

Trivia

Queen Victoria

Born in 1819

Ascended in 1837

Died in 1901, aged 81

Reigned for 63 years

Married to Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg bearing 4 sons and 5 daughters.

Eighteen-year-old Queen Victoria acceded to the throne on the 20th June 1837, after her childless Uncle William IV had left no heir to the throne. Despite her youth, she proved to be a powerful, obstinate Queen with a strong sense of duty to her people. She was a relief to a country that was becoming sick of its history of debauched and irresponsible kings and this soon made Victoria very popular.

Initially she was delighted with her coronation but she soon tired of her position. Although she continued in her duties quite admirably, her boredom was obvious and a suitable husband was sought. She married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg, nephew of King Leopold of Belgium, on the 10th February 1840. Later that year she gave birth to the Princess Royal, Victoria Adelaide, who later married Frederick III of Prussia and gave birth to the infamous Kaiser William II of Germany.

Victoria had nine children in total, but her next child, Albert, born in November 1841, was to be heir to the crown. She had a great many political problems throughout her reign, but Victoria weathered these, and several attempted assassinations, to become one of the longest reigning monarchs Britain has seen. Her husband Albert was always a massive support to her, but since he was a foreign Prince, he had no power in affairs of state.

In 1861 Albert died suddenly, causing the devastated queen to withdraw from public duties. She went into a long mourning and, during this time, the people started to turn against her. Her reign, however, ended in glory because she had been persuaded, largely by Disraeli, to resume public duties.

Many political changes occurred during Victoria's reign and she relied

forces to protect the Turks and declared war on Russia. The Victoria Cross was created and awarded to soldiers *For Valour* in the Crimean War.

One achievement of Prince Albert's that helped to occupy him was the organisation of the Great Exhibition of 1851. The huge Crystal Palace, designed by Joseph Paxton, was built especially for it to hold an *Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations*. This displayed everything from tepees to the new mechanical computer designed by Sir Charles Babbage.