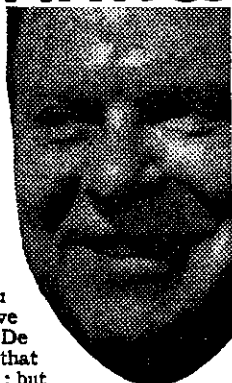


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THOUSAND NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENT

"Dad and Dave" Approaches its Millennium

IF a vote was taken to-day to discover the most popular feature on the air, a place close to the top of many people's lists would probably be reserved for that hardy Australian perennial, *Dad and Dave from Snake Gully*. Yet it will be a surprise to some listeners to learn that next week (at 8.30 p.m. on Sunday, September 5) *Dad and Dave* will reach its thousandth episode from Station 2YD Wellington. At the rate of two episodes a week, this means that for New Zealand listeners *Dad and Dave* is nearly 10 years old, and a search through the announcer's logs at 2YD revealed that the first episode was broadcast on December 14, 1937. In Australia, where it is still featured from several stations, it has been going even longer than that.

One of the most regular listeners to *Dad and Dave* is, naturally, 2YD's Station Manager, D. T. Venables, who admits that he has heard practically every episode. He also told *The Listener* some amusing tales about the serial's past history. One year, he remembered—it was about a week before Christmas and at the time of a visit to New Zealand by the real-life actors of *Fred and Maggie Everybody*—the 2YD announcer unthinkingly ad-libbed something like

this: "Make sure you are with us next week on Christmas Day when Dad and Dave will be holding a special Christmas dinner."

Numbers of listeners misunderstood this as meaning that Dad and Dave were going to be present in Wellington in person, and the station was inundated with letters and 'phone messages from people asking for invitations. In vain they were told that Dad and Dave would be present only on the usual recordings. Many thought they were being cut out of a novel Christmas treat, and the subject of Dad and Dave's Christmas dinner is still supposed to rouse a slight resentment towards the Broadcasting Service in certain quarters.

On another occasion the usual Thursday night's episode was by mistake left out of 2YD's programmes. As the time for the broadcast drew near and then passed, telephone calls began to pour in from indignant listeners. High broadcasting officials were dragged away from their firesides, while at 2YD the telephones jangled incessantly. Eventually the Postmaster-General himself rang to find what the trouble was, because the city's telephone exchange was becoming choked with calls to 2YD. In the end a special announcement was made over the air apologising for the mistake and promising a double episode the following Sunday.



LORNA BINGHAM

She plays Annie—and writes the scripts

But if listening to *Dad and Dave* is a regular weekly habit with fewer people now than it was in those days, its popularity still appears to be fairly high. Nearly every month the NZBS receives one or two letters asking for the names and photographs of the actors playing the various roles.

The reasons for this popularity are not hard to find. Dad and Dave and the rest of the family are supposed to represent typical Australian outback characters, not very witty or clever, but full of that sturdy commonsense, self-reliance and humour in the face of adversity that is said to characterise

Anzacs. Their story is a simple and unassuming one, and is enjoyed because it is no more than that.

Dad and Dave Rudd originally appeared in the novels of the Australian humorist Steele Rudd (Arthur Hoey Davis), whose *On Our Selection* was first published in 1899. The books became so popular that films were made about the Rudd family, with Bert Bailey in the leading role. The radio serial is produced by the George Edwards company.

As the serial stands at present, Dave and Mabel are married and have twins. Dave has just gone off to an Agricultural College to learn the scientific way of farming, but at home the drama of the



GEORGE EDWARDS, who produces "Dad and Dave" and also plays the part of Dad

(continued on next page)

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