



George V and Queen Mary gave thrones 6 royal heirs.



Her eldest, Edward VII, had 5 before succeeding to throne.



After their eldest, Edward, abdicated, George VI ruled.

But George VI and Queen Elizabeth had only two children, both girls.



The eldest, Elizabeth, became Queen, but she, too, has only two offspring.



that the Queen suffered a miscarriage in April, and that it wasn't her first.

I was also told that the secret which helped change Margaret's mind about marrying Townsend and renouncing her rights to the throne (she is now third in line, after Elizabeth's children) was that her sister was not likely to have any more children.

Even the permanent position of No. 3 in line for the crown is a long shot. But Margaret, in spite of her high spirits and occasional high jinks, has been brought up with a strong sense of responsibility. Being third in line doesn't seem close to the top spot to us, but to Margaret it means duty. Although the Queen is still only 32, although Charles and Anne seem healthy youngsters, nobody knows what might happen.

Actually, the Queen's "secret" is so obvious that it is a wonder somebody didn't stumble on the story long ago. It has been eight years since Elizabeth had Anne, her second child. Charles, her first, was born almost exactly one year after her marriage and was 10 on Nov. 14. Eight years is a longer period between children than most doctors recommend. The Queen is over 30, an age at which most women today have made a substantial start on large families, if they want them.

The pattern of Elizabeth's predecessors has been about two years between children—and a big brood of little heirs and heiresses. Even in these days when royalty doesn't rule, one of its major functions is to provide the British Empire with a never-ending line of future kings and queens and princes and princesses. If nothing else, they are something for their subjects to cluck and yearn over—and give American reporters copy. Even in the unlikely event a queen didn't want a big family, she would have

children as part of her royal duty.

Let's look at the record:

Victoria, Queen Elizabeth II's great-grandmother, and her consort, Albert, had nine children. Her first child was born before she was 21, nine months and ten days after her marriage. In the following 16 years she produced eight other children, four princes and four princesses. Their first son, Edward, inherited the throne in 1901. By then, two brothers and one of his sisters had died.

Edward VII and Queen Alexandra had five children, two princes, three princesses, in just over six years following their marriage. Their eldest son and heir to the throne, Albert, Duke of Clarence, died in 1892 at the age of 28. He was engaged to Princess Mary of Teck, who later married the second son, who became George V.

George V and Mary had six children, five princes and one princess, in 11 years, all before he ascended the throne. No children were born subsequently. The oldest son, Edward, abdicated and the second son, George VI, ascended the throne.

George VI and his wife Elizabeth had only two children, the present Queen and her sister Margaret, born in April, 1926, and August, 1930, respectively. Elizabeth was born after her parents had been married three years; Margaret, after seven years. The unusual time lag and the absence of male heirs indicates that the Queen Mother also had one or two miscarriages.

THE BIRTH RATE of Britain's royal family has steadily declined and it doesn't look as though the present Queen is going to be able to improve present statistics. Margaret will presumably have permanent possession of her third spot in the succession. What does that mean?

The death rate isn't as ominous these days as it was in Victoria's. But

the entire royal family, from the Queen Mother to Margaret herself, are flying constantly. Accidents happen in the best-guarded families; the late Duke of Kent, George VI's brother, was killed flying in 1942. Assassination is always a chance, and it isn't hard to get near the royal family, despite the bodyguards; a few months ago at Bristol a man got so near he almost succeeded in making a tape recording of the Queen Mother's voice. And plain overwork, which is said to have killed George VI, is something not to be taken lightly, especially in the case of Elizabeth.

She works desperately hard at her job. She received her instructions on queenly responsibility from one of the tough, vigorous women of our time, old Queen Mary, who is said by admiring reporters to have rung up more mileage during the call of duty than anybody in the world, alive or dead. But Queen Mary didn't become a queen until her last child was five years old, so she didn't have to combine childbearing with prolonged standing and walking. Nor was she the top monarch. Nor did she live in these troubled times when a queen is expected to cement relations all over the world, and spread herself thin doing it.

In Australia in 1954, Elizabeth flew more than 10,000 miles in 25 separate flights. During her American tour, she flew more than 4,000 miles. And when she arrives, wherever it is, she has to look like a queen, act like a queen, wave, smile, smile, wave—and stand, for hours on end, looking as though she enjoyed it.

Three months after she succeeded to the throne, when Anne wasn't yet a year old, the top British medical journal, *Lancet*, wrote: "As the Queen enters more fully into the private life of her people, there is everywhere a strong desire that too much should

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