

Queen Elizabeth II, who reigned over the United Kingdom for 70 years, dies at 96

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Queen Elizabeth II, Britain's longest-reigning monarch and a rock of stability across much of a turbulent century, died September 8, 2022, after 70 years on the throne. She was 96. Photo: Andrew Matthews/WPA Pool/Getty Images Photo: Andrew Matthews/WPA Pool/Getty Images

Queen Elizabeth II, who ruled the United Kingdom for more than 70 years, died on September 8 at Balmoral Castle. This was her summer home in Scotland. She was 96.

Her rule began in February 1952 after her father, King George VI, died. Elizabeth was a constant and calm figure in Britain and on the world stage. She helped lead her country through hard times and major world events.

Her last act as queen was on September 6, 2022. That day, she let Prime Minister Boris Johnson leave his job. She then asked the new prime minister,



Liz Truss, to form a new government. To make a new government, Truss chooses cabinet ministers. These are people who will help her run the country and make good choices for Britain's future.

Elizabeth Was A Fixture For Decades

In a monarchy dating back to at least the 10th century, Elizabeth's rule was the longest. She kept a promise made on her 21st birthday. She said she would devote all of her life to serving her country.

The length of her service was amazing. During her reign, there were 15 British prime ministers, 14 U.S. presidents and seven popes. Elizabeth named six archbishops of Canterbury.

By the time of her Diamond Jubilee in 2012, Queen Elizabeth's approval rating was 90 percent. At a service at St. Paul's Cathedral, then-Archbishop Rowan Williams said, "We are marking six decades of living proof that public service is possible, and that it is a place where happiness can be found."

Her platinum jubilee in 2022 marked her 70 years as queen. In terms of length, pomp and place in British life, her form of rule would not happen again.

She Never Expected To Be Queen

Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor was born a royal princess on April 21, 1926. Her mother was from Scottish aristocracy. Her father was the second son of King George V. Princess Elizabeth's younger sister, Margaret Rose, was born four years later.

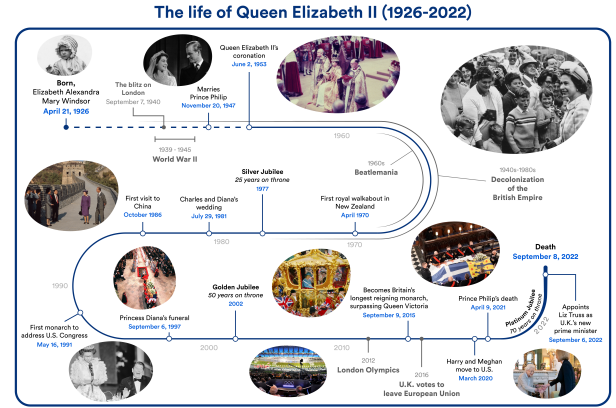
The Duke of York's older brother, Edward, became king when King George V died in 1936. Edward ruled for less than one year and gave up the throne to marry the American socialite, Wallis Simpson. Elizabeth's father then became King George VI. Suddenly, at the age of 10, Elizabeth had a king for a father and would become queen one day.

During World War II, Elizabeth stayed in England. She joined the army.

Her husband was Prince Philip. He was a great-great-grandchild of Queen Victoria and the son of a Greek prince. Philip was a young officer in the British navy.

Their wedding took place on November 20, 1947. It was a fairy-tale event between a princess and a dashing, blond naval officer.

Elizabeth had four children. They are Prince Charles (1948), Princess Anne (1950), Prince Andrew (1960) and Prince Edward (1964). With Elizabeth's death, her oldest child, Prince Charles, will be the new ruler of the United Kingdom. He will be known as King Charles III.



She and Philip had expected a long reign for George VI and the chance for a fairly normal life as a navy family. In the winter of 1952, the king died.

Coronation Helped Lift Postwar Gloom

Elizabeth's crowning the following year provided a much-needed shot of optimism. The country was suffering from postwar troubles and a drop in world influence.

She was crowned in Westminster Abbey on June 2, 1953. As a result of her long rule, Elizabeth had a major behind-the-scenes advisory role to a line of prime ministers. They traveled each Tuesday from Downing Street to Buckingham Palace to see her.

"We Are All Visitors To This Time, This Place"

In those sessions, she offered private advice. It came from her life and knowledge of leaders and diplomats. As the ruler of the Commonwealth of 15 Realms and more than 50 nations, Elizabeth kept Britain closely linked to its past territories.



At Balmoral, the public saw how Elizabeth might have lived had she not become queen: as a well-



heeled English countrywoman in green, rubber boots leading a group of muddy Welsh corgis.

When talking to leaders in 2011 in Australia, Elizabeth said this.

"We are all visitors to this time, this place. Our purpose here is to observe, to learn, to grow, to love ... and then we return home."