Queens of England Held Power, Fought Factions

Legendary Boadicea Was Warrior Queen Who Killed Herself Before Surrender

By Pamela Hinkson

There had been the legendary Boadicea, the British warrior-queen who killed herself in preference to surrender.

There had been Matilda, daughter of Henry I, who for a brief interlude in the 12th century was queen without a crown.

Came the Tudor age, and with it the first real reigns of British queens.

No woman had ever held such power in the land as did Mary Tudor when she ascended the throne one summer day in 1553. And, five years later, she was succeeded by a half-sister who gave name to England's great Elizabethan age — that fabulous age of Drake and Hawkins, Shakespeare and Spencer.

The sisters lie buried in Westminster Abbey, side by side. They knew no such harmony in life. The conflict of national and particularly, religious movements of their time drove them apart—despite moments of reconciliation and sisterly affection.

These daughters of the much-married Henry VIII were of utterly different character and appearance.

Mary, 18 years the elder, looked old for her years when, at 38, she became queen. She was without beauty, except for her striking eyes. Behind her lay tragedy, peril, loneliness. Her father had divorced her mother, Catherine of Aragon, and declared Mary illegitimate. She had been separated since childhood from her mother. But she came to the throne by the will and affection of the people, after the attempt to crown the unhappy Lady Jane Grey had failed.

Elizabeth, at age 25, thrilled the cheering crowds on her coronation in January, 1559. Men, women and children alike succumbed that day to the appeal of her youth, her red-gold hair, her hazel eyes that could dance and smile or darken with anger, her fine olive-tinted skin, beautiful hands and well-posed figure. She made them forget, as Mary could never have done, her own background of blood and anguish. Her mother, Anne Boleyn, had gone to the block; she had been declared illegitimate by Parliament. Suspected by her sister, she had been sent a prisoner to the Tower, with full knowledge of all that might mean — there was much indeed for the people to forget.

A study of their influence as queens heightens the contrast in the lives of these two women. Mary struggled vainly to put the clock back, Elizabeth swept forward triumphantly with the march of time.

Mary's Reign

Look first at Mary's reign. Half Spanish and her mother's daughter, in sympathy and loyalty, Mary tried to reverse the great religious changes of her father's and brother's reign. She did so with Tudor courage. But she was no stateswoman. She went straight to her passionate goals: the righting of her mother's divorce, the return of England to the Catholic Church and the restoration of monastic property. She looked to the Pope and the Emperor Charles V, her mother's champions, for advice. It was all useless, though, in an England which already identified Protestantism with patriotism.

Mary's reign is remembered, alas, for her religious persecutions; the torture and burning of Protestants at the stake. The burnings were denounced by the chaplain of her Catholic husband, Philip of Spain, and it is still unknown how much they were Mary's responsibility.

Almost forgotten are other happier traits in the character of Mary Tudor. She had profited by the Renaissance and the education given to women in her age. She spoke Latin, French and Spanish, loved music, and improved that of the Royal Chapel. She founded grammar schools — at Walsall, Clitheroe, Leominster and Ripon—and left money for poor Oxford and Cambridge students.

But Mary failed. Most of her time she was blind to the desires and thoughts of her people, for she saw her kingdom with half foreign eyes. She died in October, 1558—with all her dreams broken.

Queen Elizabeth I

Elizabeth I of England then ascended the throne. Her first determination was to make it clear to the people that she regarded herself as wholly English — her father's daughter. Like him, she swore like him, she made merry, boxed a favourite's ears, called her courtiers by nicknames — even though they knew her kindness depended on her mood.

Whereas Mary knew nothing of statesmanship, Elizabeth employed all its arts. She showed, indeed, a strange mixture of the masculine mind in some things and all a woman's emotions in others. Usually—and this was the secret of her success — her head ruled her heart. She revealed this strength in dealing with the ambassadors who for ever crowded her court, seeking her hand in marriage for their masters.

Mary II Reigns

Mary II, the next queen, reigned jointly with her husband William of Orange, from 1689 to 1694. She was a ruler only in name, for she was but a submissive and adoring wife to a brilliant husband.

Mary, like earlier queens, had known loneliness from childhood, for she had been separated from her father, James II. She had been troubled, too, for her father's safety as well as her husband's during their wars against each other.

Due to the Dutch influence experienced during her early married days and to her Low Church Protestantism, Mary became deeply religious. However, she was not bigoted, and shared William's religious tolerance. What influence she had was used against moral laxity, and she gave her full support to the Church.

A lover of art, she brought her collection of Chinese porcelain to Hampton Court. And she left there traces of the gardening she loved; her three botanical collections are in the British Museum. When she died of smallpox at 32, William who was devoted to her, had Greenwich Hospital for sailors built by Wren in her memory.

To England, Mary II signified that which was devout and good.

Reign of Queen Anne

Anne, sister of Mary II, reigned after William from 1702 to 1714. She found refuge from her loneliness in an intense friendship with Sarah Jennings—afterwards Lady Churchill, wife of the great soldier who became Duke of Marlborough. The Duchess ruled the Queen and so Marlborough ruled through his wife, it was said. But Anne married an unpretentious husband, Prince George of Denmark, took an active part in State affairs and Cabinet Councils. She had 17 children; only one survived infancy, to die at 11. (Their little coffins are in Westminister Abbey).

Pleasant-looking in youth, ugly in sickness and old age, Anne represented the homely virtues to her people. She was a passionate High Churchwoman, much concerned for the welfare of the clergy. She established "Queen Anne's Bounty" to aid poor clergymen.

Queen Victoria Reigns

On an early June morning in 1837, Lord Conyngham, the Lord Chamberlain and the Archbishop of Canterbury drove to Kensington Palace. As they arrived before five o'clock—a girl of 18, newly awakened, came to them in her dressing gown, her hair loose. Lord Conyngham dropped on one knee, saluted her as Queen and kissed her hand.

Thus Victoria took up the tasks of queenship with girlish enthusiasm and deep sense of duty.

After the reign of three elderly kings, the succession of this young girl with the vision of life before her stirred a wave of romantic chivalry.

Through her long reign, Victoria kept her identification with her people. Her own intense sense of truth and honesty stamped the age. She insisted on rigid morality in the Court which in this respect had deteriorated under her predecessors.

To her adored Albert, the Prince Consort, she bore nine children. Through life she wrote simply-worded letters, underlining phrases in the Victorian girl's way. She was naturally vivacious, even if Albert made her solemn on occasion.

The most constitutional monarch England has known, Victoria was trained early in life in these spheres. But for all that she had definite ideas of her own and exerted considerable influence on her Ministers during the 63 years of her reign.

In her later years, after her widowhood and unpopular retirement, she emerged as a new symbol. The Empire had developed. And the Crown, and the old queen wearing it, represented a focal point for many millions. She must have understood that even after the Indian Mutiny, for she opposed retaliatory punishment.

The picture of Lord Conyngham announcing to the young Victoria that she was Queen long held a place of honour in countless British homes. One hundred and fifteen years later another picture showed the making of history. It was that of an airliner newly arrived from Africa and of four statesmen headed by Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, awaiting a slender young figure descending alone down the plane steps.

Thus Queen Elizabeth II received the first homage of her Ministers.

London Posts To Be Adorned With Flowers

By Anne Edwards

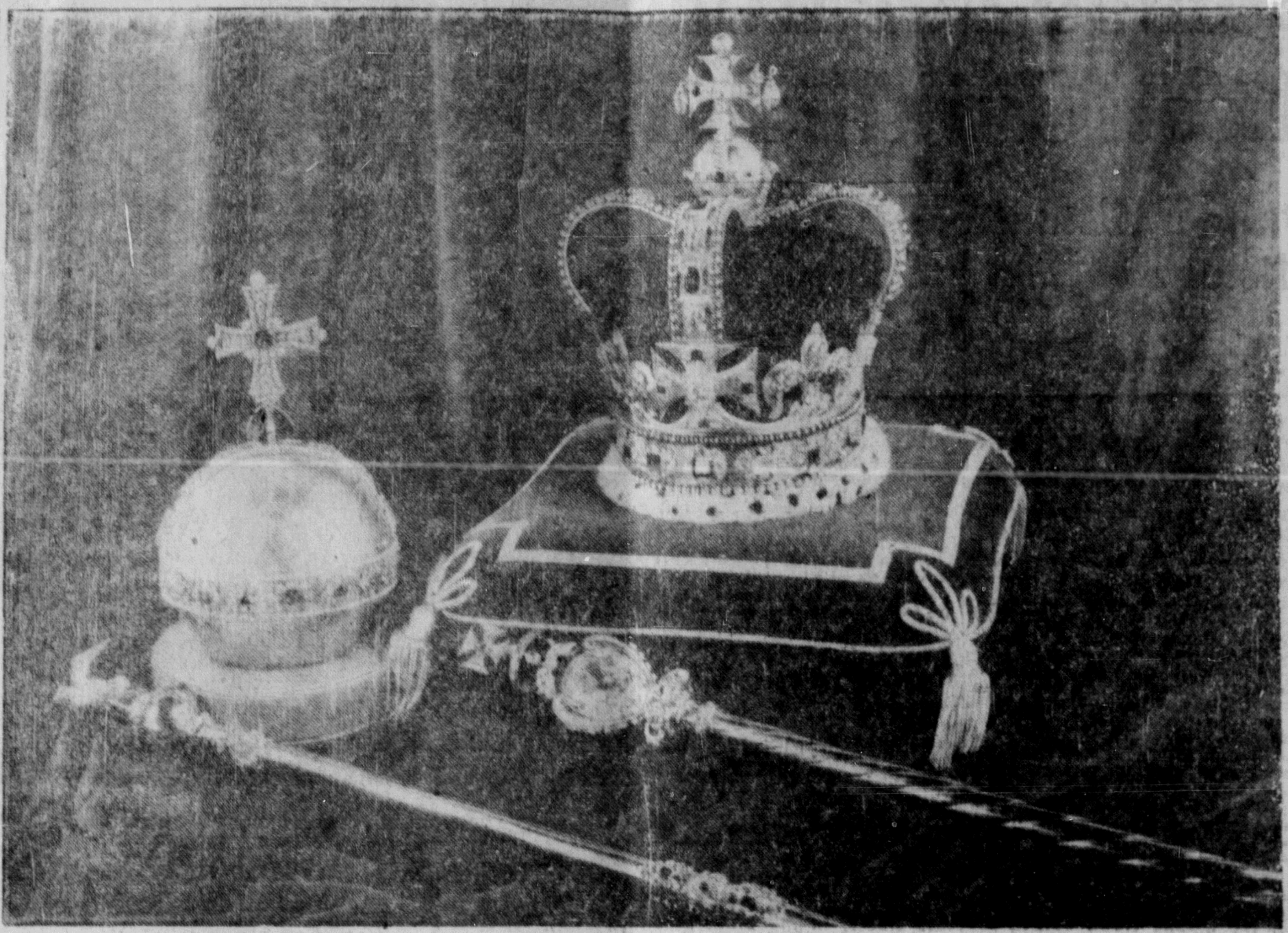
SOME fresh and charming ideas will decorate one corner of London next June. They are the decorations for London lamp-posts, statues, streets, and bridges suggested by Sir Hugh Casson . . .

With any luck we'll be seeing . . . London lamp-posts, for example, painted white in Piccadily and decorated with sheaves of red and white daisies that glow in the dusk. . . .painted pale blue in Oxford-street and garlanded with white roses and ivy leaves . . . painted black in Haymarket and looped with ping-pong balls that bob and rustle in the breeze — with a crown of ping-pong balls at the top.

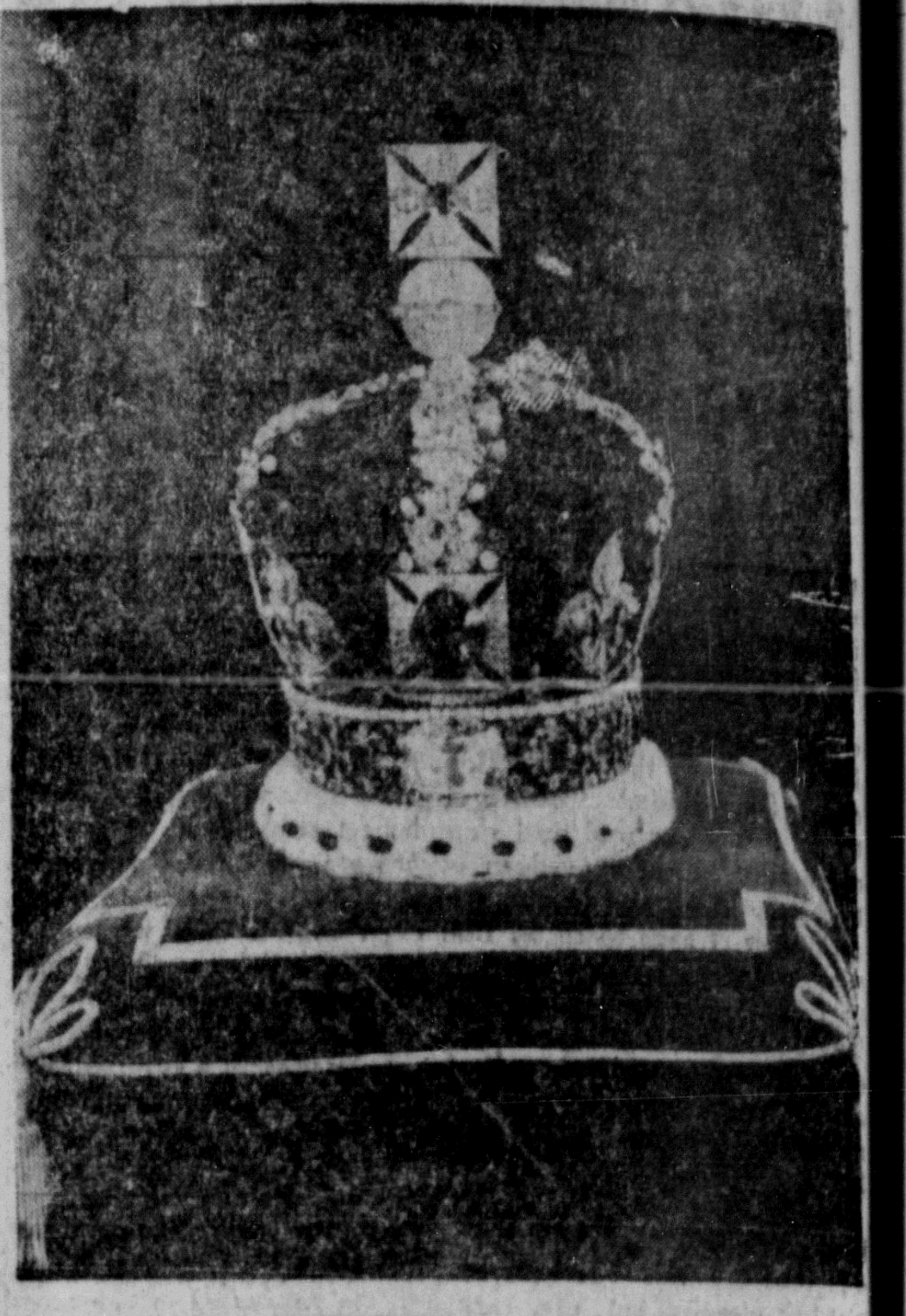
Police barriers, each painted a different color, bottle green lilac, scarlet, and purple. . . . Statues boxed in for safety with a picture of the statue drawn on the outside. . . . Hungerford Bridge with an Emmet train in scarlet painted on its sides. . . .

. . . . Eros enclosed in a gilded cage so that he can be seen but cannot be climbed. . . Charles I's statue in Trafalgar-square with a flying scarlet cloak around his shoulders. . . .

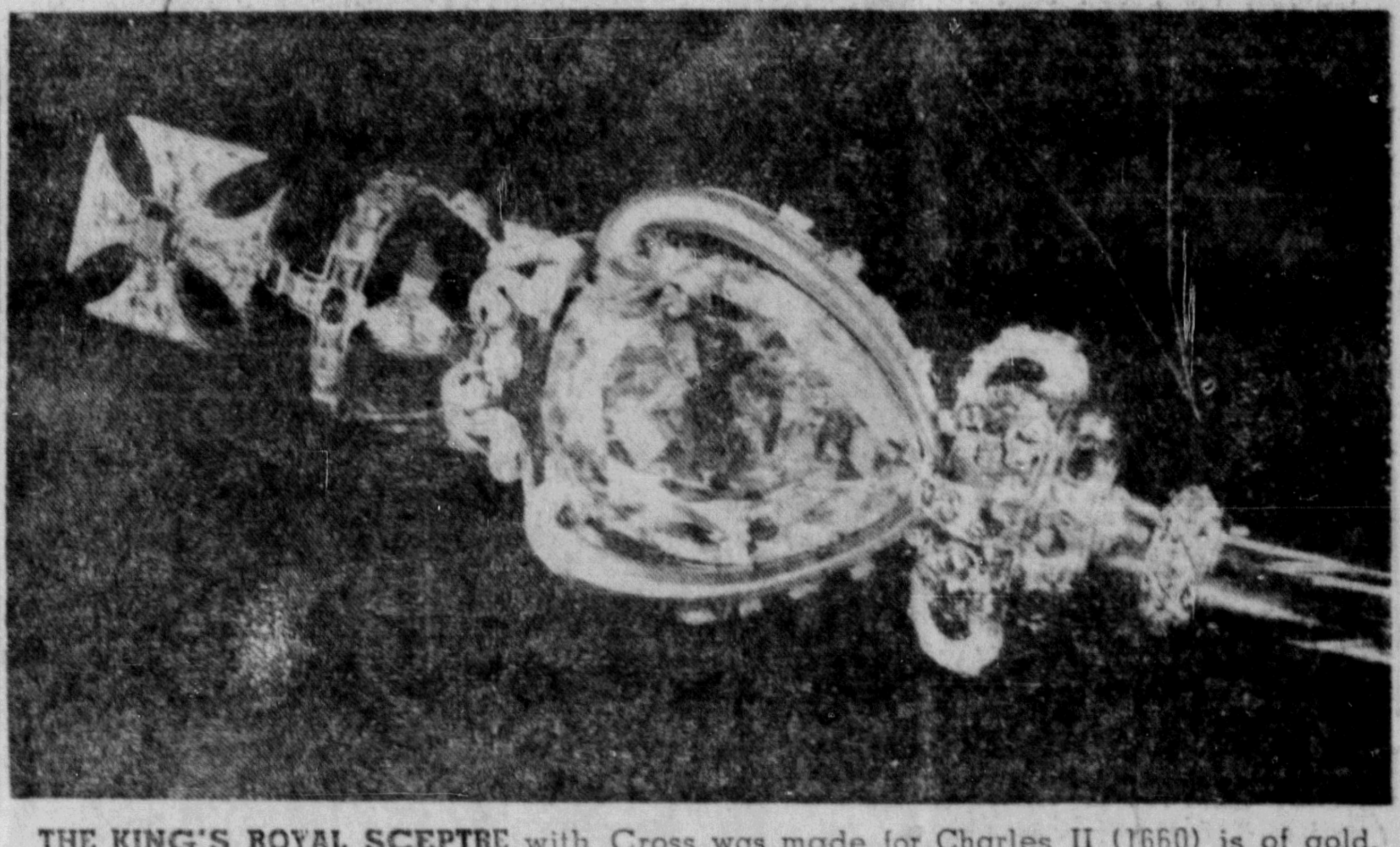
I hope the ideas get by. They are so far removed from that depressing plush and gilt which is most people's idea of Coronation decorations.



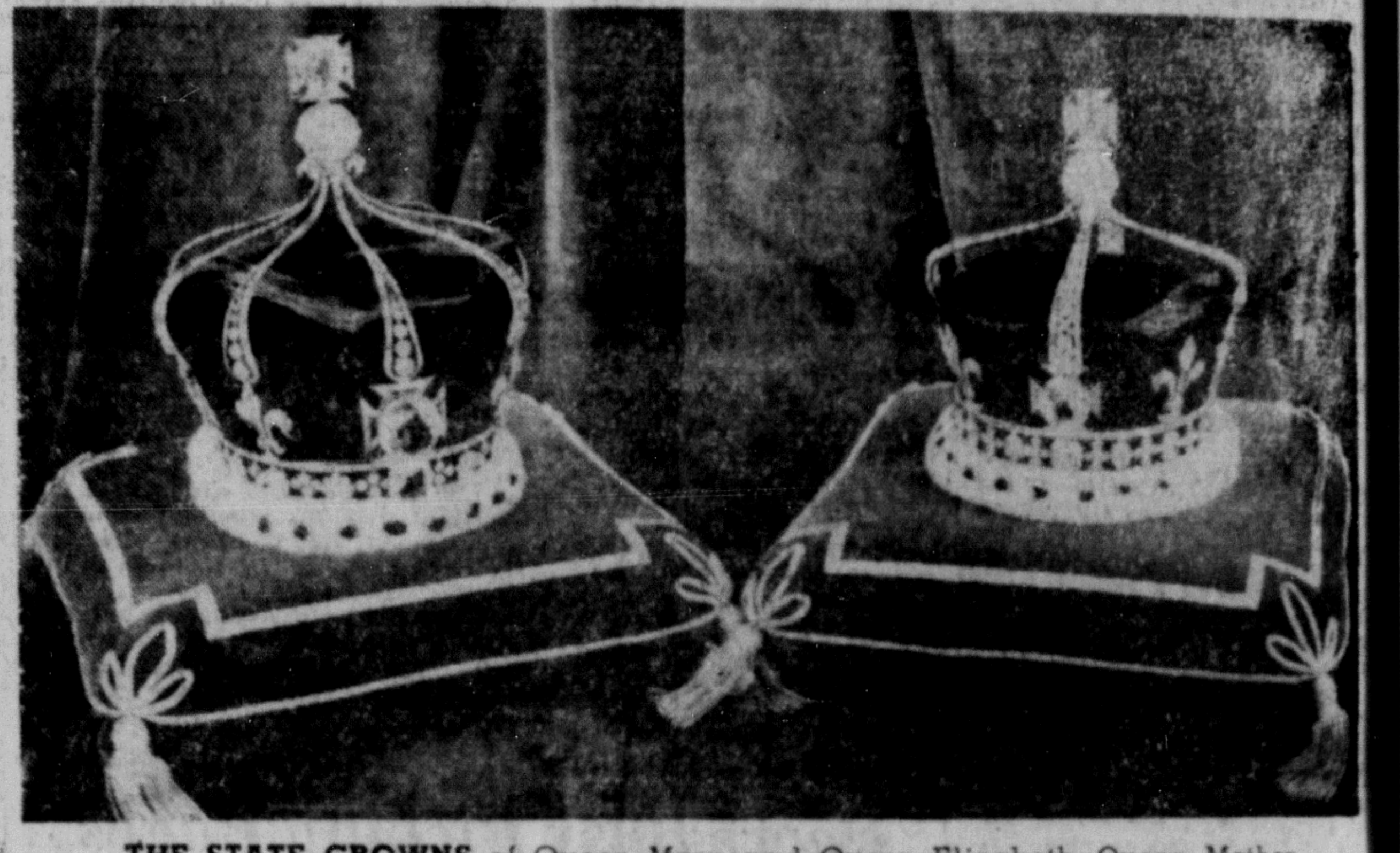
CROWN JEWELS shown here are the Orb, Sceptre with Dove, King's Sceptre and Crown of St. Edward the Confessor.



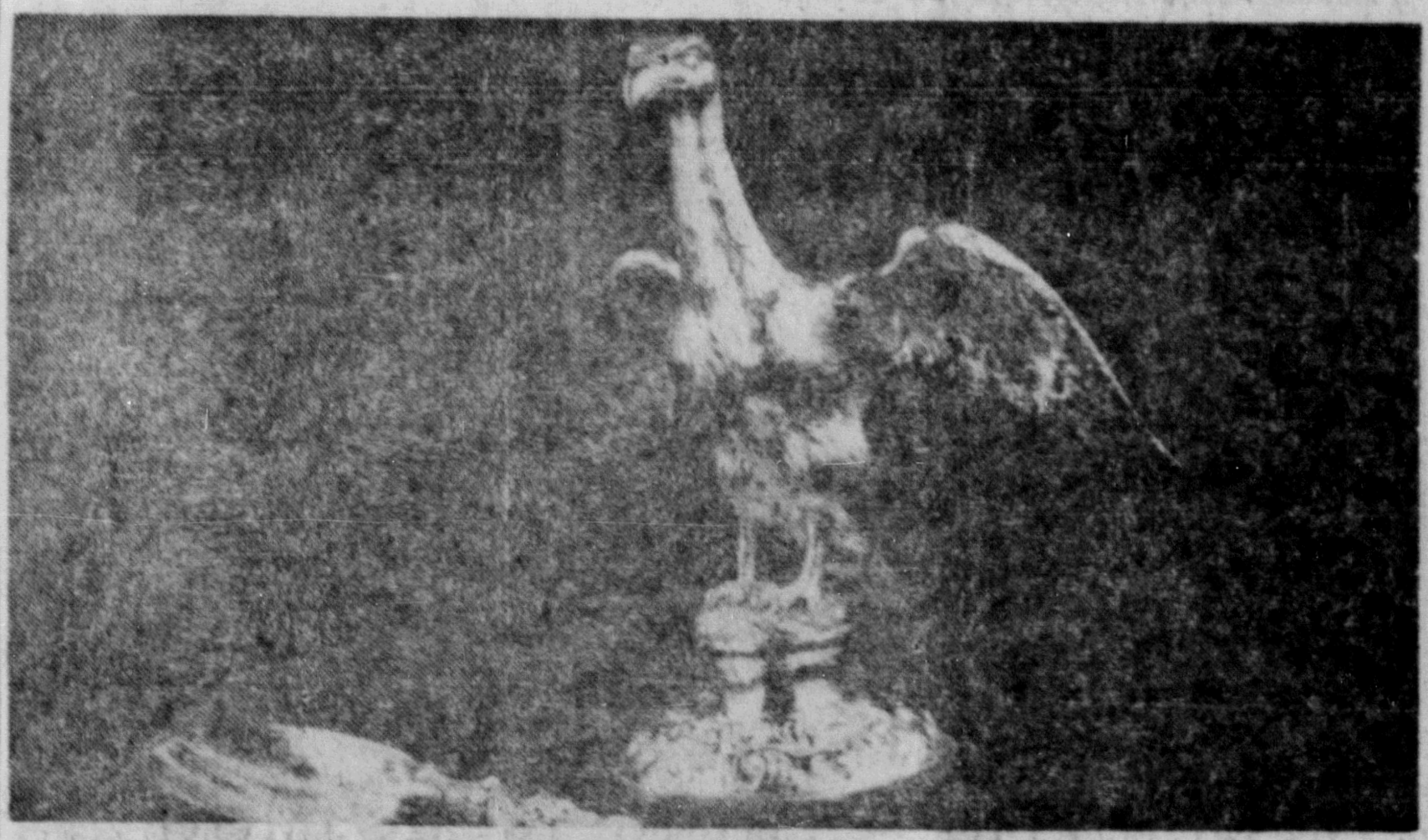
IMPERIAL STATE CROWN first worn by Queen Victoria.



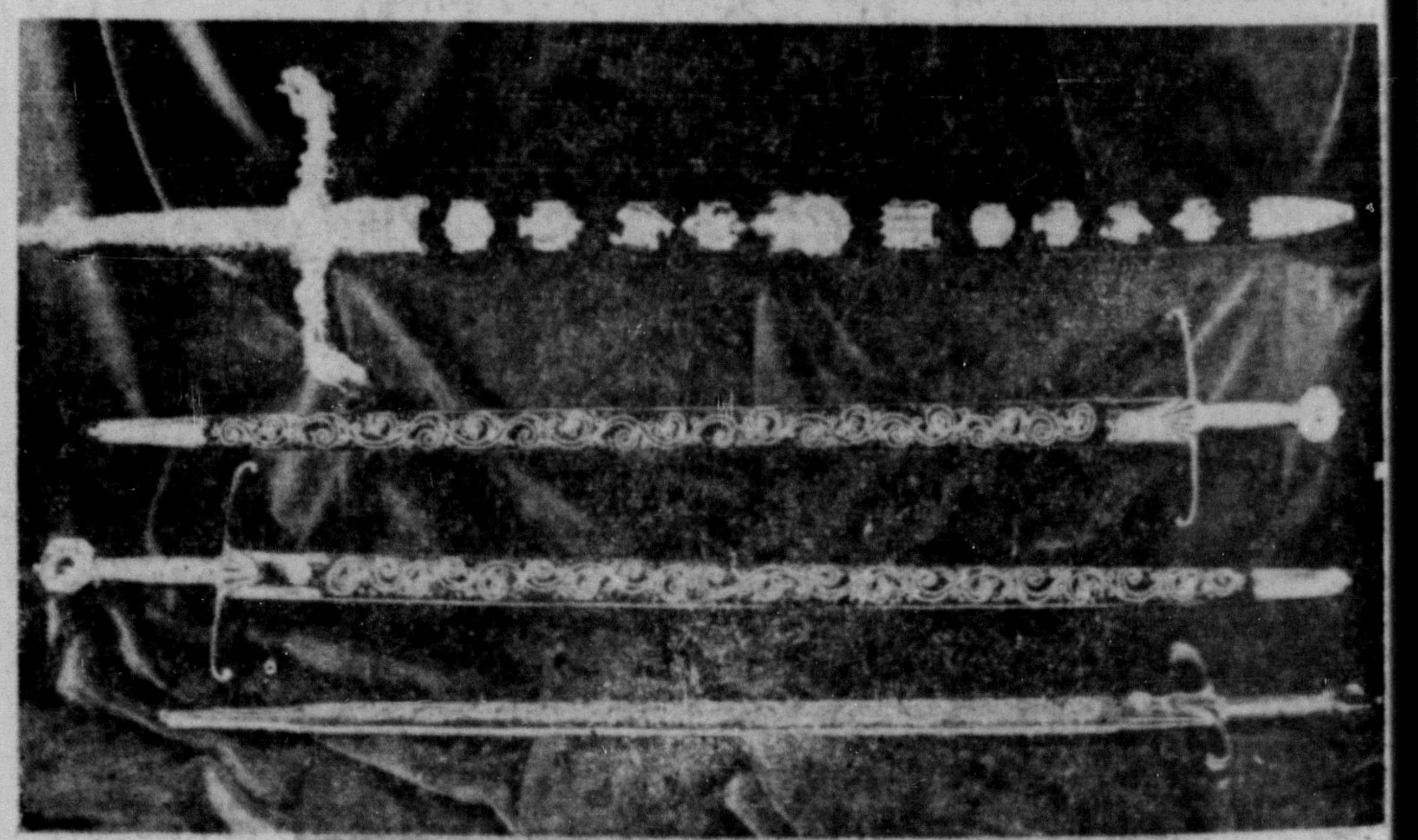
THE KING'S ROYAL SCEPTRE with Cross was made for Charles II (1660) is of gold.



THE STATE CROWNS of Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, Queen Mother.



THE GOLDEN AMPULIA AND THE ANOINTING SPOON which will be used.



FOUR SWORDS include State, Spiritual Justice, Temporal Justice and Mercy.

History of Regalia and Crown Jewels Filled with Death, Drama

When the sight-seeing crowds gaze at the Regalia in its dramatic setting behind bars at the Tower of London, how many know the astonishing story and the turbulent history of these precious ornaments of Royalty? Or do they gaze at the Cullinan Diamond and pass by the ten-inch-long silver-gilt spoon with which kings and queens have been anointed for 700 years since Magna Charta?

Now we will watch these symbols of might as they appear one after another in the service of the enthronization and Coronation of her Majesty. Each crown and orb, sceptre and sword, has a special significance for the might of the Queen. And each has its own history.

Before we watch the Coronation it is well to recall that the Regalia can historically, be divided into two parts by the great dividing line of the Commonwealth and Protectorate. A large part of the Regalia we see today was made to the order of Charles II and his brother, James II, in order to enhance the glory of the monarchy after Restoration. For, in a rather shame-faced way, the Parliament, or the army or someone, had pawned some of the Regalia after the regicide of Charles I. A few years before, at the time the Civil War broke out, Parliament ordered an inventory of the Regalia to be taken and then for it to be locked in the Tower, (not the Abbey, as previously), and retained. But three years later we find a record of the windows of Westminster Abbey being glazed and the charge being put against "Regalia Money". Who ever sold the ancient gold-plate of England did not record the transaction. But there must have been some Loyalists about; after the Restoration a few smaller hidden items of the old Regalia were returned and "no questions asked". From these Cavalier treasure-troves we have, fortunately, the ancient spoon with which the Queen will be anointed, the ampulla that the Archbishop blesses, and the ancient sapphires in the Imperial State Crown.

The day before the Queen's Coronation, the Regalia will be brought from the Tower and placed in the charge of the Dean of Westminster. It will be lodged in the Jerusalem Chamber and guarded, through the night, by the Yeomen of the Guard. Of course, only those elements of the Regalia required for Queen Elizabeth's Coronation will be brought from the City. James II had a fine Crown made for his Consort, Mary of Modena, and there is another modern Consort's Crown made for Queen Mary. But these will remain at the Tower.

On the Coronation morning the Regalia goes in procession with the Westminster Choristers and the Scholars of Westminster School, and the Crown of Edward the Confessor is placed on the altar while the remaining insignia are borne to the west end of the Abbey, whence they are carried to the service of the Sovereign by those who have hereditary privileges.

Changed Ceremony

Two centuries ago it was customary to hand St. Edward's Staff to the Hanoverian kings as they entered the Abbey. More recent monarchs have thought it undignified and indicating infirmity to walk with this five-foot-long staff, like a bishop's crozier with its five inch alpenstock spike at the end. Instead it is carried with the rest of the Regalia. But this staff is itself an exceedingly ancient Royal symbol. We can see Edward the Confessor walking with something exactly like it in the needlework drawings of the Bayeux Tapestry. (The present staff is a Restoration replica from a Medieval pattern).

When the anointing is reached in the Coronation service the Dean of Westminster brings the Golden Ampulla, in the shape of an eagle, from the altar. The consecrated oil is poured into the ancient spoon from the back of the golden bird. There is some doubt about the exact antiquity of the ampulla. Probably it was made for the unlucky and maligned King Richard III for his Coronation in 1483. In the Abbey there is an indenture of that date bearing the rare sign manual of Richard, in which such an "Ampulle" is described. But a weight is given for the gold which does not tally with its present weight so there is some confusion of the evidence. Probably the bird dates from 1483 and was concealed by some Cavalier and then attached to a newly-wrought base after the Restoration.

Of the strange and great antiquity of the spoon there can be no doubt. It was probably made for the coronation of young King Henry III in 1216—the same king who founded Westminster Abbey itself. The previous spoon was probably lost by Henry's father, King John, in his hasty dash through the Fenland and the Wash.

Two ceremonial garments are placed on the Queen after anointment. First is a sleeveless alb of linen; then a long tunic of cloth of gold, gathered with a sash.

There are four swords, each with a special significance, to be seen in the Coronation ceremony. The most important is the great two-handed Sword of State with its crimson scabbard and its "quillion" (or cross-bar) formed with a lion and a unicorn — the "supporters" of the Royal Arms. This sword goes before the Sovereign to Westminster at each session of Parliament; Queen Elizabeth has already travelled with it as a symbol of her power to the opening of Parliament. Then there is "Curtana" the short, pointless sword that symbolizes mercy—the prerogative of pardon that is reserved to the Queen. Two more swords carried in procession represent the Queen's justice to the "temporality"—all her subjects—and to the "spirituality"—her Church. These last three swords have been carried in procession since the time of Richard the Lion Heart—and their traditional significance is at least as old.

The insignia of royalty are brought to the robed Queen. She receives the golden orb which represents sovereign dominion under the cross. This is one of the insignia that have changed through the centuries. In the Middle Ages the orb was more like a sceptre—as old portraits of kings show. The present orb is six inches in diameter—large for so small a hand—and is of gold, ornamented with an amethyst.

The Royal sceptre was made for Charles II but it now has added to it the largest section of the great Cullinan Diamond—nearly two and a half inches long and nearly one and a half inches wide; this great flawless stone is the wonder of the world.

The Dean of Westminster has the privilege of bringing the Crown of St. Edward the Confessor from the altar to the Archbishop, who has the sole right to crown the King since a dispute at the time of Henry I in 1100. The crown itself is called "St. Edward's" but in fact it was made in quite a hurry for King Charles II, and is a replica from memory based on the old pattern. It is a heavy go crown. The difference between sovereign's crown and a mere co net is the arches which arise ab the rim and intersect where th is a globe of gold surmounted w a cross. The actual coronation performed with St. Edwar Crown. But it is soon changed f the lighter, and more beautiful a far more valuable Imperial Sta Crown, which was made for Que Victoria.

It has become customary place a Cap of Maintenance insi the crown—it is of purple velv edged with miniver, so that forms a kind of lining. But, hi torically the Cap has nothing do with the crown, and is part another ceremony.

For the latter part of the cer mony and for the return to th palace the Imperial State Crow will be worn. It bears a noble co lection of historic relics. Promi ently it displays the Black Princ ruby—a drop-shaped stone—give to him by Pedro the Cruel of Ar gon. This stone was worn by Ki Henry V in his helmet at t Battle of Agincourt. The pea ear-rings of Queen Elizabeth I a said to adorn this crown, and th Stuart sapphire bequeathed by t last Stuart claimant, Henry Ca dinal York, has been added to sym bolize the unity of the monarch A single stone, with the longe history of all, is the sapphire King Edward—relic of the almo legendary sainted King Edward which was once in the ring of th pre-Conquest monarch, and is no in the Imperial Crown. Finall this magnificent crown carries t second portion of South Afric greatest diamond that we have a ready noted on the sceptre in t Queen's left hand.

The Regalia is more than beautiful and glorious collection the trappings of might. It has bee said that it combines perfectly a that is highest in great jewellery grace, value and permanence.

Ceremonial Swords Getting Cleaned Up for Coronation

FURNISHING and refurbishing ceremonial swords in preparation for the Coronation is keeping British sword cutlers busy. The 180-year-old Wilkinson Sword Co., of Acton—the only company doing this work—has received orders for 2,000 swords.

An order just completed is for swords for the Royal Canadian Navy. The firm is executing an order for cavalry swords for the RCMP, and has in hand an order for sword belts for the Royal Canadian Navy.

Ceremonial swords have not been standard equipment for officers in Britain since before the war, but many officers have pre-war swords and are having these refurbished—at an average cost of about $15 each. The cost of a new sword is about $40, the exact price depending on the type.

The new swords are of about a dozen types and are being made for the Household Cavalary, the Yeoman of the Guards and others. The longest are those of the Household Cavalry—38 inches, compared with the average of a little more than 30 inches. Many swords are being sent to be brought up to date—and will bear the Queen's cypher.

The spirit of Coronation year is reflected in the new colors issued for spring and summer of 1953 by the British Color Council. Colors are for knitwear, wool, silk and rayon, cotton and leather. The 33 colors on the wool card have been arranged to give alternative suggestions for harmonizing and contrasting colors. There are 36 colors for silk and rayon, 22 for cotton and 16 for leather.