

The Monarchy in Britain

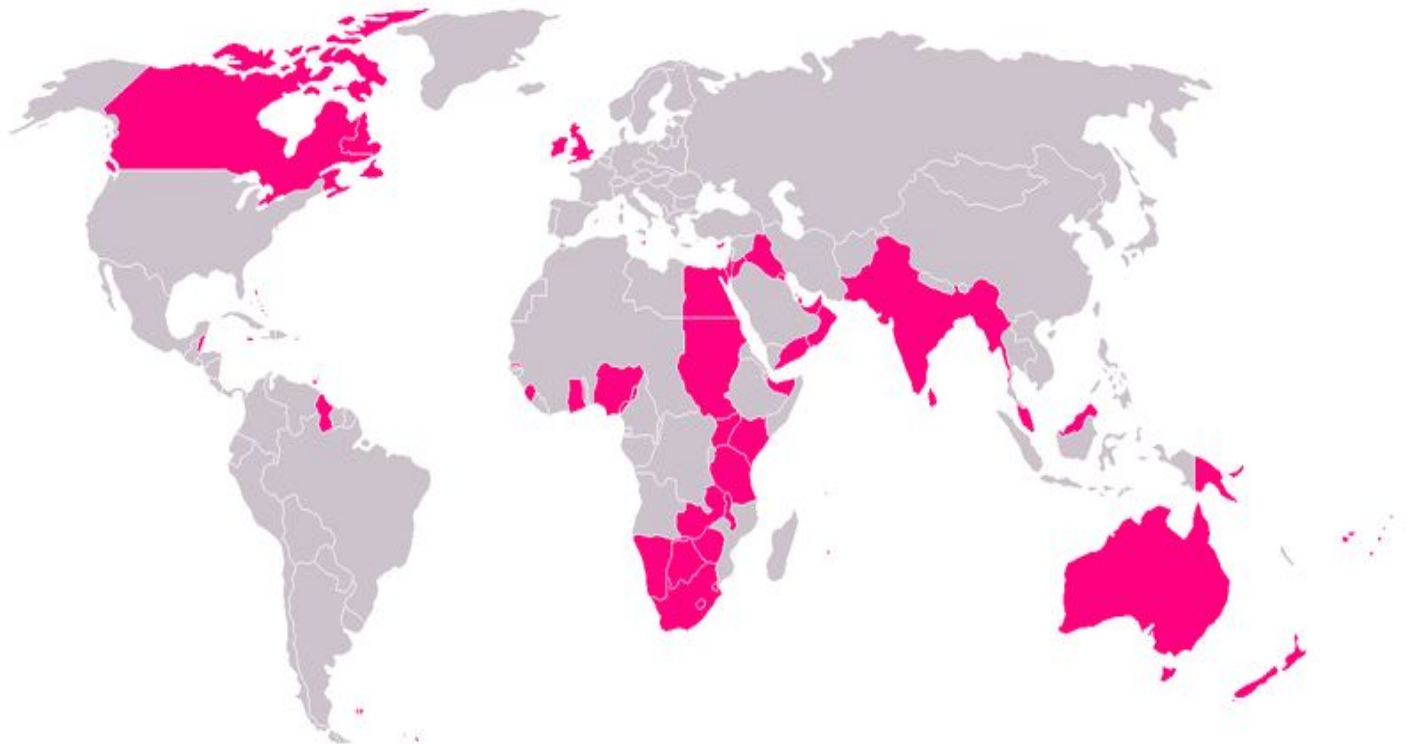
The Origin of the British Monarchy

- The monarchy is the oldest secular institution in the UK, going back at least to the 9th century. For several centuries the monarch personally exercised supreme executive. The 17th-century struggle between Crown and Parliament led to the establishment of a limited constitutional monarchy.
- The Monarch, however, remained the centre of executive power throughout most of the 18th century. By the end of the 19th century with the establishment of a modern party system, the withdrawal of the monarch from the active participation in politics had become complete.

The History of the British Monarchy

- In 1066 the English monarchy passed to the Norman conquerors. In the thirteenth century, the principality of Wales was absorbed by England.
- From 1603, when the Scottish king James VI inherited the English throne as James I, both kingdoms were ruled by a single monarch. From 1649 to 1660, the tradition of monarchy was broken by the republican Commonwealth of England that followed the War of the Three Kingdoms. In 1707, the kingdoms of England and Scotland were merged to create the Kingdom of Great Britain and, in 1801, the Kingdom of Ireland joined to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

- The British monarch became nominal head of the vast British Empire, which covered a quarter of the world at its greatest extent in 1921.



At present, 15 other independent Commonwealth countries share with the United Kingdom their monarch.

- The terms British monarchy and British monarch are frequently still employed in reference not only to the extra national person and institution shared amongst all 16 of the realms, but also to the distinct monarchies within each of these countries.



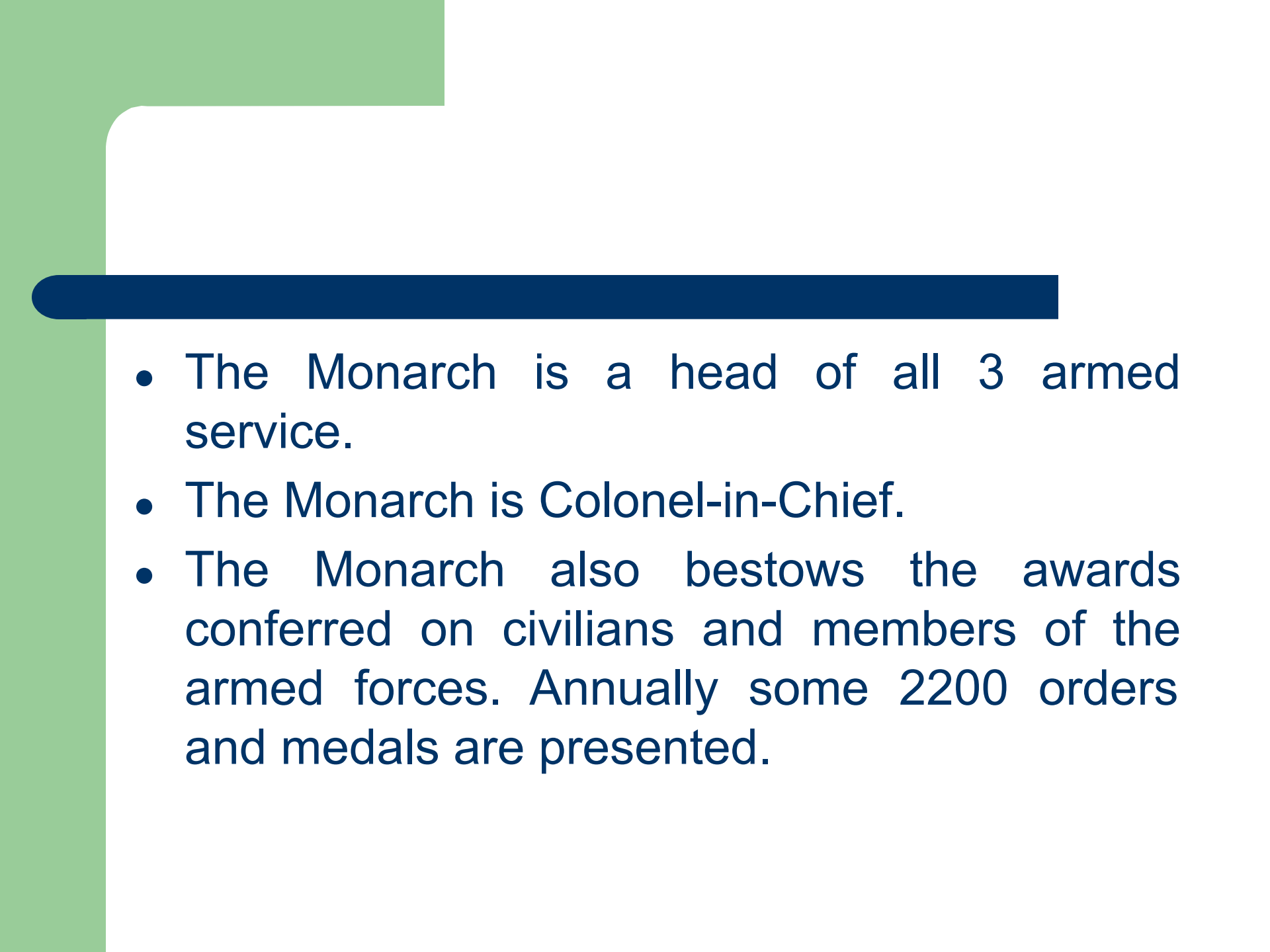
The Personal Powers of the Monarch

The Monarch reigns but doesn't rule.

- The Monarch summons, prorogues and dissolves Parliament.
- All the bills must receive the Royal Assent (monarch's approval).
- Monarch confers different kinds of honours.
- Monarch has the power to conclude treaties, to declare war and make peace.

The Monarch's Public Functions

- One the most important duties the Sovereign performs is to act as a host to the heads of States of Commonwealth. Guests stay at Buckingham Palace and at the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

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- The Monarch is a head of all 3 armed service.
 - The Monarch is Colonel-in-Chief.
 - The Monarch also bestows the awards conferred on civilians and members of the armed forces. Annually some 2200 orders and medals are presented.

The End

