



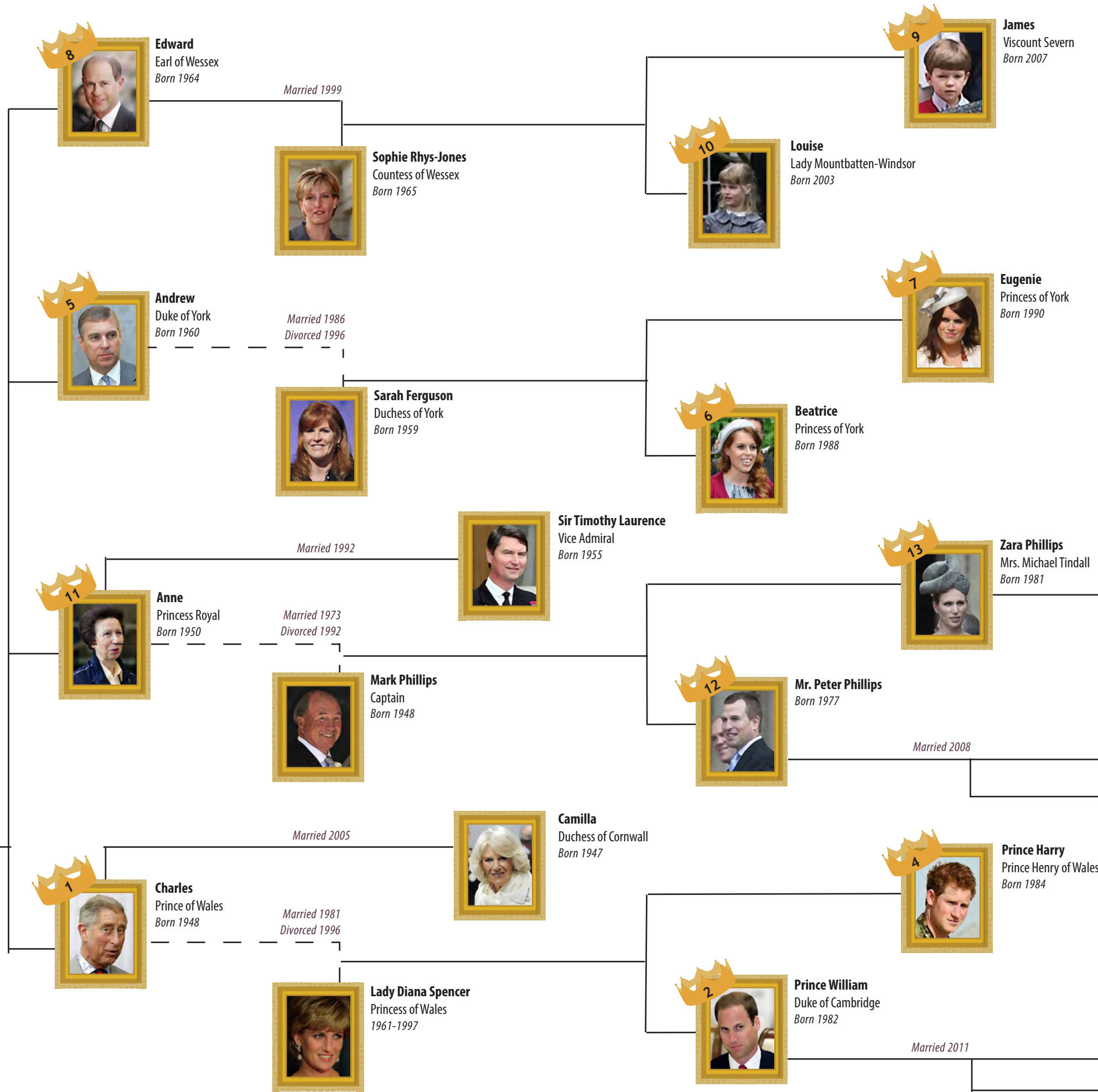
ALL IN THE FAMILY

PASSING DOWN THE CROWN

The British Royal family has had a busy two years, with the Queen celebrating her 60th anniversary as monarch in May 2012 and the recent announcement that the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are expecting their first child a year and a half after their marriage. As the family prepares for the future monarch, the question of how the crown will be passed down comes into play in the British realm and the rest of the world.



Prince Philip
Duke of Edinburgh
Born 1921



“Like all the best families, we have our share of eccentricities, of impetuous and wayward youngsters and of family disagreements.”

Quoted in the *Daily Mail*, October 1989

How to read the chart



Commonly known as,
Official title
Year of birth

Divorced

SOURCES: AP PHOTOS; MARK LENNihan; JOEL RYAN; CHRIS ISON; TIM HALE; STEVE PARSONS; DYLAN MARTINEZ; SANG TAN; ALASTAIR GRANT; MAX NASH; SETH WENG; TOBY MELVILLE; TIM CHONG; ED WRAY; JOHN STILLWELL; ROSS SETFORD; MATT GRAYSON; MYKOLA LAZARENKO; WAYNE DROUGHT; ROYAL.GOV.UK; BBC NEWS

It's easy to see a royal family as just the kings, queens, princes and princesses, but in reality the system is a lot more complicated. The “Royal Family” includes people who get certain titles depending on their lineage and their marital status. Recent laws and decisions made by the Royal Family have impacted the titles and statuses of many members of the family.

Members of the Royal Family

Members of the current Royal Family belong to the House of Windsor, either by birth or marriage.

There is no specific legal definition of who falls under the title the Royal Family, but in general, the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of a monarch, as well as their spouses, are included. First cousins of the monarch, widows of previous monarchs, and the spouses and widows of a monarch's and previous monarch's sons and male-line grandsons, may also be included on some lists.

Succession vs. precedence

The order of succession is the sequence of Family members who stand in line for the throne. Precedence determines the seniority of members at official events. Descent and parliamentary statutes determine succession while laws and traditions determine precedence.

Precedence does not follow succession, as the Queen's husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, is not in line for the crown, but follows immediately after the Queen in order of precedence.

In October 2011, succession laws were changed to make the first-born child of the monarch, regardless of gender, the next in line for the throne. This law applies to the Prince of Wales' line of descent and will not be applied retroactively. So no matter the gender of the expected child of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, he or she will become and stay third in line to throne.

Titles of Royal Family members

Her or His Majesty (HM) is the title used by a king, a queen regnant (a female monarch reigning in her own right), a queen consort (the wife of a reigning king), and the Queen Mother (the widow of a previous king).

In 1917, King George V issued a legal order defining the specific uses for certain titles. Her or His Royal Highness (HRH) is used by the monarch's children and grandchildren, as well as the eldest living son of the eldest son of the Prince of Wales (the monarch's great-grandchild). The title of Prince or Princess is used as a prefix or with other titles.

All other great-grandchildren of the monarch have the style and title of the children of dukes. Family members can decide if they want to hold a title. Princess Anne decided that her children would not have titles. Upon the marriage of Prince Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones, it was announced that their children would not have the title of HRH and instead would receive the titles of the children of an earl.

In 1996, Queen Elizabeth II issued a legal order declaring that a former wife (other than a widow until she remarries) of a son of a monarch, of a grandson of a monarch and of the eldest great-grandson of a monarch, shall not be entitled to hold the style, title or attribute of Royal Highness. This may have been in response to three of her children getting divorced in the 1990s.

Titles are received after birth, when a certain age has been reached or are given upon marriage. After their weddings, Prince William became the Duke of Cambridge and Prince Edward became the Earl of Essex. Edward was the first prince in centuries to be titled an Earl instead of a Duke, although he will eventually be given the Dukedom of Edinburgh, which is currently held by his father.