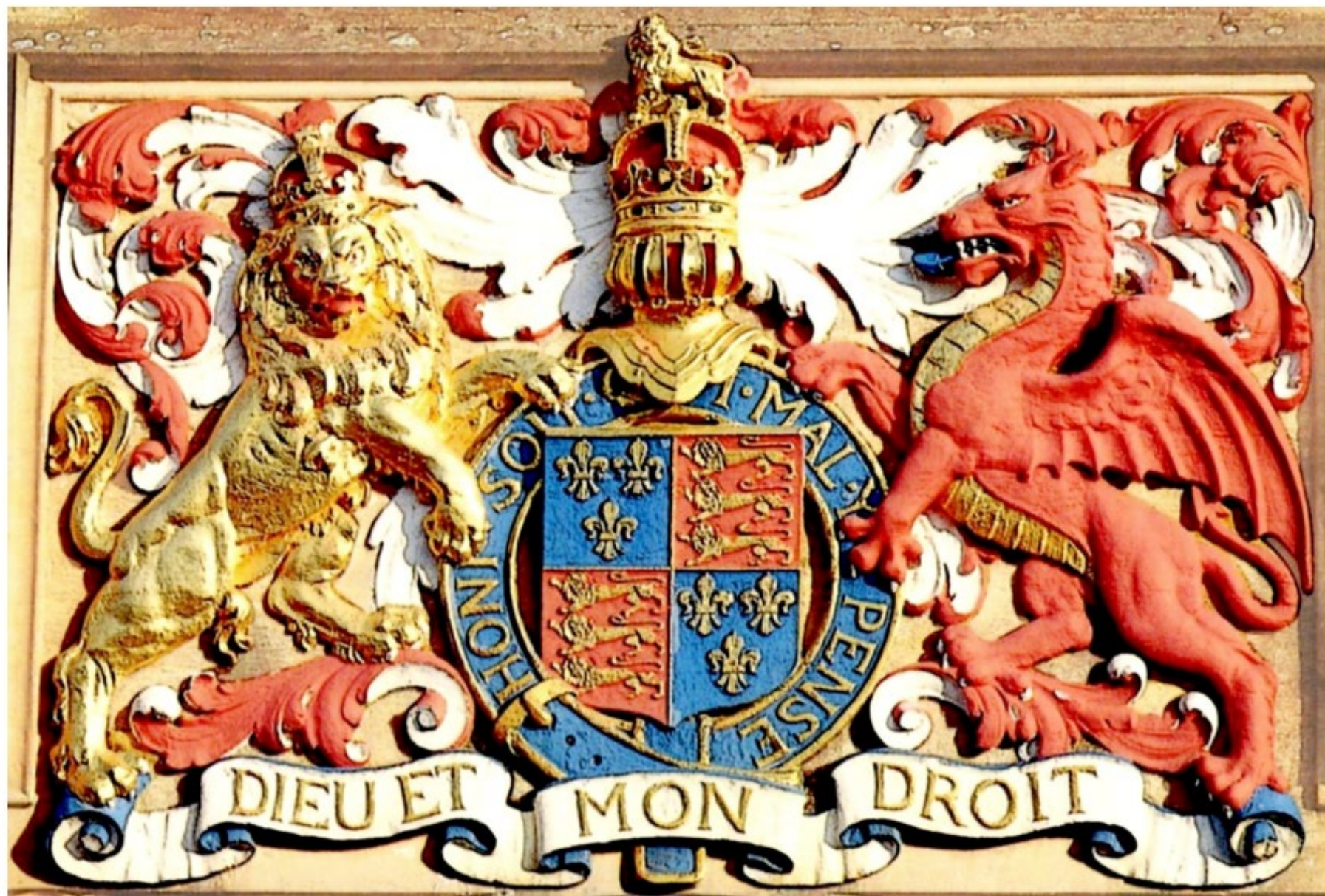


A brief history of the Coronation



told through the stories of Old Shirburnians and Old Preppers



Sherborne School has a long connection with royalty dating back to its re-foundation in 1550 by King Edward VI, whose royal arms and motto 'Dieu et mon Droit' ('God and my right') are displayed above the main entrance to the School. For this reason, the School was known locally as the 'King's School'.

Coronation of Edward VI, 1547

On 20 February 1547, Shrove Sunday, the 9-year-old son of the late King Henry VIII was crowned King Edward VI by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer at Westminster Abbey.

Charles Wriothesley described the events of the day in his chronicle:

'The twentieth daie of Februarie, being the Soundaie Quinquagesima, the Kinges Majestie Edward the Sixth, of the age of nyne yeares and three monthes, was crowned King of this realme of Englande, France, and Irelande, within the church of Westminster, with great honor and solemnitie, and a great feast kept that daie in Westminster Hall which was rychlie hanged, his Majestie sitting all dynner with his crowne on his head; and, after the second course served, Sir Edward Dymmocke, knight, came ridinge into the hall in clene white complete harneis, rychlie gilded, and his horse rychlie trapped, and cast his gauntlett to wage battell against all men that wold not take him for right King of this realme, and then the King dranke to him and gave him a cupp of golde; and after dynner the King made many knightes, and then he changed his apparell, and so rode from thence to Westminster Place.'

Edward VI is depicted on Sherborne School's founding charter (1550) wearing his coronation robes and holding the orb and sceptre – the symbols of his powers and responsibilities as monarch. →



Coronation of Queen Victoria, 1838

As Steward of the Liberty of Sherborne, local solicitor **Thomas Fooks (Sherborne School Founder c.1785, Governor of Sherborne School 1805-1844)** made arrangements for the town's celebration of the coronation of Queen Victoria on 28 June 1838.

The day of the Queen's coronation began early in Sherborne, when at 4am the town was woken by the firing of royal salutes from cannon on Dancing Hill accompanied by the ringing of the Abbey bells!

By 6am people were busy decorating their houses with branches and flowers and creating triumphal arches in some of the streets.

At lunchtime, 200 people attended a celebratory lunch and the poor of the town were given beef and beer to enjoy in the comfort of their own homes.

In the afternoon, 418 children were given tea and cake in the National Schoolroom (now the boarding side of Abbey House) after which the Vicar of Sherborne, the **Rev. John Parsons (Sherborne School 1791-1797, Governor of Sherborne School 1805-1854)**, gave a speech and the National Anthem was sung.

In the evening, several shops and houses were illuminated and a ball was held, *'thus a genial spirit of harmony, good will, and friendliness existed throughout the town, and at two in the morning all was quiet in the streets, and we have not heard of any occurrence which could blemish the proceedings of the Sherborne Celebration of the Coronation of our most gracious Queen.'*





Coronation of Edward VII, 1902

Without the medical skills of the surgeon **Sir Frederick Treves (Governor of Sherborne School 1906-1910)** the coronation of King Edward VII may never have taken place!

In 1901, Sir Frederick Treves was appointed Honorary Serjeant Surgeon to King Edward VII. Edward's coronation was originally scheduled to take place at Westminster Abbey on 26 June 1902, but it had to be postponed at short notice when on 24 June the King was taken ill with appendicitis. Appendicitis had then a high mortality rate and was not generally operated on, but Sir Frederick Treves persuaded the King that if he did not operate there would not be a coronation but a funeral. Together with Lord Lister, Treves performed the operation on a table in the Music Room at Buckingham Palace, draining the infected appendiceal abscess through a small incision and leaving the appendix intact. The grateful King presented Treves with a baronetcy and the use of Thatched House Lodge in Richmond Park.

In 1923, Treves wrote the first account of Joseph Merrick, 'the Elephant Man', who had lodged with him from 1886 to 1890.

Coronation of Edward VII, 1902

The rescheduled coronation of Edward VII took place at Westminster Abbey on 9 August 1902, when the service was conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, **Frederick Temple (Governor of Sherborne School 1896-1902)**.

Since the Norman Conquest in 1066, the Archbishop of Canterbury has played a central role in the coronation. During the ceremony, the Sovereign takes the coronation oath and is then 'anointed, blessed and consecrated' by the Archbishop. After receiving the orb and sceptres, the Archbishop places St Edward's Crown on the Sovereign's head.

In 1902, it was Archbishop Frederick Temple who placed St Edward's Crown on King Edward VII's head. Two days after the coronation the King and Queen presented Archbishop Temple with the Royal Victorian Chain, a decoration founded by the King in honour of his late mother Queen Victoria.

Just four months after the coronation, Archbishop Temple was taken ill and died on 23 December 1902. The Governors of Sherborne School put on record their deep sense of loss at his death and acknowledged his '*untiring support and wise guidance*' during the 31 years he had served as a School Governor.

In 1905, a bronze bust of Archbishop Frederick Temple by Sir George Frampton RA was unveiled by his widow in the Big School Room at Sherborne School. The bust in its marble niche can now be seen in the lobby of the BSR.



Coronation of Edward VII, 1902

As Emperor of India, Edward VII's coronation was attended by many Indian princes, one of whom was **Prince Wasif Ali Mirza (Sherborne Prep School 1887-1890)**.

Prince Wasif Ali Mirza was the son of Nawab Sir Sayyid Hassan Ali Mirza Khan Bahadur, His Highness the Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad and Amir Dulhan Kulsum un-Nisa Begum Sahiba. From 1887 to 1890 the Prince and his younger brother Prince Nasir Ali Mirza lived in Sherborne and were day pupils at Sherborne Prep School. The Princes later attended Rugby School and Trinity College, Oxford. In December 1906, Prince Wasif Ali Mirza succeeded his father as Amir ul-Omrah, His Highness the Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad.

Prince Wasif Ali Mirza also attended the 1903 Delhi Durbar which was held at Coronation Park in Delhi to celebrate the succession of Edward VII and Queen Alexandra as Emperor and Empress of India. The King did not attend the Durbar but was represented by his brother Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught. The Indian princes wore their most spectacular jewels and it was said to be the greatest collection of jewels seen in one place. Films made of the event were shown throughout India and are credited with having launched the Indian film industry.

In 1911, the Prince, by then His Highness the Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad, attended the coronation of George VI.



Coronation of Edward VII, 1902

Old Shirburnian poet **Sir Lewis Morris (School House 1850-1851)** wrote an ode in celebration of Edward VII's coronation – the only problem was that he forgot to change the date in the title when the coronation was rescheduled from the 26 June to the 9 August 1902!

Luckily, no one seemed to notice and the King presented Sir Lewis Morris with a Coronation Medal in appreciation of his 'Coronation Ode'.

The 'Coronation Ode' begins with the following lines:

*'Sing, soaring voice, to a joyous tune,
Mourning is done and pain;
Peal, solemn organ music, deep, sublime,
For 'tis a joyous time!
Shine forth serene, unclouded sun of June,
To gild the dawning Reign;
Hushed is the shriek of War. 'Tis Peace! 'tis Peace!
Blest calm, endure, increase!
Today rejoicing Britain grieves no more!
Resound, oh, reverend aisles, as oft before;
Kneel, ermined nobles, kneel, fair jewelled train,
As in our storied England past away;
'Tis a triumphant day.'*





Coronation of George V, 1911

The coronation of King George V and Queen Mary took place at Westminster Abbey on 22 June 1911. In 1908, Queen Mary, then Princess of Wales, was the first member of the royal family to visit Sherborne School.

The Shirburnian in June 1911 proclaimed 'Surely no Coronation in the world's history has ever evoked so much interest as that of His Majesty King George V', adding that 'we would wish to remind our readers that the Coronation is no mere happy chance for a few days off, but the solemn ratification of the great office which alone unites our vast dominions, and that it is the duty of every intelligent subject, particularly members of our great Public Schools, to realise that we are each individually responsible by our actions, for the welfare of the largest and perhaps most fairly won Empire that the world has yet seen.'

H.R. King (housemaster of Abbeylands 1900-1919), recorded in his diary the events of Coronation day in Sherborne: 'Cloudy: some rain: windy. CORONATION DAY. Service at 9 in chapel which I took. Afterwards the House went where they liked with lunch. Had a delicious quiet day. Went at 4pm to Sigwell Farm where we had House tea picnic. Breezy not unpleasant. Walked along the tops, afterwards rode by Compton Pauncefoot. Evening. Fireworks, Bonfires etc.'

Three years later, on 11 June 1914, H.R. King noted in his diary: 'Fiendish women try and destroy the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey.' This referred to damage caused to the Coronation Chair when suffragettes placed a bomb underneath it. The damage was, however, relatively slight. In preparation for the coronation of King Charles III the Coronation Chair, which was commissioned by King Edward I, has undergone extensive restoration.

Cancelled Coronation of Edward VIII, 1937

Edward VIII's reign lasted just 10 months, ending with his abdication on 10 December 1936 in favour of his brother who was crowned George VI at Westminster Abbey on 12 May 1937 (the date originally set for Edward VIII's coronation).

As Prince of Wales, Edward VIII had visited Sherborne School on 19 July 1923. Headmaster Nowell Smith later described the visit to the Governors, saying *'H.R.H. the Prince of Wales paid a very brief and informal visit to the School, and was received, as was only natural, with cordial enthusiasm. At his gracious request two days were added to the summer holidays.'*

The Prince's visit to Sherborne was part of a three-day tour of the West Country, during which he visited tenants of his Duchy of Cornwall estates and carried out public engagements.

On arriving in Sherborne from Yeovil, the Prince was greeted by members of Sherborne Girls' School. He then visited Sherborne School, making his entrance from the north door of the Abbey and crossing the Courts between two ranks of cheering boys. He then dashed to the Digby Hotel (now The Digby) where he changed and had tea before making his way to the Sherborne Polo Club where, in a game of six chukkas, the Prince's side won by six goals to two.

The following day the Prince visited Dorchester and lunched with Thomas Hardy at Max Gate.



Coronation of George VI, 1937

The coronation of George VI and Queen Elizabeth took place at Westminster Abbey on 12 May 1937.

In Sherborne, the streets and buildings were decorated in red, white and blue bunting and Union flags, and the Abbey was floodlit for 5 days. On the day of the Coronation a service was held in the Abbey and an afternoon of sports and games was arranged in the Old Castle grounds, where the children were given Coronation mugs and at 7pm the King's speech to the Empire was broadcast. In the evening there was dancing in the Pageant Gardens, a bonfire was lit on Dancing Hill and fireworks were set off on the Slopes.

Donald Moffat-Wilson (Sherborne Prep School 1933-1937, Lyon House 1937-1941) was one of six Scouts from Dorset chosen to attend the Coronation, which they watched from Constitution Hill. Afterwards, the Chief Scout Robert Baden-Powell paid a surprise visit to the Scouts who were camping at the Royal Horticultural Hall. Donald was a member of the 4th Sherborne Prep School Scout Troop and a King's Scout. His name can be seen at the Prep School on the Scouts Honours Board (Bulls) and the Second World War Roll of Honour, and at Sherborne School on the War Memorial Staircase.

Harold Davson (The Green 1895-1897, Assistant master Sherborne School 1940-1944) served as a Gold Staff Officer at the Coronation and was awarded Coronation medal, and **Michael James Gordon (Abbeylands 1942-1945)** holds the rare honour of having sung at two coronations – in 1937 and 1953.



King George VI and Queen Elizabeth's visit to Sherborne School, 1950

On 1 June 1950, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited Sherborne School to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the School's re-founding by King Edward VI.

Although a wet weather programme had been prepared for the visit it was, thankfully, a glorious day. The royal party arrived by train and were driven from Sherborne Station to the main school gate where they were met by **Headmaster Alexander Ross Wallace** and a Guard of Honour. After a lunch in the Big School Room of clear turtle soup, Severn salmon and Strawberries Sarah Bernhardt, the King and Queen signed the Distinguished Visitors Book in the Upper Library and then visited a number of School departments, including the Art School and the Biology Lab. At the outdoor swimming bath (now the site of the Pilkington Labs) they inspected a display of camp work put on by the 4th Sherborne Prep School Scouts.

The visit ended on the Upper playing field where the King and Queen watched a cricket match between the Masters & the 1st XI. As they were driven from the Upper to the station, the King and Queen were waved off by children from the Prep, Sherborne Girls', Fosters', St Antony's (now Leweston), and Lord Digby's.

In 1955, a tablet commemorating the 1950 Royal Visit was placed on the wall underneath the gate tower entrance to Sherborne School.



Coronation of Elizabeth II, 1953

The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II took place at Westminster Abbey on 2 June 1953, when the service was conducted by Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher, who in 1961 retired to Trent.

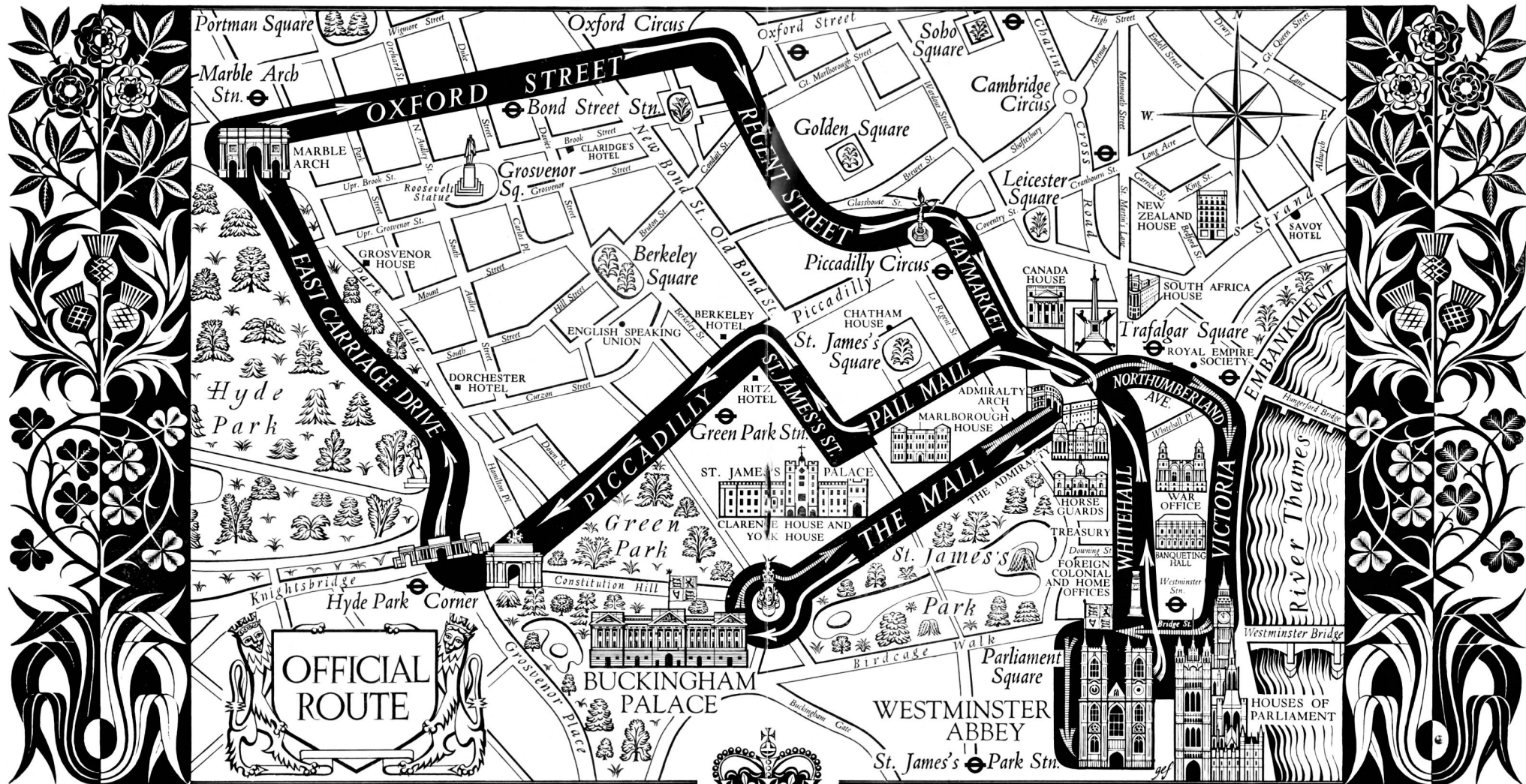
Although many public schools were given exeats for the Coronation, Sherborne was not! **Headmaster R.W. Powell** justified his decision to parents, saying *'Most schools, I gather, are having a break of four or five days. I remain of the opinion that the prospects of boys, in the examinations which come soon after, would be seriously affected by such a break. I also know that many parents are glad to be spared the expense of railway travel. If nothing unforeseen happens, all boys at the school would have a good view by television of the Coronation.'*

This was the first British coronation to be fully televised and, at considerable expense, the School bought a huge cabinet TV set which was placed on the stage in the Big School Room so that the boys could watch the coronation.

Edward Wiggett Thompson (second master at Sherborne Prep School 1930-1946) was from 1946 to 1965 Headmaster of Westminster Abbey Choir School and served as a steward at the Coronation. When he died in 1969 his ashes were buried with those of his wife in the Islip chapel in Westminster Abbey.



CORONATION PROCESSION OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II



In addition to the Royal processions, the Lord Mayor of London will leave the Mansion House at 7.55 a.m. to drive in his State Coach drawn by six horses along the Embankment, joining the main Processional route at 8.30 a.m. at Hungerford Bridge, and arriving at the Abbey at 8.45 a.m. Led by the Marshal of the City of London, mounted, and followed by the Lord Mayor's footmen in their liveries, the Lord Mayor will be accompanied by the Lady Mayoress and the Common Cryer with Sword and Mace, and will have an escort of pikemen.

The Speaker of the House of Commons will make the traditional short drive to the Abbey at 9.30 a.m. With him in the Coach will be the Serjeant-at-Arms with the Mace, and the Speaker's Chaplain. There will be an escort of one Life Guardsman and, walking before, the Speaker's Secretary and Trainbearer. B.B.C. Observers will be stationed at Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, Westminster Abbey and the Annexe, Pall Mall, Marble Arch and Piccadilly Circus. There will be television cameras at Buckingham Palace,

the Embankment, Hyde Park and inside the Abbey. The troops lining the route will be: The Mall: Brigade of Guards; Trafalgar Square to the Abbey and back: Royal Navy, with Officer Cadets of all three Services in

Parliament Square; Cockspur Street: Canadian Military Forces; Pall Mall to Marble Arch: the Army; and Oxford Street back to the Haymarket: Royal Air Force. Below are the approximate times of the return Procession.

	Depart Westminster Abbey	Trafalgar Square	Hyde Park Corner	Marble Arch	Oxford Circus	Piccadilly Circus	Arrive Buckingham Palace
Head of the Procession:	—	—	—	2.55	3.15	3.25	3.45
Her Majesty The Queen:	2.50	3.05	3.25	3.40	4.00	4.10	4.30

The Investiture of HRH Prince Charles as Prince of Wales, 1969

In 1968, **Cecil Day-Lewis CBE (Harper House 1917-1923)** succeeded John Masefield as Poet Laureate.

The first royal poem Day-Lewis wrote in his role as Poet Laureate was for the Investiture of the HRH Prince Charles as the 21st Prince of Wales at Caernarfon Castle on 1 July 1969.

The poem was first published on the leader page of the *Guardian* newspaper, side by side with a Welsh translation by Evan Gwyndaf Evans, a Welsh poet and Archdruid of the National Eisteddfod of Wales.

The poem includes the following lines:

*'Your mother's grace, your father's gallantry
Go with you now to nerve and cheer you
Upon the crowded, lonely way before you.'*





HRH Prince Charles' visit to Sherborne School in September 1974

On 2 September 1974, HRH Prince Charles started helicopter-flying training at RNAS Yeovilton. He later joined 845 Squadron and embarked onboard the commando carrier HMS Hermes.

On the 16th & 17th September 1974, Prince Charles made two informal visits to Sherborne School.

On the evening of 16th September 1974, Prince Charles arrived at Sherborne School in his Aston Martin to attend a production in the BSR of Smetana's opera *The Bartered Bride*. After the production the Prince went behind the curtain to congratulate the cast before attending a small party at Abbey Grange given by the School's new headmaster Robin Macnaghten.

On 17th September 1974, Prince Charles returned to the School and was shown around the excavations of the medieval chapter house and cloisters (on the lawn outside the Beckett Room), during which he was presented with a 13th century floor tile bearing the Royal Arms, which had been discovered in the excavated chapter house.

On leaving Sherborne, Prince Charles asked to borrow a pair of crutches from the San for a practical joke. Unfortunately, the San's only pair of crutches was out on loan so instead he borrowed a pair from the Yeatman Hospital.

Coronation of Charles III, 2023



The background of the image is the Union Jack, the national flag of the United Kingdom, featuring a red cross on a white field with blue borders.

Happy

&

Glorious