

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

Letters sent to "The Listener" for publication should be as brief as possible, and should deal with topics covered in "The Listener" itself. Correspondents must send their names and addresses even when it is their wish that these should not be published. We cannot undertake to give reasons why all or any portion of a letter is rejected

DUTCH STATION CLOSES

To the Editor,
"The Listener"

Sir,—Last night (Tuesday, December 26), Station PCJ, "The Happy Station," Hilversum, Holland, announced that they were temporarily withdrawing their Tuesday evening programme for Australasia, due to the present situation. Knowing that many listeners would have been on holiday, I take this opportunity of telling the many thousands of PCJ listeners this sad announcement.

PCJ has been broadcast regularly for Australia and New Zealand, and with L. G. Wybrands at the microphone, it has been one of the most popular sessions on the shortwaves as far as New Zealand is concerned, and has a following of many thousands of listeners. Mr. Wybrands also announced that it was his last broadcast on shortwave, and so many New Zealanders lose a real friend, whose knowledge of this country, all gained through reading, made him at home when sending his happy sessions dedicated to us.

I am sure I am expressing the sentiments of thousands of listeners when I say that we hope that PCJ will be back with a special session in the not too distant future.

Yours etc.,
Arthur T. Cushen

Invercargill,
December 27, 1939.

THE OLD TRANSPORTS

To the Editor,
"The Listener"

Sir,—The article in this week's *Listener*, "The Old Transports," by "23/762," reminded me of our trip, 18th Reinforcements on the Willochra (67, I think her number was that trip). My wife sent me a newspaper cutting which I have kept in my pay-book ever since. I thought you would publish it as I expect there are still some of the 18th Reinforcement men left. Also it will show your readers what a big task the British Navy undertakes guarding these transports through waters infested by submarines and raiders.

Yours, etc.,
S. H. READ,
28206 B. Coy., 18th Reinf.,

(We have not the space for the whole article, but are pleased to make these extracts from it.—Ed.)

"The earlier part of the voyage was uneventful; the ship's company had shaken down into their places, when the wireless jarred them into consciousness of something wrong. They were ordered to put into port, and into a port that had never been a port of call for troopships. In this port they found a small fleet of British war vessels—a first-class battleship, three armoured cruisers, and several armed merchantmen—and among these they lay for ten days, their company gradually swelling as ship after ship was driven in by the same warning of danger. It was evidently a very pressing one, for within the ten days five Australian and three African transports lay at anchor beside them. This long and anxious wait was ended by an order to put to sea on independent courses, and make for the port where the Willochra was to receive her gun—for up to this time she was unarmed. Her gun mounted, the transport turned her nose towards England. Three days she made without interference, and then received a hurry call to turn and proceed at all speed back to the port in which she had already been hung up for ten days. The ship received over the wireless a full description of a raider that was out. Again this port became the rendezvous of transport

after transport, hurriedly intercepted by the wireless, until at the end of this third week of hiding there were 50,000 troops in that port. The composition of the battle fleet lying there had changed. The battleship had sailed, but a fine French cruiser had replaced her, and there were more armed merchantmen.

"Finally the Willochra was sent out with four other transports under escort of an armed cruiser, which accompanied them the whole way. They proceeded like drunken ships, making a truly astonishing wake for the bewilderment of any lurking periscope.

For several days the Willochra continued to zig-zag over the face of the waters, and then dark smudges of smoke on the horizon grew with inconceivable rapidity into the long racing forms of seven destroyers swinging down upon them at an even 45 knots. They were a British unit sent to escort the troopships, although the latter were still three days from their final port, and on the last day out 11 more destroyers appeared and formed a girdle round them, while a mine-sweeper slowly searched the sea ahead of them.")

PRONUNCIATIONS

To the Editor,
"The Listener"

Sir,—Your correspondent, Peter Beaty, makes a suggestion concerning the right pronunciation of certain words. During his recent visit to New Zealand His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester had occasion several times to use the word "Centenary"; and in three several cases he said it in three different ways, viz.: "Centenary," "Centennary" and "Centenary."

No doubt His Highness was loath to offend the susceptibilities of those who favour one or other of these ways of pronouncing this word. But I think many people would be grateful for an authoritative lead in this matter.

Yours, etc.,
H. W. LEE.

Auckland,
December 17, 1939.

(BBC recommend "Centenary," with accent on second syllable. We recommend you to use "Centennial."—Ed.)

TWO "LAST WORDS"

To the Editor,
"The Listener"

Sir,—Would you allow me the privilege of two "last words" in connection with the "Meet the Ladies" write-up last week? Regarding the statement that I was the first woman in New Zealand to do general reporting on a metropolitan daily paper, I would like to make it clear that several others have done this class of work, but I was, so far as I know, the first and only woman engaged exclusively in general reporting on the staff of a city daily, and admitted to membership as a reporter in the Journalists' Union.

The reference to my ride down "the little-known Hollyford Valley" might lead to complications with my Southland friends, who are justly proud of the world-fame that the Hollyford Valley has achieved within the last few years! The ride in question was down the Lower Hollyford—a very different proposition! When we made the trip three or four years ago, we found at the Pyke River Hut a note left there nearly three months before by a couple of marooned trappers—nobody had visited the hut in all that time, and I think our two parties were the only ones that did the Lower Hollyford that summer.

The Upper Hollyford, which is, of course, the outstanding feature of the new Milford road, is a very different proposition—at the present time, I should imagine one could hardly see the road for the cars!

I am, etc.,
ELSIE K. MORTON

Auckland,
December 20, 1939.

DX NOTES

To the Editor,
"The Listener"

Sir,—I would like to add my appreciation to that of Mr. Sutherland in reference to the space allotted to the DX notes. To me they are the first feature I look for when my *Listener* arrives. I would like to see a little more space allowed this association, as I know these notes are very widely read.

In regard to the news in English Bulletins, may I suggest the wavelength be given in megacycles as well as in metres. Most modern shortwave receivers are calibrated in megacycles, which makes for quicker and more accurate tuning. With so many stations operating on each wave-band, it is difficult at times to sort them out. I enclose a few additions and alterations to your list of stations broadcasting news in English. As I pick up further times and wavelengths I will forward them on to you if you require them. In this way I hope to show my appreciation of your generosity in providing space for the DX notes.

Best wishes for 1940,
Yours etc.,
DUAL-WAVE.

Auckland,
December 27, 1939.

LATEST WAR BULLETINS IN ENGLISH

Japan: 11.72 meg., 9.55 p.m., not 9.30 p.m.
Radio Saigon: 11.78 meg., 11.30 to 11.45 p.m., not 11 p.m., and 3.30-4.30 a.m.
VLW3, Australia: 11.83 meg., 11.15 p.m.
VLR, Australia: 9.58 meg., 9.0 p.m., not 8.15 p.m.
Paris: 11.88 meg., 8.15 p.m.
Paris: 7.32 meg., 8.15 p.m., not 16.88 m.
Also the Australian Government have two stations VLQ, 9.6 meg., and VLQ2, 11.87 meg., which broadcast nightly a review of Australia's war effort in Spanish (7.30 p.m.), English (8.15 p.m.), and French (8.45 p.m.).
P.S.—The above times are N.Z.S.T.

ENSIGN McKENNA, V.C.

The Editor,
"The Listener"

Sir,—J.G.W.'s letter of December 10 last reminds me of another fact worthy of note: The Sergt. McKenna mentioned by him—with whom I was well acquainted—was the only Imperial soldier to be "raised from the ranks" and given a commission during the war in New Zealand of the troops sent from Britain in 1860.

The rank of "Ensign" to which he was raised is, apparently, no longer extant in the British Army.

I am relying entirely on my own recollection of what was told to me between fifty and sixty years ago when the memory of the Maori War was as fresh in the minds of adults as that of the last Great War is in the minds of adults of to-day. Further, my recollection of those days is that the Army authorities must have been very niggardly with their V.C.'s if "Hero stories" of many an old soldier who, on Pension Day, "shouldered his crutch and showed how fields were won" had been made known to them.

Yours, etc.,
I.P.S.

Turua, Hauraki Plains,
January 7, 1940.