

705-360 Douglas St. Victoria B.C. V8V 2P6

March 10, 1983

Dear Frances & Hugh,

I'm sure you won't get more than a mention that the Queen & Prince Phillip have been visiting Canada, but we had our gala day on Tuesday, March 8, & fortunately the anti-monarch folks mostly had the grace to shut up & let us enjoy ourselves. Our office window completely overlooks the inner harbour, so everyone piled in with cameras & binoculars to see the "Britannia" coming slowly in at 9.15 am. There were all kinds of things laid on that they had to do, & all sorts of opportunities for everyone to catch glimpses at various street corners, but not much time for chatting with crowds. Jean had a room at the Empress, & had a few words with Prince Phillip which thrilled her; in the lunch hour I rubbernecked at the Causeway & saw them coming off the "Britannia" (where they had had lunch), & ~~she~~ ^{the Queen} spurned a car, though it was raining, & insisted on walking round on the lower walkway & over to the Empress Hotel under a large umbrella. Mostly all I saw was the top of the umbrella moving along, & then she turned & waved to us all from the top of the Empress stairs at the entrance, & then I scuttled back to work. But by 2.30 the whole of the Min. of Ag. were out at the street corner again to see them as they drove up to the Cathedral to dedicate some new bells. They had an enormous schedule to get through, but I learn that at about 5 pm they withdrew to the "Britannia" & didn't appear again until 8.15 pm at the U-Vic concert. This went off as well as a Royal Command concert eve car.

There's so much anxiety, & everyone is glancing at their watch so I thought Dr. Corwin did very well & wisely — when it got to just after 8.15 pm

& the Royal party (40 strong) hadn't yet come, he just turned to the audience & explained it would be better now if we all just waited until they came, & shortly after that the door opened & the security men peeked cautiously in (as is their way) & then in they all came - the Queen in a deep red dress shot with gold thread (a short dress) escorted by the Chancellor of U-Vic in all his robes, etc. & we performed a magnificent version of "God Save the Queen" - the David Willcocks version, followed by a Coronation Overture, composed by a Canadian composer which didn't appeal to me at all & must have left Her Majesty cold, & then we resumed our excerpts for "My Fair Lady". Jean tells me that she read in the paper, or heard on the news that when we sang "With a Little Bit of Luck" the Royal toe was seen tapping, & I would therefore rate our effort as 100% successful! Then after that me & my choir chums had an invitation to go to Joyce Clearburne's palatial apartment which overlooks the Inner Harbour & the Parliament Buildings & of course the "Britannia", which was due to sail about 10. pm, & this was the most spectacularly beautiful send-off, & so much fun for us as there were a whole lot of the Outdoor Club people there, Dorothy & Norris Cogswell, Joan Newton & all sorts of folks. Introductions were unimportant & food was laid out in the most casual style. Joyce had draped the patio ^{railings} with a huge Union Jack, & was ringing a huge Tibetan cow bell (or prayer bell?). The Royal Marines' band was playing, there were crowds down below cheering, & Trudeau

& the Governor-General joined them aboard for a late supper on their way over to Vancouver. Trudeau had brought his three children & I pray that they were well behaved, ^{eventually} the "Britannia" moved off, all her lights ablaze, the three flags flying (Royal Standard, Union Jack & Canadian Flag) with a marvellous fireworks display from the far side of the inner harbour, & the Queen & Prince Philip came out to watch all this (still the red shimmering dress) & by this time I just felt I was right inside a spectacular movie. Never in my life will I see anything like it again. Someone close to me murmured to his wife "The British sure know how to lay on the pageantry"! Long after they'd left the inner harbour we could see the 3 flags slowly moving along the coast line above the rooftops, & there were farewell bonfires all along the coast.

Yesterday they were in Vancouver where the weather was perfect, damn it!, & for what I've seen on TV & read in the papers they were treated there to a very brash, blatant reception, mainly being used by the Social Credit Party to bolster their political fortunes, & promote the huge new B.C. Stadium for Expo '86. The Election campaign started today. I'm sure the Royal family see right through all this. Iean is just delighted with the success of her Queen-watching, which she did with a friend to Sidney. Now it all seems like a dream, except that I walked along the Causeway yesterday & there were little stacks of flags, & the

odd loyal supporter's sign scrawled up which hadn't yet been taken down. A lot of children saw the Queen everywhere they have gone, but apparently they have no idea who or what she is or represents. I really fear that before long we won't have a Queen of Canada, & it is all being dropped so quietly & steadily that the next generation will know nothing, except they will remember this visit.

I am now reading "The Gathering Storm". It will take some time, but I did enjoy the Churchill series on TV, though it would have been better if it had been done by BBC-TV.

Now I must get off to bed, but I am sure you will want an account of these very recent proceedings — not very well told, I'm afraid, but just so much happened, I can't sort it all out.

Much love to you both to

Jane