

THE KING COMES HOME

Near the little church of St. Mary Magdalene (where so often he worshipped) they wait for the King to return to his capital for the last time. Through the lanes he knew and loved so well they carry him on a gun carriage of the King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery, with men of the King's Company of the Grenadiers for his escort, and behind him walk his brother and his son-in-law. Here in Sandringham he was born fifty-six years ago and when his time was come here he returned to die.

The little procession reaches Wolferton Station and the Squire of Sandringham passes into the care of the nation over whom he ruled as King. Till now he has lain privately in the quiet of the Norfolk countryside. But in the heart of Empire, the nation waits to pay its homage. Even in death kings have their duties. The Queen, the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret arrive at the station, that was so often the gateway to happiness and rest after long toil.

The train draws out and the King begins his last journey to his capital, a hundred miles away.

In London, Guards of Honour from the three services take up their position in Palace Yard, Westminster, in the shadow of Parliament close by the Great Hall. It is a grey and bitterly cold day.

Now at King's Cross the royal train draws in.

For the Queen his daughter, the widowed Queen - his wife, and Princess Margaret the great ordeal begins. The Imperial Crown with its three thousand jewels glints in the fitful light as George the Sixth returns to his sorrowing capital. And with it on the oak coffin is the white wreath of his widow. Fifteen years ago he walked here behind his dead father, with no thought of crown or throne, a quiet, shy man, thankful that greatness was not to be thrust upon him. But fate ruled otherwise.

Through the London streets, where so often the eager crowds had cheered, the procession wends its silent way. This is London's day of mourning ... across Trafalgar Square towards Whitehall. To the right leads the road to the Palace which will see him no more. Today the King rides down Whitehall towards Westminster.

And here, where for so many years he led our yearly tribute to the nation's dead, we shall remember the King who was Good ... the King who gave his life in unsparring service to his people.

And so to Westminster ... this journey's end. Across the way in the old Abbey he was crowned King ... now, here in the Great Hall he will receive the last tribute of his peoples.

His Mother, his widow, and his daughter - three Queens - watch as the cortege nears the doors of Westminster.

Not long ago great fanfares sounded when last George VI entered to open his new House of Commons. Within, today, Lords and Commons wait in silence, and in the Great Hall a guard watches over the sleeping King.