

2-PPF 201

ROYAL CHILDREN OFF TO TOBRUK.

54/29.

Close by Nelson's flagship, "Victory", at Portsmouth, the royal yacht "Britannia" lies ready for a voyage to Tobruk. She will take the royal children to meet their mother and father. An electric train brings them on the first stage of the journey. From London to the great dockyard. Crowds gather around the station, for a glimpse of the royal visitors; the Queen Mother, Princess Margaret, Prince Charles and Princess Anne. The Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, and the Commander-in-Chief of the port welcome them to the city. The Prince wears a bright yellow carnation in the buttonhole of his powder-blue coat. His sister is also in blue.

Prince Charles, who quickly commented on the fact that the royal train appeared to have no driver, soon finds Portsmouth has plenty to intrigue a six year old.

Princess Anne sits on her grandmother's lap. Prince Charles sits in front of Princess Margaret.

Past cheering, the royal car comes to the gates of the dockyard. All warships in the ports, including Victory, are dressed overall.

Captain Balglish the acting captain of the royal yacht, is among the officers to greet their guests at the foot of Britannia's gangway.

The Queen Mother's standard is broken from the masthead. This is the first time any of the royal visitors have seen the splendid new yacht, which was named by the Queen herself. As for the children, it looks like Britannia's crew will have to answer an awful lot of questions before the 2,800 mile voyage to Tobruk has ended.

Princess Anne, rather bewildered by all the excitement, steps onto the Captain's toe!

Now comes the last farewell. A kiss from their grandmother and aunt, a few words of good advice, and the royal children will soon be on their way to join their mother again. It has been nearly five months since the Queen was with her children, though she has kept close contact with them throughout her tour by radio-telephone. The Queen Mother who has helped look after them during that time, says "au revoir" until they meet again on May the fifteenth.

Miss Katherine Peebles, the Prince's governess, stands close behind him, while Miss Helen Lightbody, the nurse, keeps an eye on the Princess. Swiftly the gangway is swung from the ship - the moment of departure is near.

Prince Charles takes a head-scarf from Miss Peebles to wave farewell as the royal yacht draws slowly away from the jetty.

From below the bridge, a Scottish piper plays a salute.

Away past Vanguard, Britain's largest war-ship, Britannia heads towards the open sea. Malta is her first port of call. After a week's stay, the yacht will set course for Tobruk. There, on May the First, Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will be reunited with their children. Then the royal family, together once more, will sail for Britain and home.

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