

"RADIO HAS IMPROVED MUSICAL TASTE"

"**R**ADIO has a very definite—and good—effect these days on the music publishing business, and though I have not been here long enough to speak particularly of New Zealand conditions, I feel that throughout the British Empire its effect in the last few years has been to improve taste, and widen the knowledge and appreciation of music"—such is the opinion of George Winchester, an Englishman who has recently come to live permanently in New Zealand. For many years Mr. Winchester has been associated with music publishing houses in Britain, so that he has had a long and practical experience of the trends in musical taste.

"After the first world war, radio was the competitor of the music publishers," he told *The Listener*, "but now it is regarded as their ally. When it was more or less a novelty, it took the place of home performance in music, but that stage has passed and people now want to make music themselves, encouraged to a great extent by what they hear over the air. It gives them ideas and they use it as a model."

"How did music publishing fare in wartime England?" he was asked.

Publishers, he explained, became very short both of paper and of labour, but instead of continuing to produce albums (which used large quantities of paper), they concentrated on sheet music, on the scores of choral works, musical plays and so on. Amateur groups and others hired the scores they needed and the demand was greater than ever.

"And what about performances of music?"

"First-class concerts attracted more people than ever; seats were booked weeks ahead, for the Promenade concerts and others; and the daily lunch-hour concerts at the National Gallery were delightfully informal—you bought your lunch in a near-by room and then enjoyed the programmes (often arranged

by Dame Myra Hess) with the Great Masters all around you. The acoustics of the gallery were excellent for string quartets, pianists and singers."

During the war years the composers had been handicapped by the difficulty in getting their work published—with paper and other materials scarce, publishers were not likely to accept work unless there was a good prospect of it selling profitably—but many new compositions were performed from manuscript. At the same time, he did not think that the war itself had been a stimulating influence on composers.

"I would say that there is very little in war to stimulate art. People engaged in war are too worried and too busy for musical creation unless it be of a special type such, for instance, as the 'Warsaw Concerto.' That and the 'Cornish Rhapsody' were phenomenal successes."

What music he had so far heard in New Zealand had greatly impressed him, Mr. Winchester added. There were signs of very good taste in selection, and performing standards were high.

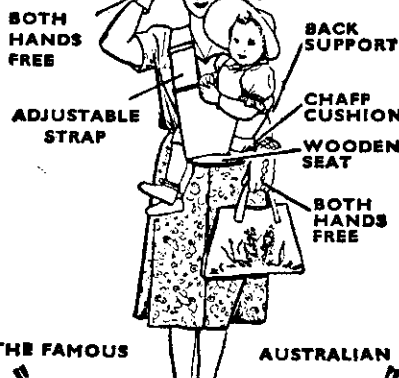


Spencer Digby photograph
GEORGE WINCHESTER
Radio is now an ally



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