

59/60.

THE QUEEN IN YUKON.

Over the forbidding, snow-capped Canadian Rockies is the airway between British Columbia and the romantic Yukon, famed for the Gold Rush of Ninety-eight. The Queen and Duke were on the way north. It would be the first visit of a reigning sovereign to that part of Canada.

Whitehorse, capital of the Yukon, is now a major staging-post of the Canadian Army, an important cog in the mechanism of defense. But it attracts tourists because of its place in the Gold Rush, and does what it can to keep alive the legends of '98.

The Queen's plane touched down at the Canadian Airforce station. One little Whitehorse lady was ready and waiting.

On this brilliant day it wasn't a bit like preconceived notions of the Yukon as frozen solid all the year. The Honourable Alvin Hamilton presented the Commissioner of the Territory and his wife. Whitehorse, by the way, is about the same latitude as the Shetlands Island, so it's entitled to a warm summer.

The little girl chosen to present a bouquet, not being used to such honours, was a bit uncertain. With prompting she got through it.

The Trail of '98 is the name they give to the tourist attractions; an attempt to present Whitehorse as it was when thousands from all over the world poured into the territory in search of a quick fortune. Many reminders of gold rush days are on view in the museum, including pictures of pin-up girls of 60 years ago.

The gold soon petered out, and of the vast number that looked for it very few became rich. But what a legend of fact and fiction was left behind.

It's a far cry from the old steamboats that took hopeful miners along the Yukon River, to the modern town of Whitehorse. Few places on the royal tour can have touched the imagination more strongly. The Queen much regretted that overstrain forced her to cancel the programme fixed for further north.