Chapter 3

Love & marriage



Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip on honeymoon, in November 1947

Princess Elizabeth first met Prince Philip of Greece when she was just thirteen, and he eighteen, at the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth, where Philip was training as a cadet. Philip was tall and handsome, with blond hair and striking features. For Elizabeth, it was a case of love at first sight.

Philip spent much of the war fighting at sea, but he saw Elizabeth whenever he was on leave in London. In 1944, Queen Mary had confided to an old friend that Elizabeth and Philip had,

"been in love for the past eighteen months. In fact longer, I think... But the King and Queen... want her to see more of the world before committing herself." Queen Mary also admitted that it seemed as if Elizabeth had made up her mind. "There's something very steadfast and determined in her – like her father."

When Prince Philip proposed at Balmoral in 1946, Elizabeth instantly accepted. The King, however, couldn't bear the thought that 'us four' were already to be parted. He made Elizabeth promise that nothing would be official until her twenty-first birthday, and that first the family would go on a tour together, to South Africa.



Princess Elizabeth plays deck games with the crew during the royal family's trip to South Africa.

Chapter 6

A job for life

The Queen's approach to change had always been cautious, unwilling to abandon the traditions and customs followed by her own parents. Following Diana's death, however, she seemed more open to suggestion and ready to take on some of the ways Diana had performed her role – being more informal, and having more direct contact with ordinary people, in ordinary places.

Here the Queen makes an informal visit to a primary school in Northern Ireland.



Her days were arranged differently, so she spent more time talking to the people she met on her visits. She was shown keeping up with the times, smiling more for the cameras and speaking more about current concerns.

The new-style 'modern' monarchy was put to the test in 1999, when Australia held a vote to decide if, as a member of the Commonwealth, it wanted to keep the Queen as Head of State. Everyone expected Australia to vote to become a republic, but instead just over half the Australian people voted to keep the Queen.



The Queen accepts flowers from schoolgirls in Canberra, Australia, in 2000. The Queen has made sixteen visits to Australia during her reign.

In May 2011, she made a historic visit to the Republic of Ireland, the first British monarch to visit the country since 1911. Despite the risk from republican terrorists, the Queen spent her four-day visit commemorating the lives that had been lost in the struggles between the two countries, cementing a new era of friendship between them.

In 2012, the Queen celebrated her Diamond Jubilee, marking 60 years on the throne. That year, she and Prince Philip toured the UK, while other members of the royal family toured the Commonwealth as her representatives. Her reign was celebrated with The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, which aimed to make an impact on the lives of those who live within the Commonwealth. More than 3 million trees were planted as part of the Jubilee Woods Project and there was a pageant, too, along the River Thames. 1,000 boats sailed all the way from Chelsea to Tower Bridge, the largest celebration on the Thames since the reign of Charles II, 350 years ago.

That summer, the Queen also opened the London 2012 Olympic Games and the London 2012 Paralympic Games. The following year saw the birth of a new great-grandson, Prince George Alexander Louis of Cambridge, the first child of Prince William and the Duchess of Cambridge. As third in the line of succession after his grandfather and his father, George is expected to become king one day.

The Queen and Prince Philip, to the right, celebrating the Diamond Jubilee with a pageant along the River Thames.





Prince William and the Duchess of Cambridge, seen leaving hospital with their newborn son.