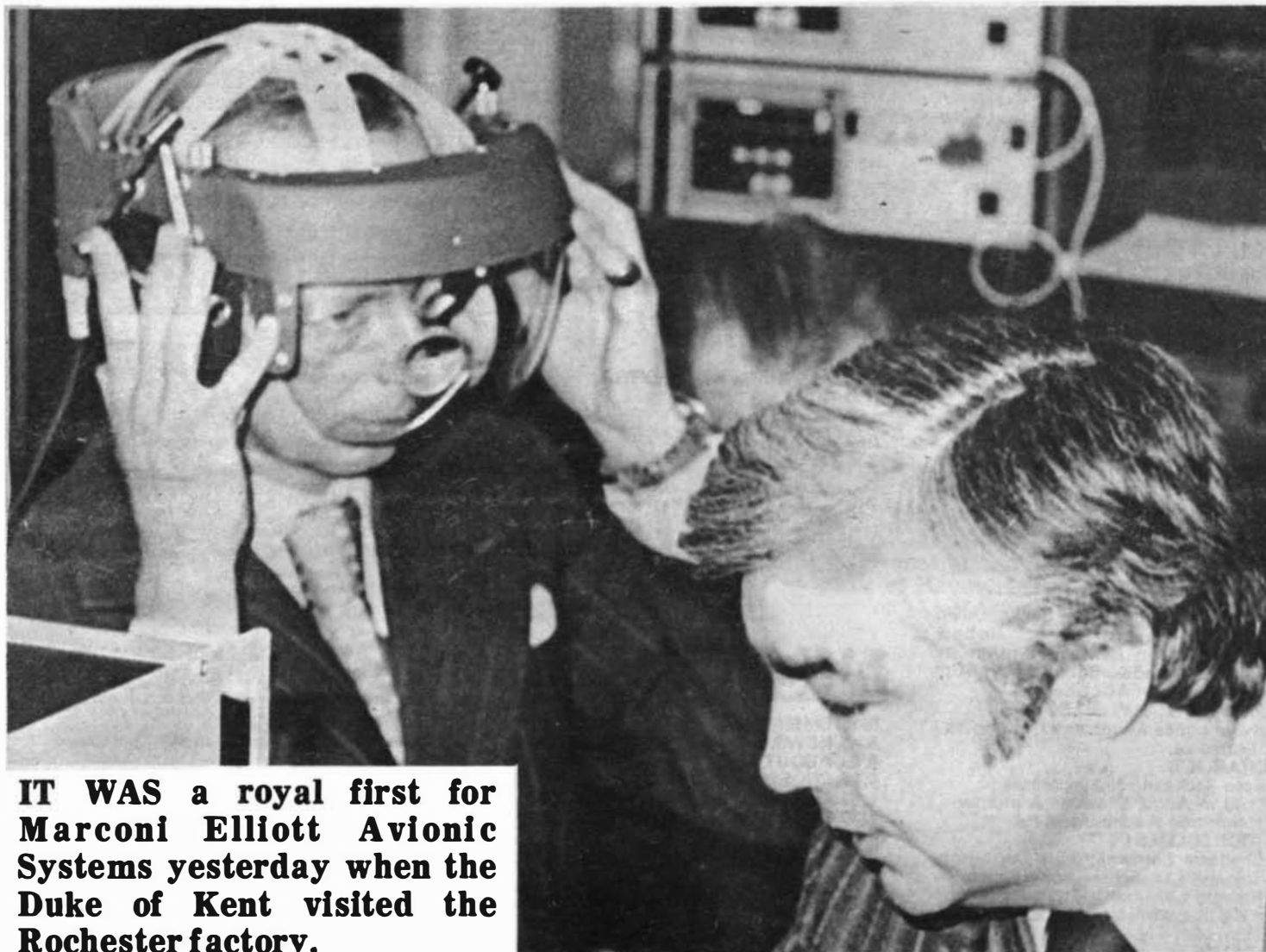


THE DUKE OF KENT AT MARCONI ELLIOTT

A ROYAL FIRST



IT WAS a royal first for Marconi Elliott Avionic Systems yesterday when the Duke of Kent visited the Rochester factory.

He arrived by helicopter at Rochester Airport.

The welcoming party included the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Lord Astor of Hever, the Mayor of Medway, Cllr Arthur Thomas, Marconi Chairman and Dr Bernard O'Kane.

On reaching the buildings the Duke was introduced to Lord Nelson of Stafford, GEC Chairman and other directors, including Jack Pateman, managing director and assistant managing directors Bill Alexander and Peter Mariner.

He was then given a special briefing about the company in the conference room by Dr O'Kane who told him of its achievements and organisation. He was

shown around an exhibition of company products.

After lunch the Duke, who is vice-chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board, went on a walk about around the factory.

DISPLAY

He was shown the central machine shop and met Mr Alf Harrison, director of manufacturing services, and Mr Reg Collins, machine shop manager.

He was then shown the Instrument Systems Division and introduced to Mr Chris Frost, the divisional manager.

In the Airbourne Display Division the Duke showed a special interest in the head-up display helmet, which he wore.

Dave Hussey, market-

AN EVENING POST SOUVENIR SPECIAL

ing executive for ADD, explained how a display unit for anti-submarine patrol work was used and answered questions about the highly sophisticated helmet unit, which allows the pilot to see an image of symbols whichever way he looks.

His last stop was in the Inertial Navigation Division where he saw Jaguar navigation and weapon aiming systems being tested.

The Duke was introduced to former Marconi employee, now Flying Officer Tim Southam, who lives in

Brindle Way, Lordswood, Chatham.

Tim, 28, worked for the company for eight years in the IND but he always had a yearning to fly the Jaguar.

FLYING

So he joined the RAF and is now stationed at Laarbruch, Germany, and has been flying Jaguars for 16 months.

Employee Mrs Stella Barton also had the honour of speaking to the Duke as he toured the factory.

Mrs Barton, of Milburn Road, Gillingham, has worked in the Gyro Division for four years.

She said: "He asked me about my job and I told him I was very happy. I thought he was a very friendly person and although I was a bit nervous he was easy to talk to."

After the Duke left the factory Mr Bill Alexander said he thought the visit had been a great success.

"He was very interested and obviously has a fairly good knowledge of the business.

"I was impressed because he went out of his way to speak to people and they found him very easy to talk to," said Mr Alexander.

Factory tour, then walkabout

• THE Duke tries on a pilot's head up display unit in the factory's Airborne Display Division. With him is Mr Dave Hussey, the division's marketing executive.

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See also Pages 3, 4 and 5

AFTER FLYING IN, THE DUKE GOES WALKABOUT



Marconi clerical worker Stella Barton meets the Duke of Kent. She said: "He was friendly."



The Duke is met at Rochester Airport by Lord Astor of Hever, Lord Lieutenant of Kent.



The Duke talks to Jaguar pilot Tim Southam.



Some of the ladies at the factory catch a glimpse of the Duke on his visit.

Pictures:
ROGER JOHNSON

WIN A £15 VOUCHER

TO HELP YOU EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY THIS CHRISTMAS

In tomorrow's Evening Post there's a really useful guide to restaurants, hotels and discos in the area. It's full of ideas on where to celebrate the festive season. And you can win a voucher for £15.00 to spend where you choose in the featured venues! If you've ever been stuck for an idea on where to eat, drink and be merry, tomorrow's Evening Post is a must!

A PROUD DAY FOR THE WHOLE OF MEDWAY

A ROYAL BOOST FOR BRITAIN'S EXPORT FUTURE

THE visit of the Duke of Kent yesterday to Marconi - Elliott Avionic Systems in this, the Queen's Silver Jubilee year, was a proud occasion for the whole of Medway, a community with a long aviation tradition at Airport Works, Rochester, now the hub of a world - wide business in aviation electronics.

It was appropriate, too, that the Duke, himself a pilot, should arrive at the firm by helicopter, a Wessex of the Queen's Flight.

By landing at adjacent Rochester Airport, which the company now manages for the benefit of business and general aviation, he made the fullest possible use of the time spared from his many other duties.

The Duke, whose energy in promoting British trade abroad is renowned, made the visit in his capacity as Vice Chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board.

He wanted to be briefed on the sophisticated products the

company makes in Medway, Basildon and Borehamwood and on the principal aircraft programmes, at home and abroad, in which the company is now playing such a vital role.

There was, indeed, much to discuss, for the company's products, more numerous than that of any competitor's in the world, equip 135 different types of aircraft, including the most advanced in Britain, Europe and the United States.

SUCCESS

The fact that this business has grown, even while many others were declining, owes much to the dedication of the company's entire workforce to its customer's aircraft pro-

grammes and to the high levels of skill applied to management, design, engineering and manufacture.

Such success, however, stems in the first place from a continuing ability to sell abroad, and the experienced sales force is helped by activities, such as trade delegations and exhibitions world - wide, which promote British exports.

Thus, the visit of the Duke was important for the future of the firm, which already provides more employment than any other in the South East.

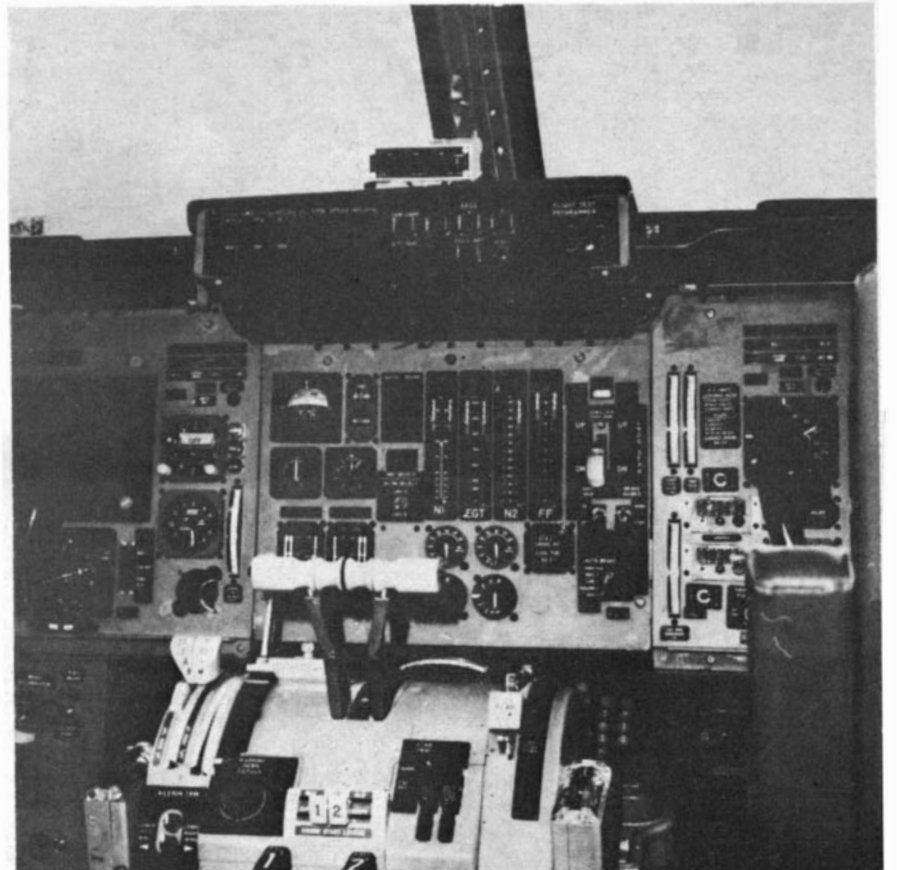
Current sales abroad of the company's end products, the avionic systems for guidance, control instrumentation, operation and support of modern aircraft, already rank high in the nation's aviation exports.

Of the total value of every kind of aviation product, including complete aircraft, engines, spare parts, components, equipment and avionics sold abroad, one twentieth part is due to avionics made by the Rochester - based firm alone.

The time scale between bidding for an export order and delivering the high - technology equipment the customer needs is, however, a long one - often up to five years and sometimes ten.

UNIQUE

Not even the company's successes in securing new orders can give cause for complacency, and the need to create the climate of confidence in Britain in overseas countries and to provide the conditions in which sales teams can complete effectively, is ever present.



The cockpit of Boeing's latest aircraft, the short take - off and landing YC-14, equipped with Marconi - Elliott Avionics flight control electronics.

Competition is strong and, in many countries, is getting even stronger and more determined in response to their own governments' policies.

The British Overseas Trade Board, which was established in 1972, draws its members from industry, the Department of Trade, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Export Credit and Guarantee Department.

Their task, to ensure that official export promotion is effective in every country, is helped by the Central Office of Information which provides literature, films, television and radio programmes, and data for the overseas press.

The news of the achievements and new orders won by Marconi - Elliott Avionic Systems, reaches potential buyers in every overseas country, as the company's correspondence from abroad already witnesses.

Thus the orders won

today are already effective in paving the way for business of the future.

There has been much of late to tell. Recent orders include a breakthrough in which United States helicopters will be equipped with a unique air data system, capable of measuring speed right down to the hover - a new capability which could extend helicopter operations with safety even in bad weather.

The company retained its leadership in the production of head up displays - 1500 of which have been delivered for the United States A-7 aircraft alone - by securing the contract for the General Dynamics F-16, the aircraft ordered by NATO in what was described as "the sale of the century."

In winning the order to supply an advanced automatic throttle control system for Boeing 747 jumbo jets, the

company applied the technology it developed for Concorde.

An entirely new airborne system, which will help RAF Nimrods to detect the presence of the quietest submarines lurking at great depths around our coast, is now to be exported to Australia.

Radio navigation and communications systems, fitted to airliners the world over, continue to win new orders from overseas.

PRIDE

It is achievements like this which the Duke of Kent's visit will help to sustain.

The entire workforce of Marconi - Elliott Avionics can take justified pride in the royal visit, not only because it honours their own successes but also because it expresses a common professional interest in the continuing business of competing overseas - a vital issue for the whole nation.



Promoting good will abroad. A brilliant flying display at the Paris Air Show by former astronaut Neil Anderson of General Dynamics, helped persuade NATO to buy the F-16, which is equipped with the Marconi - Elliott Avionics head up display. Director Peter Hearne presented him with a hand made pewter tankard on behalf of the Rochester team.



Officially - sponsored overseas trade exhibitions like this one in Tokyo, promote British export abroad. Freddy Crewe of Marconi - Elliott Avionics talks with Maj Gen Komatsu of Japanese research, development and procurement department.

WHAT THE DUKE SAW WHEN HE TOURED THE FACTORY



Assistant Managing Director Mr Bill Alexander meets the Duke.



The Duke, in protective glasses, with Medway's Mayor, Cllr Arthur Thomas.



RIGHT: Airborne Display Division Manager Arthur Colewell demonstrates a display unit for anti-submarine patrol work.



The Duke takes a close look at one of the machines.



Mr Reg Collins, manager of Central Manufacturing Services, explains the work done in his department.