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THE ROYAL DEPARTURE

To London's Waterloo station come the King and Queen and Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret. Met by Cabinet Ministers and Service chiefs, this is the first stage of their journey to South Africa. In a blue felt hat set at a new angle, Princess Elizabeth was in a gay mood - Princess Margaret's brown Juliet cap had curling pink feathers. Outside, London shivered in an intermittent snowstorm, among gas and electricity cuts. But at the station and in the surrounding streets, people had waited to see their Majesties off.

The train, gaily decorated for the occasion, moved off towards Portsmouth. As if to salute the occasion, after days of lead grey skies, the sun managed to struggle fitfully through as they left London.

At Portsmouth, down roads lined with Navy men, the Royal Cavalcade enters the dockyard - their embarkation point on this journey into the South African sunshine. The first royal journey overseas since 1939, no more fitting destination could have been chosen. South Africa's fine war record and her part in world recovery prove how strong are the bonds which join the British Commonwealth. At the quayside, the 45,000 ton "Vanguard" waits - Britain's most powerful battleship now to become a palace at sea. Before embarking, His Majesty inspects a Naval guard of honour.

Aboard ship, their Majesties will live in a large, ultra-modern flat. And, in spite of the handicap of appalling weather, "Vanguard" proudly considers herself the smartest ship afloat.

Accompanying the King and Queen from London, come Queen Mary and other members of the Royal Family. Later (the ceremonies over) all were entertained to tea in the Royal apartments.

Next morning, as the giant warship moves out to sea, she has an escort of naval vessels from the Home Fleet. Standing together on the canopied gun turret, the King and Queen, with the Princesses watched the operation.

The fond wishes of millions go with Their Majesties. Across thousands of miles, the people of Britain will follow their journeyings. We wish them God Speed and a safe return.