

Queens Helped Make Britain Great



QUEEN MARY I was the first queen of England and the daughter of Henry VIII. Half Spanish and Catholic in her religion, she sought to renew Roman ties.



QUEEN ELIZABETH I was another daughter of Henry VIII who succeeded Mary I. The daughter of Anne Boleyn, his second wife, she had long reign (1558-1603).



QUEEN MARY II (1688-94) was dual reign of William and Mary, unique in history of Great Britain.

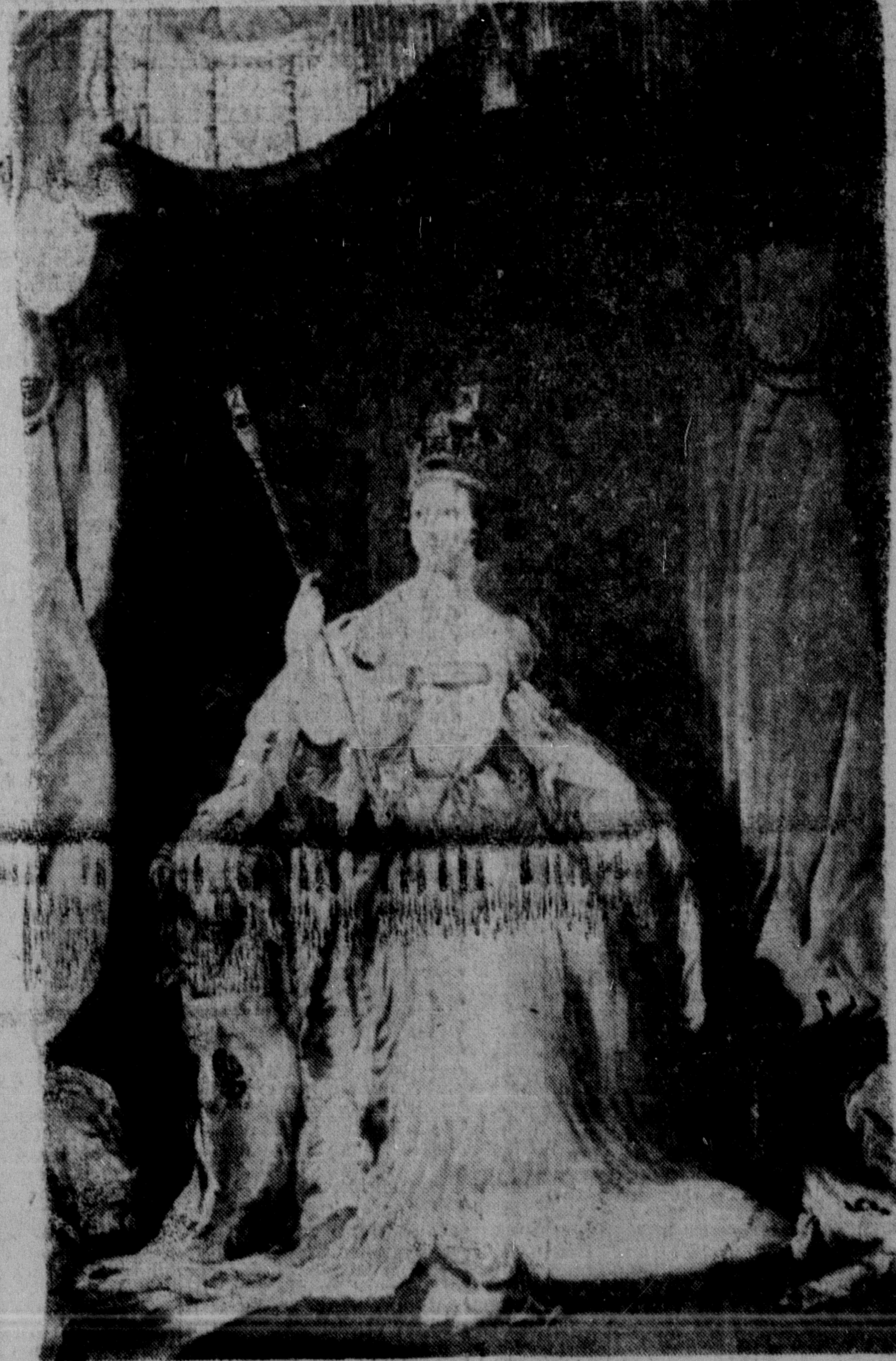
First British Queen Ascended Throne in 16th Century

FOR all their chivalry, medieval men had no high opinion of the virtues of women as rulers, so it was not until the 16th century that a queen was accepted as ruler of England. An attempt to establish a woman on the throne was made in 1135 when Henry I died leaving no son but a daughter, Matilda (or Maud). Although the king had intended that his daughter should succeed him, Matilda's cousin, Stephen, had little difficulty in seizing the crown. Throughout almost the whole of Stephen's reign

(1135-54) there was still no belief between Stephen's supporters and the Matilda faction that a woman could rule. This anarchy was remembered for centuries and England was not unnaturally anxious that the experiment of a queen should not be repeated. The desire for a son was largely responsible for Henry VIII's divorce of Catherine of Aragon—the divorce that was the occasion if not the cause of the Reformation in England.



QUEEN ANNE (1702-14) was sister of Mary II, who was married to William III of Orange. Anne was married to Prince George of Denmark. Line died.



EARLY PORTRAIT OF VICTORIA now in the National Gallery of London shows her in all her regal splendor. She was the first empress.



QUEEN VICTORIA (1837-1901) had longest reign. During this time Great Britain went through industrial revolution and saw prosperity of nation reach peak.