

# **Elizabeth II and Her Commonwealth Visits in the 1950s**

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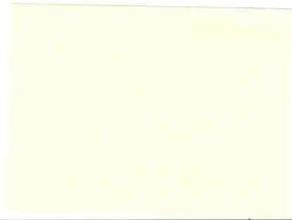
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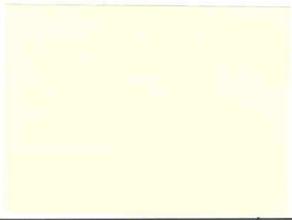
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## **ABSTRAKT**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá návštěvami královny Alžběty II. v 50. letech 20. století, zejména se zaměřením na návštěvy Austrálie a Kanady v době, kdy se rozpadala Britská říše a formoval se koncept Společenství národů. Tyto návštěvy se staly důležitým nástrojem k posílení loajality zemí a k budování dobrých politických vztahů. Tato práce je rozdělena do dvou částí. První část zahrnuje Alžbětin život, začátky její vlády a popisuje stručný pohled na historické pozadí Britské říše, které se následně proměnilo ve Společenství národů. Druhá část se zaměřuje na význam královských návštěv a poskytuje způsoby, jak královna ovlivnila rozvoj Společenství národů.

Klíčová slova: královské návštěvy, Alžběta II, Kanada, Austrálie, Britská říše, Společenství národů

## **ABSTRACT**

This bachelor thesis deals with the visits of Queen Elizabeth II in the 1950s with a particular focus on visits to Australia and Canada at a time when the British Empire was collapsing, and the concept of the Commonwealth of Nations was being formed. These visits have become an important tool for strengthening countries' loyalty and building good political relations. The thesis is divided into two parts. The first part includes Elizabeth II's life, the beginnings of her reign and it describes a brief overview of the historical background of the British Empire which was subsequently formed into the Commonwealth of Nations. The second part focuses on the meaning of the royal visits and it provides ways in which the Queen has influenced the development of the Commonwealth.

Keywords: royal visits, Elizabeth II, Canada, Australia, British Empire, the Commonwealth

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I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

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## INTRODUCTION

The bachelor thesis focuses on Elizabeth II's royal visits that she undertook after being crowned in 1953. The 1950s was the period that represented a major challenge for a young Queen as her father passed away and she ascended to the throne. At that time, the British Empire was collapsing and a new concept of the Commonwealth of Nations as the member states that are free and equal was further developing. She had to handle her duties as she received not only the new role as the Queen of the United Kingdom but also as the Queen of Commonwealth Realms and the Head of the Commonwealth. As a result, she had to dedicate much more time to the official appearances, regular public speeches and state visits.

The primary aim of this bachelor thesis is to provide a comprehensive image about the meaning of the royal visits in the 1950s. It was intended to reshape the political situation at that time through the royal visits. It was important to support relationships with countries, incline the political leaders and ensure a smooth transition of formal countries of the British Empire into the Commonwealth. It investigates the ways that were used to exert the influence over people to keep their loyalty. Elizabeth II devoted most of her time to the royal visits because travelling serves as a way how to promote good relationships with countries. In fact, she has visited all Commonwealth countries throughout her career<sup>1</sup>.

My bachelor thesis begins with a brief description of the Elizabeth's life, including her coronation and the role of the Queen. After that, a description of the British Empire is provided with the main focus on the travels of past monarchs. Following the next chapter, attention is paid to the Commonwealth of Nations that was formed from the British Empire. Furthermore, the visits of the Queen will be examined. However, despite the fact that during the 1950s, the Queen undertook 15 of these journeys, I have selected two of them and these will be discussed. The first one is the official visit to Australia that was carried out in 1954. It was a part of her largest tour right after the coronation in order to create an atmosphere of security and connection to the British monarch. Also this visit belongs to the most remarkable moments for Australians because it was the first visit to Australia ever undertaken by a reigning monarch. The second visit I have chosen is Elizabeth's visit to Canada in 1959. This journey was planned to show people Elizabeth's importance and let her

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<sup>1</sup> except Cameroon and Rwanda, these countries joined the Commonwealth later

take part in symbolic events. The reasons to choose these visits point out to the fact that Australia and Canada were among the first countries that joined the Commonwealth of the Nations in 1931 thus it was important to preserve their loyalty and maintain strong ties with the United Kingdom because the membership in the Commonwealth is based on a voluntary basis.

## 1 QUEEN ELIZABETH II

From a very young princess to a hardworking Queen, Elizabeth II remains one of the most popular royal figures of all time. As many historians say, Elizabeth II has proved many times that her popularity is well-earned. She has had positive effects on the nation's reputation and her legacy is going to go down in history.<sup>2</sup> She has been reigning for 70 years – that means that she surpassed her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria and is currently the longest-reigning monarch in the British history. She has another record to her name - thanks to visiting so many countries, she became the most travelled monarch of all time.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.1 Life of Elizabeth II

Elizabeth Alexandra Mary was born on 21 April 1926 to Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon and Prince Albert. Four years later, in 1930, Elizabeth's sister Margaret Rose was born.<sup>4</sup> The sisters were very close, however, they were very different. From an early age, Elizabeth was orderly, conscientious, and dutiful whereas Margaret was playful and enjoyed pranks.<sup>5</sup> Both of them were home-schooled. At first, their parents did not anticipate that one of their daughters would ever become a queen, and the education the girls were getting was, therefore, not focused on matters that would be important for a future ruler. When their father succeeded to the throne in 1936, Elizabeth became the first in line to the throne thus she started to focus more on history and law which included preparation for her future role. There are people who believe that she should have been educated in normal classes and criticized her for not getting the appropriate education. However, Marr claims that it did not affect her intellectually as she was able to absorb information quickly and received some lessons in Eton.<sup>6</sup>

Elizabeth married Prince Philip in November 1947 and soon after their wedding, the couple welcomed a baby. Their firstborn was a son Charles (1948) and Charles's

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<sup>2</sup> Cindy McCreery, "Queen Elizabeth II to make royal history," The University of Sydney, January 28, 2022, <https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2022/01/28/queen-elizabeth-royal-history-platinum-jubilee-expert.html>.

<sup>3</sup> "Her Majesty the Queen," The Royal Family, accessed January 8, 2022, <https://www.royal.uk/her-majesty-the-queen>.

<sup>4</sup> "Her Majesty The Queen," The Royal Family, accessed January 8, 2022, <https://www.royal.uk/her-majesty-the-queen>.

<sup>5</sup> Emma Mason, "The Young Elizabeth II: Life before She Was Queen," The Young Elizabeth II: What Was She Like Before She Became Queen?, History Extra, April 7, 2022. <https://www.historyextra.com/period/20th-century/young-elizabeth-ii-life-queen-childhood-princess-how-monarch-royal-family/>.

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Marr, *The Diamond Queen: Elizabeth II and Her People* (London: Macmillan, 2011), 89-90.

sister Anne followed two years later. After 10 years, Andrew followed being born in 1960 and their last son Edward was born four years later in 1964.<sup>7</sup> Being born to the royal family was not easy as they had to face a long separation from their parents due to their hectic schedules. According to Marr, as a result of fulfilling duties, Elizabeth had to leave kids at home frequently due to her travels. Not only as a Queen but also as a princess during father's illness, she had to step into his role and carry out his engagements.<sup>8</sup>

## 1.2 Coronation

As mentioned above, it was not originally intended that Princess Elizabeth would become the Queen. When her uncle Edward VIII abdicated in order to marry the twice-divorced American Wallis Simpson, Elizabeth's father became the new ruler as King George VI. Princess Elizabeth suddenly became a successor.<sup>9</sup> On her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, while on her first tour overseas with her parents, she publicly pledged allegiance to the monarchy: "I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong..."<sup>10</sup> and this promise had to be fulfilled after the death of her father. George VI died in his sleep on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1952 while his daughter Princess Elizabeth was visiting Kenya.<sup>11</sup> Not only did Elizabeth, who was only 25, have to cope with the loss of her father, but she also had to deal with the fact that she inherited the British throne.

Although Elizabeth unofficially took over the throne earlier, her coronation took place 16 months after her father's death, exactly on 2 June 1953 in Westminster Abbey. The coronation was witnessed not only by important figures, but also by more than 20 million spectators sitting in front of the screens as the event was broadcasted worldwide. The coronation of a new Queen presented people with a chance to celebrate a beginning of a new era. The era was full of post-war's hope with a promise for a better future. At the same time, this era marked the birth of television as

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<sup>7</sup> "Her Majesty The Queen," The Royal Family, accessed January 8, 2022, <https://www.royal.uk/her-majesty-the-queen>.

<sup>8</sup> Sarah Bradford, *Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life in Our Times* (London: Viking, 2012), 119.

<sup>9</sup> Sarah Bradford, *Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life in Our Times* (London: Viking, 2012), 13.

<sup>10</sup> "A Speech By The Queen On Her 21st Birthday, 1947," The Royal Family, accessed January 8, 2022, <https://www.royal.uk/21st-birthday-speech-21-april-1947>

<sup>11</sup> Andrew Marr, *The Diamond Queen: Elizabeth II and Her People* (London: Macmillan, 2011), 120.

a new mass medium.<sup>12</sup> The development of the television played a very significant role in people's lives as it provided a chance to watch the Queen's speeches, ceremonies and events during the royal visits anywhere. This helped to promote the Commonwealth and monarchy.

### 1.3 Role of the Queen

The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy. The monarch stands as a Head of the State, but the elected Parliament is responsible for making and passing the legislation. Even though Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is not the sole source of political power, her influence on the nation is significant. According to the expert British constitutional history Bogdanor, the Queen's reign is meaningful particularly in the terms of developing the Commonwealth which she was able to support and thus the transaction of countries from the British Empire was done peacefully. On the other hand, there are people who believe that there are no achievements that can be credited to Elizabeth II as she is very often compared to other previous monarchs that had much bigger power over the nation.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the Queen is seen as a national pride as she provides stability and continuity by committing her life to serve people. Last but not least, she sets an example as she engages in philanthropic work.<sup>14</sup>

She has over 610 patronages and many of them were inherited from her father. There is a wide variety of charities that the Queen supports such as the British Red Cross Society, Cancer Research UK, Army and Navy Club and others. Many of the Queen's engagements are linked to her patronages and some events are held at royal residences which provide crucial publicity and awareness of the charities.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, Elizabeth II is not only the Head of the United Kingdom, she is also the Head of the Commonwealth and this role requires a lot of travelling. She has already visited 116 countries. The purpose of these travels is to strengthen and maintain good relations with member countries and therefore she is well respected for her sense of caring for others and for the relationships she has built with many

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<sup>12</sup> Andrew Marr, *The Diamond Queen: Elizabeth II and Her People* (London: Macmillan, 2011), 158

<sup>13</sup> Michael Holden and Sarah Mills, "Queen Elizabeth's Reign: A Second 'Golden Age' for Britain?," Reuters, February 3, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/queen-elizabeths-reign-second-golden-age-britain-2022-02-03/>.

<sup>14</sup> "The Role Of The Monarch," The Royal Family, accessed January 14, 2022, <https://www.royal.uk/role-monarchy>.

<sup>15</sup> "Charities And Organisations" The Patrons Lunch, accessed January 14, 2022, <http://www.thepatrons-lunch.com/charities-and-organisations-flip-boxes>

leaders. As a result, the leaders have developed personal loyalty to the British Government, regardless of their politics and ideologies. For smaller Commonwealth countries, the security and connection with the rest of the world lie in the support of the Queen.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Rob Attar, "The Queen: A BBC History Magazine Guide to Her Life and Time," BBC Collector's Edition, 2016,102.

## 2 THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The British Empire was the largest political entity in the world and it represented a global power.<sup>17</sup> The British Empire consisted of territories that were controlled by the offices of the British state. It covered the continents such as Asia, America, Australia, and Africa. Of course, the development of The British Empire took time. It was a long process of colonization and growth which started with the overseas exploration at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century by John Cabot; however, the first success was marked later, when the first English colony in North America in 1607 was established. Successfully, the Englishmen colonized new settlements and the process continued to develop largely. By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, The Empire was the set of colonies in the New World, New Zealand, trading posts in India and naval bases in Gibraltar and Minorca. It developed to the largest empire in the world with a collection of colonies all around the world. The Empire lasted until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup>

### 2.1 Historical background of royal tours

Before Elizabeth II, other monarchs also participated in royal visits even though it was not as spectacular as nowadays. The roots of travelling date back to the ancient history with the most common reasons such as trade, wars, exploration and settling new colonies<sup>19</sup>. In terms of travelling during the beginning of the British Empire, it was quite difficult. There were limited options to travel; the transport network was not developed as we know it today. Cars, trains and planes did not exist at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. People used horses, carriages or went by foot. For travelling abroad, explorers had to use ships which took a long time but at the same time, it was dangerous and not very comfortable. Because of that, it was common that the monarch stayed in the country, where he or she was the most needed.

Concerning the royal tours, they did not begin to expand until the Victorian era. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, travels began to be safer due to British naval dominance and the

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<sup>17</sup> Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.), 5.

<sup>18</sup> Jessica Brain, "Timeline of the British Empire" The History Magazine & Heritage Accommodation Guide, last modified February 8, 2019, <https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofBritain/Timeline-Of-The-British-Empire/>

<sup>19</sup> Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.), 550.

expansion of settler communities.<sup>20</sup> In addition, the invention of the railway and steamship in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a huge success. It became easier and cheaper to travel the long distances. As a result, the monarchs started to travel by land and sea to undertake royal visits across the globe.<sup>21</sup> There are first mentions of royal tours that were undertaken by Queen Victoria.

## 2.2 Royal tours during the greatest expansion

Queen Victoria represented Britain's great age of economic development, industrial growth and also the Empire. During that time, the railway network expanded considerably. This was a huge development in transportation that increased the chance to travel more widely. The first monarch who travelled by train was Queen Victoria in 1842. Actually, at the beginning, she was a little bit hesitant, but her husband persuaded her to try out the first journey by train. Furthermore, the Queen insisted on a speed limit of the train of 40 miles per hour during the daytime and 30 miles per hour at night.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the travels by trains saved much of the valuable time as travels by carriages were time-consuming and the Queen started to use trains as a way of transportation.

According to the historian Kate Williams, Victoria saw travelling the country as the duty in comparison with other previous monarchs. In this sense, Williams emphasizes the significance of the invention of the trains for the royalty as the royal tours became a part of the Queen's job.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, Victoria did not pay visits to the British Empire, she travelled neither to India nor to Canada. In fact, Queen Victoria received an invitation from the Canadian colonies a couple of times, but she rejected and instead of her, she sent her oldest son Albert Edward in 1860.<sup>24</sup> This indicates her attitude to her royal visits as she advocated that it is more important to deal with the matters at home. However, she travelled through the British Isles and she visited some countries to Europe. For instance,

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<sup>20</sup> Charles V. Reed, *Royal Tourists, Colonial Subjects and the Making of a British World, 1860–1911*, (Manchester University Press, 2016.), 18.

<sup>21</sup> "Modes of Transport", Royal Collection Trust Home, accessed February 2, 2022  
<https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/trails/royal-travel/modes-of-transport>

<sup>22</sup> Lauren Hubbard, "History of the Royal Train: The Story Behind the Royal Family's Train," *Town & Country Magazine*, last modified November 16, 2020,  
<https://www.townandcountrymag.com/society/tradition/a34631895/royal-family-train-history/>

<sup>23</sup> Lauren Hubbard, "History of the Royal Train: The Story Behind the Royal Family's Train," *Town & Country Magazine*, last modified November 16, 2020,  
<https://www.townandcountrymag.com/society/tradition/a34631895/royal-family-train-history/>

<sup>24</sup> Charles V. Reed, *Royal Tourists, Colonial Subjects and the Making of a British World, 1860–1911*, (Manchester University Press, 2016.), 20.

she visited Ireland 4 times.<sup>25</sup> In this sense, it is not too many, as she ruled for more than 60 years. In terms of travelling to Ireland, she was not really interested as some sources state the factors that influenced her attitude were the threat of nationalist separatism, British ‘revolutionary’ movements relating to traditional British Protestant objections to the ‘spiritual tyranny’ of the Irish Catholic clergy.<sup>26</sup> Despite all of this, the Queen was determined to go because her reputation might be affected as some people might believe she is afraid of the visit. The first Ireland tour took place in 1849. As it turned out, the visit was more successful than it had been expected. The reason for these expectations was the Great Irish Famine that affected Ireland in the 1840s.<sup>27</sup> The contribution of this visit was seen for example in Irish industry, manufacturing as the Queen bought some things but also the people as the souvenirs. At the same time, the employment increased as decorators, painters and architects were needed for the preparation of the Queen’s visit.<sup>28</sup> This signifies the utility of the monarchs’ visits for countries and their people. In contrast to Victoria, who accomplished only some visits to Europe and did not visit Empire, her children and grandchildren travelled for longer periods through the whole Empire.

The Royal Navy was the opportunity to see the world for royalties which Victoria’s descendants took advantage of. Her son The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Alfred who toured the world as a royal sailor, visited Australia, New Zealand, South America, South Africa, China, India, Japan and many others. The travelling served rather as a didactic approach for Alfred to learn discipline than to achieve political effects. He gained experience in Royal Navy and at the same time he was able to see a lot of places. However, visits included also state receptions, speaking with political figures and participating in royal duties such as the inauguration of the construction of a new Table Bay breakwater.<sup>29</sup>

Victorian’s other son Albert visited not only Canada as mentioned above, but also India as he got an invitation in 1875 however Victoria did not want to let him go for such a long time because he got seriously ill few years before the tour. Despite this, her son decided to go. The purpose of the tour was to strengthen ties with other countries, and also

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<sup>25</sup> Margarita Cappock, “The Royal Visits to Dublin.” *Dublin Historical Record* 52, no. 2 (1999): 94, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30101221>.

<sup>26</sup> James Loughlin, “Allegiance and Illusion: Queen Victoria’s Irish Visit of 1849.” *History* 87, no. 288 (2002): 493. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24427468>.

<sup>27</sup> James Loughlin, “Allegiance and Illusion: Queen Victoria’s Irish Visit of 1849.” *History* 87, no. 288 (2002): 496. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24427468>.

<sup>28</sup> Margarita Cappock, “The Royal Visits to Dublin.” *Dublin Historical Record* 52, no. 2 (1999): 97–99, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30101221>.

<sup>29</sup> Charles V. Reed, *Royal Tourists, Colonial Subjects and the Making of a British World, 1860–1911*, (Manchester University Press, 2016.), 15–19.

to learn more about the culture and history of those regions. As a part of Indian diplomacy, gifts were exchanged during the tour. On the journey back to England, surprisingly, the Prince took with him a menagerie of 151 animals including elephants, tigers and cheetahs. The Zoological Society of London (London Zoo) received these animals.<sup>30</sup>

Prince George, later known as King George V and grandson of Victoria, became the first reigning monarch to visit India (1911). The reason to travel there was the coronation of King-Emperor at the Delhi durbar and Imperial Assemblage. He travelled also to other countries for example to Australia as he got an invitation to inaugurate the new federal parliament (1901). The events further demonstrated the monarchy's newly developed role as the symbol of a new imperial century.<sup>31</sup> The examples of state visits illustrate the fact that since the Victorian era, royals have perceived travelling as their duty and serving in the navy for years provided a chance of travelling.

### 2.3 Royal tours during the decolonization

The expansion of the Empire reached incredible numbers which included a fifth of the earth's population. This superpower lasted until the World War II but the global conflict caused a huge change in economics, culture and politics which generated a thought about nationalism. The countries desired for independence, which started in 1947-8 when Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan were granted independence.<sup>32</sup> Except Burma, these countries joined the Commonwealth of Nations simultaneously therefore the links to the British Kingdom were not erased completely. The countries Malaysia and Ghana followed in 1957. During the 1960s Britain's African territories gained their independence as well. The process of decolonization continued. Hong Kong was the last colony that separated from the British rule in 1997.<sup>33</sup>

George VI, the father of Elizabeth II, was the king during the beginning of the decolonization. The historical moment was marked when king George VI entered Canada with the stops in the USA as the first British monarch in June 1939. It was organized to introduce newly crowned king George VI to the public by demonstrating historical and

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<sup>30</sup>Farewell to India. Royal Collection Trust Home, accessed February 12, 2022

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/trails/the-prince-of-wales-tour-of-india-in-1875-6/farewell-to-india>

<sup>31</sup> Charles V. Reed, *Royal Tourists, Colonial Subjects and the Making of a British World, 1860–1911*, (Manchester University Press, 2016.), 2,25,28

<sup>32</sup> Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.), 95.

<sup>33</sup> Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.), 96.

social links between Britain and its old settlers. It was important to display the King as the King of Canada in order to prevent increasing Canadian nationalism and re-establish new Commonwealth ties. However, due to the apparent threat of war in Europe, the visit took on a political overtone.<sup>34</sup> According to Sir Robert Lindsay, the tour was important for the Anglo-American relationship and emphasis the royal influence on America.<sup>35</sup> This indicates that the tour was not important only in the context of the Commonwealth, but also to establish friendship with the USA to gain allies in the crisis of coming war.

Overall, the tour achieved success among people; the crowds were excited to see the royal couple and welcomed them warmly. Also, it was described by the headlines of the newspapers as a social event of the century.

However George VI was king for a short period of time including the World War II. As the World War II broke out, the king rather stayed in the country, so the tours were not in consideration. Obviously more essential was the support of the nation during dark times. At the end of his life he got ill and he could not undertake as many visits as he wanted. His daughter Elizabeth II substituted his duty when he got ill and she undertook visits.

To highlight the point of the substitution of the monarch's role by the descendants, it is important to mention that it became quite common even during the Victorian era. As mentioned in the chapter 2.2, Queen Victoria's descendants took over her duty and travelled broadly instead of her. However, in Elizabeth's case, it was due to her father's illness. It stresses also the fact that the members of the royal family have shared the continuity for the sense of service which is applied to the nowadays as well.

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<sup>34</sup> Benjamin D. Rhodes, "The British Royal Visit of 1939 and the 'Psychological Approach' to the United States." *Diplomatic History* 2, no. 2 (1978): 200. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24909894>.

<sup>35</sup> Benjamin D. Rhodes, "The British Royal Visit of 1939 and the 'Psychological Approach' to the United States." *Diplomatic History* 2, no. 2 (1978): 210. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24909894>.

### 3 THE COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS

The Commonwealth of Nations is an association of countries that lay on several different continents – Europe, North America, South America, Asia, and Africa. Eleven members of the Commonwealth are located in the Pacific region. The Commonwealth of Nations was founded in 1931 and established concerning 3 crucial values –independence, equality, and voluntariness.<sup>36</sup> Together, the Commonwealth of Nations counts 54 countries and is home to around 2.5 billion people.

As stated above, the members of the Commonwealth of Nations are equal, independent countries that joined this association voluntarily, therefore, are free to leave as they wish. Countries that are currently not member countries can join this association now. In this sense, the Commonwealth does not share the same historical ideas as the British Empire although the majority of formal colonies of the British Empire (except for Rwanda and Mozambique) joined the association.

#### 3.1 Transformation of the British Empire to the Commonwealth

At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, some countries gained a semi-independent status known as Dominions. Canada was the first one to become a Dominion in 1867. After that Australia (1901), New Zealand (1907), South Africa (1910) and Irish Free State (1921) were granted this status as well. As a result, the countries were allowed to be self-governed and obtained considerable independence in foreign affairs despite the fact they were still a part of the British Empire.<sup>37</sup>

During the conference which was held in 1926, it was declared that the Dominions and the Great Britain are equal and in no way subordinate to one another. The countries formed a community that was named the British Commonwealth of Nations. 5 years later, in 1931, the Statute of Westminster officially announced the independency of these dominions. Parliaments in Canada, South Africa, and Irish Free State enacted the law quickly. In 1942, Australia passed the legislation, and in 1947, New Zealand followed. Newfoundland renounced its dominion status and joined Canada in 1949.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> H. Hall Duncan. "THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS AND THE FUTURE WORLD ORDER." *World Affairs* 106, no. 3 (1943): 169. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20663873>.

<sup>37</sup> "History of the Commonwealth," Commonwealth of Nations, April 14, 2014, <https://www.commonwealthofnations.org/commonwealth/history>.

<sup>38</sup> "History of the Commonwealth," Commonwealth of Nations, April 14, 2014, <https://www.commonwealthofnations.org/commonwealth/history>.

The fact that India became a republic but still wanted to remain in the British Commonwealth of Nations represented another important milestone towards formatting the new concept of the Commonwealth. However, the transformation of this country to Commonwealth seems controversial as the country desired for independence for a long period of time and anti-colonial movement was marked by violence and bloodshed. Nevertheless it was decided, that the countries that have the status of a republic may join the association too, however, only under the condition they accept the monarch as the Head of the Commonwealth as it represented an important symbol of their unity. This decision caused a change in the structure of the British Commonwealth of Nations which then led to a transformation into a new and modern association. For this reason, it was necessary to change the name of the association - the word "British" was dropped and the association was later on called The Commonwealth of Nations or just the Commonwealth.<sup>39</sup>

It is said that this association has a primary goal to ensure that all citizens of the Commonwealth of Nations have equal opportunities, equal rights, and an overall good standard of living however practically it is not possible to achieve. The members of countries consist also of developing countries which many of them struggle with the main principles to provide equal rights and discriminate people for different religions, sexual orientations or behave inconveniently to women.<sup>40</sup> There are many articles that lead to the result that the association's statements about improving the conditions are failing, mainly in developing countries where the support should be profound, but it is not. Thus many people criticize the organization for this little impact on these countries.

Despite these opinions, according to Richard H. Leach, there are a lot of benefits resulting from being in this association and, therefore, many countries wanted to join this association despite the fact they were republics. He explains that the Commonwealth has the power to influence a range of areas including banking, trade, shipping, insurance, tourism and brokerage services.<sup>41</sup> The Commonwealth provides crucial monetary support to its member countries in need as it is one of the most vital resources.

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<sup>39</sup> "Our History," Commonwealth, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://thecommonwealth.org/history>.

<sup>40</sup> Preet Kaur Gill, "Why Religion Is the Solution to the Commonwealth's Problems," HuffPost UK, April 18, 2018, [https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/commonwealth\\_uk\\_5ad75130e4b0e4d0715c4519](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/commonwealth_uk_5ad75130e4b0e4d0715c4519).

<sup>41</sup> Richard H. Leach "Britain, the Commonwealth and Europe." *Current History* 64, no. 380 (1973): 158–83. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45314094>

Some of the areas that need significant improvement are the educational systems in the less developed countries such as Tanzania, Lesotho, Namibia, and others. Education is the first problem that needs to be addressed if a country is supposed to become stronger and more independent. Through the years, the Commonwealth has been implementing different strategies focused on enhancing the educational systems and managerial practices.<sup>42</sup> However, in the contrast with developed countries, it is still not enough and kids do not receive high-quality education in every country.

The above-mentioned countries represent examples of members of the Commonwealth that need more support and help than other member countries with more developed and stronger economies. Countries such as Canada or Australia are not excluded from the possibility of obtaining support from the association, however, they welcome this help in other areas, for instance in terms of development in the scientific, technical, medical, and agricultural fields.<sup>43</sup> Supporting research is also important as it can provide new knowledge, innovations, and new discoveries.

Overall, there are some advantages that the Commonwealth offers, but it is important to realize that it is countries' responsibility to develop their standards of living among their own people and their own government should pass the laws that would help many people.

### 3.2 British role in the Commonwealth

Britain's goal is to keep stable relationships with the member countries through developmental support, investments, and connectivity. Furthermore, Britain wishes for the member countries to feel like they are connected by being part of the same organization established by the Head of the Commonwealth.

The title of Head of the Commonwealth was established during the post-war period, when the British power weakened, and the beginnings of the decolonization only made the situation worse. King George VI was the first one to hold the title of the Head of the Commonwealth.<sup>44</sup> However, the King was only able to hold this title for a short period of time as he soon got seriously ill. Due to his illness, he was not

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<sup>42</sup>“Education,” Commonwealth, accessed April 14, 2022, <https://thecommonwealth.org/our-work/education>

<sup>43</sup> A.B. Assensoh, “FROM EMPIRE TO BRITISH COMMONWEALTH: ISSUES AND INCENTIVES WHICH KEPT ‘RADICAL’ AFRICAN LEADERS AND THEIR NATIONS IN THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS AS BONA FIDE MEMBERS.” *Journal of Third World Studies* 10, no. 1 (1993): 184–95. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45197332>.

<sup>44</sup> Duncan Hall, “The British Commonwealth.” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical* 99, no.4 (1955): 251. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3143704>

able to carry out lengthy tours that could help strengthen the ties with the Commonwealth in the crumbling time of the British Empire. After his death, even though the title was not meant to be inherited, his daughter Elizabeth II received this title. Thanks to this title, she also became a head of state in 14 (15 including the United Kingdom) Commonwealth Realms.<sup>45</sup> As soon as she became the Queen and the Head of the Commonwealth, she undertook this role conscientiously by making many royal visits. Carrying out visits abroad is an important act towards promoting the Commonwealth's stability.

### **3.3 Role of the British monarch in Australia and in Canada**

Australia and Canada are members of the Commonwealth Realm, therefore, Elizabeth II is their head in the same way she is the Head of the United Kingdom. However, due to the distance, she cannot be present at all times, thus the purpose of her role is carried out by the regular visits which belong to the most influential tools of shaping and promoting the interests of the UK and other members of the Commonwealth.

Even though the Queen is usually viewed as a positive and popular figure, she faces some criticism as well. She is criticized especially by people who side with the republicans. Their negative view of the Queen results from the fact, that the monarch does not have any official power to issue policy, but rather she quietly engages only in soft diplomacy. There are also other arguments that are not in the favour of the role of the Queen. According to the former Australian republican leader Tom Keneally, the fact that the Queen carries out occasional visits to the member countries of the Commonwealth does not mean she should be the Head of these countries. According to his opinion, the Head of the state needs to spend the majority of the time in the country she rules, therefore, Australian people should find leadership in their own country and do not need to rely on the monarch.<sup>46</sup>

Despite such opinions, the Queen has many supporters who cherish her and enjoy her visits. Many people want to show their admiration by waiting for her to wave at her and welcome her in their countries. The celebrations of these official visits are spectacular as

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<sup>45</sup> "The Commonwealth," The Royal Family, accessed March 22, 2022, <https://www.royal.uk/commonwealth-and-overseas>.

<sup>46</sup> Zelman Cowen, "Australia – Looking Ahead to the Twenty-First Century." *RSA Journal* 141, no. 5438 (1993): 299. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41376153>.

many sources reported.<sup>47</sup> Her fame and popularity especially increased when she undertook the Australian tour as it was the first time a reigning monarch conducted such a tour. Also, for this reason, it is necessary to understand what the role of the Queen represents.

Paul Benoît claims there are aspects that are embodied with the Queen's authority. Essentially, Elizabeth's public appearance reflects her charisma, which is evident in how gracefully she behaves. Another element of her authority lies in the tradition. This tradition has been evolving and respected for a long period and is also well-grounded in certain rituals. Moreover, her role as the Queen was legally established and is stated in legal acts like the Act of Settlement.<sup>48</sup>

All of these elements are linked to the figure of Elizabeth II, which suggests that a major reason why a lot of people perceive her enthusiastically does not result from her political power but rather from the symbolism of what her personality depicts. This brings us to an understanding that the role of the Queen does not necessarily have a great impact on politics, however, she has a very big impact on the people which is equally important. Taking a closer look at her attitude during her state visits is a great example of the effect she has on people and how powerful she is in this aspect of her role.

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<sup>47</sup> "From the Archives, 1954: Euphoric Crowds Welcome the Queen to Melbourne," *The Age*, accessed March 22, 2022, <https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/from-the-archives-1954-euphoric-crowds-welcome-the-queen-to-melbourne-20200220-p542pn.html>.

<sup>48</sup> Paul Benoît, "Remembering the Monarch." *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue Canadienne de Science Politique* 15, no. 3 (1982): 578. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3230041>.

#### 4 THE QUEEN'S VISITS TO COMMONWEALTH

The world was still recovering from the repercussions of the World War II in the 1950s when another danger caused turmoil. The global conflict the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the USA was happening at the same time as the decolonization of the British Empire. There was a threat of a new approach to introduce communism to newly decolonized nations and convince them that communism was a non-imperialist economic and political ideology.<sup>49</sup> As the USA was allied with the United Kingdom, it was UK that had to encourage the formal colonies to join the capitalism and consolidate the countries of Commonwealth. The Queen played a key role in influencing the foreign policy by her royal visits.

Basically, the royal visits are viewed as a sign of warm friendship between states. Such visits usually include meeting important state figures which is essential approach of obtaining the favour of countries' representatives. Also it consists of giving regular speeches and attending ceremonial events in that country, however, it is also necessary to reserve some time for meeting "ordinary" people and speaking with them.

The meaning of the royal visits developed with the time but the basis is practically the same and has not changed. Since the Victorian era, the main goal is to attend the ceremonies as the representative, honour and respect the cultures of countries and give people a chance to see their monarch. These visits are a good opportunity for the sovereign to demonstrate the compassionate interest in the countries he or she rules. However, a deeper meaning is always defined by the current political atmosphere. For example the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York in 1901 expressed the appreciation to the Dominions for support in the South African War or another example was when the future Edward VIII in the 1920s showed honour for the Dominion efforts in the Great War.<sup>50</sup>

The monarch's duty in terms of travelling gained a new meaning later with establishment of the Commonwealth. The purpose of the visits became more acute during the 1950s because of the need to develop the political relations in a Commonwealth relationship as it has been mentioned. The world needed the certainty of peace, especially in the time of crisis to stand as a unity. Moreover, the countries of British Empire were gaining independence and transforming to the Commonwealth. This transformation was

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<sup>49</sup> "Decolonization of Asia and Africa 1945-1960," U.S. Department of State, accessed February 20, 2022, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/asia-and-africa>.

<sup>50</sup> Robert Aldrich, "Visiting the Family and Introducing the Royals: British Royal Tours of the Dominions in the Twentieth Century and Beyond," *Royal Studies Journal* 5, no. 1 (September 2018): p. 6, <https://doi.org/10.21039/rsj.141>.

uncertain as the effort for independence at the end of 1940s caused protests and revolutionary movements in India which resulted even in deaths.<sup>51</sup> There were no insurance that the transformation of the colonies into the Commonwealth will go peacefully.

Thus the Queen's purpose was to pay visits and navigate the countries of the British Empire to the smooth transformation. At the beginning of her reign, there were 8 members of the Commonwealth of Nations and Elizabeth II's task was also to retain loyalty of these countries to the UK. In addition to it, the establishment of the new role as the Head of the Commonwealth and Realms suggested that the prevalence of the monarchy through the world and loyalty of people to British sovereign can be preserved by the regular visits.

What is more, the visits were expected to be large and frequent as the developments in technologies and improvements in the public transportation have resulted in a comfortable way how to get to different places in shorter time than it was before the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Elizabeth and her husband travelled by cars, planes, boats and also by trains. This was also the reason why the travelling has become a popular habit of the royal family and thus why Elizabeth II became the most-widely travelled monarch.

After being crowned, Elizabeth II was committed to fulfil her vow of devotion to which she pledged and it was especially important as the 1950s represented a busy period of time. There was no better way of shaping the Queen's attitude toward the countries of potential new countries of the Commonwealth of Nations but primary loyal countries such as Canada and Australia by paying the visits.

Commonwealth had a new Queen which for many people meant a certain symbol, especially a symbol of possible modernization and post-war progress. On the other hand, the people had to deal with the fact that the Head of the Commonwealth was now a young and a female monarch. The Queen wanted to show people her sense of responsibility, thus she immediately after her succession undertook the longest tour ever.

From 1953 to 1959, she visited 15 countries that are now a part of the Commonwealth and 7 state governments around the world.<sup>52</sup> These 6 first years of the new Queen's reign were very important as during this time she was being introduced to the world and she was also building up her reputation among the people of the Commonwealth. It was especially important to strengthen ties with the collapsing British Empire and also further develop the

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<sup>51</sup> "India and Pakistan Win Independence," History.com, A&E Television Networks, February 9, 2010, <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/india-and-pakistan-win-independence>.

<sup>52</sup> "State Visits," The Royal Family, accessed March 24, 2022, <https://www.royal.uk/state-visits-2>.

new concept of the Commonwealth. Her father did not have much time in his life to support this concept, thus it was Elizabeth's role to do it.

These visits are well-planned and organized. Some of them can take only a few days, but some of them even months. These visits can be very exhausting for the Queen, especially when they take a longer period of time. The visits have a tight schedule with many all-day activities. The Queen is expected to visit many places, meet many people and she is expected to do all these activities with a smile. Moreover, during these visits, the Queen is also followed by filmmakers, newspaper photographers, and other people who want to document such events. Despite the overwhelming situations and tiring engagements, the Queen was excited to see all the people even during the longest visits. It was also noted that the Queen was asked to cancel some meetings so she could relax, however, she did not approve that and refused to not meet with other people, because they would be disappointed, if they could not see the Queen.<sup>53</sup> These times depict the young Queen as a self-disciplined woman full of energy and charm that she would always exude during the visits.

Her behaviour and the way she behaved during these visits show that the Queen was willing to prefer the well-being of others before her own. It is remarkable that during the 1950s, Elizabeth II, as a mother of two small children, was far from her home very often and still presenting herself as a very committed woman. This is also evidenced by the fact that her first royal visit as the Queen was the most ambitious tour that has ever been undertaken by the monarch. It shows that she knew how uncertain political situation was at the time thus she had to influence people to stay loyal to Commonwealth.

The Queen was accompanied by her husband Prince Philip on this first royal tour, which lasted for 6 months, from November 1953 to May 1954.<sup>54</sup> The tour began with a visit to Bermuda in November 1953 and then continued with quick stops in Jamaica and Panama. The Queen and her husband sailed to Fiji, and Tonga. In fact, it was Elizabeth's personal requirement to visit Tonga where she and her husband were hosted also with a feast whereby Elizabeth got to know other people's culture, which is associated with

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<sup>53</sup> Anne Matheson, 'THE QUEEN TIRED? NONSENSE!', *The Australian Women's Weekly*, January 20, 1954, 23. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article46233830>

<sup>54</sup> K. Dodds, D. Lambert, and B. Robison, "Loyalty and Royalty: Gibraltar, the 1953-54 Royal Tour and the Geopolitics of the Iberian Peninsula," *Twentieth Century British History* 18, no. 3 (2006): 366 <https://doi.org/10.1093/tcbh/hwm018>.

customs, food and cultural events.<sup>55</sup> They continued with the journey to New Zealand. They stopped there for a longer time and their visit there lasted from the end of December throughout the whole of January before they left for Australia.<sup>56</sup> Their visit to New Zealand was special thanks to the fact that it was Christmas time. She used this opportunity to deliver a very important message to the people of the Commonwealth.

The speech included very important passages that depict her role as the Queen. First, she started the speech by mentioning that she could not be with her children despite the fact that Christmas time is a period of time especially reserved for family gatherings, however, she stressed how privileged she felt by being able to take on such a great journey as it is very important for her to see the member countries of the Commonwealth together with their people. Once again she showed how humble, graceful and respectful she is in her role. However, the most meaningful part of her speech is about the concept of the Commonwealth:

„But their greatest achievement, I suggest, is the Commonwealth itself, and that owes much to all of them. Thus formed, the Commonwealth bears no resemblance to the Empires of the past. It is an entirely new conception, built on the highest qualities of the spirit of man: friendship, loyalty and the desire for freedom and peace. To that new conception of an equal partnership of nations and races I shall give myself heart and soul every day of my life. „<sup>57</sup>

In this quote, the Queen stressed that there was a need to get rid of "old" ideas of imperial loyalty and superiority and the new concept shall be accepted. The last part of her Christmas speech shows the Queen's dedication, how much she is involved in implementing this conception and how much it means for her to be a part of this community.

It must be also noted that the Queen uses public speeches as a tool to manifest the loyalty and her respect to Commonwealth people. Public speeches she has given are done in front of the public or via media. The latter is a very modern approach as the era offered possibilities to speak to people through radio or television which helped spread broadly the

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<sup>55</sup> FarmFieldFireside. "The Queen: Her Commonwealth Story." YouTube video. 1.4. 2018, 8:10, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RLHXIkKJkk>.

<sup>56</sup> K. Dodds, D. Lambert, and B. Robison, "Loyalty and Royalty: Gibraltar, the 1953-54 Royal Tour and the Geopolitics of the Iberian Peninsula," *Twentieth Century British History* 18, no. 3 (2006): 366 <https://doi.org/10.1093/tcbh/hwm018>.

<sup>57</sup> "Christmas Broadcast 1953," The Royal Family, accessed March 24, 2022, <https://www.royal.uk/christmas-broadcast-1953>.

idea of Commonwealth as a “family” of nations that cooperate together. Delivering the speeches by the Queen herself makes people feel more connected to the Crown because the public speeches serve as useful way for further enhancing the relations between nations and identifying themselves with the symbol of the monarchy.

Nevertheless, after more than a month being in New Zealand, the Queen travelled to Australia. After this, she stopped also in Cocos Islands, Ceylon, Aden, Uganda, Tobruk, Malta and her last stop was in Gibraltar. The majority of these countries became later the part of the Commonwealth of Nations. Ceylon became a part of the association already in 1948, Uganda joined in 1962, 2 years after Malta followed, Tonga was accepted in 1970, Fiji in 1997 and Jamaica in 1962 which was and still is also a part of the Commonwealth Realm.<sup>58</sup>

#### 4.1 Australia in 1954

There were few visits to Australia undertaken by royal members: Prince Alfred (1867-68), Prince Albert and Prince George (1881), the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (1901), the Prince of Wales (1920) and the Duke of York (1927)<sup>59</sup> who was later known as King George VI. It was Elizabeth II, who has been the first reigning monarch to ever visit Australia. It is also essential to mention that the first attempt of visiting Australia by the reigning monarch was made in 1949, when George VI intended to visit Australia as a reigning monarch<sup>60</sup>, but due to his illness he was not able to travel. The visit was rescheduled, however, the health of the king was not getting better thus Elizabeth was sent instead of him to go for this royal visit. However, the plans were cancelled; the princess did not reach Australian shores as she had to return to London for the funeral because her father passed away.

The first Elizabeth’s Australian journey began on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1954 and it took 58 days to visit 7 capital cities and 70 country towns. She was accompanied by her husband. They spent there most of the time of her whole tour and it was for the first time when a reigning monarch reached the Australian shores.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> “TERRITORIES FORMING PART OF THE COMMONWEALTH,” National Archives Government UK, accessed April 21, 2022, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/307928/AnnexB\\_Commonwealth.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307928/AnnexB_Commonwealth.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> Jane Connors, *Royal Visits to Australia* (Canberra, ACT: NLA Publishing, 2015), content

<sup>60</sup> Jane Connors, *Royal Visits to Australia* (Canberra, ACT: NLA Publishing, 2015), 79.

<sup>61</sup> Jane Connors, *Royal Visits to Australia* (Canberra, ACT: NLA Publishing, 2015), 84.

In terms of Elizabeth's plans, it was logical to begin with a wide tour right after the coronation that included also a two-months stop to Australia which was very important for the Australians as they were not blessed with the visit of the monarch before. The reason for that long tour was to see as many people as possible but also as the political situation suggested, the idea of unity had to be spread during the Cold War. Another major point of the purposes of the royal tour is the fact that the tour was organized in the post-war period with the new Queen on the throne, it was essential to thank Australians for their help during the World War II and introduce the Queen to people.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, Queen Elizabeth's coronation brought increased interest in royalty among people that left a fresh memory of this event and the royal tour served as another opportunity to bring the Queen to people. Tours could be interpreted in the monarch's and people's purposes. It is understood as enhancing the loyalty between them and at the same time bringing the Queen's image to the public's attention creates considerable interest.<sup>63</sup> The tour also served as the opportunity to use Elizabeth's symbolic power to influence the people's opinions positively by attending the public occasions. People needed to know that the Queen is more than just the figure and feel a connection to her. Nevertheless, it was also viewed as a chance to show Australia's progress and demonstrate how much the Queen is devoted to the country.

The long-awaited visit of a reigning monarch to Australia caused massive enthusiasm. Huge effort and preparation processes preceded this visit as it was necessary to plan all the activities that would take place during the event. The streets of the cities and towns were decorated in colours and with symbols of the Empire and the Commonwealth such as crowns, Union Jack but the decoration consisted of the Indigenous symbols (kangaroos and wattle) too.<sup>64</sup> This was a great way how to highlight the connection of the Britain and the Commonwealth country.

During the Queen's journey in Australia, she took 33 flights to get to places. Broken Hill was one of the destinations, where she came. This place is well-known for mining industry thus the journey was not only about meeting people in the cities, but also it was vital to focus on ordinary working people whereby she expressed her attitude and

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<sup>62</sup> "Elizabeth II," The National Museum of Australia, accessed April 13, 2022, <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/queen-elizabeth-ii>

<sup>63</sup> Ruth P. Feingold, "Marketing the Modern Empire: Elizabeth II and the 1953-1954 World Tour." *Antipodes* 23, no. 2 (2009): 149. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41957800>.

<sup>64</sup> Jane Connors, *Royal Visits to Australia* (Canberra, ACT: NLA Publishing, 2015), 114.

acknowledgment by visiting Broken Hill and meet people who worked in these demanding conditions or even with relatives members who lost their loved ones in the mines.<sup>65</sup>

It should be noted that the role of the Queen during the visit also included endless public speeches, listening multiple times to the national anthems, changing the outfits with just a little time for the rest and having spent the time under uncomfortable conditions such as a drive in an open car during the rain voluntarily.<sup>66</sup> This all Elizabeth was firm to fulfil. As she was taught from a very young age, that there is not an appropriate place to complain about tedious tasks or boring activities. She was not complaining even during the hot weather, she remained calm and cheerful. The Queen was willing to make people happy and also it signifies that the Queen wanted to establish a kind and friendly relationship with the people of the nations thereby she braces the monarchy's position in the world in a better light. This fact is very important because she put the relationship with the people in first place which suggested the reason that the disintegration of countries in the British Empire inclined to transform to the association of the nations willingly and peacefully. At the same time, it indicates the Queen's motives to develop the community's loyalty to monarchy by showing them that she cares about them. In principle, this is a different perception how the Queen values the purposes of the visit than it was viewed in the history.

On the other hand, this all must be captured in order to raise awareness of the royal journeys. The involvement of the most influential tools like media coverage served as a technique how to depict the role of the Queen's visits. By bringing the monarchy into the public eye, they emphasize the emotional connection between the Queen and people. Their aim was not only to demonstrate the longevity of the monarchy, but also its adaptability to constantly changing conditions.

Especially this royal visit to Australia belongs to the biggest occasions that Australia has ever seen. It is estimated that approximately around 75% of the population had a chance to see the Queen.<sup>67</sup> There are ample reasons to believe that it may be thanks to the fact that the promotion and marketing of the tour were enormous. It included photographers, cameramen, and also the ABC radio broadcast team who provided reports about the Queen's journey. Interestingly, according to Jane Connors, four hundred

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<sup>65</sup> FarmFieldFireside, "The Queen: Her Commonwealth Story." YouTube video. 1.4. 2018,16:53, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RLHXIkKJkk>.

<sup>66</sup> "ROYAL VISIT TO W.A. COUNTRY TOWNS," *The Advertiser*, March 31, 1954, p. 1. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/47565352>

<sup>67</sup> Andrew Marr, *The Diamond Queen: Elizabeth II and Her People* (London: Macmillan, 2011),128

broadcasting points were set up around the country.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, not only for listeners but also for readers, information was provided by newspapers that published the commentary in the evening. This helped people to know what the Queen's plans are and allowed them to gather in front of her hotels. Another example of media involvement in promotion of the journey is the fact that the arrival of the Queen in Sydney became the first televised event in Australia<sup>69</sup> which proves a crucial point of establishing the royal visits in central attention as the media coverage helped to extend the information among people and at the same time, the promotion of these visits sets the example for other countries that were not yet in the Commonwealth to consider joining the association because advertisement of the Queen helped to increase knowledge to the world that the Queen is willing to travel for that long period of time.

This promotion consisted also of filming a documentary that captured the visit and honour the Queen's glorious travel because it was an incredible moment for Australians that the Queen was visiting their country. This documentary of the Queen's two months long visit to Australia was actually the first colour film ever made in Australia. It was filmed by 16 cameramen that featured the events that the Queen attended.<sup>70</sup> Even though, the documentary captured these special moments and preserved them forever, according to Jane Landman, Elizabeth did not like having all the lights all around her and she would rather prefer to interact with people in the crowds.<sup>71</sup>

The Queen's effort to have a positive impact on people is seen in the way how people reacted to her visit. They waited for her in queues for hours in all cities and the couple's visit reached a huge achievement. For people, seeing the Queen and her husband, even for just a few seconds during a car drive through the street meant an experience for the whole life that could not be missed. The crowds were absolutely huge and were carried away by enthusiasm. As Jane Connor states that even several women had to be taken to hospital because of the crush. Apart from this, it is also mentioned that many people stayed to sleep in the street before the arrival of the Queen.<sup>72</sup> This excitement included also waiting in the

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<sup>68</sup> Jane Connors, *Royal Visits to Australia* (Canberra, ACT: NLA Publishing, 2015), 84.

<sup>69</sup> Tim Barlass, „Queen's historic tour heralded a new era for the royal family,„ accessed April 13,2022 <https://www.smh.com.au/national/queens-historic-tour-heralded-a-new-era-for-the-royal-family-20140215-32sma.html>

<sup>70</sup> National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, “The Queen in Australia (1954),” NFSA (National Film and Sound Archive of Australia), accessed March 24, 2022, <https://www.nfsa.gov.au/collection/curated/queen-australia-1954-0>.

<sup>71</sup> Jane Landman. “*Renewing Imperial Ties: The Queen in Australia.*” In *The British Monarchy On Screen*, edited by Mandy Merck, (Manchester University Press, 2016),190, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1wn0s87>

<sup>72</sup> Jane Connors, *Royal Visits to Australia* (Canberra, ACT: NLA Publishing, 2015), 97.

rain, squeezing in the crowd and arrival of the visitors from different places just to see Elizabeth II. This shows how the Queen influences other people and depicts their loyalty and pride in having the Queen as the head of their country which is important for preserving a monarch for the future generation. More importantly, a living symbol visiting Australia connected the whole nation together as the royal couple travelled through the country.

This leads to the fact that the Queen's visits leave good memories as the celebrations of these events draw people together. As the Queen learns more about the cities, villages and various parts of the community through the tour, she stimulates the idea to invite the Queen for a repeated royal visit in the future, especially when the tour is successful as the visit in 1954. In the next decades of her reign, she has overall visited Australia another 15 times thus it belongs to the second most visited place by the Queen.<sup>73</sup>

## 4.2 Canada in 1959

In history, Canada was an attractive place where a lot of royal members travelled. It included military duties, private visits or a part of the royal duty.<sup>74</sup> An important milestone was reached when Canada was honoured with the very first visit by a reigning monarch that was made in 1939. It was Elizabeth's father and her mother who came to visit this country.<sup>75</sup> However, similarly to the re-scheduled tour to Australia, the king had a plan to visit Canada for once more in 1951 but his health was rapidly worsen and he had to undertake the surgery. For his inability to travel, Elizabeth as a princess visited Canada in that year instead of him, while the king was recovering. Another visit of Canada by Elizabeth took place in 1957, but for this time, she visited the country as the reigning monarch. After 2 years, she visited Canada for the third time.<sup>76</sup> Overall Elizabeth II has visited Canada 22 times thus the country has began the most visited place by her.<sup>77</sup>

The third Canadian journey began on June 18<sup>th</sup> in 1959 and it took 45 days to visit all provinces and territories. She was accompanied by her husband. Even though it does not

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<sup>73</sup> "Australia," The Royal Family, May 27, 2016, <https://www.royal.uk/australia>.

<sup>74</sup> Canadian Heritage, "Government of Canada," (/ Gouvernement du Canada, October 27, 2021), <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/past-royal-tours/royal-visits-1786-1951.html>.

<sup>75</sup> "Princess Elizabeth's 1951 Royal Visit to Canada," CBCnews, CBC/Radio Canada, March 12, 2012, accessed April 13, 2022, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/princess-elizabeth-s-1951-royal-visit-to-canada-1.1061794>.

<sup>76</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 67

<sup>77</sup> "Queen City: Her Majesty in Toronto," City of Toronto, February 7, 2022, <https://www.toronto.ca/explore-enjoy/history-art-culture/online-exhibits/web-exhibits/web-exhibits-culture-people/queen-city-her-majesty-in-toronto/>.

belong to the most ambitious tours for example as the Australian tour, this third Canadian visit is considered to be the longest journey that Elizabeth undertook in Canada.<sup>78</sup>

This tour was not planned in the post-war period, nor right after the coronation of the new Queen. Nevertheless, the purposes of the Canadian royal visit were important too. The nationalism in Canada was increasing. Even though, for English-speaking Canadians, the Queen's visit symbolized the representation of the nation as this was also evident from the huge crowds of English-speaking Canadians who showed considerable enthusiasm for the Queen's arrival. In the comparison, the French-speaking Canadians did not express much interest in her visit. According to Philip Buckner, English-speaking Canadians perceived the British ties as their heritage whereas the French-speaking population of Canada perceived these ties as an obstacle to developing their own Canadian national identity. For this reason, they were not as attached to the monarchy as the English-speaking citizens. Thus this visit represented an opportunity to strengthen ties with the country as well as meet its people during the tour that was planned to take place all over Canada. This would then also prevent the threat of revolution and republicanism.<sup>79</sup> Another main objective of the tour was the opening ceremony of St. Lawrence Seaway which the Queen was requested to commence by the Canadian government.<sup>80</sup> The occasion underlined the role of the Queen as she carried out her constitutional competence there. This situation was similar to the one that took place during the visit in 1957 when the Queen also fulfilled her constitutional duties by opening the Parliament in Canada.<sup>81</sup>

Important Canadian political figures, such as the prime minister of Canada Diefenbaker or the former prime-minister Saint-Laurent, demanded the Queen's presence at the ceremony. The reason lies in the fact that both men were devoted monarchists and were convinced about Canada's close connection to the Britain.<sup>82</sup>

Furthermore, Diefenbaker desired for people to realize that the Queen is the Queen of Canada, not only the Queen of England. This resulted in the fact, that Diefenbaker ensured the Queen had an overview of all matters during the journey consequently she had the Canadian minister nearby if she needed and she could feel as an active figure in Canadian matters.

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<sup>78</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 67

<sup>79</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 77

<sup>80</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 67

<sup>81</sup> "Queen Elizabeth: 1957 Opening of Parliament," CBCnews, CBC/Radio Canada, accessed April 15, 2022, <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1564903428>.

<sup>82</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 69

There was another consequence of the Diefenbaker's efforts to present the Queen of Canada. The Queen's Canadian tour had included also a quick stop in Chicago. Actually, it was proposed that the tour should be extended through the United States but it was Diefenbaker who refused to add any routes to the schedule.<sup>83</sup> It is logical as the objectives of the tour had to be accomplished primarily in Canada and not in the United States, especially when the United States is not part of the Commonwealth, thus it would not make sense to expand the tour to other countries.

The programme of the Canadian tour itself was very busy, which is understandable, because this is what the role of the Queen entails and people want to show her the most things from their country. On the other hand, it is not always necessary to create a schedule that would be tiring. Not only had she meet with many people, including the veterans from the wars, founding members of organizations, representatives of local associations but also she visited hospitals, museums, art galleries, and attending ceremonies, cultural activities. This was the reason why the visit received criticism.<sup>84</sup>

People argued that it seemed to be too lengthy, that Elizabeth had to handle all these engagements with stress and hectic shifting from one place to another, which could impact her health negatively. Moreover, the Queen at that time was expecting the third baby. However, she did not tell anyone except of Diefenbaker that she is pregnant. When the prime minister discovered that she is expecting a baby, he wanted to shorten the tour but the Queen refused. She continued with the organized plans. Only one day in a busy schedule of the Queen had to be cancelled as she got sick.<sup>85</sup>

The Queen's attitude to bearing the activities signifies how much she is resilient even in aggravated conditions. Not only does it serve as the evidence of commitment but it also shows that even though of the busy programmes she had to accomplish, the Queen is enthusiastic to attend occasions and never let down people with her permanent smile.

This characteristic feature is typical for her. She is well-aware of her purpose being the Queen. It implies that she cares for other and this trait did not change at all. Since her childhood, she was raised by her parents to be a well-behaved woman who needs to know her part in the community. From an early age, she was engaged in activities that she had to do as a princess and complete them when it was needed. In this way, her characteristic trait

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<sup>83</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 69

<sup>84</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 79-80

<sup>85</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 85

was already determined since a child and did not change in her thirties (as she was 33 in 1959).

The main goal of the tour that had to be accomplished was the opening ceremony of St. Lawrence which was the success of Canada and the United States, thus it was attended by two main figures of representation; the president of the United States and The Queen of Canada. Elizabeth II made a speech about the accomplishment which also included French passages. The usage of French was very important in the sense of nationalists. It is not only the evident that Elizabeth II is well-educated but also she cemented her role and tried to impress French-speaking Canadians. This was a strategy for making nationalists more connected to the Crown. During Canadian visit, Elizabeth spoke French anywhere where it was possible.

Another important aspect of the tour was focused on Canada's past. The Queen was proposed to give a speech on television by Diefenbaker on 1<sup>st</sup> July.<sup>86</sup> In her speech, she stressed the importance of the two occasions that happened during her visit, the first one was the opening of St Lawrence and the second one was a celebration of remembering the past history of Canada. The latter relates to the Canadians independency that is celebrated on that day called as Dominion Day, but presently, it is known as Canada Day. As mentioned in the third chapter, Canada was the first country that gained a dominion status thus the Queen took an opportunity to praise the country. Importantly, as Canada began semi-independent, it started the process of establishing the Commonwealth as a free association which later many other countries joined.

The purposes of this message, as she said herself, were to point out the strength of the unity and also to remind them that they should be proud of being the Canadian because of the success that will lead to the glorious future of the country.<sup>87</sup>

Another point to take is the fact that the Queen's speech included a French passage dedicated to the memory of the discovery of Canada which is again a way how to earn popularity of the French-speaking Canadians.

Also, she expressed the happiness that the Commonwealth provides the benefits as many students from Pakistan, India study at universities in Canada. Moreover, she felt the gratitude that television enables her to reach all Canadian households, as Canada is too big for her to visit every place so thanks to the broadcast, many people may hear and watch

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<sup>86</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 70

<sup>87</sup> "Queen Elizabeth's 1959 Dominion Day Message," CBCnews, CBC/Radio Canada, accessed April 15, 2022, <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1595552670>.

this message. As well as, the television provides people a look to her journey which makes it possible to follow her remotely.

To make a point of useful instrument of media, the occasion let to produce television coverage about the visit as it was in the case of a previous royal journey in 1957. However this time, the CBC television coverage highlighted just the events such as opening St. Lawrence Seaway, the Calgary Stampede to make it more appealing. This programme was not the only one that was offered to people but also the documentary film called Royal River after the royal couple finalized the tour, which was a success.<sup>88</sup> The media performed an important role as it acted as a means of reaching many people and consequently influence people to be involved in the Commonwealth visits as well. In addition to it, reaching as many people as possible, especially those countries that are not part of the Commonwealth is a technique how to convince people that being in the Commonwealth has benefits and that it brings opportunities to meet with the Queen because the tour visits make it possible.

It would suggest that all strategies that were used to influence people would cause possible effects on French-speaking Canadians, actually the Queen's ways of influencing people and strengthening ties with the country did not re-value the opinion of French-speaking Canadians. According to Buckner, it is said that for some new immigrants or for a younger generation the visit did not convince them to see the Queen as their own Queen just because Elizabeth made the time to travel for weeks in order to visit the Canadian cities.<sup>89</sup> In addition to this, the royal visit did not cause any emotional appeal to the French-speaking Canadians, on the contrary he also pointed out that the visit sparked enthusiasm among the British-born and the descendants because these people admire the Queen.<sup>90</sup>

Another criticism was directed to the Queen's residency. The argument suggested that as the Queen, she should reside in Canada for some longer time than just come to visit the country or that the visits should be more frequent and less formal.<sup>91</sup>

Despite this perception, the excitement of people that were gathering in the crowds in order to see the Queen's arrival was huge as it estimated more than one hundred thousand people waiting in the cities.<sup>92</sup> The heat was not an obstacle either and many people

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<sup>88</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 83

<sup>89</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 88

<sup>90</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 90

<sup>91</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 89

<sup>92</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 84

appeared to see the Queen. Also, there were found articles in the French-Canadian press that commented on the Queen's visit very positively.<sup>93</sup> Based on these points, the Canadian royal visit was rather viewed negatively than positively despite the efforts of political people who were involved in engagements to connect people with the Crown and with Queen Elizabeth II who participated in symbolic acts. Nevertheless, her approach did not appeal to some people, there were still people who praised her.

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<sup>93</sup> Phillip A. Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 83

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis was to show how royal visits can serve as an important tool for connecting people with their sovereigns. Being crowned in 1953, Elizabeth II undertook several visits all around the world. The purposes of the royal visits in the 1950s differed in some ways, however, it was clear that the political situation played a significant role. The Australian and the Canadian tours were focused on showing that Elizabeth II is as much a queen of Australia and Canada as she is the queen of the United Kingdom and also the travels had to facilitate the smooth transformation of other countries into the Commonwealth.

As stated before, Canada and Australia were among the first members of the Commonwealth, so it was important to visit these states first so that the Queen would show her commitment, express her gratefulness and stress the benefits of being in the Commonwealth. In this thesis, it was shown in what way Queen Elizabeth II wanted to trigger her impact. The public speeches, never-ending travelling, constant smile, usage of French and attending a multitude of activities even in the demanding conditions indicate Elizabeth's effort to make impress. This thesis reflects how important the royal visits were and it is interesting to see how their importance changed over the years as, for example, Elizabeth's great grandmother Queen Victoria refused to travel and meet with her subjects.

This thesis also highlights the role the media played in spreading the awareness of the Commonwealth. Both television and radio represented important tools that enabled people to keep track of the Queen's visits, see and hear her often and, therefore, strengthen her position.

It is confirmed that the Queen's presence in Australia resulted in people's enthusiasm towards the Queen and that the tour also helped reinforce a sense of unity. As part of the tour, the Queen also visited other places in the former British Empire which then motivated more countries to become members of the Commonwealth. Therefore, the goal of the tour was reached.

In the case of the Canadian tour, the purpose of the journey was not achieved in terms of making the French-speaking Canadians perceive the Queen as the Queen of Canada even though the prime minister coordinated the whole tour and was fully committed to reaching the goal. On the other hand, it is important to let the Queen engage in opening ceremonies and similar events because it reminds people of the Queen's role.

Overall, the royal visits that took place in the 1950s were able to make the newly crowned queen trustworthy. It portrayed Elizabeth II as a queen that was fully devoted to bringing all members of the Commonwealth together despite their differences. Based on this thesis, it is obvious that the royal visits are not just an abstract idea but a functioning, practical concept that comes with a great sacrifice, but also often results in big success. It also proved to be one of the main tools that helped transform the declining British Empire into a new, strong association of 54 members that is known as the Commonwealth.

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