

FRUITGROWING INDUSTRY HONOURED

Royalty's Interest In Orchard Procedure

THE recent visit by Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to a typical New Zealand orchard establishment will be appreciated by fruitgrowers as a gracious compliment to the whole industry; especially so, when it is considered that the visit was made possible notwithstanding the Royal couple's programme of engagements having necessarily been heavily restricted because of their very brief stay in this country.

A typical example of a well-kept, up-to-date New Zealand orchard, Mr. Arch. A. Wake's property in St. George's Road, Hastings, could scarcely have been bettered as the venue of such an event, nor could the domestic atmosphere of the average New Zealand orchardist's home have been more realistically conveyed than was done by Mr. and Mrs. Wake and their family.

Hillview Orchard, as Mr. Wake's property is known, was in showcase order for the occasion with just that extra polish having been given to everything in furtherance of its ambassadorial job for the fruitgrowing industry. Velvet-smooth lawns and flower beds ablaze with colour provided an inspiring frontispiece to the Hillview home and outbuildings. The orchard itself, the packing shed, harvesting equipment, and all else connected with the establishment betokened orcharding efficiency.

The occasion obviously was welcomed by the Royal visitors as a temporary release from the formality which protocol generally demands in engagements of a more official nature.

Throughout the visit, the Queen and his Royal Highness made themselves part of a friendly group, mingling with their host and hostess and members of the Wake family and discussing with workers in the orchard and the packing shed various aspects of their respective jobs.

The Minister of Internal Affairs, Sir Leon Gotz, presented to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, Mr. and Mrs. Wake, Mr. and Mrs. Graham Wake, Mr. and Mrs. Colin Wake, and Mr. and Mrs. Noel B. Congdon. (Mrs. Congdon is Mr. and Mrs. Wake's daughter). Immediately after the introductions, the Queen, with a beaming smile, remarked, "A family affair, Mr. Wake?"

In conversation with "The Orchardist" subsequent to Royal visit, Mr. Wake, answering a question as to whether he experienced any nervousness at the prospect of entertaining Royalty, said that while Mrs. Wake and he were awaiting the arrival of Her Majesty and the Duke it did run through his mind that presently he would actually be greeting the Queen of England. "But just then the cars turned into the drive, and the moment the Queen stepped from her car and smiled, I knew it was going to be good. I knew that everything would be reasonably informal and friendly—an easy visit," he said.

On arrival at Hillview Orchard the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were met by the Minister of Internal Affairs (Sir Leon Gotz), who presented Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Wake and family. Photo shows (left to right): Sir Leon Gotz, Mr. A. A. Wake (partly obscured), the Queen, the Duke, Mr. and Mrs. Graham Wake, Mr. and Mrs. Colin Wake, Mr. and Mrs. Noel Congdon.



EASY CONVERSATION

The Queen and Mr. and Mrs. Wake engaged in general, easy conversation on weather, travel problems, and such like, the Queen commenting about the exceedingly cold weather prevailing in Britain and the heat experienced during her short stay in Fiji. However, she observed "It is rather nice here."

"Her Majesty was obviously delighted at Mrs. Wake mentioning that only a few months ago, when we visited the Old Country, we had stood on the pavement in London, among cheering thousands, and seen Her Majesty with her mounted escort riding down Whitehall in the Royal Coach on her way to open Parliament," Mr. Wake told "The Orchardist."

"The Queen and the Duke were also very interested," he said, "when we observed that our son-in-law, Noel Congdon, who is Horticultural Superintendent at Hastings, would soon be on his way overseas to inspect the out-turn of New Zealand's export apples in London and the Continent."

KNOWLEDGE AMAZING

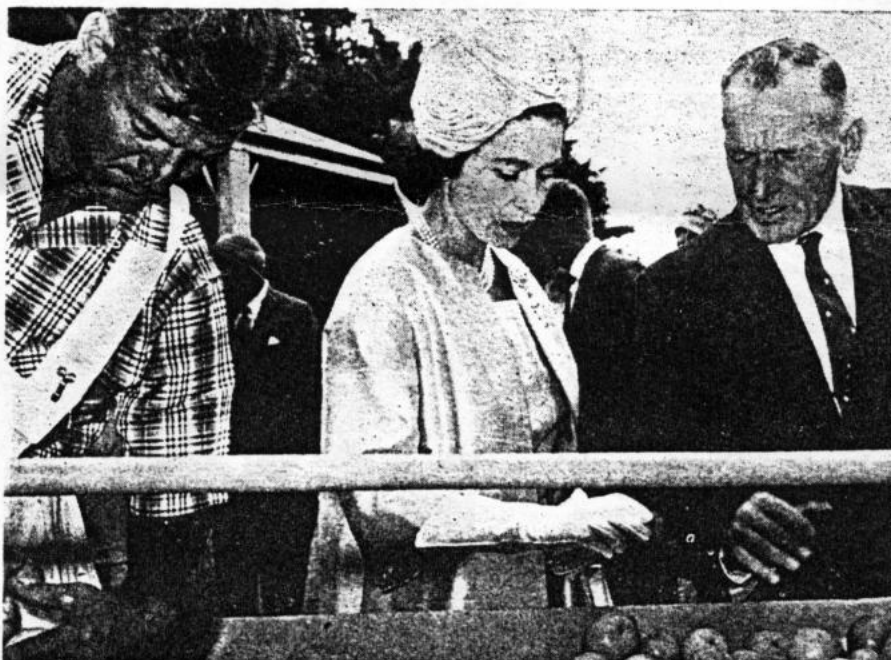
Accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Wake, the Queen visited a nearby orchard block and watched Gravenstein apples being picked. She remarked on the picking dates for this variety and, selecting a coloured apple from an adjacent bulk bin, she asked several questions about the Gravenstein variety and wanted to know the extent to which colour was an indication of maturity.

"Her interest and knowledge about different aspects of fruitgrowing and of the terms we use in the industry was amazing," Mr. Wake observed.

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ROYAL VISIT
PICTURES

In the top photo the Queen is portrayed inspecting apples in a bulk trailer. On her right is Mr. Wake and left, "Bronc" Langman. Centre picture: Her Majesty has a word with Mr. Wake about the operation of the sorting table, Mrs. Hollier at left. In the bottom picture, the Queen observes Keith Spackman packing Gravenstein apples.



ROYALTY'S INTEREST

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"The Duke also had a good grasp of the fruitgrowing business; there seemed to be not a great deal he didn't know about certain aspects of it. The questions asked by both the Queen and the Duke were pointed and sound. They definitely were prompted by the desire for information which I am sure they will remember."

Interest in most activities of orchard operation was shown by the Queen. She had a few words with Mrs. Elizabeth Hollier, working on the sorting table of an Ansa grader, and she asked some pertinent questions of Peter Verduin, who was engaged in packing apples.

Keith Spackman, also wrapping and packing apples, answered a question or two concerning his job, whilst John Paynter and Bill Hollis, respectively assembling cases and lidding packed cases, also came in for Royal interest.

During the Duke of Edinburgh's inspection of orchard activities he was most of the time accompanied by Graham and Colin Wake, and Noel Congdon. He spoke to "Bronc" Langman, who was picking fruit. He asked "Bronc" whether he worked on contract and on what basis he was paid. He also wanted to know about canning varieties of fruits and he showed great interest in the impressive line-up of orchard trailers used for bulk harvesting.

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FURTHER PICTURES

The Queen admires locally-grown fruit in an artistic display arranged by the Hawke's Bay Fruitgrowers' Association. Mr. Arch. Wake (with can of apple juice) is on the Queen's right and in the background with the Duke are Messrs. Graham and Colin Wake. Middle photograph: The Duke quips with picker "Bronc" Langman. Mrs. A. A. Wake, centre. Bottom picture: Her Majesty, with Mrs. Wake and (obscured) the Duke, shows interest in the speed at which Bill Hollis is nailing case lids.—

Photos, Russell Orr.

