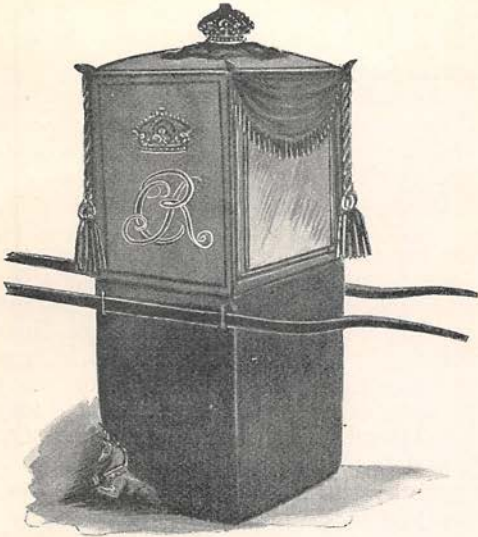


THE QUEEN'S CONVEYANCES.

BY GEORGE A. WADE.



THE ROYAL SEDAN CHAIR.

ALTHOUGH the Queen this year gave up her journey to the Continent in order to stay with her people, her Majesty has in no wise lost her love of travel. As it is, she has been to Ireland, and before long will go northward again for her usual autumn sojourn at Balmoral. But the venerable Sovereign travels, of course, under the easiest possible conditions, and everything is done to obviate any exertion, fatigue, or discomfort.

To begin with the conveyances which are for her Majesty's use by road, the first mentioned must be the Coronation coach. To the present generation this carriage is almost unknown, as it has never left the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace since 1861.

This lovely, if cumbersome, vehicle was designed for George III. by Sir William Chambers. Every portion of it is richly decorated with gilded carving work, and the outside of the coach contains many panels on which are painted superb pictures by the finest artists of that period, Ciprani being the chief of them. On one door are represented Mars, Mercury, and Minerva, supporting the Crown of

Great Britain, and on the other door are shown figures of Industry and Ingenuity presenting the Genius of England with a cornucopia, whilst History is recording the deeds of Fame.

The body of the Coronation carriage consists of a representation of eight palm trees, which, branching out towards the top, form a support for the roof of the vehicle, and in the middle of the roof there are placed three boyish figures, representing England, Scotland and Ireland, holding a crown. Two figures in front of the coach appear to be pulling it with cords round their shoulders, and are sounding shells to announce the approach of the "Ocean's Monarch"; whilst the back of the vehicle is splendidly decorated with the Royal Arms, the Order of St. George, and the Rose, Shamrock and Thistle. The total length of the carriage is 24 feet and its height is 12 feet, the whole weighing no less than four tons.

But beautiful as the Coronation coach is, lined inside with rich scarlet embossed velvet, and decorated outside with such gorgeous gilding, painting, and carving, the famous carriage has never been much favoured for State use by the Queen. It is too clumsy,

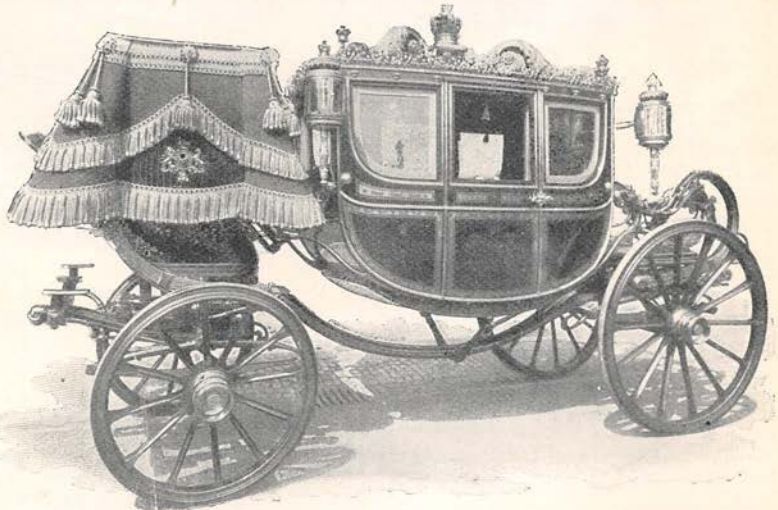


Photo by]

[H. N. King, Goldhawk Road, W.

THE QUEEN'S FAVOURITE CLOSED STATE COACH.

too heavy, too jolting for her Majesty, in these days of lightness, luxury, and speed on the roads. In the good old days of King George III. this coach was considered to be the acme of comfort and ease in travelling; to-day it is far behind the times in these respects. Yet no conveyance of modern times can compare with it as a sumptuous carriage for the roads, with its painted panels, that alone are worth £7,000. It also remains one of our most interesting links with past methods of travelling in England, before railways were invented, and when motor-cars were unknown.

The next State conveyance used by the Queen to be noticed is the one she has generally favoured upon ceremonious occasions when a closed carriage has been neces-

sary. Her Majesty likewise uses a carriage of this description when she takes her daily drive either at London or at Windsor. But in this case she is generally drawn by two pairs of greys, with outriders, the Queen showing a marked preference at present for this colour in her private carriage horses. On such occasions she is attended by a maid-of-honour and by one or two equerries. Only when the weather is either very wet or piercingly cold does the Queen drive out for her constitutional in a closed vehicle.

Of late the Queen has more often preferred an open carriage for her State appearances, as, for example, on the occasion of the Jubilee, and on her visit to Sheffield a few years ago. In such a case one of the best of the ordinary landaus at the Palace Mews is generally brought into requisition. These Royal carriages differ but little from many of those of the aristocracy, save that they are of regal size and upholstery. The latter is of dark blue cloth, and there are always a number of these carriages kept in the Mews ready for use.

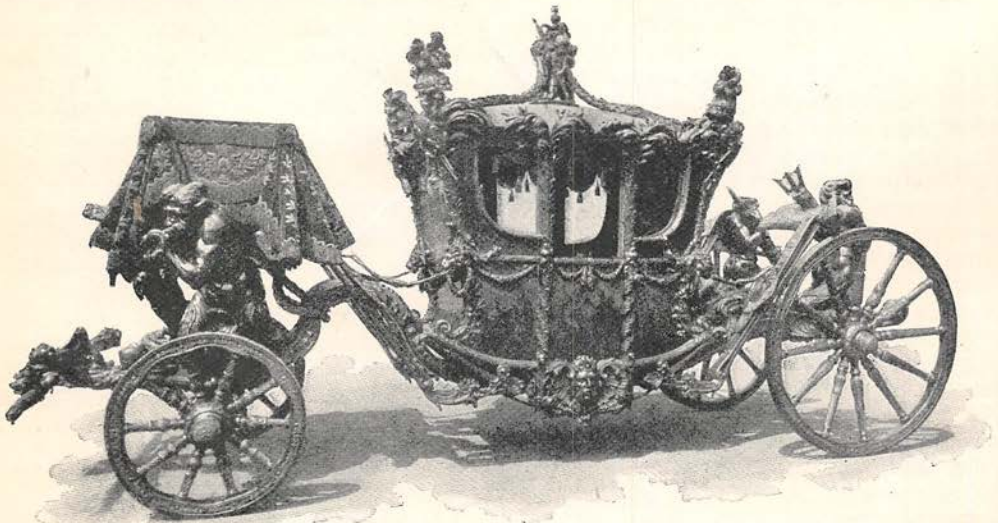


Photo by]

THE CORONATION COACH.

[H. N. King, Goldhawk Road, W.

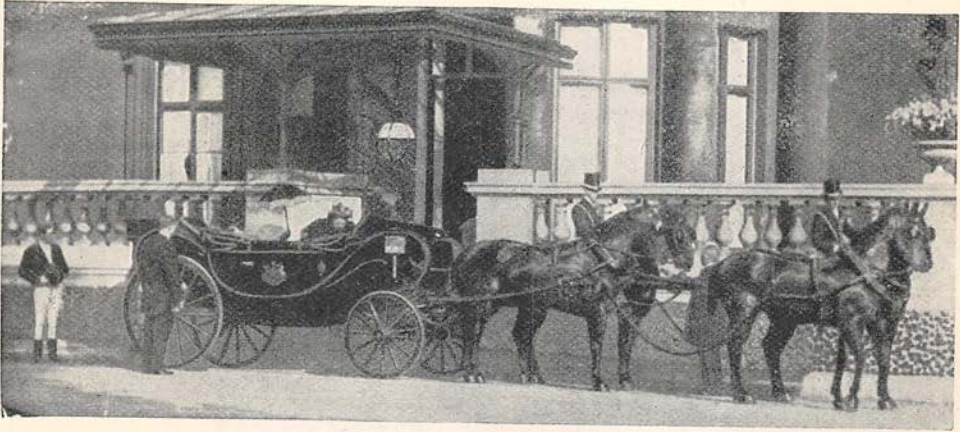
sary. This has been used by her Majesty when opening Parliament in person, and for many State or semi-State processions she much prefers it to the Coronation coach previously mentioned.

Round the top of this second coach is some lovely carving, all richly gilt, of roses, shamrocks and thistles. On the roof itself is the representation of a cushion bearing the Royal Crown. The interior decorations are very charming, the upholstery being done in light blue silk. So perfectly is the vehicle strung on its strong springs that, despite its size, it moves along with such ease and lightness that the occupant scarcely feels any motion.

When her Majesty uses this carriage on State occasions it is drawn by the famous

eight cream-coloured horses which are kept in the stables of Buckingham Palace. These Hanoverians, with their harness of red morocco leather and their grooms at their heads, make a very imposing spectacle.

Lastly, amongst her driving conveyances we must not omit to mention the small phaeton and the donkey carriage which the Sovereign uses for her daily drives within the bounds of the Royal residences. Of late years the Queen has almost given up the



THE ORDINARY DRIVING CARRIAGE.

phaeton she formerly kept for this purpose, and has employed the donkey carriage instead.

The latter is made to carry two persons only, sitting side by side, and so is admirably adapted for the drives of the Queen and the Princess Beatrice. When the latter does not accompany her Royal mother the donkey is led by the groom. In any case the pace is seldom more than a walk or a very easy trot, and the Queen often takes the reins in hand herself.

The donkey carriage has a top which can

be raised to keep off the hot sun or rain; it is made of basket-work and is very light. Its steps have been arranged specially to facilitate her Majesty's getting in and out; they nearly touch the ground, and the bottom of the phaeton will be noticed to be very low. It is more than probable that the Queen now prefers the little donkey-chaise to all the carriages in the Royal stables, since she derives more pleasure and recreation from it than from all the rest put together.

When our Sovereign wishes to travel by railway very elaborate preparations are neces-

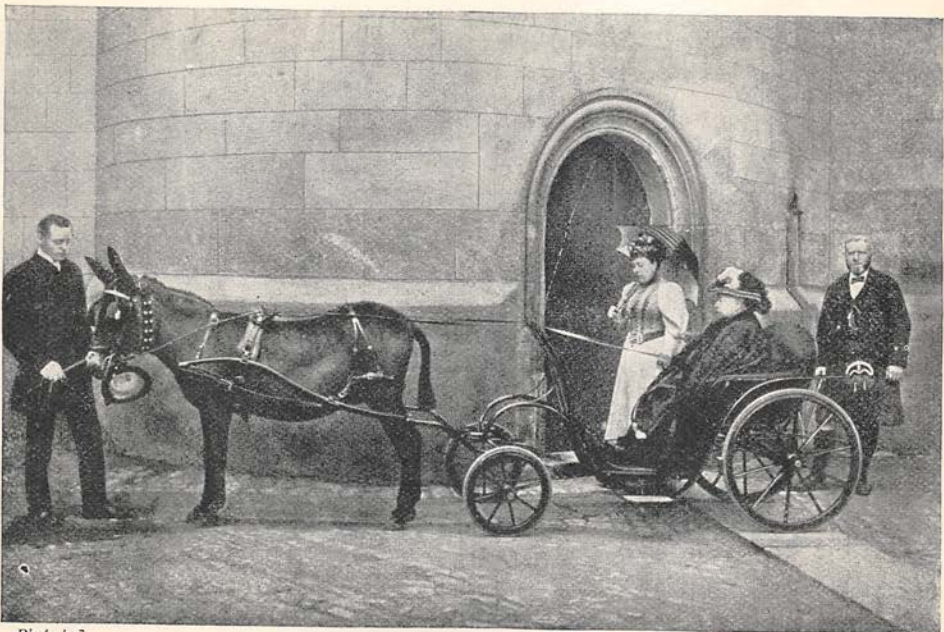


Photo by]

THE DONKEY CARRIAGE.

[Gunn & Stuart, Richmond.

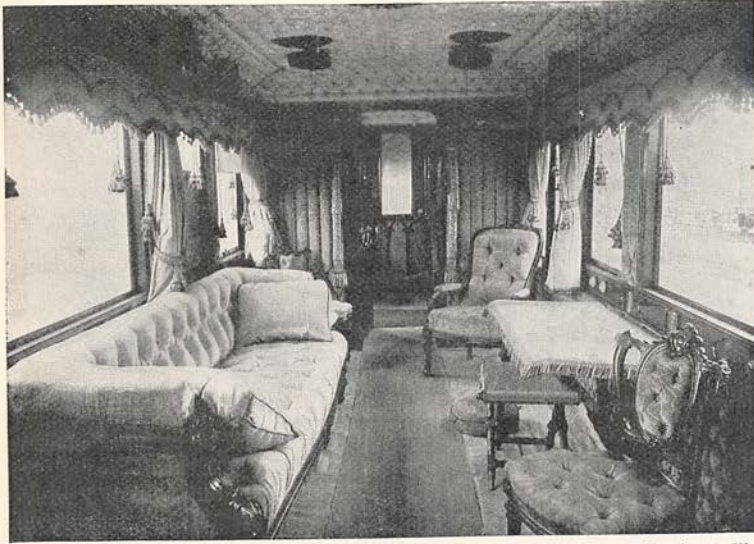


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[Russell & Sons, Baker Street, W.

HER MAJESTY'S SALOON, LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

sary. There are at least two trains that may be dignified by the title of "Royal." One of them is the property of the Great Western Railway Company, and the other of the London and North-Western Company. The former of these is the train which her Majesty uses when she travels to and from London and Windsor for such events as the Drawing-Rooms, etc. It is a train of the corridor build and is most luxuriously fitted up, being painted in chocolate and cream colours, and consisting of at least six carriages.

This train was built specially for the Queen to commemorate the Jubilee three years ago, and it is said to have cost in its entirety over £40,000 to the Great Western Railway. This Company also built a new waiting-room on the station platform at Windsor especially for Royal use, as a memento of the Jubilee.

But the train which is, *par excellence*, the "Royal" train, is the one that carries her Majesty to Scotland and back when the Court goes to Balmoral. This belongs

fitted up, the suite of the saloon being of satinwood, inlaid, and the chairs, settees, etc., being covered with blue silk. Even the door-handles are gold-plated, and the floors are covered with thick carpets of velvet pile, whilst the saloons are brilliantly lighted in dull weather.

Small tables, cages of pet birds, books, and the usual impedimenta which the Queen carries with her on all her journeys are there. Outside the

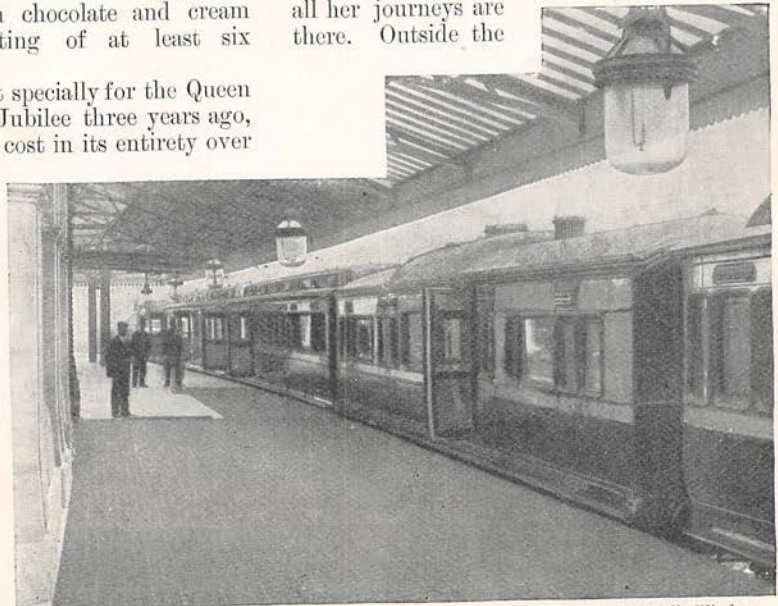


Photo by]

THE ROYAL TRAIN.

[Russell, Windsor.

to the London and North-Western Railway Company. The train invariably consists of twelve vehicles when it is fully made up, the Royal saloons being exactly in the centre. These include a sitting-room, a bedroom, and a dining-room. The windows are wide and are warmly curtained by heavy green curtains, green being perhaps her Majesty's favourite colour for the drapery of windows and beds. Every part of the rooms is gorgeously

roofs of the train are painted white, and inside they are either upholstered, or painted and decorated in light colours.

Until a short time ago the carriages were lighted by gas, her Majesty being most conservative in such matters, but now the incandescent light is being brought into use here as in the Royal palaces.

Electric bells are practically all over the train, so that the Queen can at once call her attendants, whose rooms adjoin her own, or she can in a few seconds have the train stopped, should she so desire, by touching an electric bell that tells the guard and engine-driver of her wish.

On a table in her saloon is always laid beforehand a time-table, which gives every particular relating to the journey she is making. This time-table is artistically printed in mauve, on white paper. The Royal Arms surmount it, and it is bordered by a narrow gold band.

The steps of the Royal saloons are worth notice. They let down to the ground like those of an ordinary State-carriage, so that her Majesty has no fatigue in mounting them. It need scarcely be said that these railway carriages are placed upon springs as perfect as human ingenuity can make them.

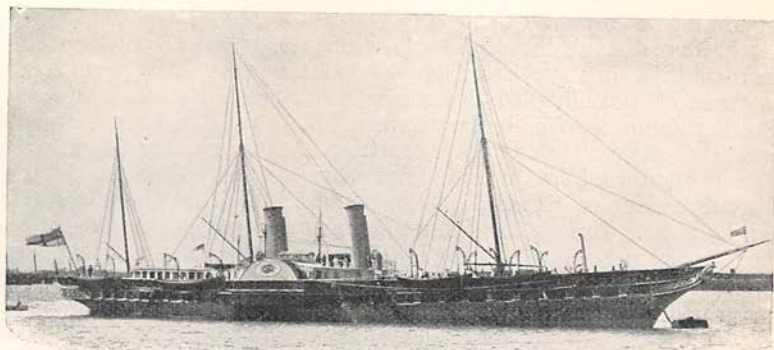


Photo by]

THE ROYAL YACHT "OSBORNE."

[West & Sons, Southsea.

As one of the Princesses usually accompanies the Queen on these journeys, in addition to the two maids-of-honour, equerries, secretaries, and railway directors, these have all to have their own apartments apportioned on the train. The ladies-in-waiting are always in the saloons next to the Queen, nearer the engine, while the equerries are in a carriage behind the Royal one.

No special engine is adhered to, but there are two or three from which the selection is always made, these being naturally the best engines the Company possesses. The drivers and guards are similarly selected from the most trustworthy servants of the Company and are changed as seldom as possible. Both the engine and the carriages of the Royal train have the Royal Arms painted upon them. It is worth noting that under no circumstances whatever will her Majesty permit a higher rate of speed than thirty-five miles an hour.

How many people know that there is still

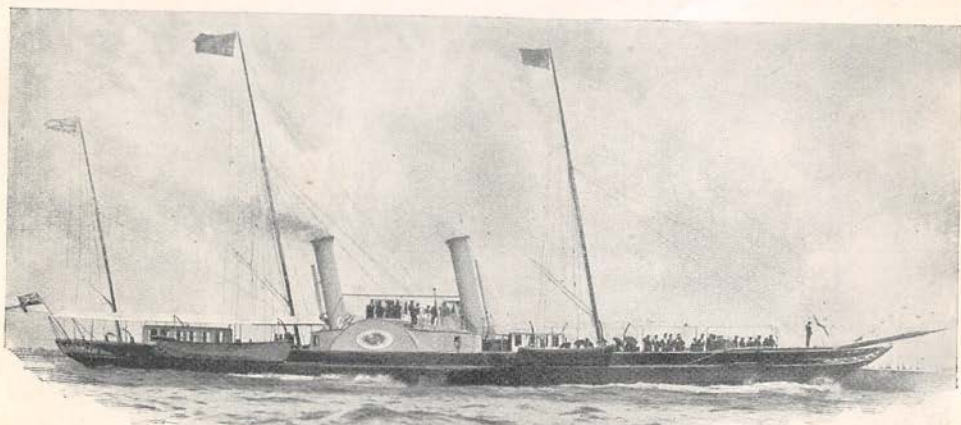


Photo by]

[Symonds & Co., Portsmouth.

THE ORIGINAL ROYAL YACHT "VICTORIA AND ALBERT," WITH THE QUEEN ON BOARD.

in existence a Royal sedan-chair? Yet such is the case, though her Majesty has never had occasion in these latter days of quick methods of travelling to make use of it. But the visitor to Windsor may have seen it near the entrance to the State apartments. It was often used by Queen Charlotte, and has her monogram, "C. R.," plainly marked on its sides. Except for its rather more sumptuous upholstery, there is little to differentiate it from the many sedan-chairs of the period to which it belonged.

It is kept in a glass case, and its embroideries are not nearly so much faded as one would have supposed. On the top of it is a gold, or rather gilt, crown on a cushion, and the front is hung with silk drapery and a fringe. Two large tassels hang from it, and the sides above the monogram are decorated with a crown. The bottom part of the chair is of red morocco, and rests upon a Royal Lion and Unicorn in gilt work. It is at present without its staves.

For many years the sedan-chair lay unheeded in one of the many lumber-rooms of the Castle, and when it was discovered, so little was known about it that it was believed at first to have been a relic of the time of Charles I., and the initials on it seemed to

favour this view. But when its history began to be inquired into, the real meaning of the "C. R." soon became clear.

There are few people who are aware that the Queen has still a Royal Barge-Master, though the barge itself is now a thing of the past, as far as the Queen's use of it is concerned. The old barge used for so many generations by Royalties, from the days of James I. onwards, now reposes in the South Kensington Museum, and will never more carry beavies of fair ladies and gallant gentlemen from Westminster to Hampton Court as in the olden days. Its last appearance in public was at the Fisheries Exhibition in the early eighties, and then it had to be sawn into two pieces before it could be got into the building.

The barge was 63 feet long, and about 6 feet wide, and she carried a complement of twenty-one oarsmen. Her speed was often, at its best, not less than from nine to ten miles an hour, so that she was not easily to be beaten on the Thames in her day. Her hull was oak-planked, and had a considerable rise at the stern. Passengers entered her by a landing stool, carried for use where no stage existed, which, when placed upon the beach, formed a gentle slope to the gunwale level.

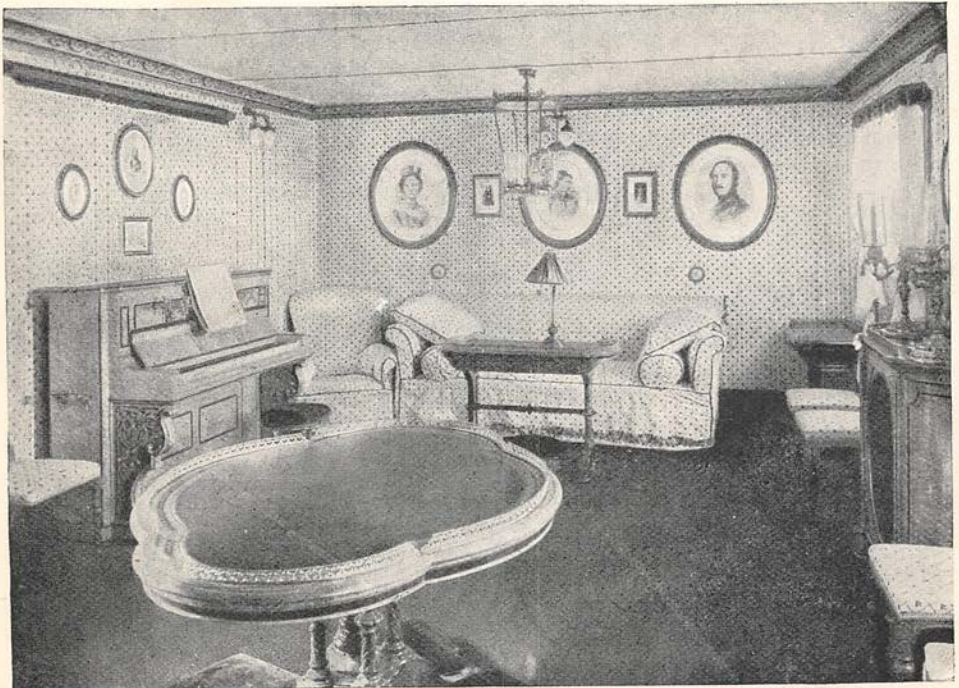
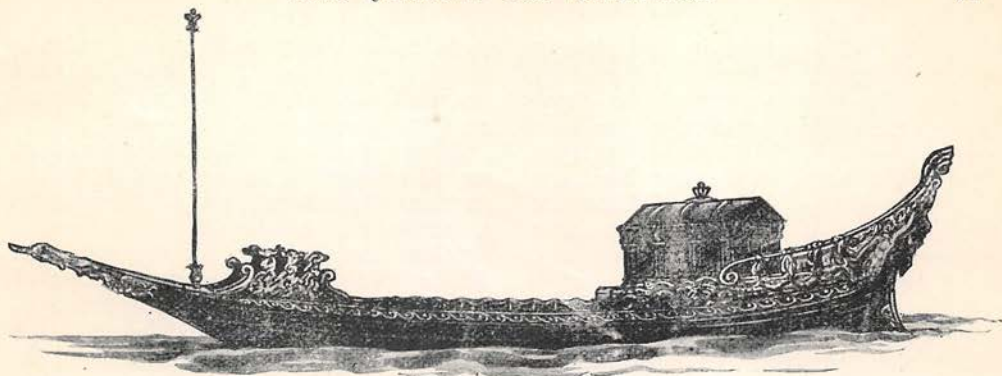


Photo by]

[Symonds & Co., Portsmouth.

DRAWING-ROOM ON THE ROYAL YACHT "VICTORIA AND ALBERT."



THE ROYAL BARGE.

Her state-room was near the stern, and extended the full width of the hull, into which it was completely incorporated. It was about 5 feet 8 inches high, and was sumptuously gilded and furnished. Its upholstery was of scarlet and gold cloth, and the exterior of the barge itself was adorned by a number of carved mermaids, dolphins, fishes, etc.

It is not exactly known who was the maker of the gallant vessel, or in what year she was first placed upon the Thames. But she can be traced back to the time of James I., and Mr. Messenger, the Royal Barge-Master, gave me it as his opinion that the barge was made from some Venetian model, if not actually by a Venetian workman, in the "City of the Sea" itself.

As to the last use of the barge by her Majesty, the same gentleman told me that he was appointed to his present post in the year 1862, but that he has never had the pleasure of rowing the Queen in the barge. It seems that the last occasion on which our Sovereign patronised the famous river craft was on the opening of the Coal Exchange in 1849, when the Queen went from Whitehall Stairs to the City by way of the Thames, and used the barge for the purpose. Since then it has not been engaged in any State ceremony, for the days of slow travelling on the river are past, when one can use the railway, and, moreover, the great river traffic nowadays has made such a journey far from being the easy and pleasant means of locomotion it used to be.

There is now a smaller barge, commonly called the "Shallop," which plies on Virginia Water for the use of Royalty, when so disposed, though it must be said that that is not very often. This is the boat which was brought down the river, when the Sultan of Turkey visited England a quarter of a

century ago, to give his Majesty a river-trip.

Speaking of the old barge and its master, who, by the way, gets £60 a year from the Royal Household as his salary, we must not pass by those curious survivals of the same period, the "Queen's Watermen." There are thirty-six of them who get each £3 10s. a year as wages, with 15s. each day, and their meals, when on duty. This duty was, of course, originally to row the Royal Barge, but now it is confined to taking visitors round the lake for a row on the occasion of a garden party at Buckingham Palace. Their costume is a very fine one, and consists of knee-breeches, silk stockings, low shoes, a scarlet coat with silver facings, and a black velvet jockey cap. On the coat, both back and front, there is a silver badge of the Royal Arms, with V.R. at its side.

These watermen, or three of them, have to be present when the Sovereign opens Parliament in person—a survival of the old days when they had to go by water to fetch the Royal Crown and Maces from the Tower, and hand them to the monarch at the House of Lords.

As regards the boats at Buckingham Palace, which may fairly be regarded as coming in the list of "the Queen's Conveyances," there are a few particulars that may prove interesting. Only a couple of these boats are kept there permanently. The others are brought when required from Mr. Messenger's place at Teddington, generally about ten or twelve of them, and there is a "Queen's Waterman" to each. On the occasion of the last Jubilee they were much in evidence, and at State garden-parties on warm summer days they are well patronised. Except for a Royal flag at the stern of the boat, and occasionally a gay awning, they differ in no respect from the ordinary

river boats. The Queen, it need scarcely be said, has not had a row in them lately, but the younger members of the Royal Family often make use of them on such occasions.

The Royal yachts, on the other hand, are much patronised by the Queen. There are at present four of these, the latest being the extremely fine vessel just completed, which, however, her Majesty has not yet used.

When not in actual use all the Royal yachts are kept at Portsmouth. The smallest is the *Alberta*, then comes the *Osborne*, the largest of all being the newer of the two vessels christened *Victoria and Albert*. There is, too, a small tender called the *Elfin*, occasionally brought into requisition if needed.

The *Alberta* is really a small steam yacht with paddles. Her hull is painted black, with yellow bands, and the upholstery of her state-rooms is in scarlet and blue. She is seldom used by the Queen herself, as her Majesty much prefers the larger yachts, which are more roomy and commodious.

The *Osborne* is a vessel of 1,850 tons and 1,800 horse-power. Except for her size, she is fitted up much like the *Alberta*, but there are more rooms for her Majesty's use and for her guests. The *Osborne* is a very comfortable yacht, and is frequently brought into requisition when any of the Royal Family wish to visit Southern Europe by sea. She some months ago took H.R.H. the Princess of Wales on such a cruise. With the whole of the Royal Family this yacht is much in favour.

The Queen herself, however, has for many years favoured the older *Victoria and Albert*. This is a steam yacht of 2,470 tons and some 2,400 horse-power. She is commanded by Rear-Admiral Fullerton, an experienced officer in whom her Majesty reposes the fullest confidence. When the Sovereign goes over to the Continent she as a rule uses this yacht, and generally makes a point of sleeping on board overnight on such occasions.

The *Victoria and Albert* was built in the year 1855, so that she will soon be half a century old. There are three apartments set aside on the vessel for her Majesty's private use. One of these is a bedroom. The bed is one of the old-fashioned order, with four posts. It is hung on every side with curtains, and is kept from moving, in the case of the

yacht rolling in a swelling sea, by being fastened to the floor. Next to this bedroom is a small sitting-room, and the other apartment is a dressing-room.

Besides these rooms for the Queen there are others which are apportioned to various members of the Royal Family. These rooms are sumptuously fitted-up, much in the same style as those kept for her Majesty's use. The upholstery in the state-rooms is of chintz, with a pattern of pretty rosebuds, and was chosen by the Prince Consort. His piano still stands in the drawing-room of the yacht. All the usual furniture and nick-nacks of her Majesty's rooms when at Osborne or Windsor find their counterpart here on the Royal yacht.

Lately there has been launched from Pembroke Dockyard a new yacht, also christened the *Victoria and Albert*, for the Queen's use. It will be much larger, better fitted than the others, and as sumptuous as possible. Much of the interior is arranged in accordance with the Queen's own ideas and wishes. In length this yacht exceeds the older *Victoria and Albert* by 80 feet, and in breadth by 10 feet. Instead of having paddles, the new vessel is fitted with twin-screws, and all her cabin fittings are of fireproof wood. The yacht is built of steel, with her hull sheathed with copper.

Outside, the new yacht is even more imposing. Round her hull run two imitation coils of rope, which are brilliantly gilded. These are 5 feet apart and over 700 feet long. There are also large shields on the sides of the yacht carrying the Royal Arms, the Rose, Shamrock, and Thistle, etc., and at the starboard quarter of the stern is placed a great figure of Britannia, 10 feet high, whilst a similar figure of Neptune is on the stern port side.

The upholstery of the Royal apartments is of the same style and pattern as on the old *Victoria and Albert*. From the upper deck to the main one is a lift especially built for her Majesty and suite to reach their rooms without fatigue.

The new *Victoria and Albert* has, on the medallion at her stern, the motto, "Heaven's Light our Guide."

Altogether, this newest yacht is, without doubt, in every way the most beautiful, as it has been the most costly, of all "The Queen's Conveyances."