

HE GREW UP WITH RADIO

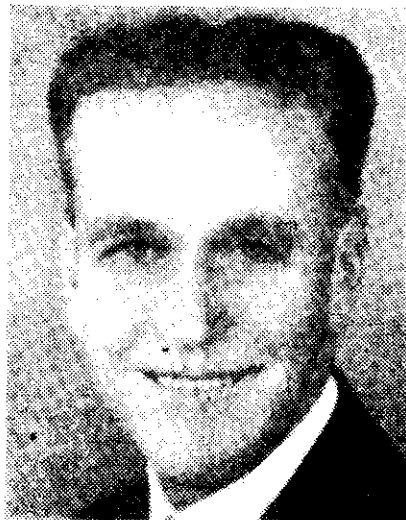
Retirement Of Clive Drummond, NBS Chief Announcer

CLIVE DRUMMOND, who retired recently from the position of Chief Announcer with the National Broadcasting Service to join a special branch of the Air Department was one of the best-known personalities in New Zealand broadcasting. He in fact almost grew up with radio in New Zealand. Signals were his first interest when he left Motueka District High School, and the Post and Telegraph gave him his first opportunity to practise it. He became a P. and T. cadet, went from Motueka to a training school at Oamaru, returned to Motueka, and was in the Department in Wellington in 1911 when the Government opened a small Morse wireless station on Tinakori Hill. The staff was recruited from the P. and T. Department, and young Drummond was one of six selected for the work. Equipment was crude then. Morse messages came in with a compensating signal above them, and it required a practised ear and intense concentration to pick out the message code beneath it. The work became more and more difficult with the outbreak of war in 1914. Tinakori Hill was an important link with the Fleet, and operators had to learn the Navy's codes and signalling methods. Through a message heard and reported by Drummond, four hours before the main body of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force was due to leave Wellington Harbour, the troops were returned to camp and their departure was delayed three weeks.

He had intercepted a cipher message from the Scharnhorst to the Gneisenau at midnight on the Saturday. It was transmitted to Australia, decoded there, and persuaded the authorities that the convoy was not then strong enough to meet the threat of the German warships. Instead of leaving at dawn on the Sunday the troops were disembarked until the Japanese Ibouki and bigger ships from Australian waters joined the little Philomel and Psyche.

Service in Mesopotamia

The creation in the second year of the war of a radio signal unit gave Clive Drummond another chance to enlarge



CLIVE DRUMMOND
Intercepted enemy signals

his experience. He joined the unit as an operator and served for the "duration" in Mesopotamia. The work of the unit limited the scope of roving natives

whose amusement it had been to cut and steal the overland wires of the Engineers.

He worked for a little after the war in the Post and Telegraph Department's Money Order and Savings Bank branch, but was soon back on Tinakori Hill. Subsequently he and other radio enthusiasts developed a small station in Wellington with a five-watt transmitter. Life was all thrills for radio men in those days. In 1924 came another for Drummond. The All Blacks had gone unbeaten through their tour of the British Isles. The last match was to be played at Twickenham. By arrangement with Auckland Pacific Cables, 2YK secured the score at 17 minutes before 3 o'clock on the Sunday morning and was broadcasting it two and a-quarter minutes later. The message was repeated at intervals and the following week letters were received from 63 listeners who had heard the first broadcast.

When the Dominion Radio Company arrived on the scene, Clive Drummond was asked to be announcer. He put his money on radio, and his first big score of 63 mounted eventually to a daily audience of anything up to 300,000.

WHY SUFFER WITH RHEUMATISM?

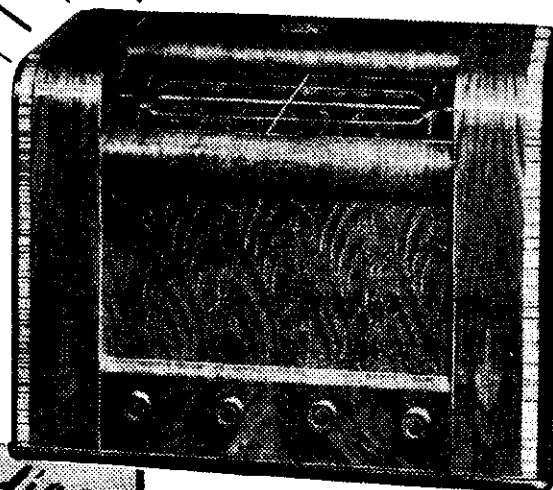
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P.B. 4



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