

# The Royal House of Windsor: The Queen and the Turf

In the annals of British history, the House of Windsor has long been synonymous with tradition, pageantry, and a deep-rooted love of horse racing. From the reign of Queen Victoria to the present day, the royal family has played an integral role in shaping the sport of kings, leaving behind a rich legacy that continues to captivate the imagination.

## Queen Victoria: The Matriarch of the Turf

The reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) marked a golden age for horse racing in Britain. A passionate devotee of the sport, the Queen owned and raced numerous horses, including the legendary Ormonde, one of the greatest racehorses of all time.



## The Queen and the Turf (The Royal House of Windsor)

by Helen Cathcart

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Under Victoria's patronage, the sport flourished. She established the Royal Ascot racecourse, which remains one of the most prestigious racing events in the world. She also introduced the tradition of the Derby Stakes, a 1.5-mile race for three-year-old horses, which has since become one of the most iconic spectacles in the British sporting calendar.



**King Edward VII: The Sportsman King**

Queen Victoria's son, King Edward VII (1901-1910), shared his mother's passion for horse racing. Known as the "Sportsman King," Edward was a keen sportsman and a regular attendee at racecourses throughout Britain.

Edward's reign saw the construction of the famous Epsom Downs racecourse, home of the Derby Stakes. He also founded the National Stud, a breeding ground for thoroughbred horses that has produced some of the greatest champions in the history of the sport.



### **King George V: The Soldier King**

King George V (1910-1936), Edward's son, was a less enthusiastic follower of horse racing than his predecessors. However, he continued to support the sport and attended major races such as the Derby and the Royal Ascot.

George's reign was marked by the outbreak of the First World War, during which he played an active role in supporting the war effort. His horses were

used to pull artillery and transport troops, and he himself served as a colonel in the army.



### **King Edward VIII: The Abdicating King**

King Edward VIII (1936), George's eldest son, abdicated the throne after less than a year to marry American divorcee Wallis Simpson. His brief reign was overshadowed by controversy, and he had little involvement in the world of horse racing.

Edward's abdication led to the accession of his younger brother, King George VI (1936-1952). George had a keen interest in horse racing and

owned several successful horses.



## **Queen Elizabeth II: The Longest-Reigning Monarch**

Queen Elizabeth II, who ascended to the throne in 1952, is the longest-reigning monarch in British history. She is also a passionate lover of horse racing and has owned and bred numerous successful racehorses.

Under Elizabeth's patronage, the sport has continued to thrive. She has attended countless races, including the Derby and the Royal Ascot, and has presented the trophy to the winner of the Grand National, a steeplechase race that is one of the most challenging and prestigious events in the racing calendar.



## The Royal Legacy in Horse Racing

The House of Windsor has played an instrumental role in the development of horse racing in Britain. From Queen Victoria's establishment of the Derby Stakes to Queen Elizabeth II's continued patronage of the sport, the royal family has left an enduring legacy that continues to shape the



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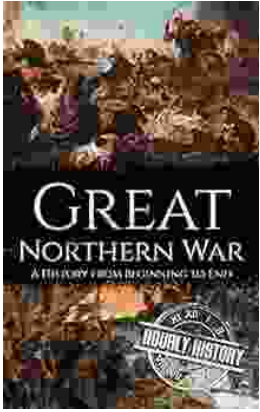
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