

Duke visits Lonely Islands

8th February 1957

Steering a course well off the beaten track - the Royal Yacht "Britannia" came to Gough Island, in the South Atlantic.

Going ashore, the Duke of Edinburgh met the sole inhabitants of this rugged mass of volcanic rock in the South Atlantic - four South Africans manning a weather station.

But perhaps we should have said sole human inhabitants, for the island has a large colony of the tiny rock-hopper penguins.

*Yes, the rock hoppers are well named. For Gough Island demands and no wonder, for the very nature of the terrain demands agility and sureness of foot - even from a distinguished visitor.*

*TRICKY*  
A ~~difficult~~ crossing, but one spectator looked on with admiration - or was it anxiety?

So this unique Commonwealth Tour moved on - to Tristan da Cunha, often called the world's loneliest island.

Once again, only a small group welcomed the Duke: but it must be remembered that these islands (about 1800 miles south-west of Cape Town) have a <sup>TOTAL</sup> population of only 260.

One place of especial interest was the "Settlement of Edinburgh". This prosperous village dates back to 1816 - when a settler, William Glass, brought his family to ~~the island~~ <sup>the island</sup>, and so founded a thriving community.

But chiefly, it was a great day for the island children - an unforgettable link with the outside world - for the Duke was only the second Royal Visitor to set foot on Tristan da Cunha.

~~Another thoughtful gesture was the gift of toys and oranges - made by the Ship's Company.~~

~~Before leaving, the Duke joined the administrators, the ~~island~~ <sup>island</sup> ~~man~~ <sup>man</sup> ~~Mark Heath~~ and the ~~chief~~ <sup>chief</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>for</sup> ~~a~~ <sup>a</sup> ~~treasurer~~ <sup>treasurer</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~island~~ <sup>island</sup> ~~fund~~ <sup>fund</sup>.~~

Continuing the homeward voyage, the Britannia dropped anchor again - at St Helena - perhaps the best known of these Lonely Atlantic islands. Here, one official duty was the opening of the Prince Philip Recreation Ground for Children - who seem to enjoy life even twelve hundred miles out in the Atlantic.

~~St. Helena is, of course, famous in history - for Napoleon was held here, in 1815. But to day, an island people share with other,~~

~~Commonwealth outposts - a landmark in Royal Service~~