



THE SUSSEX
FAMILY OF 3

Archie's Modern Royal Life!

WITH AN INTIMATE
CHRISTENING, MEGHAN AND
HARRY REWRITE TRADITIONAL
ROYAL RULES TO GIVE
THEIR SON A PEACEFUL START
By **MICHELLE TAUBER**

Tender Bond

"Harry is so good with babies—he's a proper natural!" a friend says of the royal dad (with Meghan and Archie in a July 6 christening portrait). "That whole family is wonderful with little children."

Baby Archie Harrison Mountbatten-Windsor has spent the first eight weeks of his life swaddled in the serenity of the English countryside. At home with his parents at Frogmore Cottage, he has been merrily introduced to close friends and family, taken for strolls around the lush Windsor Castle grounds and, like babies around the world, nestled in an infant seat in the kitchen while his parents, Meghan Markle and Prince Harry, bustle around him. "They are doing everything," says a royal source—including the "sleepless" night shift, as Harry recently described it.

The laid-back setting, far from the regal grandeur of London's Kensington Palace and the paparazzi's prying lenses, also reflects the couple's determination to raise their son, who is seventh in line to the throne, as privately as possible. And if that means departing from the way things have been done in the past, Meghan and Harry are comfortable with that. "This is not a couple that will



Royal Family Portrait

Back row, left to right: Prince Charles; Meghan's mom, Doria; Lady Jane Fellowes; Lady Sarah McCorquodale; Prince William. Front row: Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall; Harry, Meghan and Archie; Princess Kate.



↑ Throwback to Harry's Christening!

The same couch was used for Harry's 1984 christening portrait, featuring (from left) the Queen Mother, Queen Elizabeth, Prince William, Harry, Princess Diana and Prince Charles.

'Harry is close to Diana's family. It meant a lot'

—SOURCE ON INCLUDING THE SPENCERS IN THE PORTRAIT

conform if they don't feel it's right for them," says an insider. "It's that simple."

So when Meghan, 37, and Harry, 34, observed their 2-month-old son's christening on July 6, they did so with a celebration that was both sacred and special. That meant limiting the guest list to an inner circle of around 25 people—including Archie's grandparents, godparents, great-aunts, uncle William and aunt Kate—and holding the ceremony in the Queen's private chapel at Windsor Castle rather than the larger St. George's Chapel. "It was just very, very low-key," a source says of the brief ceremony and luncheon that followed. "You wouldn't have even known it was going on. It was all very well thought through."

In the two photos released by the couple, the youngest royal looks unbothered by the festivities. "Archie was so sweet, so calm," the source says. "The mood was joyful." As for his proud mom and dad, "as most new parents are, they are just so excited," adds the source. "There's something new every day. They're just really happy."

With a focus on friends and family, the new parents also insisted on keeping the names of Archie's godparents under wraps. "These are friends, private citizens, not celebrities or public figures," says the royal source. "[Meghan and Harry] wanted to protect them from the inevitable onslaught: 'When did you meet them? How?' That was the driving reason [to keep them private]. It's a very personal thing to ask somebody to be a godparent."

The service itself held special meaning for Meghan, who was confirmed in the Church of England before marrying Harry. "Having gone through her confirmation just a little more than a year ago, she forged a very close bond with the

A Rare Appearance from Princess Diana's sisters

The inclusion of Lady Sarah McCorquodale, 64, and Lady Jane Fellowes, 62, in Archie's christening portrait served as a vivid reminder of the close bond Harry shares with his mother's family. The sisters, who are both now grandmothers, live out of the spotlight in England, but they and their brother Charles, 9th Earl Spencer, 55, were among the first to be notified of Archie's birth—and their children and grandchildren remain close with both William and Harry.



Honoring Tradition

Although Meghan and Harry departed from some of the customs governing royal christenings, they took care to preserve the ceremony's beautiful details



1926
Queen Elizabeth



2013
Prince George



2015
Princess Charlotte



2018
Prince Louis

The Gown | The ultimate hand-me-down is a perfect copy of the historic robe first worn by Queen Victoria's oldest daughter in 1841 and then 61 other royal babies, including Archie's great-grandma Queen Elizabeth. In 2004 the fragile gown was replaced with a replica created by a team of the Queen's dressmakers. "Even though there was modern machinery, they had to go back to doing a lot of it by hand," a source said of the painstaking process. The new silk-based tulle gown with embroidered lace was worn by all three of Archie's first cousins. Between royal christenings, it's hand-washed in spring water and stored in a dark room.



The Chapel
The new parents chose the Queen's private chapel, located within Windsor Castle (above), for the ceremony because they wanted "a peaceful setting in a place with such a special connection to Her Majesty," says a source.



The Officiant
Meghan shares a close bond with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, who also officiated the couple's 2018 wedding.



The Lily Font
The silver-gilt baptismal water basin was commissioned by Queen Victoria and has been used by royals since 1841. It is filled with water from the River Jordan.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: NEWS LICENSING/MEGA; THE PRINT COLLECTOR/GETTY IMAGES; GARETH FULLER/PA IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES; JOHN STILLWELL/GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK; PA IMAGES/SIPA

5 Ways Meghan & Harry Are Changing the Rules

Life in the Country

The couple moved from Kensington Palace to Frogmore Cottage ahead of Archie's birth to escape the "fish bowl" of London.

Archie's Different Debut

Departing from the royal tradition of posing on the hospital steps with their newborn, the pair kept the hospital location secret—and introduced their son two days later.

Keeping the Godparents Private

Traditionally royals reveal godparents' names just before the christening, but Meghan and Harry kept their choices out of the spotlight. "It's a very personal thing," says a source.

Sweet Snaps on Instagram

The couple shared photos of Archie for Mother's Day and Father's Day.

Traveling to Africa

In generations past, royal children were left behind. Today the Susses are looking forward to "their first official tour as a family!"



Meghan's Support Circle
The royal mom joined close friends Genevieve Hillis (left) and Lindsay Roth at Wimbledon on July 4—and wore a new "A" necklace from Australian jeweler Verse. "She looked amazing," says designer Emma Swann.

Archbishop of Canterbury [Justin Welby]," says the source. "She has a particular fondness for him, having gone through confirmation as an adult, and going through that process relatively new to the U.K. and at a key point in her life."

Although the couple did not speak publicly on the day of the christening, their family portrait spoke volumes, particularly the poignant inclusion of Lady Sarah McCorquodale, 64, and Lady Jane Fellowes, 62, the older sisters of Harry's late mother, Princess Diana, alongside Meghan's mother, Doria Ragland, 62. "Harry is close to Diana's family," says the source. "In the same way that it was important for [Harry and Meghan] to include both Doria's and Diana's family in the official Buckingham Palace birth announcement, it meant a lot to them to share a photo of their full family." A family friend says that the inclusion of the Spencers "is typical of both William and Harry to say in a very, very gentle way, 'This is the family of our mother, and we want to reflect that.' She is always in their hearts, but this is a way of publicly saying that she is still on their minds."

Meghan, who remains on maternity leave from her royal work, also had two of her closest friends on hand in the days leading up to the christening: Genevieve Hillis and Lindsay Roth, former classmates from Northwestern University. The trio attended Wimbledon on July 4 to watch Serena Williams, who is also a friend of Meghan's. Asked whether she would be attending the festivities, the seven-time Wimbledon

champ told reporters, "No, I'm working on Saturday," adding, "[Meghan] understands work." In fact, the royal mom is gearing up for her next big job: a two-week royal tour of Africa this fall with Harry and Archie. "It's a really exciting program," says a palace source. "The trip to Angola will be very emotional and meaningful to carry on the work Harry's mother started and was so passionate about on land mines. Botswana and Malawi equally, following on with [Harry's] passion for conservation and HIV/AIDS work with his charity Sentebale."

'As most new parents are, they are just so excited'

—ROYAL SOURCE

For now, however, the new parents are savoring their first weeks as a family of three within the privacy of Frogmore Cottage. Unlike his first cousins Prince George, who turns 6 on July 22, Princess Charlotte, 4, and Prince Louis, 1, Archie does not have a title—and his parents have indicated they won't be seeking one for him—although that could change when Harry's father, Prince Charles, becomes King. Says the insider: "They have done things their own way since day one, and they will continue to do so."

So yes, expect to see Archie occasionally on Instagram, and expect his parents to forge a path that differs from those of royal parents who have come before—but as with smitten moms and dads everywhere, their main focus is on loving their new little boy. "They are absolutely settled into parenthood. It is a happy house, and they are on great form," says the family friend. "We all wish them so well." Adds the royal source: "They are basking in the glow and enjoying each day."

With **Simon Perry**, **Monique Jessen** and **Phil Boucher**