

A. G. MACDONELL'S DEATH

A Tribute Broadcast From The BBC

By Reginald Pound

ALL who knew A. G. Macdonell, and especially those who worked closely with him, as I did, for several delightful and stimulating months, are united not simply in a common and faithful regret, but in a complete inability to believe the occasion for it. When this evening I heard of his death I was more deeply shocked than by any similar news I have heard for a long time.

By birth a hundred per cent. Scots, in appearance and speech he was 150 per cent. Englishman. I may be allowed to quote from something I wrote about him in a book of mine last year. Describing him, I said: "He has the facade of a brigadier, the wit of a beau sabreur! In fact, he was the most soldierly looking of our writers. More so even than Major P. C. Wren, and much more so than Major-General Ian Hay."

Like a soldier, too, he expressed his opinion, as you know, straight from the shoulder, and he was no great respecter of persons. Some of his very best works

of gossip to write about, a lively new idea for a book or an article, or a talk to discuss with you. And many of you I am sure will agree he imparted something of this gift of friendship to his broadcasting—many listeners must have felt that he was taking them personally into his confidence.

I shall be going home this week-end to the Sussex village in which he laid the scene of the celebrated cricket match in his first and in many ways his most memorable book, "England, Their England." I shall take down from my shelves the copy he inscribed and gave me, as he did all his later books. Slipped between the pages I shall find some of his letters, which I now remember he always finished with the phrase, "Yours, Till Death do us Part."



A. G. MACDONELL

"HIS WITTY COMMENTARIES"

A. G. Macdonell, who was only 45 years of age, was a regular broadcaster in the BBC Overseas Service for some months last year, and his well-informed and witty commentaries had a very large public. Mr. Macdonell was one of the many Scots who succeeded in England. He was educated at the famous Winchester School, and there is a beautiful reference to the school in the book that made his name, "England, Their England."

He served with one of the Highland Divisions in the Great War, and after the war made two unsuccessful attempts to enter Parliament as a member of the Liberal Party. He also served on the Headquarters Staff of the League of Nations Union for five years. His books, which include "England, Their England," "How Like an Angel," "Lords and Masters," and "Flight from a Lady," have been widely read for their satire and their wit.—(A tribute from the NBS, Saturday, January 18).

He was so eagerly, so humorously, so very alive, so enormously interested in people and events, so immediately responsive to every sympathetic appeal of mind and heart, so very keen to make friends, and so loyal always in keeping them. But it seems absurd that all this vivid thought and integrity of personality should have gone from us. I feel sure you must have caught some of this spirit in his many broadcast talks to you.

consisted of criticism, but he was rarely unkind and still more rarely unfair, and he could be impulsively generous.

Most genuine humorists have a gloomy side to their temperament. Unlike some humorists of my acquaintance, Macdonell seldom inflicted his darker moods on others. He had his troubles but he would keep away from his friends until his natural high spirits came back, until he had a new joke to tell you, a fresh bit

POLAR EXPLORERS VISIT 4ZB

Sidelights On Admiral Byrd

ALTHOUGH Auckland and Wellington are usually the favourite cities as far as visiting celebrities are concerned, there is one field in which Dunedin scores heavily. Antarctic expeditions almost invariably call there.

lations officer of the expedition, just what it aimed to do.

Lieutenant-Commander Lystad, who was interviewed in the studio a couple of days later, has had an exciting career. He has commanded the North Star in both Arctic and Antarctic waters, and has created a record by taking his ship within twelve months as far north and as far south on the surface of the globe as it is possible for a vessel to sail.

The following evening Don Donaldson interviewed Roger Hawthorne again. In addition to relating his personal experiences, Mr. Hawthorne was able to give listeners an insight into the character of Admiral Byrd. This interview was repeated from 2ZB.

Story Of Today's Children

A new serial soon to start from the ZB Stations is "To-day's Children," a homely, true-to-life story of an Irish family in America. Centre of the family is the big-hearted mother, who has struggled for years to give her three daughters and her son a start in life, and who suddenly realises, when one of her children leaves for New York to study music for a year, just what the breaking up of her family means to her.

"To-day's Children," which is presented by Harvey Adams, starts from 2ZB on Monday, February 3; 1ZB February 10; 3ZB February 17; and 4ZB February 24. It will be heard at 10.45 a.m. from Monday to Fridays.

About a year ago Station 4ZB carried out several interesting broadcasts when Admiral Byrd and his men were in Dunedin on their way to and returning from Little America. Another opportunity occurred recently when the North Star called in on her way back to pick up men and supplies.

Fifteen minutes after the North Star had berthed, Don Donaldson of 4ZB was on board renewing friendships made a year ago, and within an hour Dunedin listeners heard from Lieutenant-Commander Lystad and Roger Hawthorne, public re-

THEY DIED IN 1940

PEOPLE who are under an impression that obituaries are necessarily dull and depressing should tune in to the programme "They Served Mankind," heard from 2YA at three o'clock on Sunday afternoons.

"They Served Mankind" commemorates celebrities and leading personalities who died during 1940, last Sunday's programme dealing with those whose deaths occurred during the first six months of the year. These included Colonel Crompton (who had the distinction of being slapped by Queen Victoria), Noble, the Australian cricketer, Senator Borah, Lord Tweedsmuir and Michael Joseph Savage.

Next Sunday the feature will deal with Katherine Mayo (author of "Mother India"), Tom Mix, Sir Oliver Lodge, Cherry Kearton, W. H. Davies, Sir J. J. Thompson, and a whole group of Empire figures, including Neville Chamberlain, Lord Lothian, Lord Craigavon, Lord Strickland, Sir Abe Bailey and Sir Wilfred Grenfell.

On the following Sunday, tribute will be paid to stage and concert celebrities who died in 1940.



"PERSONALITIES OF THE WEEK" interviewed recently from 1ZB by Hilton Porter included two members of the Gilbert and Sullivan company and a visitor from Singapore. From left, front: Hilton Porter, F. L. Shaw of Singapore and Thea Ryan (1ZB studio pianist); back: Peggy Shea and Bernard Manning of the Gilbert and Sullivan company.