

## EIGHT HUNDRED AUTOGRAPHS

"Tell them I haven't really a face like a horse," said "Maggie," writing furiously her three hundred and eightieth autograph.

AN enormous table, its whole polished surface spread out before her and the family—Fred, Maggie and small daughter hard at work at their seemingly endless task.

"It's been the same at every station we stopped at all through the South Island," said Maggie pathetically. "I've written my name so often I've forgotten how to spell it!"

And she's not like a horse either. I had to agree about that. Her hair's lovely—golden red and wavy and coiled at the nape of her neck quite simply, without any fuss. Her skin's lovely too—the kind that goes with that hair. Eyes large and darkest grey with long mid-brown lashes.

"What do you have to say about me?" she asked.

"Ordinary things, like cooking and . . ."

"Oh? Well, but I can't. I'm no good. Fred's a better cook than I am. Maca-

roni cheese is his favourite. And he's our best coffee maker. I love a garden. I hate clothes. I'm mad about animals—and the races. I can't swim much and I'm terrified of surf. . . ."

"Tell about animals first," I begged.

"O—well, they're an obsession. We've always got a house full of strays—as well, of course, as Maggie the Dog, Pitti-sing the Cat, Canaries, Budgies, Lovebirds, Goldfish. Maggie (the dog) had five puppies, and then couldn't feed them! We had to rush home every day after broadcasts to give them prepared food.

"Who's looking after all this menagerie while you're away?"

"O—my girl friend, Thelma Scot. She'd be known here—over the air. She's our 'Mrs. Sproggins' and 'Sonia,' the Viennese maid. And she was Mary Queen of Scots and Anne Boleyn in 'Coronets of England.' She's got the flat and all."

## THEY WORK WHILE THEY TALK TO THE LISTENER

*The Everybodies*  
Interviewed  
By Ann Slade



"Now clothes," I suggested.

"O, clothes—yes, well I like them but I just can't be bothered with them."

I thought how the pinafore dress with its great loose sleeves gathered in to the wrist, and the low neckline suited her.

"I'm happiest in slacks—slacks and pyjamas. I never wear anything else at home. Another thing I love is driving. But Fred's a driver, too, so it means whoever gets the car first. He hates playing passenger."

Fred had scarcely lifted his sleek dark head. He wrote diligently, passing the books on with occasional directions.

"Who writes your scripts?" I asked.

"O, we all do that," he said now. "At least, I write them—seven a week—but they give me ideas. Madeleine, too, and jolly good ones."

"How many have you done to date?"

Fred looked up. "Eight hundred and fifty-seven," he said.

Two assistants were unwrapping and wrapping again—addressing and posting—as hard as they could go.

## A WELCOME AS FOR ROYALTY

Christchurch literally "got off its bicycle" when those famous radio personalities "Fred and Maggie Everybody" and little "Daisy Sproggins" arrived in the City during the course of their triumphant tour of the Dominion just after the New Year. From the moment they landed at Lyttelton, until they left for Dunedin, Christchurch witnessed one of the most amazing demonstrations of enthusiasm that has been shown to anyone other than Royalty.

Fred and Maggie must qualify as the Royal Family of Radio.

When thousands of people gather just to catch a glimpse of three people, when they cheer and roar a vociferous welcome, you can take it for granted that those people really represent something.

And they do.

In Fred and Maggie and the quaint little "Daisy Sproggins," the lives of ordinary people, their ordinary little joys and troubles, their worries and hopes, are typified.

The first cheers came from the wharf employees at Lyttelton when Fred and Maggie and Daisy Sproggins stepped off the boat.

In the meantime, thousands of people were milling about the Studio. The

problem was to get the popular pair to 3ZB.

### Traffic problems

Police and traffic officials found themselves struggling to cope with a crowd of almost unprecedented dimensions. Two officers had to force a path through the crowd outside the hotel to allow them to enter the car. Outside the studio it was worse, but eventually they made a triumphant if somewhat dishevelled appearance.

Here Maggie was presented with a spray of scarlet carnations by members of the Travel Club, who put more formally into words the enthusiastic welcome to Christchurch expressed by the vast crowd outside.

Little Daisy Sproggins, in the meantime, had been resting at the hotel, and after the visit to the Studio, Fred and Maggie returned to pick her up for a visit to the hospital.

It is impossible adequately to convey more than impressions of this visit. It was obvious that Fred and Maggie, the "Everybodies" of radio, had become

something of importance to those people compelled perhaps to be mere spectators of the lives of the greater human everybody family.

From the hospital, Fred, Maggie and Daisy (the last surreptitiously consuming biscuits picked up at a grocer's shop en route), went on to the community sing. Maggie had to swallow hard when the audience stood and cheered until they had left the hall.

### Police Have to Help

More was to follow. At 8 p.m. a studio presentation was arranged, and by 7 o'clock every conceivable nook and cranny was crammed with excited people. Shortly after seven the Traffic Department found that they could no longer cope with the traffic problems, and the police came along to help them. From the hotel, along Colombo Street to the studio, it was impossible to see just where the car could go. With the assistance of the largest policeman that Maggie had ever seen the car drew up near 3ZB. Here they were mobbed. Maggie lost her hairpins and Fred almost lost his coat. But the studio presentation was an immense success.

### "Tallest Ever"

Then on to the St. James's Theatre. Again Maggie's "tallest policeman ever" came to the rescue when Maggie got lost in the crowd.

In the morning they left for Dunedin, and among the crowd, almost the last person to say good-bye to Maggie, was the "tallest policeman ever."



In 3ZB Studio