

UNW 2656.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 1955.

What sort of year was ushered in at midnight 1954? 1955 was a year whose early days saw the first Commonwealth Tour that Princess Margaret undertook alone --- a royal visit to the Calypso Islands of the Caribbean. It was a year of destiny, for the Princess whom we all hold in such affectionate regard. Here --- as later --- Princess Margaret proved her claim to a very special ^{place} ~~claim~~ in our hearts.

Awhile afterwards --- these same islands were battered by a guest that came unbidden and unwanted. The Calypso songs were swept away by the roar of the hurricane that cost a hundred lives.

Reaching out, the hurricane caused these floods in Mexico.

At home, Britain was locked in the grip of unusual winter. The north of Scotland was cut off by snow ~~storms~~ and drifts. Food was sent by air.

But this savagery was followed by one of the best summers for many years.

And a home-grown beauty --- Jennifer Chimes --- became the National Bathing Girl.

But in Fleet Street --- a deep depression over Easter. Twenty-six days of newspaper strike.

Then the papers came back on the streets and the world went back to normal. Next stop --- Railway Strike.

So that brought in a back-to-the-road movement --- only there was hardly any movement.

Contrast on the water --- Donald Campbell's world record of two hundred and two miles an hour on Lake Ullswater..... pushed up to two hundred and sixteen miles in America --- after Campbell's triumph over bad luck to his Bluebird.

But road-racing brought to Le Mans the most terrible tragedy of the sporting world. Eighty lost their lives.

As always, the hazards of the high seas took their toll of life and told their story of courage. The Stratheden's lifeboat went to the rescue of a Greek trawler off the Italian Coast; and for eight men of the lifeboat's crew, it was the last voyage.

In Portland Harbour, the submarine "Sidon" sank with the loss of thirteen.

In the world of science, the first atomic-powered submarine "Nautilus" made a successful maiden trip. In Britain, the first nuclear power station at Calder Hall was nearly ready.

But in the great Nevada desert, science built a model town to show what atom power could do to it. Appropriately, they called it "Doomtown".

And America launched satellites paving the way for travel from earth to moon --- in case we have to.

Aviation: Britain's Flying Bedstead was one more step into the unknown future.

America replied with a one-man helicopter; ~~and another~~ and another type of wingless chicken called "The Flying Platform".

Another novelty was named the "Flying Mattress".

And --- for the more immediate future --- a helicopter flight from London to Paris.

One of Britain's famous Canberras flew from London to New York in less than fifteen hours. Think of it! A London business man could have breakfast at home and ~~lunch at home~~ supper at home and lunch with Marilyn Monroe.

A come-back for the Comet. ~~Comet III prototype jet airliner~~ ~~for and next catastrophe,~~ the Comet III prototype jet airliner made England --- Australia in twenty-five hours flying time.

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In the realm of politics, Sir Winston Churchill resigned from the office of Prime Minister. For that, if for nothing else, 1955 has a date in the history books. Before leaving No. 10, the old Premier was host to Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh. *m*

Election followed soon after; and the nation sent back Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden with an increased majority. *^*

What of the political scene abroad? Flashpoint of possible world war --- Formosa, ~~stronghold of Chiang Kai Shek.~~ *But the danger was averted.* ~~It nearly came to China and Russia versus the rest of the world; but the day of a return was postponed.~~ *^*

Morocco: seeking independence from France; ~~terrorism~~ *terrorism* ~~the return of an exiled Sultan.~~ *^*

Cyprus: Britain's island base in the Middle East. Here, too, violence and terrorism were used as argument to prove fitness for self-government. The new Governor, General Harding, sought the answer with Cyprus leader, Archbishop Makarios. *m*

In South America --- successful revolt against the rule of Dictator Peron of the Argentine. *^*

The world rocked when Premier Malenkov resigned from the Premiership of Russia. *^* Succeeded by Marshal Bulganin --- who represented the Soviet Union at the summit Conference at ~~Geneva~~ *Geneva* ~~with~~ *with* President Eisenhower, *^* and M. Faure of France, *^* ~~and Sir Anthony Eden.~~ *^*

Those two headlines promised to bring in a new era of peaceful co-existence and warmer understanding. In Vienna --- the Austrian State Treaty was signed after an occupation lasting seventeen years. Though disappointed later, further signs of better relations between east and west came with the exchange of visits between Britain and Russia. The Russian Navy came to Britain. The Royal Navy went to Leningrad. *^*

On the 27th on his 80th birthday Sir Winston was elected as the President of the Labour Party - and his 80th birthday was celebrated in his presence.

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Goodwill was cemented in the world of sport. Wolverhampton Wanderers had a great reception in Moscow

And Moscow welcomed also the first British athletic team to visit the city of the Kremlin. High spot in the Dynamo Stadium was a track victory in the Five Thousand Metres for Chris Chataway.

In London, Gordon Pirie achieved ambition with his masterly victory over the great Czech runner Emil Zatopek.

In purely national sport, the great steeplechase was, as always, the Grand National. A hat-trick win for Ireland with "Quare Times"

The Derby --- and this was a win for Phil Drake, owned by Mme. Volterra of France

F.A. Cup --- Newcastle beat Manchester City --- three-one.

In Australia $\frac{2}{1}$ ---England kept the Ashes under the captaincy of Len Hutton.

And in swimming, Canadian schoolgirl Marilyn Bell was the youngest ever to beat that old Chanel.

The most romantic wedding; in Venice --- Princess Ira and Prince Alfonso Hohenlohe-Langenberg

In Venice, too --- British stars proclaimed the business of our film-makers to world markets. And --- for a film occasion at home --- Her Majesty the Queen attended the Royal Film Performance

The Royal accolade for shipbuilders; Her Majesty launched the "Empress of Britain" on Clydebank.....and our newest aircraft carrier was at sea; H.M.S. Ark Royal.

For naval affairs, Admiral Earl Mounthatten became First Sea Lord. And on the day of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Trafalgar, the Queen unveiled the memorial to a sailor King --- King George VI

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As usual, the Royal Family took a holiday in Scotland.

But this year was different --- because it saw them ~~at~~ ^{working behind} ~~the~~ ^{the counter,} ~~counter,~~ raising money for church funds. The New Year will see the Queen and the Duke setting out ~~once~~ once more for distant places. Let us hope that the year ahead will further strengthen the bonds of our Commonwealth of Nations in a world that is prosperous and at peace.

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