

300 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP & INNOVATION

VOLUME 2



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THE HISTORY OF
PARLIAMENT
British Political, Social & Local History

SJH
ST JAMES'S HOUSE



CHAPTER ONE

OUR SOVEREIGN LEADER



Our Head of State

The Queen has carried out nearly 70 years of unerring and devotional duty to Britain and the Commonwealth, reigning as a monarch like no other. Words by Robert Jobson

Our Queen, Elizabeth II, has reigned longer than any other monarch in British history. Next year, on 6 February 2022, the nation will come together again to celebrate another great milestone of her reign – her 70 glorious years on the throne. As head of state of the United Kingdom since her ascension in 1952, Her Majesty has been a symbol of continuity and a unifying national figurehead. When she speaks in public she speaks for the entire nation, without fear, favour or political bias.

Strictly speaking, a monarch is a single ruler of a state with supreme authority. Over time, however, with the emergence of representative democracy our monarch's role in our political system, and that of the 15 Commonwealth realms she reigns over, has evolved. Today, in Britain we have a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy where essentially the monarch's role is to “be” not to “do”.

Unlike her predecessors from history, Elizabeth II does not hold real power. However, as The Queen she still plays an important part in the life of the nation and has a great influence. She meets with her incumbent prime minister once a week and carries out significant ceremonial and diplomatic duties. Whereas the kings



Opposite

Portrait by Patrick Lichfield for The Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002



Left

Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip on the balcony of Buckingham Palace after her Coronation in 1953, with (front) Prince Charles and Princess Anne



Above

The Coronation ceremony in Westminster Abbey on 2 June 1953

and queens of ancient royal dynasties, such as the Normans, Plantagenets and Tudors, were often powerful, ruthless rulers in charge of great armies, that power now rests with the elected prime minister and his Cabinet ministers. Parliament not monarchy represents the supreme authority of the nation.

For more than 700 years, parliamentarians have gradually and deliberately reduced the powers of absolute monarchs. Charles I's determination to preserve that "divine right of kings" led to the English civil war, the emergence of Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector and cost the unshakeable Stuart King his throne – and his head. When his second son, James II, a devout Roman Catholic, was forced to abandon his throne and flee the country in 1688, it led to the "Bill of Rights", which proved fundamental to the evolution of constitutional monarchy. Although James's protestant daughter, Queen Mary II, was the head of state, her power and that of the monarchs that followed, including Elizabeth II, had become eroded. The role they perform is a more subtle form of leadership and diplomacy.

Elizabeth II reigns not by the "Grace of God" as her full titles say, but by the will of Parliament and in accordance with

the Act of Settlement of 1702, a law designed to secure the Protestant succession to the throne, and to strengthen the guarantees for ensuring a parliamentary system of government. If it so chooses, Parliament can remove her or those who come after her and pick a successor. Although it is tradition with a hereditary monarchy like ours that a deceased monarch will be succeeded by her eldest son or daughter, now the rules on primogeniture have been changed, it is not the law.

Her Majesty has a less formal role as "Head of Nation", which means he or she acts as a focus for national identity, unity and pride, and thus helps to provide a sense of continuity in the country. When The Queen made a televised address during the Covid-19 pandemic in April 2020, watched by 24 million, she was widely praised for trying to reassure those who were suffering and for unifying the country. In only the fifth time in her long reign that she has given such a speech, she thanked people for following government lockdown rules to stay at home and praised those "coming together to help others".

Our Queen, born at 17 Bruton Street, Mayfair on 21 April 1926, is renowned worldwide for her devotion to duty. Since her ascension at the age of 26 she has been an important figurehead for Britain and the Commonwealth, the voluntary association of 53 independent countries, almost all formerly under British rule, of which she is also head. As a little girl, the then Princess Elizabeth did not expect that she would one day become monarch and it was only when her uncle, King Edward VIII, abdicated on 10 December 1936 so he could marry the twice-divorced American Wallis Simpson, that reality dawned on her. Once the outgoing king agreed he and any children he might have were excluded from the succession to the throne, and his younger brother, Elizabeth's father Prince Albert, Duke of York was to become King George VI, it meant the princess was the direct heir, known as heir presumptive. The primogeniture laws still existed then, but unless the king and the queen consort had a male heir then Elizabeth would be the next monarch.

After her father died in his sleep while at Sandringham, Norfolk, Princess Elizabeth acceded to the throne, becoming Queen Elizabeth II while she was in Kenya with her husband at the start of a major royal tour. The following year on 2 June 1953 the Coronation took place. The event, televised for the first time, meant millions around the Commonwealth could share the moment too. Her Majesty had to learn the complexities of the role of monarch while on the job. In early 1953, the influential



Left

A young Queen is conveyed in a state carriage, accompanied by Prince Philip, April 1952







Emission possible

“This kind of advancement is something that hasn’t happened for over 30 years”

Yerasimos Angelis, GA R&D

“We’ve changed the game,” says Yerasimos Angelis (pictured, below), Managing Director of GA R&D. “And now, we’re leading this market, globally.” The company, based in Aberdeen, Scotland, is a highly innovative and experienced technology design and product development company focused on delivering novel global energy solutions. Having developed many design solutions for others, the company is now focusing on developing its own IP, which so far includes two highly novel patented global energy technologies to meet challenges in oil and gas downhole conveyancing.

“I created the backbone for a new business structure,” says Yerasimos. “Which is the U-line technology. It’s the first technology ever developed in the oil and gas industry, or any industry, to deploy any tool you want in a well – and it doesn’t need screws to be put together. It is very unique.” Alongside this wireline downhole conveyance roller and tool product pipeline, the company is leading the way on delivering sustainable and environmentally friendly clean power. This comes in the form of

3C-Steam Turbine, a novel power generation technology which re-imagines the use, efficiency and power of steam from existing power plants, waste heat and geothermal sources. “We’re actually now developing the new textbook of steam turbine technology for universities,” Yerasimos says of its success.

The uniqueness and innovation of this U-line technology has already seen record-breaking work in Nigeria and as a result is experiencing huge demand and rapid global expansion. “By the end of the year, we will take this to another 20 countries,” Yerasimos says. “This will generate the revenue we need to apply for more funding for building this steam turbine generator that we believe will reduce emissions by 20 per cent.”

Not only is the company focusing on reducing emissions to create a cleaner and more sustainable world for all, but they are also doing the same for companies’ expenditure in the oil and gas industries. “Oil prices have increased because getting the oil out is now very expensive,” says Yerasimos. “What we are trying to do is reduce production costs for oil and gas by 50 per cent.” Because of the success and reliability of the technology it has developed in this field, the potential savings in upkeep and maintenance are also hugely significant for operators. “We can claim that if this technology is used everywhere, the operator will save 95 per cent on intervention costs,” says Yerasimos. “For example, operators that we’re working with now were paying about \$100,000 a day and they now pay \$3,000 a day for the same service with our technology. They are saving tremendous amounts of money in maintenance.”

The company’s trajectory is sharply on the up. “We’ve created a very strong partnership with the biggest oilfield tool manufacturer in India,” Angelis says. “The model is very hybrid and allows partners to enter easily. What we’ve done is set up a business that can replace very high tech with simple technology.”

The work that GA R&D is doing with its patented technology is not just simply innovative and taking the next logical steps in the industry, instead it has positioned itself as a pioneer that has created a once-in-a-generation achievement. One that is revolutionising the oil and gas world, as well as the renewable energy and clean energy industries. “This kind of advancement is something that hasn’t happened for over 30 years,” says Yerasimos. “It’s really game-changing.”

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