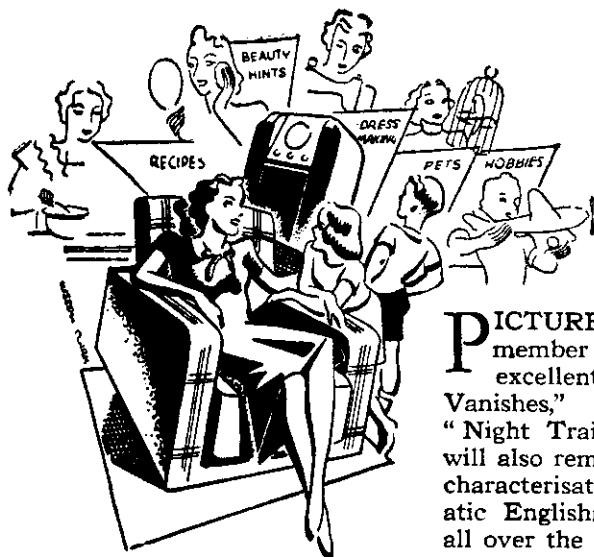


# Women and the Home

Radio is the slender wire that brings the world and its affairs into the tiny kitchens and living rooms which hitherto had isolated so many housekeepers in the performance of their duties  
—Margaret Bondfield

## INTERVIEW

### THE BIRD LADY



#### These Should Interest You:

Talks prepared by the A.C.E. Home Science Tutorial Section, University of Otago:

- "Shades of Autumn," Monday, March 17, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 2YA 3 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.
- "Pantry Stocktaking," Thursday, March 20, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.; Friday, March 21, 2YA 3 p.m.
- "Thrill in the Kitchen," Wednesday, March 19, 4YA 3.15 p.m.
- "Farewell Parties," Friday, March 21, 4YA 3.15 p.m.
- "Our Natural Heritage and What We Are Doing With It," by "Belinda," Monday, March 17, 1YA 10.45 a.m., 4YA 10.40 a.m.

#### From The ZB Stations

- "Romance in Music," all ZB Stations, 10.0 a.m., Mondays.
- "Filmland Session, 12B, 1.0 p.m., Tuesday, March 18.
- The Morning Star—Harold Williams, 22B, Sunday, March 16, 10.15 a.m.
- The Easter Brides' Session, 32B 3.30 p.m., Thursday, March 19.
- "Two's Company," 42B, 4.0 p.m., Friday, March 21.
- "Radio Rotogravure," 22A, 7.15 p.m., Sundays.

- "Concussion and Compression," Talk by a representative of St. John Ambulance. Tuesday, March 18, 2YA 11.30 a.m.
- "Cooking by Electricity," by Miss D. McStay. Wednesday, March 19, 4YA 11.20 a.m.
- Talks by Major F. H. Lampen, Thursday, March 20.
- "Just What Might Have Been—If," 1YA 10.45 a.m.
- "Just Looking Backwards," 2YA 11 a.m.
- "Just Listening-in," 3YA 11 a.m.
- "Just Our Village Again," 4YA 10.40 a.m.
- "A Backblocks Woman Remembers: The Bride in the Bush," by Mrs. Mary Scott. Friday, March 21, 4YA 7.15 p.m.
- "A Few Minutes with Women Novelists," by Margaret Johnston. Saturday, March 22, 1YA 10.45 a.m., 2YA 11 a.m., 3YA 11 a.m., 4YA 10.40 a.m.

PICTURE-GOERS will remember with pleasure that excellent film "The Lady Vanishes," and more recently, "Night Train to Munich." They will also remember those priceless characterisations of two phlegmatic Englishmen, a type familiar all over the globe.

But the men have not got it all their own way. There is their feminine counterpart; the typical, globe-trotting British woman. From the Andes to Hong-Kong, she is a familiar and respected figure. She is quiet, determined. She will face lions, deluges, and earthquakes with the same equanimity. Cartoonists have sketched her, a small, sturdily-built figure with nondescript dress, a glint in her eye, and a line to her jaw. The pen has tried to capture in words her indomitable spirit. She is as old as Britain herself—and as endurable.

#### Let's Have Tea!

The artist and the writer would have appreciated this small, sturdily-built British woman who sat facing me one morning across the tea-table.

Her first words to me were essentially British.

"Do let us have some tea."

For an authoress, a noted ornithologist and explorer, Mrs. Conyers Alston did the honours with a feminine grace and delicacy.

"I do hope you're hungry," she said. "I am. You see, I've always been an early riser. When I lived in South Africa I always got through my personal correspondence before breakfast—that left me my mornings free for writing. Since I have been living here in New Zealand with my daughter, my programme is slightly modified. Instead of settling down with pen and paper, I help to get my grandchildren off to school."

Mrs. Alston was born in Glasgow, and even as a child, she told me, was attracted to country life and the study of birds and flowers. Eventually she went to London where she took up the study of kindergarten work. The curriculum included elementary zoology, and this so fired her imagination that it became her hobby.

#### In the Transvaal

After her marriage, she went to live in South Africa and spent the first nine years of her life in the Transvaal, where her children were born.

"Did you like the life?"

"Not at first," she said, "but it grew on me. I came to love it. That is true, you know, about Africa. It has some strange power to draw one back. Everyone who has lived there knows the feeling."

"When I was very young," I said, "I read Cynthia Stockley's 'Poppy.' It left a vivid impression of South Africa."

"Cynthia Stockley?" she spoke a little sadly. "She was an old friend of mine. A most unusual and striking woman,

bizarre in appearance—and daring in her generation. When her books finally began to lose their vogue—and on top of that she lost her only son—she became so despondent and morose that eventually she took her own life."

#### Visits from General Smuts

General Smuts was also included. He is a god-parent to her grandson, and has been a personal friend of the family for many years.

"He is a delightful personality," she said. "When we lived on the veldt, he frequently visited us. Like all great people, he is very simple. He adores children and is an ardent botanist. One need not mention his genius as a statesman."

She got back to her story again.

When the Great War came, Colonel Alston rejoined his regiment, and the family moved to England. Though very badly wounded, Colonel Alston continued in service, and was finally sent on a mission to Egypt.

Mrs. Alston spoke with enthusiasm of their visit there—and of further trips to Palestine and Turkey. On the latter trip, Colonel Alston was in charge of 2,000 repatriated Turkish prisoners returning to Constantinople. Mrs. Alston joined the expedition in charge of the women and children prisoners. She spent a memorable week in the Turkish capital. Among well-known identities there, Miss Alston mentioned Lady Paul, one of the romantic figures of the day. A Pole by

birth, she was adopted by an Englishwoman residing in Constantinople, and was directly instrumental in helping many British prisoners to escape. Later she married an Irish baronet, whom she had also helped to escape from an internment camp.

#### Return to South Africa

It was inevitable that Mrs. Alston should return to South Africa. Living this time at the Cape, she took up the study of ornithology seriously, and in 1925 her articles began to appear in the English reviews. Several books followed, including "From the Heart of the Veldt," "From an Old Cape Homestead," and "A Bird Lover in Africa."

Mrs. Alston has travelled far afield in the study of her hobby: an adventurous trek with two other women to Swaziland; two trips to Zululand; and a trip by native barge up the Zambesi.

Mrs. Alston confessed that she never uses a camera in her work.

"My brain and my ears are my camera," she said "but it is necessary to jot down very swift impressions. I carry field-glasses, too. That is essential. One's ear becomes accustomed to the note of birds, but one needs patience, as well. It took me three years to identify the note of the honey-guide."

Would she ever return to South Africa?

Mrs. Alston smiled, her head on one side: "Perhaps—one day—who knows?"



Keep your hair beautiful  
... avoid greying

**RACHEL**  
HAIR TONIC

*Keeps your*  
**HAIR YOUNG**

Rachel Hair Tonic definitely restores grey hair to its original colour—it is not a dye, but a special preparation absolutely harmless and easy to use. Once you have tried Rachel, you'll never go back to anything else. Don't put up with grey hair any longer—get a bottle of Rachel to-day.

Priced at

**4/9**