

MR STAGG.

The Duke's larches

WHEN Prince Akihito visits Blair Castle in North Perthshire to-day, he will see a copper beech tree which his father planted there in 1921.

The Crown Prince is to be invited by the Duke of Atholl to plant a second copper beech alongside it. And he will also plant a larch tree.

It was the second Duke of Atholl who introduced European larches to Britain in 1738. But they were not a commercial success until 1880, when the present Duke's father produced a hybrid European - Japanese larch, now common to the whole country.

Five of the larches planted in 1738 are still standing. The new one will be planted alongside.

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The duke stages a hunt for Prince Akihito

Daily Mail Reporter

AN out-of-season tally-ho in the Borders last night ended Crown Prince Akihito's six-hour visit to the Earl and Countess of Dalkeith at Bowhill.

The 19-year-old Japanese prince drove to St. Boswells before returning to his Edinburgh hotel and watched huntsman Tom Smith gallop with the Buccleuch pack across a field.

The horn blew and the hounds yelped. But there was no scent—and no fox.

Beaming and immaculate in a grey check sports suit the young prince said he enjoyed the display. And he asked the earl and countess more about hunting.

Then he walked across to Tom Smith, asked more questions, thanked him for riding and returned to his party. Suddenly he swung round, went back to Tom and shook hands. He said good-bye to his hosts outside the stables.

The countess, a yellow kerchief showing above her white twin set, curtsied. The Duke of Buccleuch and the prince shook hands.

'Very cordial'

Few saw the prince during his Border visit. But every incident, every smile and every mood of the prince was photographed by 20 bouncing, jostling Japanese Pressmen.

While their Emperor - to - be remained seated in his car, they leaped from their own limousines to photograph a herd of sheep straying across the road.

The prince smiled. So he was photographed again.

And when he was joining the 14 guests at lunch they turned their cameras on black bulls and pastures. "Everything very cordial," they observed.

Inside Bowhill, the prince sat between the earl and the countess. And he dined Western style—on fish, roast beef, salad and plum duff.

He carefully observed his no-drinking, no-smoking rule.

Estate tour

Time for more pictures and a scramble across Bowhill's flowerbeds by the Japanese Press contingent.

They stumbled, grinned and apologised, then chased the countess and the prince as they strolled across the sun-kissed terrace chatting in English.

The party returned to the house and appeared a few minutes later, the countess wearing a brown three-quarter-length jacket.

She climbed into a jeep; the prince got in beside her and the Duke of Buccleuch drove. The earl and Japanese entourage followed in an ex-Army farm truck.

The cars started a 1,500ft. climb up a twisting track and toured the estate.

The prince had a light tea before driving to St. Boswells, where farmhands lined the road as the informal group watched Tom Smith's display with the hounds from behind a hedge.

Today Prince Akihito will sight-see in Edinburgh.



The Duke of Atholl shows Prince Akihito of Japan a Sumarai warrior's costume during his visit yesterday to Blair Castle, Perthshire. The suit was brought to Scotland from Japan 70 years ago by the duke's father.

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Peter Wilkie (65), a gamekeeper, wearing a 150-year-old plaid, and piper Archibald Alvis. Pipe-major Wilkie played the Japanese National Anthem on the pipes when the Prince's father, now Emperor, visited Blair Castle in 1921.

No whisky

In the castle the Prince had luncheon of melon, cold salmon, asparagus, ice-cream and chocolate sauce. He declined whisky but accepted port.

After posing for photographs beside a grass-skirted figure of Samurai (Japanese warrior) taken to the castle by the duke's father 70 years ago, he strolled across the sunlit forecourt to see the copper beech tree planted in the grounds by his father.

Then he planted another alongside it while the pipers played "Happy We'll Be a' the Gither."

Later he saw Pitlochry power-station and dam before returning to a Pitlochry hotel where he stayed overnight.

Today the Prince goes to Glasgow by the Trossachs and Loch Lomond.

For a few minutes yesterday he paused beside the River Tilt to see "Peter's Pool," where his father caught his first salmon during that 1921 visit.

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'Army pipers'

It was the only unrehearsed incident in the visit to Perthshire. There were no crowds, no flags, only brilliant sunshine and informality.

Shortly before 1 p.m. the Prince arrived at Blair Castle, where he was welcomed by the Duke of Atholl, Lord James Stewart-Murray, Mr. Iain Murray, heir to the dukedom, and his mother, Mrs. Campbell Preston.

Two pipers of the duke's private army (the only private army in Britain—it can still muster 12 pipers) played the Duke of Atholl's Reel as the Prince arrived.

Among them were Pipe-major

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