

TROOPING THE COLOUR

The Sovereign's official birthday, and the ninth anniversary of the Coronation. What an auspicious day this is. In the golden sunshine it is almost as if Nature herself relents her churlish behaviour in the icy Spring. The Duke of Gloucester, Senior Colonel in the Brigade of Guards, rides with the Queen on her way to Horse Guards Parade, for that most glittering of all military ceremonies, Trooping the Colour.

On the parade ground the ranks open for the passage of the Queen Mother who is taking Princess Anne to see it all.

With dignity and composure such as a king might envy, the Queen of Britain and many lands beyond the seas arrives as the clock strikes eleven. As she makes her way to the saluting base, she can have only one regret: the unavoidable absence of the Duke of Edinburgh in North America. Among the watching thousands is Field Marshal Slim, Bill Slim of Burma, seeing how the youngsters comport themselves during the Queen's inspection.

17-hundred men are concerned in one way and another, in Trooping the Colour, this incomparable feast of sound and spectacle. Nearly 400 make up the massed bands of the Brigade.

The colours of the second Battalion, Coldstreams Guards is to be trooped this year, borne up and down the line by a young ensign, as custom ordains.

At the end of the Trooping, the Brigade marches past the Queen.

The Household Cavalry go past at the trot.

The ceremonial on Horse Guards Parade is over; time now for the return to the Palace.

From the Palace roof unfolds the full splendour of this noble setting Her Majesty returns to take the final salute.

On this day the affectionate thoughts of millions at home and overseas centre upon this gracious lady who presides as titular head of the British family of nations, Queen Elizabeth the Second.