

ROYAL NAVAL REVIEW

Nearly 300 ships of the British Empire and foreign fleets wait in line in the Solent, the narrow strip of water between the coast of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. For more than four hundred years British ships have gathered here for review by the sovereign. Soon to celebrate Her Majesty's Coronation, the despatch vessel "Surprise" will sail out from Portsmouth bearing Queen Elizabeth along the lines of warships and merchantmen. The Queen is piped aboard:

On board "Surprise," Her Majesty receives Captains in command of many of the ships that lie at Spithead. The Duke of Edinburgh, who saw active service with the Navy in wartime, wears the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet.

Among the foreign officers received by the Queen is Captain Rudakov of the Russian cruiser "Sverdlov."

Sir Winston Churchill, as an elder brother of Trinity House, boards "Patricia," which will lead the royal yacht in the review procession. Mr. Attlee is another guest on the same vessel.

Also aboard "Patricia" is Earl Alexander.

Slowly "Surprise" draws away from the jetty and moves towards Spithead. The Coronation Naval Review has begun.

As the crowds ashore surge forward for a glimpse of the Queen, Her Majesty waves a greeting from the saluting box.

In lines stretching for seven miles, the ships wait to greet Her Majesty, each dressed overall. Also aboard "Surprise" is Princess Margaret. As the royal yacht enters the review lines, warships of all the nations represented fire a salute of twenty-one guns.

Past the mighty battleship "Vanguard," flagship of the home fleet, steams "Surprise," heading down the line of foreign warships.

The United States heavy cruiser "Baltimore," which leads the column of visiting craft.

The Soviet cruiser "Sverdlov," making its first visit to a foreign port since its commission two years ago.

The Queen Mother chats with Lady Mountbatten as "Surprise" moves slowly along the line of mighty aircraft carriers. As the royal yacht passes among the fleets, cheers ring out from every vessel.

The crew of the battle class destroyer "St. Kitts" greets the Queen. Close by is the Italian training ship "Amerigo Vespucci," a fully rigged sailing vessel. Her crew man the yards high above the deck.

Also aboard the royal yacht are the Duchess of Kent and her daughter, Princess Alexandra. Three-hundred-and-seventy-years ago the first Queen Elizabeth reviewed her Navy at Spithead, and since that time many fleets have gathered here for inspection before battle. The great D-day armada was reviewed by King George the Sixth. Present at this mighty naval spectacle is Lord Mountbatten. Even as the review continues, comes news that a British submarine has crossed the Atlantic without surfacing - a magnificent feat by Royal Navy personnel.

Now comes a great fly-past by three hundred Naval aircraft. First, Dragonfly helicopters, many of which were used for rescue work during the flood disaster in Holland.

In tight formation, fighters, reconnaissance aircraft and anti-submarine planes, all designed to fly from aircraft carriers, sweep past Her Majesty in salute.

When evening falls, the fleet gets - dare we say it - lit up! And the whole of Spithead is aglow.

At a given signal, the huge firework display begins.

Whatever tasks the Royal Navy may be called upon to perform in the years to come, it will be (as it has always been) "ready, aye, ready."