

The Queen's Men



SOME of the most colourful figures who have a part in the Coronation ceremony are described in *The Queen's Men*, the first major series of BBC Coronation programmes to go on the air from NZBS stations. *The Queen's Men*, which starts in 3YA's *Mainly for Women* this week (April 15) and in the 1YA and 2YA Women's sessions on Thursday, April 23, is about the functions and duties of those who stand close to Her Majesty at the Coronation and on State occasions.

In the first programme, "The Heralds," which gives an historical sketch of the Officers of Arms and their functions today, listeners will hear Garter King of Arms, Sir George Bell, principal officer of the College of Arms, which controls the granting of coats of arms and all matters concerning heraldry in Britain (except Scotland) and Lord Lyon, King of Arms, who has similar functions in Scotland. A Junior Herald also takes part in the programme. The Officers of Arms are probably the most gorgeously arrayed officials at great occasions of State.

"Yeomen of the Guard" describes the most picturesque of all the military bodies attending the Sovereign. Since the days of the Tudors their uniform and arms have scarcely altered at all, and at State occasions a centre of attraction is the rank of bemedalled, scarlet-clad figures armed with partisan and sword, all with the Royal cypher blazing in gold on their knee-length tunics. The Yeomen have their headquarters at St. James's Palace, where the Clerk of the Cheque and the Wardrobe Keeper were interviewed for this programme.

Since 1509 the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms has stood on guard closest to the Sovereign, and in "Her Majesty's Bodyguards" the microphone

visits their Orderly Room in St. James's Palace. From there the programme moves to Scotland and the Queen's Bodyguard of the Royal Company of Archers. The Queen's Bargemaster, who if he no longer steers the Royal Barge down the river, still conveys the Crown to the Opening of Parliament, was also interviewed, and finally the programme visits the Military Knights of Windsor.

The first glimpse of a State procession for the onlooker on a London pavement is usually the plumes of the Sovereign's mounted escort. In "The Sovereign's Escort" listeners will hear interviews recorded at Hyde Park Barracks with officers and N.C.O.'s of the Household Cavalry, including the Field Officer of the Escort who will be on duty on Coronation Day.

The Guard of Honour is an important and picturesque part of any State ceremony, and Guards of Honour from all services will be on duty on Coronation Day. Another of *The Queen's Men* programmes covers the history of Guards of Honour and their significance at times of State ceremonial.

In the Coronation procession in Westminster Abbey, among the high officers carrying the Regalia and other emblems will be a young army officer, Captain John Lindley Dymoke. He will be there as the Sovereign's Hereditary Champion, an honour which has descended in his family for centuries

and which he established before the Court of Claims. In "Coronation Officers," the last of the series, listeners are told how the Court of Claims determines the right of hereditary and other high officers to play their part in the Coronation.

The Crown Jewels, a programme about the Regalia which will be used for the Coronation, will be broadcast first from 3YA, in *Mainly for Women* on Thursday, April 23. *The Crown Jewels* was recorded in the Jewel House at the Tower of London, where Richard Dimbleby interviewed the Keeper of the Jewel House, Major-General Harvey

LEFT: A troop of the Household Cavalry which provides the mounted escort for the Sovereign and other Royal personages on State occasions

Degge Wilmot Sitwell, C.B., M.C., and the Crown Jeweller, Cecil Mann, M.V.O., of the Goldsmiths' and Silversmiths' Company. The Keeper of the Jewel House is responsible for the security of all the Crown Jewels displayed in the Tower, and listeners hear from him about the history and symbolism of those which will play a part in the Coronation. Mr. Mann describes some of the work done by craftsmen to keep the Regalia in perfect condition and to adapt the crowns and the ring to fit each succeeding wearer.

Both *The Queen's Men* and *The Crown Jewels* will be broadcast later from other stations.

Though not included by the BBC in its Coronation series, a programme to be heard from 2YA and 2YC during the next few days (and later from other National stations) is closely linked with those planned for the Coronation. In *The Court of St. James* Colin Wills describes the Court and its functions and how it came into being. In its narrowest sense the Court is another name for the Royal Household of the Queen, but more broadly it is simply those of Her Majesty's subjects who feel themselves to be in the immediate vicinity of the Queen. *The Court of St. James* contains descriptions of Court ceremony, music composed by Court musicians of the past, an explanation of "court fashion," actuality recordings of parts of the Changing of the Guard, and other ceremonies, and the voices of distinguished speakers commenting on the constitutional position of the Court today. This programme will be heard from 2YC at 8.0 p.m. this Friday (April 17) and 2YA at 8.0 p.m. on Wednesday, April 22.



THE QUEEN'S CHAMPION, Captain John Dymoke, of the Lincolnshire Regiment (left); and the Queen's Bargemaster Ernest Barry in his official regalia.