

In 1997 the monarchy was under attack from the news media. When I took over responsibility for our then fledgling journal, then a one-page newsletter,

the Princess of Wales was being criticised for embarking on a series of escapades with the jet-setting Dodi al-Fayed and numerous other male friends. Though she was no longer a member of the Royal Family, her actions continued to damage it. Her death a few months later changed the direction of the media attacks. From target for criticism she became almost a saint (literally so for some of her more extreme adherents), and the Prince of Wales became the target.

The recent movie *The Queen*, starring the avowedly republican, though not unsympathetic Dame Helen Mirren, whilst highly speculative on matters of detail, contained at least some elements of truth. One of them was when the Duke of Edinburgh expressed exasperation that the media only saw one side of Diana. The side the Royal Family saw – her manipulative and destructive behaviour – has since been successfully buried. The day after Diana died I was asked, after an interview by a *New Zealand Herald* reporter, what the long-term effect of Diana's death would be. I answered that the monarchy would be strengthened.

I remain sure that this initial assessment was correct. The Diana years were a distraction, a time of media hype, when the real work of the Royal Family was obscured, much to the annoyance of members of the family. The bewilderment expressed by the actress portraying *The Queen*, at the hysteria and extravagance of the public reaction to Diana's death, was probably felt by Her Majesty in real life. The irony is that had Diana lived a few more months the negative media coverage she was beginning to get would have taken a firmer hold of the public mind, and her death would have been marked very differently.

Earlier in the year media coverage of Kate Middleton reminded me of the Diana years. Some in the media seem bent on portraying those who marry into – or may potentially marry into – the Royal Family, as more important than those who are born members of the Royal Family. The media, and some misguided members of the general public, criticised the Royal Family as “disfunctional”, though in reality it was those who married into the family who were most to blame (if blame is to be assigned), which is improper.

The media never accepted responsibility for their complicity in the building up of the Diana myth, and in the creation of the public face of the Royal Family, with all its element of exaggeration. Their unending coverage – much of it highly intrusive –

has caused much trouble. Nor have they refrained from reporting rumour and speculation as news, or blowing minor incidents into full-blown “scandals”.

The double irony here is that on the one hand they condemn the Royal Family for these so-called scandals, while at the same time criticising them for being stuffy or in need of “reform” or “modernisation”.

Not to mince words, this is rubbish. The Royal Family would be more stable if they were less modern. For instance, had the Prince of Wales married a Princess he would probably still be married to her today – for a princess born would have understood duty as only a born member of a Royal Family can. She would have understood the expectations that were placed upon her; nor would she have been as likely to court publicity in the way that Diana did.

It may be that Prince William would also be better to marry a princess than a commoner, if only because the former would understand the pressures and expectations of royal life in a way which others cannot. It isn't worthwhile even pointing out the shallowness of most recent speculation over the break-up of the relationship between the Prince and Miss Middleton (if her middle class origins were a problem (as some alleged) it would hardly have taken four years for this to arise).

Members of the Royal Family have also been criticised in the past for cashing in on their royal position for commercial gain – yet are now denied parliamentary funding. The reality is that they will be criticised whatever they do or don't do, because this is the mindset the media has adopted.

The picture is not, however, by any means all bad. As I said above, the major disruptive elements over the past ten years have passed. The work of the Royal Family continues, and *The Queen* remains serenely at the head of the Firm. The next generation is coming along nicely, though not without some concerns from time to time.

Rather than concentrating on telling us that one of the Princes has gone to a night club, it would be more valuable for the media to ask why it is that the tradition of public service and duty compels princes of the blood royal to wish to serve on the front line, while politicians sit comfortably at home, having sent the troops into danger in the first place.

On the political front much has changed in the past ten years. Constitutional changes in the United Kingdom under the Blair regime has led to The Queen being left dangerously exposed politically. The emasculation of the House of Lords, and the neutering of the Cabinet and the House of Commons, has left the Prime Minister all-powerful. All that stands between the Prime Minister and absolute power is The Queen, and Her Majesty is understandably reluctant to take any active steps, unprotected and exposed. Even if she were to do so it is questionable whether the population – and most importantly the media – would understand her actions.

This inevitably places her in a difficult position. I am not confident for the future in the United Kingdom. The incipient destruction of the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords and its replacement by a new Supreme Court (slavishly named after the American body) is a further nail in the coffin of Westminster government as we have known it. Changes in the United Kingdom – if the federation still warrants that name – have flow-on effects in the wider Commonwealth.

The monarchy isn't likely to crumble because of opposition to it – the huge numbers of people who came out on the streets during The Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 (despite a hostile and often dismissive media) is evidence of that. But it could fall a victim to political expediency. The fate of the King of Greece in 1967 shows how easy this can occur. King Constantine tried to resist a military coup, but ended up being exiled and then deposed by the very politicians whose positions he was trying to save.

In this country the threat also is not opposition to the monarchy, as such. Despite an often sneering and dismissive news media, the Royal Family remains popular. But there is widespread ignorance of the fact that we are a monarchy, and of the constitutional role of The Queen. Successive governments, of different political hues, have weakened the position of the Crown in New Zealand. Ironically the only safeguard is lethargy – politicians and people can't be bothered to replace the monarchy. But there is insufficient understanding of the valuable role the monarchy plays for this to be a satisfactory long-term safeguard.

The Monarchist League has always stood for the maintenance of the status quo. This is not because of attachment to the old order per se – although that is an attraction for many. Nor indeed are we necessarily

“biscuit tin collectors”, as some in the media have tended to label those who are avowedly interested in matters royal. We support the system for a number of reasons, ultimately because we believe that it represents the best hope for the future.

As I see it, the problem we face is two-fold. Firstly, decades of attacks on members of the Royal Family from the media have harmed their standing. The media would doubtless jump to defend themselves and claim that they are merely reporting facts. But the truth is that much of what is written about the Royal Family – and especially accounts of what supposed friends of the Royal Family say – is completely or partly false. Unfortunately most people are naïve or innocent enough to believe what they read, and mud sticks.

The second problem is that political changes over the past couple of decades, in New Zealand and in the United Kingdom, have concentrated power in the hands of the Prime Minister. Parliament in both countries has allowed the Chief Minister of The Queen to become too powerful. The House of Lords resisted this trend, and was effectively destroyed as a result. The hereditary peers actually offered who was in some respects a more democratic element than the party-dominated elected members of the Commons. But of course they had to go, as they were seen as a check on the will of the House of Commons – in reality the will of the Prime Minister.

A relatively recent report from the left-wing Fabian Society contained the recommendation that The Queen should lose her remaining prerogative powers. A review of these powers by the Commons, ostensibly to limit the powers of the Prime Minister, is likely to propose changes which would make The Queen more dependent upon the Prime Minister. Ignorance and apathy threatens the political stability which led to the success of the United Kingdom on the global stage over the past five hundred years.

In this country we face a similar problem. The Governor-General is but a pale imitation of The Queen. He or she doesn't see the Prime Minister regularly, as does The Queen, and effectively has no opportunity to influence or comment on policy in even the slightest degree. They are little more than a cipher, and although legally entitled to exercise certain discretions, would not be taken seriously if they were to attempt to assert themselves. Constitutional changes have been less significant in New Zealand than in the United Kingdom, but the monarchy was already in a weaker position here.

The Monarchist League was never intended to be a mass-membership body. While the monarchy was not under a direct threat it was content to be a cadre organisation; indeed the equivalent body in the United Kingdom is small and has a low profile. This intention may have to change, in both countries. Unfortunately most of those who have volunteered to take an active role in defence of the monarchy are already heavily committed with other causes or positions, or are, for one reason or another, unwilling or unable to taking a public role.

We may find that the monarchy's biggest difficulty is the poor level of education about it. If it is worth having, it is worth fighting for. The battlefield is not simply in the news media – though that is important – it is in schools and homes. That is where the battle is being lost.

Generations of children in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom are brought up knowing nothing or almost nothing, about the monarchy, or the constitution. In this country, if they are taught anything, it is about the alleged wrongdoing of the Crown over the Treaty of Waitangi, or the “repression” by the Crown in Ireland. This is a dangerous situation. The monarchy is not, and should not, be a politically-contentious subject. But it does need people who are prepared to stand up for it. They should not be embarrassed to declare that they support the preservation of our constitutional heritage.

Professor Noel Cox

News in Brief

The Queen's Birthday Honours List

The principal awards in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List included five new Distinguished Companions of the New Zealand Order of Merit (DCNZM) – Dr Patricia Grace, Alison Quentin-Baxter, Stephen Tindall, Henry Van Der Heyden, and Hon Justice William Young. The senior award is to the Rt Hon Justice Sir Kenneth Keith, Judge of the International Court of Justice.

The 11 Companions of the Order (CNZM) included outgoing Auckland War Museum Director Dr Rodney Wilson, and museum designer Kenneth Gorbey. There were 27 Officers (ONZN) and 54 Members of the New Zealand Order of Merit

(MNZM) appointed, including two additional and two honorary.

There were 14 awards of the Queen's Service Order (QSO) and 69 Queen Service Medals (QSM). New honours included one New Zealand Antarctic Medal, and 9 New Zealand Distinguished Service Decoration

Overseas, The Queen's Birthday Honours included knighthoods for sportsman Ian Botham and writer Salman Rushdie – the latter leading to political controversy in the Islamic world. Soprano Emma Kirkby became a Dame of the Order of the British Empire (DBE), and the Princess Royal's husband, Tim Laurence, now a Vice-Admiral and Chief Executive of the Defence Estate, was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB).

Royal Diary

The royal wedding anniversary

Sixty years ago, on 20th November 1947 Her Royal Highness The Princess Elizabeth (now Her Majesty The Queen) married His Royal Highness Prince Philip of Greece (now HRH The Duke of Edinburgh).

In 1997 The Monarchist League held a concert to mark the Golden Wedding Anniversary of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. This was at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Parnell, Auckland, on Saturday 15th November. The North Shore One-Hundred Voice Chorale, and the ASO, performed music with a royal flavour.

Each year, the Auckland Symphony Orchestra (“ASO”) performs a number of Free Family Concerts. These are held at both the Auckland Town Hall and at the Bruce Mason Centre in Takapuna.

Last year, ASO Free Family Concerts had a “Music for a Royal Occasion” theme in order to celebrate Her Majesty's 80th birthday. I am sure all League members will join me in commending Mr Daveerne for publicly celebrating these important and historic Royal events (which regrettably, seem to be ignored by official governmental agencies). It was significant that the recent ASO ‘Last Night of the Proms’ concert (also held at the Bruce Mason Centre)

commenced with a video image of Her Majesty and the playing of “God Save the Queen”.

At the request of the Monarchist League, ASO Musical Director and Conductor Mr Gary Daverne, ONZM, has agreed that the two concerts scheduled for November this year will have a “Royal Diamond Wedding Anniversary” theme in order to publicly celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

The dates and times for the concerts are as follows:

Sunday 18th November 2007 at 2.30pm, in the Great Hall, Auckland Town Hall, Auckland City.

Sunday 25th November 2007 at 2.30pm, Bruce Mason Centre, Takapuna.

Tickets are not required for the Auckland Town Hall concert. For the Bruce Mason Centre concert, tickets may be obtained (at no charge) from the Centre’s box office. They are likely to be available a month before the concert date and will be in high demand – in the past, ASO Free Family Concerts have been quickly booked-out. Prospective attendees for the Bruce Mason Centre concert are therefore advised to obtain their tickets as soon as they become available.

Stephen Brewster

League News

New Council

A new Council was elected at the Annual General Meeting of The Monarchist League of New Zealand Inc. on Sunday 10th June.

All office-holders remain in office. Professor Noel Cox remains as Chairman and Chris Barradale as Treasurer. Mrs Robyn Bridgman was re-elected as Secretary. Dr Robert Mann was re-elected as Vice-Chairman.

Councillors re-elected were Roger Barnes, John Cox, Brett Cunningham and Miss Ruth Dillon.

Stephen Brewster was re-appointed Auditor.

In his annual report the Chairman reviewed the past year with respect both to royal events and the activities of the League. Particularly noteworthy

were the visits by HRH Prince William and HRH The Duke of York.

The subscription rates were increased slightly from last year. The individual subscription was raised to \$30, and joint \$35. The student rate is now \$15. The overseas surcharge of \$10, and the life membership of \$500 remain unaltered.

The Queen’s Golden Jubilee Medal

Since 1887, eight Coronation and Jubilee Medals have been awarded to New Zealanders. These are:

Jubilee Medal 1887
Jubilee Medal 1897
Coronation Medal 1902
Coronation Medal 1911
Jubilee Medal 1935
Coronation Medal 1937
Coronation Medal 1953
Jubilee Medal 1977

The Queen’s Golden Jubilee Medal (QGJM) was struck to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Accession to the Throne by Elizabeth II, on 6th February 1952. The QGJM was widely issued in the United Kingdom and in Canada but not in New Zealand.

In the United Kingdom, 366,000 medals were awarded, mostly to members of the Armed Forces. All who were serving on 6th February 2002 and who had served for five years on or before that date received the medal. The Emergency Services such as Police, Fire and Ambulance were also included. As recently as 26th May 2005, it was announced that Prison Officers are also to receive the medal.

In Canada, 46,000 medals were awarded. To ensure that persons from all walks of life were recognised, the Government identified organisations who were asked to select recipients. These partners included the Royal Canadian Legion, Scouts Canada, Girl Guides of Canada, Athletics Canada, Canadian Cancer Society, Canadian Red Cross, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Canadian Forces, Members of Parliament etc.

According to the New Zealand Defence Force website, the QGJM was “never offered to New Zealand”. This is hard to understand, in the light of the Canadian situation. Perhaps it is more correct to

infer that the New Zealand Government let it be known that it was a “thanks but no thanks” situation.

However, the same New Zealand Defence Force website does list the QGJM in the Order of Wear. This is presumably because any persons being recruited to the New Zealand Defence Force or the New Zealand Police from the United Kingdom (or Canada) could have received this medal.

Whatever transpired in 2002, the New Zealand situation could be described as un-constitutional. The Canadians have clearly seen the awarding of the QGJM as an aspect of nation building. In comparison with Canada, New Zealand should be looking to about 6,000 awards being made.

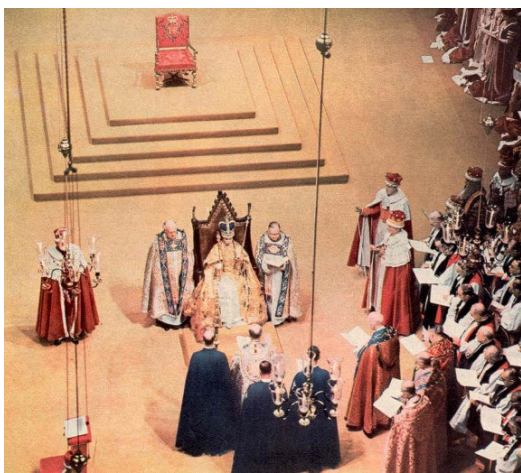
After all, Elizabeth II is the Queen of New Zealand.

Malcolm Faulls

Review article

Sir Roy Strong, *Coronation: A History of Kingship and the British Monarchy* (HarperCollins, London, 2005) ISBN 0-00-716054-2 £25

Sir Roy, former director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and of the National Portrait Gallery in London, is one of the foremost British arts critics, writers and broadcasters. He has now brought us what can, with some justification, be called the definitive history of the coronation.



There have been many works on coronations – usually written in time for one – varying from the comprehensive 1937 history by the German scholar

Percy Schramm, and the early twentieth century researches of father and son John and Leopold Wickham Legg, to more popular works. These latter have included books by Randolph Churchill (son of Sir Winston), Brian Barker and others who were personally involved (though often in a relatively minor capacity) in a coronation. But although there has been a considerable quantity of writing on some aspects of the coronation (usually highly technical) there has not, until now, been a major book which brings up to date the scholarship of the past century or so.

Strong takes us through the history of the coronation (the subject is the coronation in Westminster Abbey, so Scottish coronations receive slight and only peripheral attention). This coverage is always with an eye to the contemporary context, but at the same time emphasising continuity. Indeed the coronation service shows remarkable resilience, with the form of the coronation of King Edgar in 973 (one of the earliest for which comprehensive details are available, and also historically one of the most important) being clearly recognisable as the forerunner of The Queen’s coronation in 1953.

That is not to say, however, that the symbolism, and the purpose (let alone its content), of the coronation have not changed substantially over time. In the early mediæval period the coronation owed much to the blending of pagan tribal kingship – with its acclamation, and formal bestowal of a helmet and other regalia – into a Christian tradition. The coronation of the early middle ages was primarily a religious ceremony, with the heir becoming king through their anointing. By 1200 coronations were essentially a rite of passage, from *Dominus Anglorum* to *Rex Anglorum* (mere de facto ruler, to de jure King). The Archbishop of Canterbury bestowed unction – using holy oil or chrism – transforming a candidate from merely *Dominus* (ruler) to being *Rex Dei Gratias* (King by the grace of God). Just as the early Church used oil in baptism and confirmation, so it used oil for anointing Christian kings.

The secular aspects of the coronation in the middle ages were relatively less significant (though important nonetheless), and since only a comparatively few people could actually be present at a coronation only the political and religious elite could witness it first-hand. But there were a number of essential secular and religious elements in a mediæval coronation, as there are still. These are the recognition or acclamation, the oath, anointing, the investiture with regalia, the crowning, and the

homage. There were also elements which occurred outside the Abbey, such as the procession into London, and the coronation banquet. Over time the importance of each of these changed, to reflect differing expectations and requirements. The main role of the coronation became secular rather than sacred, but both elements were always present. As the Crown lost much of its spiritual power in the eighteenth century, so it increasingly gained psychological authority – which also required the occasional “manifestation of magnificence”.

For the coronation service itself the liturgies for each was recorded in a series of manuals, the best known of which is the *Liber Regalis*, used in 1308 (and probably earlier). This shows a considerable degree of commonality with the coronation of Edgar, and with that of Elizabeth II.

The Fourth Recension of the coronation order (the *Liber Regalis*) was the basis of all modern coronations. In its essence the message the service conveyed was that only when he was enthroned aloft on a raised stage, kissed by the officiating clergy, and had received fealty by the supporting magnates, could a would-be king be seen as having sovereignty over both Church and people.

The acclamation – when the congregation expressed their acceptance of the king-elect – grew in importance when the title of the king was slightly suspect (as for example King William III and Queen Mary II). In the case of William the Conqueror the acclamation almost caused a disaster, as the enthusiasm in the Abbey was misunderstood by the Norman soldiers on guard duty outside.

A king who wished to emphasise his divine right to the Crown would subtly downplay the importance of this part of the ceremony. This could be done without deleting it. In a similar way, sixth century Byzantine theorists focused not on the coronation, but on the “election” and the consent as crucial elements in the imperial inauguration. This was the divine choice manifested through officials, senators and people.

One element which has long remained particularly important, and uniquely British, is the coronation oath. The coronation incorporated and perpetuated features which put limits and conditions on the king’s reign. The coronation oath stressed the idea that the king was a servant of God and the Church, and had assumed important Christian duties, and it also called loyalty to the king’s person and to the office. The claimant had been put in possession of

the Crown, throne, and kingdom as securely and as publicly as the wit of man could devise. His power had been legitimised. *Potestas* was converted into *auctoritas*. He had also been given a new character, and was now different from other men. He was required to swear that he would ensure that the Church of God and the whole Christian people within his dominions would keep true peace.

Further, he swore that he would forbid impure and wrongful acts to men of every degree, and that he would order that justice and mercy should be observed in all legal judgements. The exact wording of the earlier oaths is generally lost, but there is no doubt of the contemporary importance with which they were treated. To this day the coronation oath is a formal legal requirement under the Act of Settlement 1700 and the Coronation Oath Act 1688.

Kings James I and Charles I both regarded the oath as not strictly binding upon them, since their title to the Crown was by divine right. But kings were always expected to honour their coronation oath, and not a few reissued their oaths later in their reigns. Oaths in a feudal society were inviolable, and even if there was no direct sanction – except divine – on a royal oath-breaker, still they were in some manner bound. Equally, the magnates and prelates bound themselves to the new king in the homage service. However, with the accession of William and Mary the Crown was to be in a quite different situation.

By 1603, under the influence of Calvinism, the coronation as a whole was seen as a royal ornament, a solemnization of the royal title. Symbolism remained important, but it was the symbolism of the court, not of the Church or the people. Elizabeth I had taken care to meet the people’s expectations with her pre-coronation procession. Just as the acclamation within the Abbey was part of the king-making process, so too was the procession. James I and Charles I both neglected the procession into London – the latter to the extent of cancelling it. He thereby incurred the resentment of City burghers, who lost the traditional opportunity to express their loyalty to him, and remembered this to his disadvantage fifteen years later.

The investiture with items of regalia, and the crowning, underwent detailed changes over time, but its function remained largely unchanged. Even the destruction of almost all the regalia by the Parliamentary forces in 1649 – only the anointing spoon, and the three swords of spiritual justice, temporal justice, and mercy survived – did not cause undue changes to be instigated. Indeed in 1662 a new

spirit of antiquarian inquiry ensured that the best efforts were made to recreate the regalia in as authentic a manner as possible.

The coronation of 1689 did much to legitimise the new order, with King William and Queen Mary crowned in the traditional manner, but jointly (rather than as King and Queen Consort). The oath enjoyed particular importance, due to the so-called “Glorious Revolution” and the new parliamentary supremacy. We start to see the coronation serving a different function to the king-making of past centuries.

After 1685 the constitutional and social significance of the coronation went into decline. The hallowing by the Church remained important constitutionally and religiously, but there were increasingly large numbers of spectators in Westminster Abbey, whose interest perhaps lay more in the show of the investiture with the regalia and the later coronation banquet in Westminster Hall than in anointing and oath-taking.

The coronation ceremonial was treated in cavalier fashion in the 1700s and 1800s. King George I succeeded not by divine right or even popular choice but by the will of Parliament. Hanoverian coronations lacked the attention to detail that characterized many of those of earlier periods, though they did bring us Handel’s incomparable music. The coronation of William IV was a mean affair; even that of Victoria was only marginally better. By the time of Victoria’s coronation, however, there were signs of a desire for the revival of a ceremony of some splendour, to emphasise the setting aside by anointing with holy oil of the Sovereign as popular embodiment of both Crown and nation.

The pre-coronation procession into London was discarded after 1661, but was replaced in effect by the parade to the Abbey. The coronation parades of the twentieth century (even that of 1953) far exceeded the earlier efforts for sheer size. For splendour the twentieth century parades may have been at a disadvantage compared with their mediæval and later counterparts, but now they were aimed at showing the nature of a popular monarchy, dependent not on the choice of God hallowed by Holy Church, or the choice of Parliament, but on the approbation of the people. In the course of the twentieth century the form of service was improved to recover from the slash and burn treatment under James II and William and Mary.

For coronations continuity has always been important. These were never occasions of mere spectacle – though George IV’s tended towards that (even though the cost was very largely met by the French war indemnity) – nor merely an antiquarian extravaganza. They were not even primarily exercises in propaganda – though that was an element, especially in the parades (as in the twentieth century the parades’ emphasis was already on expressing imperial power – national not personal to the King). They remain primarily religious occasions at which the Sovereign is anointed and hallowed for their role – though now a rather different role to that in the middle ages.



It had become a national and international act of commitment. Although he goes into this briefly, it is beyond the scope of Strong’s plan for his book. Nor did he explore the justification for the retention of the coronation in the face of twenty-first century iconoclasm. While it can be said – with some justification – that it is unquestionable that Charles III will have a coronation, in this age of the advancing destruction of our ancient heritage in the name of modernisation – or simply for the sake of destruction for its own sake – it is important to show why coronations are not merely indispensable, but that changes are made to them only with due caution.

Even in the latter days of Queen Elizabeth I’s reign Sir Peter Wentworth maintained that a coronation was a declaration rather than a creation of right. In

Calvin's Case (1608) the Court of King's Bench decided that a coronation, as a consequence of hereditary succession, was not a legal necessity. But no king – or queen – would have felt secure without one.

There are several principal reasons for this. Firstly, all English kings since time immemorial had been crowned, and since Saxon times had been anointed with holy oil – a privilege not accorded by the Church to every ruler. Secondly the coronation served to publicly declare the king to have come into his own, and allowed the people to welcome him. In this regard the parades were important elements. The swearing of the coronation oath was important from Anglo-Saxon times, and never lost its constitutional and political importance. Indeed, since 1689 they have been enjoyed increased importance, with the coronation an indispensable rite of passage for a kingship recast since the late eighteenth century as a bulwark of the democratic system which it fostered. Since the claim to the Crown by divine right was weaker, popular support, based on adherence to the ancient constitution, grew in importance, as did the need to affirm the accession symbolically.

The idea that the Sovereign is above politics – which can be traced to *The Patriot King*, a 1714 essay by the statesman and philosopher Henry St John Viscount Bolingbroke – does not render the oath any less important. It becomes, like the anointing, part of the hallowing and dedication of the Sovereign as a national figure.



But the oath-taking was not all one way. For a king or queen to have any chance of keeping their oath they had to have the support of their people, hence the homage. Not only was the king expected to take the oath, but the king expected the magnates and prelates to reciprocate.

The coronation was also expected of a new king – and even as recently as William IV, the economy measures which were followed led to him being lampooned in the less sympathetic press as having had a “half-crownation” or “penny coronation”. Although in strict legal terms the Sovereign accedes the throne immediately on the death of their predecessor, the popular idea that the king hasn't really become king until they are crowned remains fairly common – and who is to say that the title is not only made secure by a coronation, *Calvin's Case* notwithstanding. Lastly, it is rarely a wise move to make radical changes at the beginning of a reign.

Where does this leave the coronation in the early years of the twenty-first century? The Queen's coronation in 1953 was in the latter days of empire. It was marked by a significant coronation parade in which figures such as Queen Salote of Tonga stood out. It was also in the early days of the development of the realms as clearly distinct constitutionally. Theoretically future coronations could follow the 1953 model exactly – so far as the service itself is concerned at least – and in principle there is no reason why they should not do so. But care would have to be taken to ensure clarity of understanding of its exact role. In 1953 elements were further changed to incorporate Scotland – where the last coronation was in 1633 (Scottish peers and officers of state had been involved in the London ceremony from 1714) – and the realms.

In an ideal world it might be thought that the realms could have their own coronations (or at least inaugurations), but really this isn't necessary. The Queen is crowned for the whole Commonwealth. At the coronation of King Edgar there were five sub-kings present. It was truly an imperial occasion, just as in 1953 The Queen wore, figuratively speaking, many crowns.

Some changes may doubtless be required – and some are desirable for liturgical or historical reasons (such as the restoration of the sermon, abandoned in 1902) – and others to reflect the diminished role of the House of Lords (this could be achieved by including the Speaker of the House of Lords). But no Sovereign can risk their title being questioned – least of all one succeeding to the Crown in an age of media hostility and vindictive and evilly-disposed opportunists – not to mention jaundiced and sceptical academics.

The greatest challenge today is apathy and ignorance. By 1838 the coronation had become a popular spectacle – rather than a state religious rite,

or a private court entertainment – but the so-called educated classes were suspicious of it as a gigantic extravagance, without any more purpose than to amuse the masses (though that role was important enough – probably far more than contemporary commentators realised).

Sir Roy himself remarks on the ignorance shown by many people. Even in 1953 there was widespread lack of understanding of the nature and elements of a coronation, only partly helped by the avalanche of books at the time. Apathy or downright hostility, fuelled by a desire to save money, could result in the idea that a coronation is an optional extra. Nothing could be further from the truth, though both William IV and Edward VIII would have dispensed with the coronation altogether, given the choice. While the ceremony in Westminster Abbey is the last true coronation in western Christendom – there are equivalents in other civilisations – this is because the United Kingdom is the last of the ancient major Kingdoms of the west.

The inauguration of minor European royalty in no way compares with the historic importance of a British coronation. The major cost of a coronation would be the procession, which would doubtless include far fewer military personnel than before – simply because the armed forces of the Crown are everywhere much smaller today than in 1953. But to abolish the parades would be as wrong in the twenty-first century as it was in the seventeenth. It would be even more unwise, for the parades are the primary public aspect of the coronation – while it is true that we can all watch a coronation at home on television (and now presumably the Internet), taking part in an event of this nature far exceeds merely viewing it from afar. The trend from the seventeenth century has been towards perceiving the coronation as a public spectacle, an occasion for national and later international rejoicing. From 1838 – when Buckingham Palace was the first used as the point of departure for the coronation – the parade has been far longer than in ancient times, reflecting the increased emphasis upon public participation.

Rather than scaling back the parade it would be desirable to return to the ancient practice of allowing City livery companies, foreign merchants guilds, and their modern equivalents, to contribute in their own way. Such pageants as the Queen Mother's 100th birthday parade, in which Her Majesty's charities paraded floats, would be an admirable modern interpretation of the ancient coronation procession.

With respect to the service itself the overall structure can scarcely be touched, such is its antiquity and importance. Careful liturgical revisions have corrected the errors which had crept in, and the only acceptable alterations would be to make small changes to further improve it – not wholesale vandalism aimed at “modernising” it. For instance, the innovation in 1953 of a hymn to be sung by the congregation can be expanded. But although music has been increasingly important in the last one hundred years adding bongo drums would be going too far, and make a mockery of the service.

On the delicate question of whether to involve representatives of other religions, all that need be said is that they can be included in the parade, or a separate service, perhaps drawing inspiration from the now-defunct coronation banquet, and held in Westminster Hall. The coronation service itself is a Church service, of great antiquity, and on that score alone unsuited to the admixture of non-Christian elements.

Equally importantly, it remains an important religious service, the hallowing of the Sovereign. Doubtless twenty-first century atheists, separation of Church and State enthusiasts, and so-called “politically correct” people might balk at that. But it is true nonetheless. The monarchy, like the legal system and the principal institutions of government, is underpinned by Christian concepts; but it has rarely been exclusive. The Queen is Sovereign alike of Christian and non-Christian, but the mantle of kingship has been hallowed by the Church since the Christianisation of Britain.

Strong has done a great service in bringing us this book. It is lavishly illustrated, and nicely produced, and will be a major addition to many bookshelves. It also will prove a valuable source for all those wishing to understand the context of the next coronation, which is doubtless to occur within the next couple of decades.

Professor Noel Cox

Residences past and present

Llwynywormwood

The Duchy of Cornwall has recently bought a small house to provide a home for the Prince of Wales and

Duchess of Cornwall when they are visiting the Principality of Wales.



Llwynyworm wood or Llwynwermood (“Wormwood Grove”) is on a 192-acre estate above the village of Myddfai, near Llandovery, Carmarthenshire. Settlement

of the purchase was completed earlier in the year.

There is a 3-bedroom farmhouse, which is expected to be rented out when not in use, and the ruins of a Georgian period 13-bedroom mansion.

The earliest mention of the estate was in 1686, when the owner, William Williams, died. It passed to his nieces, and the family name later became Griffies Williams, and the then head of the family received a baronetcy in 1815.

The estate was broken up in sales in 1879, 1909 and 1912. It was bought by the Rogers family of Blaencwm in 1913, and then by the Morris Isaac family. After the initial sales the owners ceased to live there, and the farm was tenanted. The Home Farm was unoccupied for most of the twentieth century. The tenant bought the farm in the 1950s.

The estate was neglected from the beginning of the twentieth century, and the main house was extensively quarried for stone. Now little of it remains. There is evidence of a late mediæval kitchen in the seventeenth century Old Bakehouse.



The current farmhouse was created in the 1860s out of a three-bay cart house. It was extended into the stable and harness room in 2000. A range of

ancillary rooms are disguised to resemble cottages. There is a walled garden, and a late eighteenth century to early nineteenth century landscaped park, created by Sir George Griffies-Williams, Bt, out of rolling countryside.

There are some 40 acres of woodland, and the remainder of the estate is grazing land and parkland. There are the also the remains of a lake.

Prior to the purchase of the estate the Prince of Wales did not have a permanent base when visiting his principality.

Professor Noel Cox

Letters to the Editor

Readers are reminded that they are welcome to write to the Editor. I reserve the right to publish such letters – if clearly intended for publication – at my discretion. More general contributions to *Monarchy New Zealand* – such as articles and news – are also welcome.

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