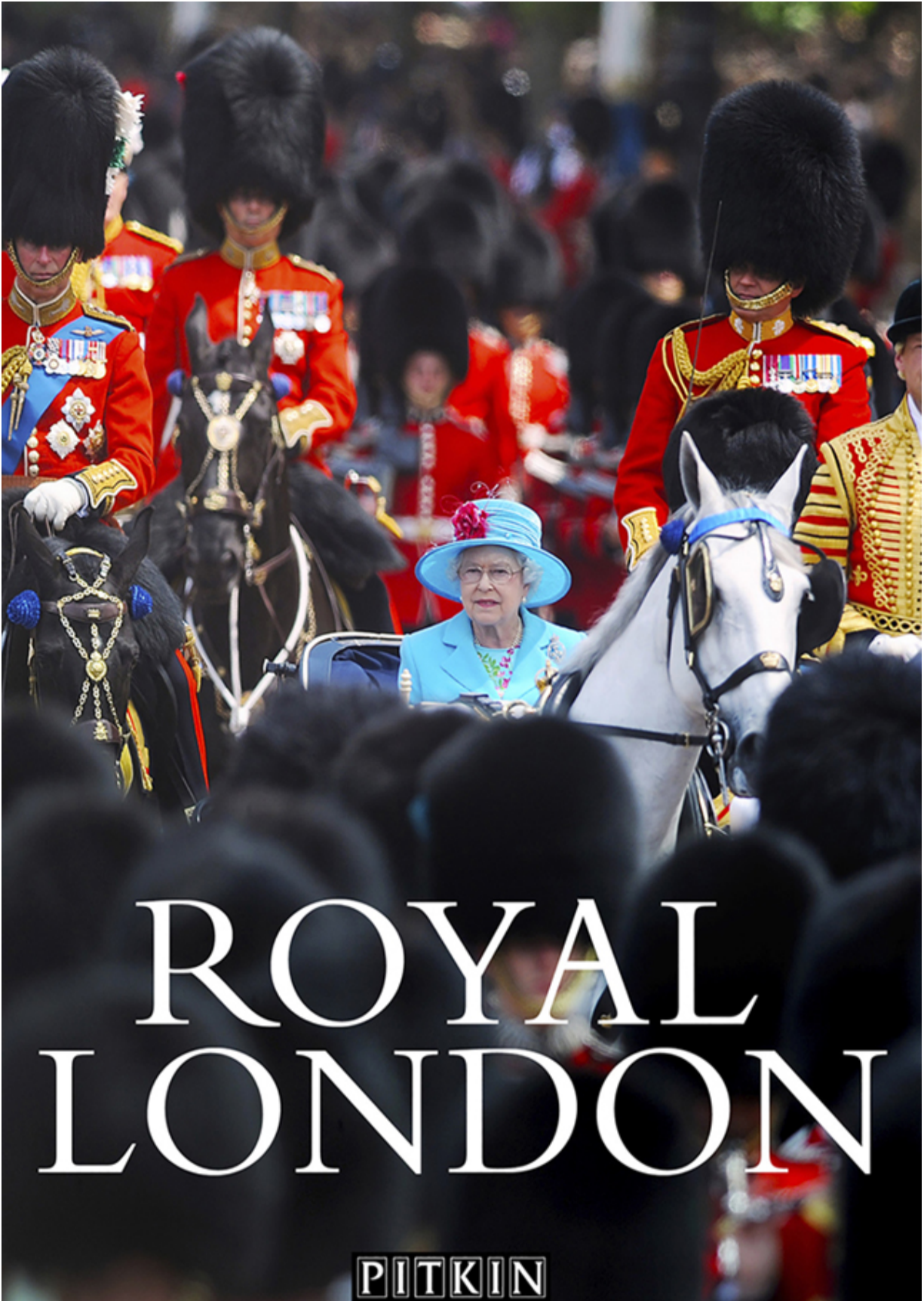




ROYAL LONDON

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Acknowledgements

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The royal barge carries Queen Elizabeth II and members of the Royal Family past the Palace of Westminster during her Diamond Jubilee River Pageant in June 2012.

ROYAL LONDON

London has a charm that draws visitors from home and abroad who are looking to explore what England's capital city has to offer. The fact that for hundreds of years Britain has had a Royal Family is part of that charm, and the unique history of our monarchy forms the basis of *Royal London*.

From palaces and parks to pomp and ceremony, from streets with royal connections to statues commemorating past sovereigns and their consorts, much of today's royal London is readily available to any visitor who wishes to seek it out. But it is fascinating, too, to reflect on how parts of London came about, thanks to those monarchs who have lived, loved, lost and left a royal footprint. Follow in the footsteps of royalty past and present on this journey through England's capital and beyond to Kew, Hampton Court and Windsor.

Gill Knappett



Royal Palaces

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

In the early 17th century, James I planted 10,000 mulberry trees in a walled garden where Buckingham Palace now stands. He planned to establish a silk industry but the wrong type of mulberry tree had been chosen and the project failed.

What has become London's most famous royal residence was a much smaller property when it was built as a town house for the Duke of Buckingham in 1705. Buckingham House came into royal ownership in 1761 when George III purchased it for £28,000, renaming it the Queen's House in honour of his consort, Queen Charlotte. When she died it became known as the King's House in preparation for her son, the Prince Regent's, future role as sovereign.

By the time the Prince Regent took the throne as George IV in 1820 he had employed the architect John Nash to extend the King's House into a palace. Nash's work was a masterpiece but grand plans and spiralling costs meant the project was still unfinished by the time the king died. During the reign of his successor, William IV, another architect, Edward Blore, was employed to complete the task, although work was still taking place when King William died.



Buckingham Palace seen from St James's Park.



DID YOU KNOW?

There are 775 rooms at Buckingham Palace. As well as the 19 State Rooms, there are 52 royal and guest bedrooms, 188 staff bedrooms, 78 bathrooms and 92 offices.

Soon after Queen Victoria's accession in 1837, she became the first monarch to make Buckingham Palace her home. Blore was responsible for building the balcony at Buckingham Palace and when Victoria stepped on to it to

greet the crowds in celebration of the opening of the Great Exhibition in 1851, so began what is now a tradition on many royal occasions – although the now famous ‘first kiss’ was only established in 1981, following the marriage of Prince Charles to Lady Diana Spencer.

Today Buckingham Palace remains the official London home of the sovereign, and the Royal Standard flies when the sovereign is in residence.

The State Rooms are open to the public for ten weeks during the summer. These are lavishly decorated and furnished with priceless treasures from the Royal Collection. As the name suggests, the State Rooms are where the Queen receives guests on State occasions, but they are also used for ceremonial and other official events. Most of the 19 State Rooms were designed by John Nash and include the White Drawing Room, where members of the Royal Family gather before official events, and the Throne Room, where court ceremonies and official royal entertainment takes place.