



LIEUT. J. C. BRANDT, of H.M.S. Theseus, and Ian Curtis, of IYA, record the scene on the carrier's flight deck

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ever, and women in the States so rarely have a nurse of any kind that they train each other in mothercraft.

Christmas became a milestone with me. That first Christmas in Utah I watched my new family decorate their trees with the accumulated glitter and tinsel of a life-time, heard Christmas carols drift across the cold crisp streets of Salt Lake, went to parties, wrapped and opened packages like a polite stranger, lost and out of my depth. Later, in the Northwest, where it never snows for Christmas, but where nothing else is missing from the festival, I began to see the pattern and meaning of such hectic festivities. And this last Christmas, with a two-year-old running underfoot, I had scarcely time to be amused by the change in my attitude as I worked frantically with the rest shopping in great crowds for the symbols and decorations that make it such a lucrative season commercially, and as I packed and parcelled, dressed and decked the tree. Tired out, we waited for the morning for the child to have the first magic of that lighted tree, and all day long our flat was full of the neighbour's children. Then there was my first turkey, trussed and stuffed, basted and watched through all the morning, and the meal that was as American as cranberry sauce.

Getting a Job

If my family gently persuaded me into the ways of America, going out to get a job took away the last vestiges of reserve, misunderstanding, and tension. I tried to teach in Oregon but that State demands American citizenship as a first essential. After the local authorities turned me down I tried a teacher's agency, a shabby concern that takes a five per cent cut for its services. The agent looked at me blandly and said "They don't like foreigners in Oregon!" Hairdos and hats in windless cities; better cosmetics, and sharper feminine competition had levelled me off nicely. I had never felt less a foreigner, looked less one. "Oh, don't be offended! Anyone from California is a foreigner here. . . ."

Foreign birth was no disqualification on the lower level of education and I worked very happily in a nursery school. There I lost my tag, "war-bride." None of those busy women who brought their children in early in the morning had time to express their curiosity and very soon I had my own identity back again.

"Long, Hard, But Exhilarating"

Being weaned from our more spartan existence, from certain prejudices, until I could live at peace with myself and my neighbours, was a long, hard, but exhilarating experience. After three and a half years I had begun to get the feel of America, to weigh the good against the bad, the great and magnificent against the petty and drab; progress against reaction. I even understood the Immigration Officer who held my re-entry permit in one hand as he said,

"I've been all over . . . Europe, South America, the Pacific . . . I admit I haven't been to New Zealand, but I'll take Portland, Oregon, every time. . . ."

I understood him, but five days from sailing time is no time for argument, and I took my permit and left.

There was, of course, a taxi-driver in Portland who told me more about trout-fishing in New Zealand than I had ever known, and who dreamed of coming here to try it out; there was a forestry graduate who tested out his half-formed decision to bring his family here on a meeting with a dinkum New Zealander; there were students who planned their coming here on rehabilitation bursaries without ever having met a single New Zealander. And there was Norman Corwin, who broadcast all over the CBS network more good things about life in New Zealand than most Americans imagine can exist outside the United States.

But it was hard to leave San Francisco and I was glad that it was. A certain smugness stayed with me all the way across the Pacific. Some of it disappeared in Auckland, where a taxi-driver, thinking I was an American, charged me five bob for a quarter of a mile from the wharf to my hotel.

(To be Continued.)

GETTING THE NAVY TAPED

NZBS Tests New Recorder At Sea

IN terms of human relationships, the visit of the aircraft carrier Theseus was important, for many hundreds of new friendships were formed; but the visit was interesting, too, in terms of radio, for the recordings made on the carrier during exercises off Auckland were something new in New Zealand broadcasting history.

To the average listener, tuned to 12B on Sunday evening, September 21, or to 1YA a week later, these broadcasts were probably little different from similar recorded radio reports previously heard; to the discerning listener, however, there was greater fidelity, clarity and continuity.

The reason for this was that for the first time—apart from test trials—the new NZBS tape recorder was used. Previous broadcasts of this type have been either disc-recorded or made with a wire recorder. The advantages of the new machine are many and any experienced radio technician or broadcaster will enthuse over it at length.

The machine is about the size of a large mantel model radio. On top are two reels, similar to those used on a film projector but about seven inches in diameter and wide enough to carry the quarter-inch tape, which is like a paper streamer, black on one side and grey on the other, and metal impregnated. The tape passes from one reel to the other through two knobs about an inch wide. One of these is the obliterator, which removes from the tape any previous recordings made on it and the second is the recorder, which works on magnetic principles.

In one corner of the top of the machine there is a small hole into which is plugged the lead to the microphone. Above this are five buttons and four switches, for stopping and starting the machine, for recording or playing, and for volume and tone control.

When it is wanted to make a recording, the machine is plugged into the power, the controls switched to "record" and the announcer says his piece, or lets the noises he wishes recorded come over the microphone. When he has finished he calls "cut" over the microphone, the technician stops the machine, and if it is necessary to hear what has been recorded he can immediately switch the controls to "play" and the recording can be heard over the speaker in the machine. The tapes can be used many times, previous recordings being automatically obliterated when the machine is set to "record," but if it is wanted to superimpose something upon a recording this can be done by running the tape round the side of the obliterator instead of through

it. If the tape should break when the machine is running, or if the spool finishes, the machine automatically stops.

The machine has these advantages over the disc recorder: It is more compact; it can run without having to put in a new spool for a very much longer time than it takes to complete the recording of a disc; it does not have to be absolutely level when recording—it will function on its side or even while being moved around—and noise such as close gunfire, which would ruin a disc, can be recorded on the tape without trouble.

It is much simpler to edit than either a disc or wire recorder, for the tape can be cut with a pair of scissors and the two ends joined up, whereas wire recorder editing has to be done when a disc is made from it and similarly in the case of a disc recorder when a second disc is made from it. A wire recorder of the type used by Norman Corwin in his One World Flight series is about half the size of the tape recorder being used by the NZBS, but the latter provides no difficulty when it is being carried around, even up and down companionways on an aircraft carrier.

Then the tape has greater fidelity and clarity than the wire, technicians consider, and it can achieve greater continuity than the disc. An example of the practical value of the last-mentioned advantage is the case of an unrehearsed radio interview. If this is made on a disc recorder, the interviewee has to be asked to stop giving his views while the disc is being changed, and then to carry on as if there had been no hiatus. This, as might be imagined, is a very difficult thing for the inexperienced broadcaster to do. As regards the practical results of the former two points, this is something listeners will be able to appreciate themselves in future programmes of radio "reportage."



NORMAN EDWARDS, senior technician at IYA, with the tape-recorder aboard the carrier Theseus