

Gracie Fields  
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Gracie Fields

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Princess Margaret's visit to Italy this week did not come about altogether on her own suggestion. She casually expressed a wish to go there and the idea was immediately seized upon by the King himself.

Although the Princess has reluctantly had to refuse an invitation to attend a June fund-raising ball for the British Hospital in Paris (the Duchess of Kent is going over instead), I believe that a visit to the French capital is still on the cards. She is anxious to go there, and the French people are eager to welcome her.

When she begins her Italian holiday at Capri, one resident of the island paradise—the most famous and the best-loved resident of them all—will be regretful that she must miss the Royal visit. Who? Gracie Fields.

Gracie, just back here to appear again before her favourite audiences (perhaps for the last time) is making plans to settle down at her lovely villa on Capri—"Song of the Sea." First, though, she is determined to recover her British passport. Gracie is officially an Italian (the nationality of her husband, Monte Banks), but whoever heard of a Lancashire lass being "a foreigner."

Gracie Fields was among passengers who sailed from New York for Southampton on the Queen Mary. She said she will appear on several London television programmes before returning to the United States next month.



### GRACIE SINGS

Gracie Fields had her own remedy "I start to sing my new numbers. I go to the piano, sit down and pick out the notes.

"Doesn't it worry the neighbours? Not on your life, lad. I just IMAGINE I'm doing all these things. Soon the thought of doing them makes me drop off

'We must have a party at Christmas!' The BBC will reflect this seasonal resolve on several occasions over the holiday period, and especially on Christmas afternoon. Immediately after the King's broadcast, Light Programme listeners will hear *Gracie Fields' Christmas Party*. Gracie will be presiding at a real Fields' family reunion. Her mother will sing 'Home Sweet Home'; her father will sing his favourite bathroom song, 'My wife is gone'; her brother Tommy will sing 'I'm shy, Mary Ellen,' the first song he ever sang in public; and her brother-in-law, Duggie Wakefield, will recall the first time he ever



Here you see the happy family group which Gracie Fields gathered round her for her Christmas Party. Left to right, Tommy Fields and his wife, Cynthia; Mr. Stansfield, Gracie's father; Gracie herself; Mrs. Stansfield, her mother; Duggie Wakefield, Gracie's brother-in-law; and (behind) some boys and girls from the Gracie Fields Home and Orphanage