

IDEAS HAVE CHANGED SINCE 1838

The Queen's Choice For Her Coronation Robes

THE Coronation acquired a personal interest for me yesterday. Looking at the form of service used in 1937 I discovered that the young woman to be crowned on June 2, and who will enter Westminster Abbey in mere crimson robes as though to open Parliament, has to be accepted as your Queen and mine before the service proceeds. This is called the Recognition, when the Archbishop of Canterbury presents her to, and she is accepted by, the people (the congregation).

Three sets of robes have to be prepared for the Queen, in addition to other ceremonial garments. She will be robed twice in the Abbey. Her crimson being removed, she will be invested in cloth of gold before being crowned. (And please note, the *putting on* of the Crown will not make her a Sovereign, but only *shows* that she has attained to it.) Only those in the Abbey will see her in gold. She will go out of the Abbey wearing, as a Sovereign, purple robes and the Imperial State Crown.

Purple Velvet Now Being Woven

The royal purple velvet for her third robe is to be made by Warner and Sons, who made the velvet for King George VI, and woven at their silk mill at Braintree, in Essex. They have just received the order from the Royal School of Needlework, and preparation of the fabric is already in hand.

The velvet will be wholly British. The raw silk has been produced on

Zoë, Lady Hart Dyke's farm at Lullingstone in Kent, and it has been thrown by the silk mill in the little Suffolk village of Glemsford.

The Queen's purple velvet will be of the richest quality and hand-woven. It will be 21 inches wide, and over 20 yards will be required to make the Royal robe.

The rate of weaving is no more than half a yard a day, and, allowing for dyeing the yarn, which will also be done in Warner's dye house at Braintree, and setting up the loom the required length will take over three months to produce.

It will be woven by Miss Lily Lee, who wove the velvet for the Coronation robe of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

The dressing side of Queen Victoria's Coronation in 1838 was embarrassed by the prim feelings of that day, which don't worry us now. Queen Victoria had to retire to get out of her robe as it fastened down the back with hooks and eyes and had an all-round skirt, instead of being open in front like a cape.

The Queen must be smiling, too, at suggestions that she will wear a light crown—because Queen Victoria wore a small 3lb affair that she also used for her drawing-rooms. To be crowned with the Crown of England, the historic St. Edward's Crown, is far more satisfying to Queen and people, and since she will only wear its 7lb weight for a few minutes during the service, you can imagine that her Majesty wonders why so much fuss is made about it.

An Off-The-Shoulder Gown

A Queen has an advantage over a King. She can be anointed in a low-shouldered dress. The crimson mantle is taken off and the Archbishop anoints with oil the crown of the head, the breast and hands. Her father wore a specially made shirt, but the Queen will only need a plain white off-the-shoulder dress under her robe!

After the solemn act of anointing with oil, which is in the nature of a sacrament, a surplice-like white garment will be put on the Queen—the colobium sindonis, as it is known. This will probably be made with stud fasteners all down one side and shoulder so that she can get into it easily. Over it she will wear the gold supertunica, possibly George IV's.

Here is an interesting point—no one, even in the Abbey, will see the anointing except those assisting at it. The Queen will be seated and hidden by the high back of King Edward's chair, the cope of the Archbishop and the canopy over her head, held by four noblemen Knights of the Garter.



Queen Elizabeth has to be "recognised" as our Queen before the Coronation service.

BY

EVELYN

GARRETT



Queen Victoria in her Coronation robes—some consider them stagy and pseudo-medieval.

D. Tel.
1/10/52

POSTMAN BRINGS ORDER FOR ROBE

Express Staff Reporter

A POSTMAN delivered a letter to a London office yesterday. It was an order to make the royal purple velvet for the Queen's Coronation robe.

The letter was received at the Wells-street, W., office of Warner and Sons, who made the velvet for King George VI's Coronation robe. A director of the firm said last night: "We have been honoured with every royal order for Coronation robes since King Edward VII.

"The weaving work will take at least three months at our factory in Braintree, Essex.

"One of our hand-weavers, middle-aged Miss Lily Lee, will make the robe. It is a tremendously delicate job. Every inch is hand-woven—not more than half a yard a day.

"It will be 21ins. wide, and more than 20yds. will be needed.

"Another of our craftswomen, Mrs. Hilda Calver, will weave a duplicate."

'Hurrah, hurrah— my silk used'

THE raw silk for the Queen's robe has been produced on the silk farm of Zoe, Lady Hart Dyke, at Lullingstone Castle, Kent.

Over the telephone last night Lady Hart Dyke said: "Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah.

"I am in the middle of the end-of-season party I throw for my work-folk. I must rush in and tell them this wonderful news."

The Lullingstone silkworms—there are now 4,000,000—produced the silk for the robes for the 1937 Coronation and for the present Queen's wedding dress.

Emily and Myrtle 'throw' the silk

THE silk has already been "thrown"—prepared for weaving—in the Glemsford Silk Mills in Suffolk.

First the silk was steeped in oil and water.

Then Miss Emily Adams, 60 years with the firm, wound it on to bobbins; 16-year-old Bob Oakley twisted each single thread; and Myrtle and Ida Brewster, Evelyn Levett and Brenda Suttle completed the process.

Write

D. Express.

1/10/37

Apply

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*Have you
silk pile to
velvet.*

E.N. 1/10/52.

The Queen's Robe

Two Women Weave Their Way to Fame

"Evening News" Women Reporter

BRAINTREE, Wednesday.

TWO smiling middle-aged women—both expert hand weavers of pure silk velvet—were to-day discussing the royal purple velvet they are to weave for the Queen's Coronation robe.

The weavers—plump, bespectacled Miss Lily Lee, and small, vivacious Mrs. Hilda Calver—work at Warner's silk factory in Braintree, Essex. Yesterday the order came: twenty yards of purple velvet. But in case of accidents two 30-yard lengths will be made by Miss Lee and Mrs. Calver. The best will be chosen for the robe, the other sold elsewhere, perhaps to America.

ONE SLIP

The velvet will take three months to produce, for it can only be woven at the rate of half a yard a day. Says Miss Lee: "You need patience and concentration. One slip of the knife and the whole thing is ruined."

Sometimes Miss Lee sings as she works—"That seems to help my concentration."

Miss Lee became a velvet weaver in 1920 and has been at it ever since except for the war years, when she left her loom to go and make munitions. She made the velvet Coronation robe for Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and also the velvet for the Duchess of Kent and the Duchess of Gloucester. She was sent a ticket for the Coronation.

CLOTH OF GOLD

Mrs. Calver joined the firm in 1914, left to get married in 1932, and returned last year. Away from the work she is a great friend of Miss Lee and they live only a few roads apart. Strangely enough Mrs. Calver lives in Coronation-avenue, Braintree.

According to ancient custom the Queen will appear at the Abbey for her Coronation in her crimson Parliamentary robe. For her actual crowning she will wear a cloth of gold. But when she leaves Westminster Abbey to make her royal progress through the streets she will be wearing the purple velvet Robe of State.



Mrs. Hilda Calver working in the factory at Braintree to-day.



Miss Lily Lee, the other hand-weaver, at work.

White

ONLY ONE ROBE FOR THE QUEEN

By ROBERTA NELSON

IN the Royal School of Needlework at Prince's-gate some of England's finest embroideresses are awaiting the most important task of their careers—the making up of a Coronation robe for the Queen.

The twenty-yard length of pure silk purple velvet now being hand-woven in Essex will probably not reach them before January. Then they will spend several unhurried months embroidering it in gold. The robe will finally be bordered with ermine worth perhaps £3,000 and edged with gold lace.

The design of the embroidery will probably resemble that on the Coronation robe of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, which is in the London Museum at Kensington Palace. This, too, was embroidered by the Royal School of Needlework, founded in 1872 by Princess Christian, daughter of Queen Victoria.

The design on the robe of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother embodied the floral emblems of the British Empire, and the same tradition will apply to the Coronation robe of her present Majesty. Her personal cypher will also appear in the embroidery.

The purple velvet Robe of State is the one in which the Queen will leave Westminster Abbey and make her progress through the streets. It may never be worn again, since each Sovereign has his or her own Coronation robe; and after an interval it may join those of her Majesty's parents and grandparents in the London Museum.

The other Coronation vestments need not be specially made, and it is in fact believed that the Queen will not choose to have new ones. It is more than possible she will wear those used by her father King George VI.

AT the same time her Majesty has been studying details of the Coronation vestments of Queen Victoria, all of which were made to her requirements. This would appear to have been necessary for two reasons. According to one source Coronation robes had often previously been sold, or given to actors for use on the stage. Most of King George IV's were auctioned in 1831; his purple velvet mantle, embroidered with 200 ounces of gold, fetching £55. This course was evidently sanctioned by his brother and successor, King William IV.

In any case Queen Victoria could hardly have worn either of her uncles' robes, for she was tiny in stature and, as a girl, slightly built. King George IV's Imperial Mantle of cloth of gold, which survived the auction, was too heavy for her and she had a lighter one made which is preserved in the London Museum.

Queen Elizabeth II is not really very much taller than Queen Victoria. She is only five feet two inches tall (though unlike Queen Victoria she gains extra inches by wearing high heels). But it is possible that her Majesty, accustomed from babyhood to healthy independence, may feel only amusement at the idea that George IV's gold mantle—which was worn by her father—should be too heavy for her.

ACCORDING to immemorial tradition her Majesty will drive to Westminster Abbey in her crimson Parliament robes. These will be retained during the first part of the service, when she shows herself to the people for the Recognition, and laid aside while the anthem which precedes the Anointing is being sung.

After the

times also called the "Pallium Regale" and "Dalmatic robe," is shaped like a cope. It is a vestment of regal beauty and dignity, surpassingly rich in effect. The one worn by King George VI was of purple and gold brocaded tissue fastened at the neck with a heavy gold clasp, the train reaching about a foot on the ground. Queen Victoria's was seventy-seven inches long and was made of four breadths of yellow cloth of gold, each twenty inches wide, bearing a golden-branched pattern with roses, shamrocks, thistles and fleurs-de-lis interspersed with coronets. It was edged with deep gold fringe and lined with rose-coloured silk, and its gilt clasp was formed of an eagle between two palm branches.

IT is likely that a handkerchief will be specially embroidered for her Majesty to carry on this one memorable occasion. Queen Mary at her Coronation had one of Honiton lace bearing an M and a Crown, which had been made and presented to her for the purpose.

Possibly this custom derives from former coronations, when the Queen's Bedchamber Woman stood by during the anointing "ready to close the (Queen's) tucker and pin on the Crown... There is a little handkerchief, which the Bedchamber Woman gives to the Mistress of the Robes, to wipe off any oil that might fall upon the face." That was written in 1761, as a guide for Queen Charlotte, consort of King George III.

Empire emblems on her mother's robe



Anointing the Dean of Westminster will array her in the Colobium Sindonis and the Supertunica, or Close Pall, of cloth of gold with a girdle of the same; and then in the Amill and Imperial Mantle, or Open Pall. In these vestments her Majesty will be crowned.

The coronation of a Sovereign is akin to the ordination of a bishop, and the Colobium Sindonis corresponds to a bishop's rochet or alb. It is therefore traditionally a simple garment of pure white, sleeveless and unadorned—only in modern times has it been edged with masses of rich lace, "surfed very full," as Queen Victoria's was. "A singular sort of little-gown of linen," she called the Colobium Sindonis in her description of her Coronation; and we know that it was open down the sides and fastened on one shoulder with three tiny buttons.

The floral emblems of the British Empire were embodied in the Coronation robe of the Queen Mother. The same tradition will apply to the present Queen.

E. News
10/11/52

PURPLE ROBE MAKERS CHOSEN

LONDON FIRM

Daily Telegraph Reporter

The purple velvet robe to be worn by the Queen at her Coronation will be similar to that worn by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother at the Coronation of King George VI in 1937. It will be cut on traditional lines with rich embroidery of Imperial emblems.

Ede and Ravenscroft, Chancery Lane, London, announced yesterday that they had been entrusted with the order for making it. This firm, one of the oldest of its kind in the country, having been founded in 1689, made the Coronation robe of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

The robe will be cut at the firm's shop in Chancery Lane, by Mr. Martin, who is over 70, and who cut the previous robe. It will be stitched by Miss R. L. Lale, Miss H. R. Banting and Miss L. Williams.

A spokesman for the firm said: "It will be made of pure silk, hand-made purple velvet supplied by Warner and Sons, of Braintree, Essex. It will be furred with miniver powdered with ermine tails and embroidered in gold, in a design to be chosen by the Queen. The embroidery will be undertaken by the Royal School of Needlework."

D. Tel.

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The Queen's robe shown on TV

TV's millions will be the first to see the purple robe to be worn by the Queen at her Coronation. A programme tomorrow week will show viewers the Royal School of Needlework in London, where the robe is being embroidered. A team of seamstresses will be seen at work on the robe.

D. Express.

4/2/53.

The Queen's beasts are taking shape

Coronation decorations for the Abbey

From A. P. MAGUIRE, of our London staff

Five miles west of Westminster, in a studio at Hammersmith, the Queen's beasts are taking shape. There are 10 of them, they stand six feet high, and they will decorate the Coronation annexe of the Abbey.

The beasts have shields fashioned with arms or badges, and are fashioned after heraldic devices used by the Queen's ancestors. The Lion of England, the Unicorn of Scotland, the Falcon of the Plantagenets, the Griffin of Edward III, the Bull of Clarence, the White Lion of Mortimer, the Greyhound of the Tudors, the Dragon of the Tudors, the Yale—not so fierce a beast, rather like an antelope—of the Beaufoots, the White Horse of Hanover.

Impressive

They were on show yesterday to a small party of visitors that included the Minister of Works (Mr. David Eccles), at the studio of Mr. James Woodford, R.A., the sculptor, who knows the difference between a griffin and a dragon—and also how hard it is to make a falcon sit up with dignity, bearing a shield.

The report on the beasts, which ranged from the bare wooden skeleton, through the full-size clay-model to the finished plaster casts, must be that they are grand and admirable.

Crowded in a studio they were impressive; spaced out in their proper places, and toned down to a brick colour, when they are seen in their architectural setting, they will be handsome and thrilling beasts.

There ought to be a special exhibition of them, when the Coronation is over, and then there will be many opinions about which is best. Will it be the great, upright proud Dragon, holding its shield before it? Or the Lion of England, with a beautiful crown and a fine beard—a most superior-looking beast?

Or some will say the Unicorn, and if there is a school of thought that holds that the Unicorn is a fabulous animal then such heresy must be ended, for this Unicorn is far from fabulous, but very real and dignified.

Mr. Woodford stood with these great creatures of his—in the clay stage each weighs half a ton—and with his assistants, Mr. Leslie Sandham and Miss Jean Ralston. He looked pleased about the whole scheme yesterday when the visitors called.

Yorks. Post.

7/2/53

Mr. Stagg

He was given the commission last autumn and works now in co-operation with the Ministry of Works Chief Architect (Mr. Eric Bedford). That is the right way for a sculptor to work, believes Mr. Woodford, who designed the entrance to the Architects' Institute building in Portland Place, and work for Whitehall and the liner, the Queen Mary.

He likes people to smile when they see his work, for he is much given to smiling himself—a round-faced, pink-complexioned man of middle age, who comes from Nottingham, and does not speak with the accents of Chelsea—or even of Hammersmith.

He is against (you gather) modern sculpture, for, he believes, young sculptors are being "led up the garden path" by being encouraged to do fantastic stuff which no architect would have.

"They call me old-fashioned," he says with his easy smile. But oh, what splendid beasts!



The Minister of Works, Mr. David Eccles, with Mr. James Woodford, the sculptor, looking at a scale model of the Dragon of the Tudors, in foreground. Behind is Mr. Eric Bedford, Chief Architect to the Ministry of Works.

E. STAN. 6/2/53.

Eccles sees the Queen's Beasts taking shape



Mr. Woodford works on the Lion of England.

Evening Standard Reporter
Mr. David Eccles, Minister of Works, to-day watched sculptor James Woodford in his Chiswick studio working on the Queen's Beasts, which will be placed at the entrance of the Coronation annexe to Westminster Abbey.

The Ministry commissioned 10 heraldic Beasts. Mr. Woodford is carving them all. One, 6ft. tall, has a goat's horns, a bear's tusks. Five tons of clay and two tons

of plaster are being used. Each figure will weigh 4-cwt. The carving of the Unicorn of Scotland was finished to-day. The Lion of England is ready to be cast.

Mr. Woodford works from nine to 13 hours a day. Three assistants work 11 hours. They expect to complete the work a week before the Coronation.

What does Mr. Eccles think about the figures? "They have plenty of character," he said.



Mr. Woodford shows a scale model of the Dragon of the Tudors to Mr. Eccles and Mr. Eric Bedford, Ministry of Works chief architect (at the back).

Couple buried together

Mr. John Mannerings, 85, of Hastings Road, Maidstone, and his 92-year-old wife, Eliza, were buried together to-day at Maidstone. Mrs. Mannerings died on Wednesday; her husband on Thursday.

Easter in Paris

A party of Leyton schoolchildren will visit Paris this Easter.

SAPPER ROBBED

MEN IN THE PUBLIC



THE QUEEN'S BEASTS

Press View, Friday, February 6th, 1953, At the Sculptor's Studio

Mr. James Woodford, R.A., was commissioned last autumn by the Ministry of Works to design and model the ten "Queen's Beasts" as part of the decorative scheme for the Coronation Annexe to Westminster Abbey. Mr. Woodford has been working in close co-operation with the Ministry's Chief Architect, Mr. Eric Bedford, A.R.I.B.A. Authoritative heraldic advice has been provided by the Hon. Sir George Bellew, C.V.O., Garter King of Arms, who was personally assisted by Mr. H. Stanford London, F.S.A., the well-known scholar of medieval heraldry.

The Queen's Beasts, and their shields emblazoned with arms or badges, are taken from heraldic devices used by Her Majesty's ancestors. They will be placed along the western facade of the Annexe.

They are:

The Lion of England; The Unicorn of Scotland; The Falcon of the Plantagenets; The Griffin of Edward III; The Bull of Clarence; The White Lion of Mortimer; The Greyhound of the Tudors; The Dragon of the Tudors; The Yale of the Beauforts; The White Horse of Hanover.

(For the official description and colouring, supplied by Sir George Bellew, C.V.O., Garter King of Arms, see Appendix Note).

Mr. Woodford first produced small sketch models 9 inches high, in plasticine, as his representation of each Beast. These were executed in full detail and tested against the scale model of the Annexe.

Then followed "enlargement to scale" - full-scale reproductions in clay upon wooden armatures or framework, of the 6 ft. figures now approaching completion in the sculptor's studio, at St. Peter's Square, Hammersmith. Because of the moisture content of the clay, which has to be maintained to prevent cracking, each Beast at this stage weighs about half-a-ton. From the clay figures, plaster casts were moulded and the completed work given a protective coat of paint. In its finished state each statue will weigh between three and four hundredweight.

Mr. Woodford is personally attending to the final modelling of every statue, after preliminary preparation by his two assistants, Mr. Leslie Sandham and

HERALDIC DESCRIPTION OF
THE QUEEN'S BEASTS

Description of Supporters

1. A lion of gold with the Royal Crown (as above some of the badges) on its head. Its claws and tongue are red.
2. A silver unicorn, its mane, horn, hoofs, beard and the tufts of hair on its body and tail are of gold. Round its neck is a coronet of gold composed of crosses patee and fleurs-de-lys, to which a golden chain is attached. The chain passes between the beasts's forelegs and then is reflexed over its back.
3. A silver horse.
4. A silver greyhound with a red collar around its neck. The collar is edged and studded with gold, and a golden ring is affixed to the front of it.
5. A red dragon. The red shades into a golden belly.
6. A black bull with golden hoofs and horns.
7. A silver lion with a blue tongue and blue claws.
8. A silver yale covered with golden spots, its hoofs, horns, tusks and the tufts of hair on its body and tail are of gold.
9. A silver falcon with its wings out-spread; its beak and legs are gold.
10. A golden griffin, its beak and claws red.

Supporters and Shields

1. SUPPORTER. Lion. Dexter supporter of present Royal Arms.
SHIELD. Present Royal Arms of England.
2. SUPPORTER. Unicorn. Sinister supporter of Royal Arms.
SHIELD. Royal Arms of Scotland.
3. SUPPORTER. Horse. From Arms borne by Kings of Hanoverian dynasty.
SHIELD. Royal Arms as used 1714 - 1801.
4. SUPPORTER. Greyhound. Supporter of Royal Arms of King Henry VII.
SHIELD. Crowned Tudor Rose on field of Tudor livery colours.
5. SUPPORTER. Dragon. A supporter of Royal Arms of King Henry VII.
SHIELD. Arms of Llywelyn ab Gruffydd. Now borne in pretence by Princes of Wales.
6. SUPPORTER. White Lion. A badge of the Mortimer family. The Mortimers were descended from King Edward III and were ancestors of the Yorkist Kings.
SHIELD. White Rose en Soleil on a field of the livery colours of the House of York. A Yorkist badge.
7. SUPPORTER. Black Bull. A badge of Lionel Duke of Clarence, son of King Edward III, and an ancestor of the Yorkist and Tudor Sovereigns.
SHIELD. Royal Arms as used from King Henry IV until Queen Elizabeth.
8. SUPPORTER. Yale (form of heraldic antelope). A supporter of the arms of the Beaufort family. Margaret Beaufort, mother of King Henry VII, was a descendant of King Edward III.
SHIELD. Crowned Portcullis on a field of the Beaufort liveries. A badge of the Beauforts and of King Henry VII.
9. SUPPORTER. Falcon. A badge of King Edward IV.
SHIELD. Falcon within a fetterlock. A favourite badge of King Edward IV, it is shown on a field of his livery colours.
10. SUPPORTER. Griffin. From the Privy Seal of King Edward III.
SHIELD. Badge of the House of Windsor on a field of the present Royal livery colours.

Miss Jean Ralston. The sculptor says that the Falcon has proved hardest to create, because "it is not easy to depict gracefully a bird sitting down and supporting a shield".

The Lion of England, which will stand guard at the Royal entrance to the Annexe, is Mr. Woodford's favourite; it wears the authentic expression of that "ferocious loyalty" which the Minister of Works, Mr. David Eccles, said he hoped would be visible on their "aristocratic faces".

Biographical Notes

Mr. James Woodford, R.A., was born in Nottingham and studied at the Nottingham School of Art. After the first World War, in which he served with the 11th Sherwood Foresters, he attended the Royal College of Art and won a Rome Scholarship, studying in Rome, 1922-1925. In World War II he was Camouflage Officer, Air Ministry. Mr. Woodford's work includes the bronze doors and entrance to the Royal Institute of British Architects in Portland Place; three wooden screens in the first-class smoking room of the "Queen Mary"; figures on the Whitehall facade of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries; the Robin Hood statue and plaques in the grounds of Nottingham Castle; and heraldic beasts for the Imperial War Graves Commission to decorate the cemeteries in Italy (including Cassino), upon which he is engaged at present. He has also been commissioned to sculpt the War Memorial for the Lutyens Courtyard of the British Medical Association, Tavistock Square.

Mr. Leslie Sandham, of 113, Mayo Road, Willesden, studied at Kingston School of Art and has exhibited ivory carvings at the Royal Academy. During the War he served with the 2nd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and was taken prisoner-of-war by the Japanese, when he was forced to work on the notorious Burma railway.

Miss Jean Ralston, of 3, Burghley Avenue, New Malden, studied for over five years at the Kingston School of Art. She has exhibited carvings at the Royal Academy.

M.O.W./12/53 (P.I.233/27)

6th February, 1953

Issued by the Press Office, Ministry of Works. (RELIANCE 7611)