

Memorable "Mike" Moments

(7) Des. Lock

ONE good thing about the ridiculous moments in our lives, we can usually limit our discomfiture to the people immediately concerned — or, if we're lucky, just to ourselves. Radio announcers, on the other hand, are subjected to the merciless ears of a large, unseen audience every time they open their lips before the microphone. So when an awkward moment does by chance crop up they must act quickly and coolly — to save complete demoralisation at the thought of all the unseen consequences that might result from the smallest incident. When we put the question to Des. Lock, of 1ZB about any memorable moment he could remember — a comically rueful expression came into his face, and he said:

"Once it was my good fortune to conduct a relay from a tearoom where a luncheon was in progress. We had just been given the air, and I as announcer on duty, was performing my office nobly and well, when one of the waitresses tripped over the carpet towards me, and presented me, a trifle unconventionally, and in no uncertain manner, with a steaming hot bowl of soup! Which all goes to prove the force of the old saying. 'It's in moments like these. . . !'"

(8) John Gordon

At this point John Gordon, Production Supervisor, interrupted with "Why, that's nothing — listen to this. Quite the most awful mike moment in my experience was a little matter of badly placed breathing. This is the story:

"A nervous announcer, who was I, had to share a microphone with a worthy celebrity who was making public appearances in New Zealand. At the conclusion he was called upon to make a pretty speech of thanks to the Personage, thanking him for coming to the studio the evening before the final concert of his tour, which had been a most popular success. What the nervous announcer meant to say was something like this: 'We much appreciate the visit of Mr. XX the night before his last appearance in New Zealand. We hope, however, that the near future will bring him again to our country for a further triumphal tour.'

"What he did say, forgetting his full stops, and gulping for breath was this: 'We much appreciate the visit of Mr. XX the night before his last appearance in New Zealand we hope . . . !'" (Collapse of Celebrity and all in studio).

BACK FROM ABROAD

"The Listener" Interviews Ken Waterhouse

I WAS tempted to quote from the famous scene in Noel Coward's "Private Lives" to Ken Waterhouse, when he returned from India the other day, with a breathless jumble of "Did you see the burning ghats or gars?" "And of course you saw the Taj Mahal, looking incredibly beautiful by moonlight. And the sacred elephants, they're lint white, I believe, and very very sweet."

Mr. Waterhouse, however, picked my little quotations in an instant, and countered with the fact that India was very hot, that he broadcast from Bombay and Calcutta, that the actual broadcasting was all done by Indians, and that he has learnt to say some things in Hindustani. I asked him to say some. He did, and from the twinkle in his eye when he said it, I am still wondering what it meant!

Ken Waterhouse was on 1ZB's staff in the early days of Commercial Broadcasting, and is also well-known to listeners from 2ZB and 3ZB. He has spent seven or eight months travelling abroad, on extended leave of absence, and has some very interesting things to relate concerning conditions in the radio world overseas. It was on his way to England that he visited India, and he originally hoped to remain there for some time on his way back, but the trouble overseas forced him to change his plans.

Ken can always get the most out of his travelling experiences, and listeners will be eager to hear him tell over the air what befell and what he saw during his stay abroad.

Colombo First

First port of call was Colombo. He was to spend a week there, and was scheduled to give a talk on New Zealand. This proved a great success — especially the Maori music, he says himself — and he was asked to give two more programmes within the week. The interested station director asked for particulars of Maori recordings, and subsequently ordered some for their own use.

At Bombay, too, Ken broadcast in what he says was a most modern and luxurious studio; actually one of about eight, all air-conditioned, beautifully decorated, and equipped for various types of programmes, which are broadcast in some five or six different languages. About ten per cent of these broadcasts consist of European music and English talks.

From the BBC

On to England, and the Mecca of all radio artists—the BBC. And there also Ken broadcast. He gave a talk on Tasmania in the National programme, which was very well received, and earned him

the distinction of appearing in print in the BBC publication "The Listener." This talk evidently caused no little interest among listeners, too, and Ken received many letters, among them a letter from a sculptor and his wife who had lived for a few years in Tasmania. They asked him to visit them. Ken was delighted to go later, when he went to France. They lived in a quaint old village called Bourron on the edge of the Forest of Fontainebleau, than which there are few lovelier forests in the world. He spent a delightful time with them; sightseeing in the village where most of the houses were 15th Century, and in visiting the chateau to meet the Comte and Comtesse, who were very interested in hearing about New Zealand.

Ken spent three and a-half months in London and touring in England; but though he crammed all he was able into his stay in London, the BBC claimed much of his time. It is, he says, a huge organisation, and it is being added to, so that when finished it will be double its present size. He was most impressed by the Effects Studio, which was full of ingenious devices, and the control room, in which about 30 control operators were working on programmes and auditions. Each worked with ear phones and the visitor heard no noise whatever.

Television in England

Ken was taken to Alexandra Palace, to see a television programme in progress. It seemed rather like a movie studio, he says, with the lights and cameras. Television itself is uncanny when seen for the first time. It gives tremendous scope to radio programmes — they can broadcast films, outside broadcasts, plays, reviews; and reception in London is practically perfect. Tuning in to the vision must be split-hairs perfect, otherwise the reproduced picture becomes merely a series of wavy lines.

Commercial radio in England is not particularly remarkable. He went to see one half-hour programme produced for a commercial programme, and there met Barry K. Barnes, Diana Churchill and June Dupré — and Debroy Somers, whose band was playing.

Regretfully Ken left England at the end of three months, and off he went to Paris, where he saw Maurice Chevalier at the Casino de Paris, and he said, with great enthusiasm, "The theatres there were simply wonderful — and the food fit for the Gods!"

He had three weeks in France — and, on the way home, two months in India, which he would very much liked to have extended to several more. Beside his broadcasting, Ken had time to see many forms of Indian art. He says the films were a mixture of Indian and American ideas, the Nautch dancing fascinating — and the Indian plays intensely interesting.

With such memories of a wonderful trip behind him, Ken has come back to the Commercial Service and to his many listeners with many stories to tell and lots of new ideas.

Meet the LADIES



PRETTY Joyce Hamer, popular 4ZB announcer, was born in Dunedin. She was educated at Waitaki and the Otago Girls' High Schools, and further cultivated her talent for elocution by completing her L.T.C.L. Practical Examination in 1935.

She continued her studies in Musical Appreciation and English at the University, and though this meant plenty of concentration and hard work, Joyce still had time to play hard too—and with excellent results.

She represented the N.Z. University in hockey, and the Otago Province in tennis.

Nor did her versatile career end there. Joyce, with an eye on future success in the business world, took a commercial course for typing and shorthand.

Nor did her love of dramatic work diminish at all, and Miss Hamer is a popular and well known member of the Repertory Society, and has appeared several times in the Society's productions. She has also taken part in Operatic Society and Otago University productions.

Music, too, has a large part in her life. She is very interested in orchestral work, and has reason to be proud of her achievement as 2nd violin in the Dunedin Orchestral Society, and the Junior Orchestra.

At the inception of 4ZB in Dunedin Joyce Hamer was appointed to the announcing staff. Her pleasant, clear voice was immediately successful over the air, and to-day thousands of women listeners know and applaud her in her practical and informative Shopping Reporter's Session, which she conducts every day from Monday to Friday inclusive, at 11.30 a.m.

Joyce Hamer is a good example of the modern, self-reliant spirit of many young women earning their living, who do not hesitate to make a place for themselves beside men, competing with them in their game of earning a living, and carving themselves a worthwhile job of work.