

'A Thousand Miles of Loyalty':

THE ROYAL TOUR OF 1901

THE VISIT to New Zealand of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York from 10 to 27 June 1901 was New Zealand's first nation-wide extravaganza. It had been a long time in preparation. The Duke and Duchess had been invited by the Premier, R. J. Seddon, to come to New Zealand in 1897 after Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. The old Queen instantly declined, for personal reasons: 'she dare not consent to a prince so close to the Throne leaving her for a long period of time and making a voyage to a distant part of the world'.¹ Nevertheless, she assured her loyal subjects that the Duke regarded New Zealand 'with the warmest interest'.² In 1900 New Zealand's invitation 'was again renewed, this time by electric cable', while Australia also invited the Duke to open the first federal parliament in Melbourne in 1901.

By this time the South African War had made the colonies a matter of more immediate concern in London. The presence of the colonial contingents, among them the Australians and New Zealanders, aroused feelings of gratitude among beleaguered British ministers, and some interest in the colonies' military capacity. Moreover, the power and the extent of Britain's empire was an aspect to be emphasized to other European powers in the jingoistic mood of the turn of the century. A tour by the Queen's grandson would both reward and stimulate loyalty to the crown. Queen Victoria agreed to the project, but in January 1901 she died. Another monarch's indifference to the outposts of the empire had then to be overcome. The leverage applied to Edward VII by Arthur Balfour was the argument that the colonies did not feel unquestioning loyalty to Britain, nor the British government; their emotional attachment was to the throne, and could be much more effectively stirred by royalty's emphasis on a shared attachment to the old Queen and her family, than by political argument.³ That the eventual decision had little to do with New Zealand and less to do with the personal inclination of the Duke and his family would naturally never be suspected from the official record of the tour of New Zealand

1 R. A. Loughnan, *Royalty in New Zealand*, Wellington, 1902, p.4.

2 An interest he kept well concealed. 'New Zealand' is not even indexed in Kenneth Rose's long biography of George V.

3 K. Rose, *George V*, London, 1983, p.44.

published in 1902. As far as New Zealanders were concerned, King Edward had sent his heir to visit them alone. A wave of jingoistic and royalist fervour swept the country, summed up by Loughnan⁴ as 'a thousand miles of loyalty'.

Organizing the tour provided an extraordinary patronage opportunity for the Liberal government. Thirteen honorary 'Executive Commissioners' were appointed to arrange a 'fitting reception' for the royal party in each city and to oversee arrangements for 'paying suitable marks of respect to their Royal Highnesses during their visit to the said Colony'. Each commissioner was a prominent Liberal, chosen personally by Seddon. The Chief Commissioner, John Holmes of Wellington, requested that each gentleman receive a special copy of his warrant of appointment in parchment to frame as a memento and this was agreed to.⁵ Holmes himself was granted £100 for expenses and a travel warrant for railway and steamer travel. He spent the early months of 1901 in a state of ecstatic bustle. 'Travelling day and night finished citizens meeting midnight last night inundated with callers and deputations must leave tomorrow morning for Christchurch Auckland' he telegraphed from Dunedin on 29 March.⁶

Some citizens were invited to lend their houses for accommodation for the Duke and Duchess or members of their suite. The mayor of Christchurch, A. E. G. Rhodes, lent his house, Te Koraha. Rhodes's claim for expenses eventually came to £247.2.10 plus £48.19.0 for servants, who had to be boarded out to make way for the royal entourage. The coachman asked for only one pound to board his children for ten days but it cost the gardener ten pounds to put his large family in a hotel. Asked to account for a mysterious 10/6 in the accounts, Rhodes replied it had been paid to 'Mr Howard'. Pressed for a further explanation he responded that it was for 'extra sanitation'. 'The night carts come on Sunday night to Wilkins' and my home and those adjoining, and they could not possibly go to Te Koraha while the Royal visitors were there as the Guard might have stopped them. In any case, the carts might have frightened the Royal visitors with their noise, so I had to arrange with the Borough Council that all the houses in the neighbourhood should have the night soil cleaned away on the Friday night'. Satisfied, the Internal Affairs department paid Mr Rhodes his 10/6.⁷ At the end of their stay at Te Koraha, the Duke and Duchess presented Mr and Mrs Rhodes with signed portraits, a handsome malacca stick, and a scent bottle with a gold top set with diamonds. The honour requited the fuss.

As well as the Commissioners, a multitude of local committees sprang up. Auckland produced a reception committee, a ladies' committee,

4 R. A. Loughnan, a Wellington journalist, was appointed official 'historiographer' of the tour in May 1901. He was paid £1 a day from 4 June to 4 July, plus free travel and another £1 per day expenses. Internal Affairs (IA), 1901/1750, National Archives, Wellington.

5 J. Holmes to R. J. Seddon, 31 October 1901, Seddon MSS, National Archives.

6 J. Holmes to R. J. Seddon, 29 March 1901, Seddon MSS.

7 A. E. G. Rhodes to T. E. Donne, 5 and 25 July 1901, IA, 1902/653.

finance, executive, art, fireworks, platform, music, maritime, and procession committees. All were meeting regularly throughout April, May and June 1901. Working bees supplemented their activity. Women and children were hard at work making garlands of artificial roses. Schoolchildren and troops practised their displays. Workmen were employed for weeks erecting arches, 'Venetian masts', and viewing stands.

Hundreds of New Zealanders were chosen to present bouquets to the Duchess, to meet the royal visitors, or to receive military medals. Six thousand were invited to royal receptions, many more marched in processions and took part in the military reviews. Larger numbers took part as spectators. Tickets for the government and municipal viewing stands became valuable local patronage dispensed by councillors and Members of Parliament.

Local rivalry occasionally expressed itself in sour remarks and squabbles. Auckland and Wellington newspapers confidently predicted that the other city's efforts would be ruined by wet weather (it rained in both places) and disparaged one another's decorations. Shopkeepers quarrelled with councils over the procession routes. Mayors and county chairmen disputed precedence on official platforms. But the overall impression is one of rather self-important, bustling activity.

The only serious contretemps concerned Mahuta, the Maori King. He was affronted by the choice of Rotorua as the site of the Maori welcome and made it clear that the Waikato people would not go there. Instead, there was a proposal that the King and his people bring their canoe, Tahereheretikitiki, and two other canoes to greet the royal yacht. Mahuta would then be presented to the Duke. These plans do not ever seem to have reached the stage of firm offers but they met with an enthusiastic response in Auckland and struck dismay into the hearts of the government organizers. Auckland was delighted at the prospect of being able to display such a 'characteristic' feature of New Zealand as war canoes on the Waitemata. The maritime committee immediately produced a Maori display sub-committee, which began to collect money for the project. The government remained adamant that the Maori welcome was to occur at Rotorua and nowhere else. Even a suggestion that the train might pause at Ngaruawahia for the Duke and the Maori King to shake hands was vetoed. Requests for Maori ceremonies in the Bay of Islands, at Kaiapoi, and numerous other places had already been refused. James Carroll, the Minister of Native Affairs, feared that if Rotorua's monopoly were broken then other tribes might opt out. George Fowlds candidly explained that the government had decided 'to get a good advertisement out of the Royal visit by taking the Duke and Duchess and suite to Rotorua' and dared not risk allowing its impact to be reduced.⁸

By 10 June the argument was forgotten, at least in Auckland. The city

⁸ *NZ Herald*, 23 April, 29 May 1901. *The Times*, 12, 13 June 1901, reported that Seddon was booed by Maori in Auckland for insulting the Maori King.

was awash with bunting, transparencies, and foliage. 'Royalty, War and Welcome were the main ideas on which the changes were rung along the house-fronts, together with Loyalty, Love and Patriotism,' wrote Loughnan.⁹ Huge transparencies of the King and Queen, the Premier, and the Duke and Duchess dominated the large buildings. Portraits of the generals in South Africa and the names of battles were also popular. The Windsor Castle hotel showed 'a Maori scene' and two large transparencies of Roberts with Kitchener and Buller with Baden Powell. These were the work of Charles Blomfield.¹⁰ 'And all these forces are bound together by miles of 'Arohas' and 'Akes' and 'Tonus', and Royal and Ducal monograms, in a great confusion of Union Jacks and marble columns'.¹¹

There were four triumphal arches. The Harbour Board Arch was two lighthouses connected by a 'Roman arch', bearing the mottoes 'Haere Mai' and 'God Save the King'. The Citizens' Arch, a confused tower of greenery and lilies in 'pagoda style', bore coloured lights and flags. The Maori Arch, painted to represent carved panels, said 'Haere Mai'. The largest and most dominant was the Government Arch at Victoria Street: 'a massive construction rising harmonious and splendid, giving classic stamp to the city'. It consisted of three spans, joined by Ionic columns and was decorated with nikau sprays, the Royal arms, and a nest of furled flags with speared shafts. More flags flew above it and it carried the legends 'Welcome' and 'Aroha Tonu; Ake Ake Ake'.¹²

The royal yacht *Ophir* arrived at Auckland ahead of time on 10 June. She brought with her fog, rain and bad weather which persisted throughout the tour. On the eleventh she moved to the Queen Street wharf, escorted by naval ships and with the thunder of saluting cannon. Ministers boarded the ship for the official welcome. They presented an address 'handsomely illuminated with "typical" New Zealand scenes' (in which highly romanticized landscape and Maori predominated). The text assured the Duke and Duchess of the devotion of the people of 'the land of the Moa and Pounamu' and their readiness to answer the Empire's call, and invited them to see at first hand New Zealanders' happiness and prosperity. The casket containing the address is worth considering. Described by Loughnan as 'the most beautiful thing ever made in New Zealand,' it had been produced by Frank Hyams, a Dunedin jeweller, for £630. The greenstone casket was decorated with gold and silver; at each corner stood a pillar surmounted by a kiwi. On the top of the casket stood a replica of a Maori war canoe in gold, silver and greenstone containing nine figures.¹³ This extraordinary object, a kind of Antipodean answer to the age of Fabergé, stood on a base

9 Loughnan, p.9.

10 *Auckland Star*, 11 June 1901. Blomfield also painted the Maori Arch. His panels were sold afterwards for one pound. *NZ Herald*, 18 June 1901, p.5.

11 Loughnan, p.11.

12 *ibid.*

13 IA, 1901/2435.

of New Zealand woods and was enclosed in an outer box of New Zealand woods carved in 'a Native Character'. The Duchess's colonial gold bouquet holder cost £56.10.0. These were the first and most expensive of many such offerings and must have left the royal pair in no doubt, before they set foot on shore, that they were in a part of the world distinct from Australia or Britain.

At 2 p.m. the visitors disembarked. At the foot of the gangway stood a table draped in royal blue on which reposed 'an electric arrangement'. At the precise moment that the royal feet touched New Zealand, the Duchess was to press the button. This action produced an astonishing result. In reply to the signal, ships' cannon roared, the shore batteries replied, bells rang all over the city, bands played 'God Save the King', the guard of honour presented arms; moreover, the signal 'landed' ran to every telegraph station and almost every school in New Zealand, so that bells, guns and flags welcomed the great moment simultaneously up and down the country.¹⁴ Loyalty, happiness, prosperity, and modern technology were constant handmaidens throughout the visit.

Sir John Logan Campbell's mayoral welcome was an opportunity to stress the progress and prosperity which resulted from the work of the pioneers. Campbell himself was a venerable object-lesson on that subject. He had first visited the site of Auckland 60 years before in a Maori canoe. Now 'a great, well-built city' of over 67,000 people stood on the same spot. In Wellesley Street 2,500 children formed a 'living Union Jack' and in Princes Street a special stand had been erected for 800 old-age pensioners, the recent beneficiaries of Liberal legislation, so that they could watch the procession. Government House drive was lined with veterans of imperial wars. Later in the day the Friendly Societies marched through the grounds. Deputations of citizens' groups then brought loyal addresses, which were presented (but mercifully not read) in the ballroom. The Duke's reply traversed the usual themes of the late Queen Victoria, South Africa, peace, prosperity, racial harmony, loyalty. He said he looked forward to seeing New Zealand's world-renowned scenery and her natural wonders. In the evening there was a royal reception. Meanwhile, ordinary citizens enjoyed the illuminations and a spectacular firework show. After that, the *Ophir* and her escorting ships were illuminated and played their searchlights for two hours. An immense crowd watched from the hills and waterfront, while many took to the water and sailed round the ships in small boats.

The first day of the visit had catered to the young, the old, the thrifty and the notable. The second day, 'an Imperial moment', was devoted to a military review at Potter's Paddock.¹⁵ Fortunately it did not rain heavily, as it had during the rehearsal. 'It was impossible to look brave and brilliant careering round in the mud on an ungroomed horse in a wet uniform',

¹⁴ *NZ Herald*, 5 June 1901; Loughnan, p.20.

¹⁵ Later renamed Alexandra Park in honour of the Queen. *NZ Herald*, 22 June 1901, p.5.

sniffed the *New Zealand Mail*.¹⁶ The Duke, wearing the uniform of a colonel of the Fusiliers (complete with busby) lent a dash of colour to the scene. Most of the local troops were in khaki. After the inspection of the troops, South African war medals were presented. The first was to Major Madocks, who led the defence of 'New Zealand Hill'.¹⁷ The review was followed by a luncheon at the Choral Hall for 400 men, veterans of 'all the wars of the Great Queen' and troopers from South African contingents, thus demonstrating 'the continuity of British prowess'. These events were repeated in all four cities but the Duke attended only the first, dropping by to join in the toasts, his appearance being greeted with 'frantic cheering'. His impromptu speech set off the 'chips of the old block' theme which, with 'the bulldog breed', became a standby for all the military occasions of the tour. In the afternoon the Duke laid the foundation stone for Queen Victoria School for Maori Girls, where he noted that the education of women was a key to the 'regeneration' of the Maori race. Rev. F. A. Bennett, one of the leaders of the Young Maori Party, endorsed that opinion. A guard of honour for the occasion had been sent by the Maori Parliament. The Auckland visit ended with a mayoral reception in the Art Gallery.

On 13 June the Duke and Duchess left by decorated royal train for Rotorua. Stations along the way were garlanded, and the train slowed for waiting crowds. At Frankton the royal party ate lunch, surrounded by local notables and crowds of children with Union Jacks. Awaiting them at Rotorua was a vast gathering of Maori. The Young Maori Party, like the Liberals, had availed themselves of the tour to convey messages of their own. Apirana Ngata wrote the official record of the great Rotorua hui.¹⁸ He stressed the efficiency and orderliness of the event. There was no sickness in the huge encampment, no drunkenness, no crime. Sanitation had been organized by Dr Maui Pomare. The contrast between past and present was a congenial theme to both Maori and Pakeha, as was the 'chips of the old block' refrain.

The unique combination of ancient exotic tradition and emotional ceremony which marked the Maori reception proved irresistible to foreign reporters, as the organizers had hoped.¹⁹ Eleven hundred Arawa waited at the station, most in Maori costume. Some chiefs wore top hats with their dogskin or feather cloaks. Te Heuheu of Taupo and Te Keepa Rangipuawhe of the Tuhourangi tribe welcomed the visitors to Rotorua. At the Grand Hotel, James Carroll and a hundred more chiefs awaited them.

16 *NZ Mail*, 6 June 1901, p.23.

17 See K. Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for National Identity*, Wellington, 1986, p.130.

18 Loughnan, ch. iii and Appendix IV.

19 They spread themselves over pages of 'local colour' freely larded with historical fiction. One reporter wrote as the train passed Rangiriri, 'Here was fought one of the fiercest fights of the war, where Whare Nui (*sic*) fought and died unconquered with a dozen flattened bullets in his huge frame!' A clear difference between local and British papers was in the spelling of Maori words. Even *The Times* was cavalier about accuracy but local papers were not.

The next day saw visits to Ohinemutu, where the Duchess was given a teacosy of kiwi feathers and the Duke a carved mere, and to the sanatorium in the Government Gardens where the Duchess opened the new Duchess Bath. J. G. Ward soon to become New Zealand's first Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts, was hoping to establish Rotorua on the international spa circuit and the royal visit provided a chance for the overseas press to praise the town's invigorating atmosphere and efficacious waters.²⁰ Guides Sophia and Maggie Papakura took the visitors around Whakarewarewa. In the afternoon there was a visit to Tikitere. For a month beforehand the practice of soaping the geysers had been forbidden in case their strength was sapped for the display on 14 June.

Saturday, 15 June, one of the rare fine days, saw the biggest spectacle of the tour, 'the Grand Carnival of the Tribes' at the Rotorua racecourse. ' "Old New Zealand" at its best.'²¹ The speeches, while suitably nostalgic for the warrior past made a point, however, of looking forward. The Rotorua meeting was designed to show off the health and vigour of Maoridom and to underline the point that it was no longer a dying race. The Duke's speech picked up this theme: 'He was pleased to know that the Maoris were all happy and contented, and in the enjoyment of good health. It also pleased him to know they were increasing in numbers'. He thanked them for their loyalty to the crown and for their 'rare gifts connecting the present with the past'.²² Rotorua produced an avalanche of gifts. Several thousand Maori were present at the racecourse hui and at the end many spontaneously came forward to heap their priceless heirlooms at the feet of the future king. The gifts included precious mats, ancestral greenstone, carved weapons. All these treasures were gathered up and stowed in the capacious hold of the *Ophir*. Later, cartoons appeared showing the yacht returning home towing canoes full of bundles labelled 'Maori treasure'. There was some criticism in the newspapers of the removal of such items from New Zealand.²³

Wellington was the next stop. As befitted the capital, the Wellington programme was heavy with public and political consequence. Loyalty and prosperity were the main themes; red, white and blue bunting, troops and exports. There were eleven arches in Wellington, each one weighty with significance. The Woollen Company Arch was constructed of tricolour, rolled blankets simulating brickwork and the bases of its pillars were buried in seven feet of white scoured wool.²⁴ Marlborough showed its loyalty by erecting an arch thatched all over with sheaves of grain and this 'cereal arch' was eclipsed only by 'the Arch of the Buttermen' artfully built of butterboxes displaying their trade brands. The *pièce de résistance*, however,

20 I. Rockel, *Taking the Waters: Early Spas in New Zealand*, Wellington, 1986, p.8.

21 Loughnan, p.104.

22 *ibid.*, p.133.

23 *Evening Star*, 17 June 1901.

24 *NZ Mail*, 20 June 1901, p.35.

'the glory of the Quay', was the Westport Arch of massive blocks of coal adorned with gold and the ubiquitous flags. The diplomatic corps had contributed 'the arch of twelve nations'. There was a Floral Arch, a Chinese Arch, a Te Aro Arch, a Citizens' Arch, and a Maori Arch in the shape of 'a runanga house supported by floral towers'. Women and children sat in front of the house and chanted a welcome as the royal carriage approached. The Government Arch was even more massive than that in Auckland. It was said to be in 'Balmoral style', castellated and battlemented, carrying colossal portraits of King Edward and Queen Alexandra and the Duke and Duchess of York. Standards flew from the timber turrets and it was surmounted by a Crown.²⁵

Celebrations followed the familiar pattern of official welcomes and replies, receptions, marches of veterans and friendly societies, and the laying of foundation stones. The most impressive of the evening illuminations was the Post Office — a staggering monument to loyalty and technology, visible from Mt. Victoria to Day's Bay. Words are inadequate to convey the astonishing gallimaufry of sentiment which was revealed when the 2,400 electric lights were switched on. The windows contained transparencies — devices and patriotic mottoes in Maori and English. The building itself was outlined in red, white and blue lights with the added novelty of alternating patterns of light and colour: 'the greatest effort of electric illumination ever achieved in the colony, and surpassed hitherto nowhere in Australia.'²⁶

Wellington's position as the political centre was underlined by the ceremonies at Parliament. War medals were presented on Parliament steps to the province's veterans, who included two nurses. There were two parliamentary receptions, one for a 'representative multitude' of 600 in the afternoon and a gala evening affair for 2,000 guests. This was the largest social event of the tour. Invitations were coveted favours, distributed, like all the tour favours, with an eye to political advantage. The Bellamy's bill for these festivities came to £1677.16.9. The Ministry congratulated itself that the cost was not higher. Several of the more expensive ornaments had been borrowed from city stores and were slid quietly back into stock after use. Three épergnes, five cake stands, ten dozen finger bowls, three vases and £757 worth of cutlery and linen were returned.²⁷ Other linen and glassware were used to restock the government steamer.

Social obligations having been fulfilled, the government also used Wellington for a blast on the progress and prosperity trumpet. On 20 June the Duke and Duchess were taken to Petone and shown over the woollen mills, the railway workshops, and the Gear Meat Works. Just as royalty's gaze had approved and confirmed the work of the pioneers, the fitness of the troops and Maori progress, so now it was cast over colonial industry. 'All the details of one of the great freezing and canning establishments of New

25 Loughnan, pp.157-9.

26 *ibid.*, p.182; *NZ Times*, 19 June 1901; *NZ Mail*, 20 June 1901.

27 IA, 1901/3682.

Zealand passed in the ordinary everyday way under the eyes of Royalty', wrote Loughnan, improbably.²⁸

Christchurch's welcome on 21 June was more staid than those in the north. Nikau was much less in evidence, but there was an abundance of toitoi. The *New Zealand Times* complained that the royal dais at the mayoral reception, with its oriental carpets, potted palms, and velvet drapes looked like a tea-room. The *Press* was similarly restive about the failure to convey in the decorations 'the peculiar characteristics which distinguish New Zealand from other countries in the world'.²⁹ Few private buildings were decorated, but the Salvation Army had put out some pink and white bunting and banners proclaiming 'The World For Christ; Righteousness Exalteth a Nation'; and 'Greetings to the Duke and Duchess'.³⁰ There were only four arches, but two were sufficiently arresting to leave an indelible impression. The Marine Arch, of boats, and the Firemen's Arch, of ladders, paled beside the Frozen Meat Arch which was supported by columns of real ice 'enclosing carcasses dressed for the butcher, also chrysanthemums of delicate hues'.³¹ The Canterbury Agricultural Arch consisted of a bridge of foliage and cereals decorated with flax and toitoi. It was upheld by towers of animals. At the base of each tower a fat bullock was penned. Above them were pens of live sheep, above the sheep were pens of poultry. As the royal carriage passed two stockmen perched on the pediments waved their hats.³² The Duke's speech remarked on New Zealand's splendid climate and her rich fertile soil. He also evinced a special interest in the old-age pensioners and went on to say that 'the working of the system which has been established in New Zealand is being closely watched in the Mothercountry'.³³ Another of the Liberals' main achievements was thus recognized and validated.

The main event at Christchurch was a military review of 11,000 troops at Hagley Park. Great emphasis was laid on the fitness of men and horses. 'Men in the prime of life, of exceptional physique, hardy and sun-tanned, fairly well disciplined, and grand horsemen all; horses in the pink of condition, well bred, handsome, serviceable, up to heavy weights . . . a force it would be hard to beat anywhere'.³⁴ Seddon's speech at the subsequent troopers' and veterans' dinner was an excited tirade extolling New Zealand's military strength and denouncing the Boers: 'They have not fought as you have, but have fought and sniped in a most despicable way, which the colonial or the Britisher would never think of or tolerate.'³⁵

28 Loughnan, pp.197-9.

29 *NZ Times*, 24 June 1901; *The Press*, 24 June 1901.

30 *The Press*, 24 June 1901.

31 Loughnan, p.225.

32 *NZ Herald*, 22, 24 June 1901. This arch was considered particularly novel by Joseph Watson, Reuters correspondent, in his record of the tour, *The Queen's Wish*, London, 1902, p.270.

33 Loughnan, p.227.

34 *ibid.*, p.245.

35 *ibid.*, p.262.

Dunedin followed the by now familiar pattern except that the mottoes of welcome were in 'Irish' and Gaelic as well as Maori and English. The Town Hall, with its 1,200 electric lights, was the most elaborately illuminated building except the unsurpassed Wellington GPO. As before, there was special prominence for children, old-age pensioners, veterans, and friendly societies — the young, old, brave and thrifty. At Petone the visitors had been shown industry; in Dunedin they were taken to the Agricultural Show. They saw butter which 'appeared to extend for miles', huge cheeses, piles of wool and grain and vegetables. They were shown the newest agricultural implements and told how efficient and up-to-date were New Zealand's farming methods.³⁶

The series of events described above can be 'read' at several levels of meaning. Its imperial task, the rewarding of past loyalty and encouraging of future loyalty, was its most serious purpose in the eyes of the King and the British government. At a ceremonial level, the 1901 tour was New Zealand's first, as 1953 was the last, of the stately royal progresses, the impressive rituals by which a king takes possession of his kingdom and marks a territory for his own. 'When Kings journey around the countryside, making appearances, attending fetes, conferring honors, exchanging gifts or defying enemies, they mark it, like some wolf or tiger spreading his scent through his territory, as almost physically part of them.'³⁷ Before passenger jet planes, the enacting of such a ritual on an imperial scale presented obvious difficulties. There was no possibility that Edward VII could come in person, but his heir was an acceptable proxy. The royal entries to New Zealand's principal cities (and indeed the refreshment stops at decorated railway stations on the way) were part of a long ceremonial tradition, the *joyeuse entrée*. 'A royal entry reflected the achievements of the present and reviewed those of the past while turning an optimistic eye to the future.'³⁸ The imagery used in New Zealand in 1901 clearly fitted within this framework but the patron saints and classical figures of Victory, Fortitude, Prudence, or Renown so common in Renaissance Europe, were replaced here by more material and less loquacious symbols such as bales of wool or frozen lamb. Maori greetings took the place of Latin verse.

The education of the future King-Emperor was another function of the tour. This task was viewed far more seriously by the colonies than by the British. The latter tended to see the empire as a useful resource. The colonies, and especially New Zealand, saw their place in the empire as their access to the world stage. British insularity was the greatest threat to imperial ties. 'Every day of the Royal Progress', wrote the *Herald*, 'sees a nail driven into the coffin of Little Englandism.'³⁹ Personal knowledge of the

36 *ibid.*, p.318.

37 C. Geertz, 'Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power', in *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*, New York, 1983, p.125.

38 R. Strong, *Splendour at Court: Renaissance Spectacle and Illusion*, London, 1973, p.23.

39 *NZ Herald*, 14 June 1901.

countries of the empire by the next monarch was of inestimable value in the eyes of colonial politicians: they hoped to have a friend at Court.

The process of impressing the future king was double-edged. The royal personage's role was to receive the impression — and then to reflect it back. An image of New Zealand crafted by the New Zealanders themselves was thus validated and enhanced by the magic of the royal touch. The Duke's speeches were designed to this purpose. He was shown something and in reply he acknowledged that he had seen it, thus affirming its 'sacred truth'. Prime Minister David Lange made this point in 1986 at the State Banquet for the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. He said, 'New Zealand today is a different country [from 1953] but the great responsibility of the monarchy is still to reflect New Zealand now as Your Majesty reflected New Zealand then.'⁴⁰

Royal tours are narcissistic festivals; the 1901 visit provided New Zealanders at all levels with a wonderful chance to show off. It is, therefore, fascinating evidence of adolescent New Zealand's self-image at that time. The combination of new country, new century, and new ruler produced a confident euphoria that transcended the reality of rain-sodden decorations, muddy streets, and small towns. To read the rhetoric and the flowery descriptive prose is to receive an impression of prince and princess wafting through an enchanted utopia.

Sir Keith Sinclair has written that, in 1901, New Zealanders were not yet a nation. 'All that may be stated is that clear steps had been taken towards a national sentiment.' New Zealanders were not considered a separate people by outsiders, but amongst themselves were beginning to assert an identity of their own.⁴¹ Royal tour activities demonstrate many of the ingredients of this developing self-image. New Zealand was small, but prosperous. The achievements of the pioneers and the flourishing condition of New Zealand's export industries, the fertility of soil and people, were endlessly celebrated. Maori shared in this progress. Their decline had been halted and regeneration through education begun, it was said. The use of the Maori to create a New Zealand identity has been discussed elsewhere.⁴² The Duke reflected this attitude as well. In Wellington and Dunedin, with uncharacteristic boldness, he finished speeches with 'Kia Ora!' and was rewarded with loud cheers. At Rotorua the Duchess tied a tiki around her neck, wore a feather cloak, and stuck a huia feather in her hair. New Zealanders took pride in the scenic beauty of the country. They were remote from the centre of the empire, but their land was unique. They were quite sure they were as good as, or better than, Australians and could put on as good a show. Technical efficiency, especially in communications and in processing industries, was a matter of pride. The crown could count on

40 P.M.'s speech notes, 26 February 1986.

41 Sinclair, p.141.

42 J. O. C. Phillips, 'Musings in Maoriland — or was there a *Bulletin* School in New Zealand?', *Historical Studies*, XX, 81 (1983), pp.520–35.

New Zealanders' loyalty, but it was tempered by independence. Even in the heat of the ecstatic imperial rhetoric there was a note of self-confidence. New Zealanders considered they had earned an honourable place in the empire by their service in South Africa. New Zealanders valued 'manliness', an absence of servility: 'no grovel and no toadyism'.⁴³ Seddon's critics were inclined to feel that, if anything, he had toadied too much.⁴⁴

The military values, loyalty, bravery, obedience to duty, were much emphasized during the tour. At each of the four major cities troops were reviewed and a dinner was staged which brought together, in newsworthy and popular conjunction, the veterans of past wars and men just returned from South Africa. Nevertheless, other social values were affirmed in the course of the festivities and the stereotyped reporting of the tour. Family obligations and the importance of family life were linked to the theme of duty. Queen Victoria was mentioned almost as often as Kitchener and Roberts. The Duchess's kindness and her devotion to husband and children were much admired. Good manners and decorum were clearly important. New Zealanders wished to be seen as knowing how to behave properly. But these things were modified by informality and personal warmth. In Dunedin 'an exceedingly loyal old woman' managed to enter the royal pavilion at the Caledonian ground and to ask for a flower from the Duchess's bouquet. She got it.⁴⁵ At the other end of the age-scale the heroes of the weekly journals were Walter and Robert Adcock, aged nine and eleven, who ran away from home and walked barefoot from Invercargill to Dunedin to see the Duke. Their swollen, blistered feet were treated at Dunedin hospital. They did meet the Duke, who allegedly remarked that the boys were 'just the stuff to make fine soldiers of the Empire'.⁴⁶ Enterprise and courage were affirmed as equal to, even above, obedience, as the qualities expected of young New Zealanders.

King-centred public ritual was still an important political activity in Europe before the First World War. The elaborate pageant surrounding the king displayed and ratified the latest ranking in civil and political society.⁴⁷ During the 1901 tour New Zealand's own effulgent ruler, Seddon, was in no way eclipsed by the transit of a royal duke. Royalty's presence confirmed his place at the centre. Everywhere the Duke and Duchess went, Seddon and his lieutenant, Ward, accompanied them, sharing the applause, sunning themselves in the royal presence, conspicuous in their 'Windsor uniforms'. It was almost impossible for a photographer to catch the Duke

43 *Free Lance*, 15 June 1901, p.8.

44 The Opposition denounced Seddon's 'greasy flattery' and 'vulgar sycophancy', *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates*, (NZPD), 1901, 119, p.1034; also *Free Lance*, 15 June 1901, p.8. In Australia, similar criticisms were made by the *Bulletin* and the *Tocsin*, C. Cunneen, *King's Men*, Sydney, 1983, pp.18-19.

45 Loughnan, p.317.

46 *The Sketch*, n.d., Seddon MSS.

47 A. J. Mayer, *The Persistence of the Old Regime: Europe to the Great War*, New York, 1981, p.136.

without also including Seddon in the photograph.⁴⁸ The concentric circles of consequence were clearly visible to participants and onlookers, and ephemeral moments of social triumph were recorded in newspapers and official souvenir programmes. Lists of the lucky few invited to the dinners and receptions were published and pages devoted to descriptions of the women's dresses. Military medallists were also listed. The official souvenir book, a solid 400-page tome, contained the names of everyone presented to the royal visitors and photographs of the women and children who gave bouquets.

Some rewards lasted longer than the moment. At an investiture in Wellington, honours were conferred upon Lord Ranfurly (GCMG), Hon J. G. Ward (KCMG), Colonel Gudgeon, the Resident in Rarotonga (CMG), and Hon W. C. Walker (CMG). The retired Minister of Lands, Hon John McKenzie, was also awarded a KCMG but he was too ill to come to Wellington and a special stop was made at Shag Point for him to receive it. Seddon, although ubiquitous, was not honoured by the Duke. He remained Dick Seddon, the workingman's friend, thus showing his capacity to walk with kings yet not lose the common touch. Ward, the social aspirant with a financial past that he was anxious to obliterate, revelled in his new status as Sir Joseph, but increasingly found the common touch harder to locate.

Above all the tour focussed the attention of the British press on New Zealand. This was an unparalleled opportunity to advertise New Zealand, and the Liberal Government seized it with energy and imagination. The overseas reporters and photographers were official guests of the government during the tour. Ward, in particular, made himself endlessly available to the visiting press, for whose comfort no expense was too great.⁴⁹ As the Duke and Duchess were led around the tourist traps, the reporters who followed were fed a steady diet of colourful copy. Excursions into scenic areas not covered by the tour were arranged. In Wellington the Premier hosted a dinner for them. The toasts and speeches were blatant exercises in flattery and self-promotion. The reply to Ward's toast to 'The Visiting Representatives' recited the lesson about New Zealand's resources, her prosperous agriculture, advanced social legislation and labour laws and praised 'the high-priest of democracy, Dick Seddon'. In return for the hospitality, the coverage achieved in overseas newspapers was impressive. Prodigious numbers of columns were devoted to fulsome accounts of New Zealand's scenery and tourist attractions, especially Rotorua. Nearly as much space was used to describe living standards which seemed almost incredible to Europeans. As an aid to attracting immigrants and tourists these yards of eulogistic 'news' were probably well worth the ministers' efforts.

Finally, the tour was an example of an ancient and ephemeral art form

48 Geertz, p. 143: 'The extraordinary has not gone out of modern politics, however much the banal may have entered; power not only still intoxicates, it still exalts.'

49 The *Daily Telegraph*, 24 August 1901, referred to the government's 'paternal regard for our comforts'; *Morning Post*, 14 August 1901: 'infinite attention was paid to detail . . . no grudging of time or cost'.

— the art of festival.⁵⁰ It has never been an art much practised in New Zealand, and in recent times has become much less a participatory experience than one enjoyed vicariously through television. In 1901 New Zealanders throughout the country went to enormous trouble and expense to stage and participate in a national festival.⁵¹ Thousands of ferns and nikaus were sacrificed for decorations, bunting was draped around specially constructed pavilions, 'Venetian masts' were erected to carry garlands. Special trains and steamers were organized to bring thousands of people to the five venues. At a time when opportunities for private recreation were limited, the 1901 tour seems to have been enjoyable mass entertainment. Bands, processions, and military displays were staple fare for popular circuses, but the royal presence provided both the occasion and a dash of extra glamour.

While local notables disported themselves at state dinners and royal receptions, the less notable sang and danced (and fought) in the streets. Crowds wandered about late into the night admiring the illuminations and firework displays. All the exciting paraphernalia of nineteenth century festival was provided — souvenirs, and fireworks, bonfires, sporting competitions. In Wellington, there was a hastily organized 'aquatic sports carnival' including a battle with 'Mops, Soot, Flour etc.', programmed as 'Britons v the Foe'.⁵² In Wyndham Street, Auckland, the crowd was treated to a cinematograph and lime-light show on a screen fixed to the side of the *Herald* building.⁵³

Earlier celebrations had been local or at most regional. The royal tour of 1901 drew the whole country together in a celebration of New Zealand as New Zealanders wished it to be seen at that time. It was so successful that even before it was over, the *Herald* was looking forward to the next tour, possibly by Prince Edward. 'Not a decade should pass without such a desirable ceremonial, so gratifying to our colonial feelings and so edifying and instructive to the Monarchy',⁵⁴ gushed the editor. In the event New Zealand had to wait nearly two decades for the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1920.

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⁵⁰ Strong, pp.19-20.

⁵¹ Seddon admitted that the government had spent £70,000. It was probably more. Rows about extravagance bedevilled Estimates debates for years. NZPD, 1901, 119, p.10.

⁵² IA, 1901/2303a.

⁵³ *Auckland Star*, 12 June 1901.

⁵⁴ *NZ Herald*, 15 June 1901, p.4.