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## BBC ACTOR, NZBS PLAY Background to "Bomber Over Marshmoor"

A NEW voice soon to be heard in NZBS productions is that of Dermot Cathie, formerly of the BBC and the London stage. Mr. Cathie has earned his living as an actor and producer for several years and he has come to New Zealand with the idea of settling here. His introduction to the NZBS was by

March 26. In this he takes a dual role. The play, which tied for first place with John Gundry's *A Certain Wilderness* in last year's NZBS radio play competition, uses a spiritualistic theme as dramatic entertainment.

Though authors and playwrights are often unable to recall, specifically, the genesis of their plots—they frequently arise from unrelated incidents — we asked Mr. Snowdon if he could recall



DERMOT CATHIE  
His voice is already familiar



BRIAN SNOWDON  
Monotony set his mind free

way of a letter from Val Gielgud, director of the BBC's drama department, but it was his wife who brought him here. Twelve years or so ago, Enid Nathan, of Palmerston North, went to London to take up stage work, and later she became Mrs. Cathie. She wanted to return to see her people, so her husband came too.

### Plays and Documentaries

Dermot Cathie told us that for the last three years he has been appearing in plays and documentary features for the BBC. One of these was Anthony Trollope's *Framley Parsonage*, in which he played the leading role of the Rev. Mark Robarts. But his voice is already familiar to New Zealand listeners through the BBC serial *Bleak House*, heard from Station 2YD at 9.15 p.m. on Sundays. He plays the role of Dr. Allan Woodcourt. He was also in the BBC documentaries *The Harbour Called Mulberry* and *Radar*. But he is mainly interested in production.

He produced Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* at the Mercury and Westminster Theatres, London, and has taught at the Elsie Fogerty School (London) to which many New Zealand stage aspirants have gone. His present work with the NZBS is in recorded plays and short stories. Later he will be seen and heard as narrator with the National Symphony Orchestra when it presents Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*.

Lately, under Bernard Beeby's direction, Mr. Cathie has been busy with an NZBS production of *Bomber Over Marshmoor* (by a Wellington writer, Brian Snowdon) which will be heard from 2YA at 8.0 p.m. on Wednesday,

how he hit on the idea of a man talking to his own spirit and not recognising the answering voice. He, too, found that hard. All he could say was that he thought up the play when he was engaged on a job so monotonous that his mind was free to wander into fantasy. He also wrote *Young Rex Harrison*, heard from 2YA about four years ago, not knowing when he chose the title that there was a film star of the same name. This play was based on a coal-mining incident related to him by friends.

"I've had writer's itch since I was about 16," he said. "I used to turn out a short story about once a week, bombarding the magazines, and I suppose my weekly earnings averaged about 3d." Helped by a friend he started his writing career with a hand-printed publication which he called the "Brighton Magazine" and which ran for three years, the friend doing all the illustrations. At Wellington College he contributed to *The Tide*, later editing it, and he also edited the Victoria University College magazine *Spike*, designing a cover which was used for two years. Now he is on the staff of a Wellington newspaper.

### PRINCESS TE PUEA HERANGI,

who is particularly energetic in preserving the customs of her people, has arranged a regatta to take place at Ngaruawahia on Saturday, March 29. The Governor-General will be present and will be received with full ceremony on the marae at Ngaruawahia. Broadcasts of the regatta will be made by 12B at various times during the afternoon.