

"THERE'LL ALWAYS BE AN ENGLAND"

CBS Produces Prize Script

PRODUCTION has been completed on Miss Marie Conlan's prize-winning script in the "There'll Always Be An England" playwriting contest conducted by the Commercial Broadcasting Service earlier this year, and the feature will start from all ZB stations this Saturday night, September 6, at 9.15 p.m. Miss Conlan, who lives in Epsom, Auckland, has written an outstanding feature comprising 12 quarter-hour episodes, the connecting theme of which is the part played in England's history by her many bloodless revolutions

THE contest was open to all New Zealand writers, and carried a first prize of 25 guineas. The second prize of 10 guineas was won by Miss P. McDonagh, of Wellington, and the third prize by the late Fred Baird, who was chief copywriter at 1ZB, Auckland. The judges were the CBS Controller, C. G. Scrimgeour; W. Elliott, CBS production supervisor; Bryan O'Brien, assistant production supervisor; and O. N. Gillespie. There were several entries from Australian writers, but these were disqualified by the conditions of the contest.

Miss Conlan's was the best script by a fair margin, the judges remarking that the most common weaknesses of the other entrants were lack of knowledge of the medium for which the programme was intended, the introduction of too many characters, orthodoxy in style, and lack of imagination. Some of the judges also noted that in attempting to achieve a sincere expression of the sentiment of the title *There'll Always Be An England*, which was where Miss Conlan excelled, many entrants descended to the merely jingoistic.

The Episodes

Some idea of the content of the winning script may be gained from the titles of the episodes, which are "Caractacus," "Alfred the Great," "Simon de Montfort," "When Elizabeth Was Queen," "Oliver Cromwell," "The Story of St. Paul's Cathedral," "The Story of Edward Jenner," "Elizabeth Fry," "The Tolpuddle Martyrs," "The Story of Ali Singh," "The Story of Captain Oates," and "The Story of Our Time."

To play the leading roles, the producer, Bryan O'Brien, gathered together a cast of competent Wellington radio and repertory players. Leading roles are played by Linda Hastings and Henry Howlett, supported by Miss Kay Grey,



Stanley Vinsen, Harison Cook, G. L. Sweetapple and M. E. Lynch.

Mrs. Hastings' voice is well known to ZB listeners. She is featured regularly in *Real Life Stories*, and a year or two ago she conducted a bright bi-weekly *Journal of the Air* from 2ZB. She has played important parts in repertory shows in Auckland and Wellington, and



TOP: Linda Hastings and Stanley Vinsen as Elizabeth and Essex in the episode "When Elizabeth Was Queen." **AT LEFT:** Henry Howlett as Will Shakespeare, in the same episode. **BOTTOM:** Marie Conlan, author of "There'll Always Be An England"

and thought and preparation was necessary, but now that the initial difficulties were being overcome, he hoped that more and more New Zealand-made programmes would be heard from the ZB stations.

The programme which will be heard from 1ZB next Saturday night is "The Story of Captain Oates," in which one of the most gallant episodes in the history of exploration is dramatically recounted. The narrator points out that it is just 30 years since Oates sacrificed his life while returning from the South Pole with Scott and his companions "by willingly walking to his death in a blizzard to try and save his companions beset by hardship," and the story proceeds to tell something of the life and background of this "very gallant gentleman."

Oates's Sacrifice

Though he was delicate as a child, Oates overcame his weakness to such an extent that he became a fine all-round sportsman and soldier, being recommended for the Victoria Cross during the Boer War. It was while chafing at the inactivity of peace-time service in India that he offered to go with Scott's expedition in one of the humblest roles. Little is told of the already familiar story of Oates's decision to sacrifice himself, the heaviest accent being on the spirit of service and self-abnegation which motivated his life.

The first episode of *There'll Always Be An England* which 2ZB will hear is "The Story of Ali Singh," which tells of a sacrifice made more directly for England, this time on the part of a common Eurasian who helped a British regiment to suppress a notorious bandit somewhere "up beyond Khyber." Station 3ZB starts off with "When Elizabeth Was Queen," and 4ZB with "The Story of St. Paul's Cathedral."

last year was one of a select group of New Zealand artists who were invited to join the J. C. Williamson stage company which toured New Zealand with *Yes, My Darling Daughter*, *It's a Wise Child*, and *I Killed the Count*.

Henry Howlett arrived in New Zealand in July of 1939 with a good deal of experience in Australian broadcasting behind him, and he has been kept busy at both the NBS and the CBS ever since. He has had parts in several Australian-made serials heard here over the NBS, as Tanghey Hyland, the Cockney, in *Soldier of Fortune*, as Lyttelton the crook in *Singapore Spy*, and as Sergeant Smithers in *The Black Moth*. For the NBS he has played the name part in the *Inspector Hornleigh* series.

There'll Always Be An England was given a preview over the CBS network last Sunday evening at seven o'clock. Commenting on the production, Mr. Scrimgeour remarked that its release was in line with the Commercial Broadcasting Service's policy of giving increasing encouragement not only to New Zealand acting talent, but to New Zealand writers. The making of radio features was like the making of motion pictures in that a great deal of care