

THE QUEEN AT R.A.F. ANNIVERSARY
DINNER

The Queen, escorted by Secretary for Air, George Ward, and Prince Philip with Marshal of the R.A.F. Sir Dermot Boyle, lead the way into a dinner to honour the R.A.F.'s fortieth birthday. The Queen Mother is with Sir John Salmond....

Princess Margaret with Lord Newall...

The Duke of Gloucester with Lord Tedder...

The Duchess of Gloucester with Lord Douglas, the Princess Royal with Sir Arthur Harris, and the Duchess of Kent with Sir John Slessor. Eight members of the Royal Family, eight Marshals of the R.A.F., and other senior officers, all gathered in the mess of Fighter Command Headquarters, Stammore, to celebrate forty years of Britain's youngest fighting service. Silver worth £20,000 from Air Force messes all over the country, sparkles on the polished tables; the Queen's jewels sparkle even more brightly on her white satin dress; and above her own portrait seems an exact replica of herself, completing a brilliant pattern as she rises to propose the toast of the evening:

"I thank you for inviting me and my husband here tonight, and for the way in which you have drunk his health and for the kind references you have made to my family. I am certain that on your 50th Birthday those who are left of that cheerful band of officers and airmen, who remember the service from its earliest beginnings, will look with admiration from a new generation of young men and women flying the aircraft, controlling the missiles and working the magically complexed technical equipment of the Royal Air Force, which will still be young in spirit. And it is to that spirit and to your great service that I now ask you to rise and to drink a toast. Secretary of State, My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you the toast of the Royal Air Force"....