

SUSAN M. WEBB



# KING BERTIE

*Fact Book for Kids*

# Facts about BERTIE



Prince Bertie was born on December 14, 1895, the 34th anniversary of the death of his great grandfather, Prince Albert (husband to Queen Victoria), for whom he was named. His grandfather was ALSO named Albert!



Bertie was born at York Cottage on the Sandringham Palace estate. It's been described as a "higgledy-piggledy building" which contained a stuffed baboon!



Queen Elizabeth II gave the cottage to Prince Harry and Duchess Meghan as a wedding present.



There is a famous prank where children call a drugstore and ask the clerk, "Do you have Prince Albert in a can?" (Referring to a tobacco product sold in a canister). The clerk says yes. Then the pranksters say, "Well, let him out!"

*The highest of distinctions is service to others.*



At birth, Bertie was fourth in line to the throne. His grandfather, father, and brother Edward came before him in the line of succession. Who would guess that Bertie would ultimately become king? If Edward had married and had children, they would have attained the throne before Bertie.



According to reports, Bertie's crown almost went on backwards! The archbishop, who was about to place the crown on Bertie's head, lost track of the little red string attached to the crown indicating the correct side!



His coronation in 1937 was the first of the British monarchy's to be broadcast, and partially televised, live.



He was the first British monarch to visit the U.S. He stayed with President and First Lady Franklin D. Roosevelt at the White House in 1939.



He also addressed the United Nations during their very first assembly in January 1946.



He was the last British king to hold the title "Emperor of India." That position was dissolved in August 1947. Instead, he took on the titles "King of India" and "King of Pakistan."



He was the creative force behind the honorable medals titled "George's Cross" and the "George Medal." These are awarded to civilians who show exceptional bravery.

*The task will be hard. There may be dark days ahead and war is no longer confined to the battlefield.*



Bertie was known to have a temper (probably due to his terrible childhood, physical ailments, and stutter). Biographer Sir John Wheeler-Bennett wrote: "[t]hat passionate temper which ever and anon would burst its bounds." The royal household called these outbursts "gnashes."



There have been numerous reports of mistreatment of the princes by nannies, including spanking, yelling, pinching, and withholding meals. According to Elsie Hollingsworth (a daughter to one of the royal coachmen) who played with the royal princes, she witnessed some of these incidents and stated, "Oh, fancy being able to shout at a prince."



After his leg braces were removed, Bertie became quite a good tennis player – some think Olympic caliber. He even played a double's match at Wimbledon!



Prince Bertie was called the "Industrial Prince" for his frequent visits to factories, coal mines, and railyards while serving the King.



Three weeks after the outbreak of WWI, while serving on a Navy ship, Bertie had to be evacuated to a hospital to have his appendix removed.



Bertie was awarded the Ordre de la Liberation by the French government in 1960, eight years after his death. He was one of only two people to receive this medal after 1946.

*That passionate temper which ever and anon would burst its bounds.*



In January 1946, Bertie addressed the United Nations at their first assembly, held in London. He affirmed "our faith in the equal rights of men and women and of nations great and small." What a true statesman!



Bertie was the first member of the British royal family to be certified as a fully qualified pilot and was qualified as an RAF (Royal Air Force) pilot.



Bertie was mentioned in dispatches for his action as a turret officer aboard the ship Collingwood in the Battle of Jutland, where he helped fight the German navy.



Later in his reign, Bertie had one of his lungs removed due to lung cancer caused by heavy smoking. He died approximately 4 months later quietly in bed one night at Sandringham Palace. He was 56 years old. Queen Elizabeth believes the stress of being king added to her father's heavy smoking and early death.

*There is great weight in the modern times of being monarch; the scrutiny and access is much more than in times gone by.*

# Facts about BERTIE'S FAMILY



## Queen Victoria | Bertie's Great-Grandmother



Queen Victoria is Bertie's great-grandmother. You can see her image all over England in the form of statues (outside Buckingham Palace and Kensington Palace), paintings, coins, and more.



There is also a whole era named after her, the Victorian Era, which refers to events and fashions during the years of her reign from 1837 to 1901.



She was the longest ruling British monarch of all time until Queen Elizabeth II (Bertie's daughter) reached her Platinum Jubilee in 2022, marking 70 years on the throne.

*The important thing is not what they think of me, but what I think of them.*

## King Edward VIII | Bertie's Brother



Sir Alan Lascelles, a British courtier, once said: "Edward was like the child in the fairy tale story who was given every gift except a soul."



The wizard character in "Bertie: The Best Stuttering King" is based loosely on an Irish palmist/astrologer/psychic nicknamed Cheiro.



Cheiro wrote that "the Prince of Wales's birth chart 'shows influences...that...point to changes...greatly affecting the Throne of England...[He] was born under peculiar astrological circumstances which make his character a difficult one to understand....[He] is determined not to "settle down" until he feels a grande passion, but it is well within the range of possibility...that he will fall a victim to a devastating love affair. If he does, I predict that the prince will give up everything, even the chance of being crowned, rather than lose the object of his affection.'"



Cheiro also noted, "People blamed Wallis Simpson for the Prince's callous behavior to [others]...but persons born under such peculiar astrological conditions [as he] exhibit remarkable fluctuations of feeling – they pass from ardour to indifference in a few seconds and they are very liable to be charged with inconsistency."

*Edward was like the child in the fairy tale story who was given every gift except a soul.*



King George V, Bertie's father, had severe reservations about Edward becoming king. He said, "After I am dead, the boy [Edward] will ruin himself in twelve months." He continued: "I pray God that my eldest son [Edward] will never marry and that nothing will come between Bertie and Lilibet [Princess Elizabeth] and the throne."



His wishes came true: Edward was only king for a year before he abandoned the throne - and the country! Not very kingly, I think you would agree.

## Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon | Bertie's Wife



Bertie's wife, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, was born in Scotland. There's a famous Scottish children's prayer that goes like this: "From ghoulies and ghosties and long-leggedy beasties and the things that go bump in the night, Good Lord deliver us!"



It has been stated that Elizabeth "had the capacity to calm with a word that passionate temper [of Bertie's] which ever and anon would burst its bounds."



"After Buckingham Palace was bombed during World War II, she famously stated: "Now I can look the East End in the eye!"



Elizabeth hated Edward's wife, Wallis Simpson. She felt Wallis was the reason Edward gave up the throne. She refused to call Wallis by her name, simply calling her, "That woman." In return, Wallis referred to Elizabeth as "the fat Scottish cook!"



*Now I can look the East End in the eye!*



## Queen Elizabeth II | Bertie's Daughter



Queen Elizabeth II, the current monarch of Great Britain and the Commonwealth, is Bertie's daughter. Queen Elizabeth II is the longest reigning monarch in all of British history with 70 years on the throne as of 2022. I'm sure she continues to make Bertie proud.



Queen Elizabeth II no longer rides in the famous coronation carriage, the Golden State Carriage. It is stated that the ride is terrible - very bumpy with lots of swaying due to thin rubber on the wheels and leather straps for suspension! This causes many passengers to experience motion sickness.



She is the only person allowed to drive without a driver's license in the United Kingdom!



Queen Elizabeth was affectionately called "Lilibet" by her family and husband. Prince Harry and Duchess Meghan named their first daughter Lilibet in honor of the Queen.

*I declare that all my life...will be devoted  
to your service.*

## Titles of the Nobility



Bertie had lots of titles!

- His birth name was Prince Albert Frederick Arthur George
- His family members called him “Bertie,” short for Albert
- He held the title of the Duke of York, Earl of Iverness, and Baron Killarney before being crowned king
- When he assumed the throne, his titles became:
  - King George VI, King of the United Kingdom and the Dominions of the Commonwealth
  - Emperor of India.



Edward had titles, too:

- At birth, Edward was named Prince Edward Albert Christian George Andrew Patrick David
- His family called him “David”
- When he was crowned, he became:
  - King Edward VIII, King of the United Kingdom and the Dominions of the Commonwealth
  - Emperor of India.



Did you know that if you’re married to a king, your official title is “Queen Consort,” not “Queen”? Only a royal person from birth is called “King” or “Queen.” If you are non-royal and married to the Queen, your official title is “Prince Consort.”

*The monarchy is foremost a business...*



Titles such as Baron, Earl, Duke, and Duchess can now be granted by the reigning monarch for almost any reason to anyone (such as American actress Meghan Markle, who was given the title of “Duchess of Sussex” after her marriage to Prince Harry). I find this so confusing, don't you?!



Every British monarch is crowned in King Edward's chair, which was built in 1296 at the request of King Edward I. It is pictured here with the Coronation Stone of Scotland, called the Stone of Destiny, under the seat. This stone is highly cherished by the Scottish people and was stolen by Scottish Nationals from the chair in Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day, 1950. Later, it was returned to England. It was eventually handed back to Scotland in 1996.



After the stone's return to Scotland, it was agreed that the stone would be sent to England and placed in the chair for future coronations.

*It was only a rock...but to us it was a symbol of our freedom...*

# About SUSAN M. WEBB



## Susan M. Webb

Children's Book Author

Susan M. Webb is a California-based world traveler, award-winning artist, and children's book author. She is a loyal fan of the British royal family.

Her travels across the globe have taken her from the U.S. to Europe, Canada to Mexico, South America to Asia. She has trekked through crypts, sauntered through palaces, and hoofed through hilltop ruins. She is fascinated by history and sharing it with young readers!

Learn more at: [www.susanmwebb.com](http://www.susanmwebb.com).



## Sergio Drumond

Illustrator

Sergio is a painter, illustrator, animator, and digital graphic artist with various degrees in Fine Arts and Advertising Art.

He lived in Europe where he did illustrations for books, magazines, and posters for theater companies. He spent a great part of his life in Asia, mostly in the Philippines, Japan, India, and Thailand where he worked illustrating books and teaching art for humanitarian projects.

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