

UNIT 36 – UPSC - Queen of England Titled Empress of India

India's History : Modern India : Delhi Durbar: The Queen of England proclaimed Empress of India - 1877

Queen Victoria



The title Empress of India was given to Queen Victoria in 1877 when India was formally incorporated into the British Empire. It is said Victoria's desire for such a title was motivated partially out of jealousy of the Imperial titles of some of her royal cousins in Germany and Russia. Prime minister Benjamin Disraeli is usually credited with having given her the idea. When Victoria died and her son Edward VII ascended the throne, his title became Emperor of India. The title continued until India became independent from the United Kingdom in 1947.



When a male monarch held the title, his Queen consort assumed the title Queen Empress, but unlike Queen Victoria, they themselves were not reigning monarchs but the consorts of reigning monarchs.

Emperors and Empresses of India

- Queen-Empress Victoria (1877-1901)
- King-Emperor Edward VII (1901-1910)
- King-Emperor George V (1910-1936)
- King-Emperor Edward VIII (Jan-Dec 1936)
- King-Emperor George VI (1936-1947)

George VI continued to reign as King of India for two years during the viceroyalty and then the short governor-generalships of The Earl Mountbatten of Burma and of Rajagopalachari after which in 1949 India became a republic. George VI remained as King of the United Kingdom until his death in 1952.



Royal Consorts also were called Queen-Empress. This list of Queen-Empress Consorts is

- Queen Empress Alexandra (wife of Edward VII)
- Queen Empress Mary (wife of George V)
- Queen Empress Elizabeth (wife of George VI, and mother of current sovereign Elizabeth II)

When signing their name for Indian business, a King-Emperor or Queen-Empress used the initials 'R I' (Rex/Regina Imperator) after their name.