

SOME OF THE BIG ONES GOT AWAY

Interviews Of The Year Recalled

BY convention, this is the season for forward-looking: at New Year we toy with good resolutions and speak with real feeling of our hopes for the coming year. But "The Listener" proposes for the moment to be perverse, and to look backwards. The members of its staff have occasionally been in unusual places, and met unusual people since last New Year's Day, and they have contributed to its pages their reports of interviews that took place successfully and tales of interviews that didn't come off, conversations with all sorts of people, including the First Lady of the United States of America, and even with the Monkeys in the Zoo; with a missionary from India and a yachtsman from the Argentine.

TO all of these interesting subjects, all of whom had something to say, and most of whom said it very graciously, we now offer our wishes for a happy 1944.

To Vito Dumas Argentine yachtsman, who claims relationship with Alexandre Dumas, but who is picturesque enough in his own right—he sailed from Buenos Aires to Capetown, from Capetown to Wellington, alone in a 31-foot yacht. He arrived here hungry, thirsty, and lightly bearded, after 104 days at sea, without even a radio. He spoke very little English, but people were kind to him, and he was friendly to *The Listener*. And there is in *The Listener* office now an autographed copy of a book (in Spanish, unfortunately) which he wrote after a similar journey across the Atlantic. Senor Dumas spent a few weeks here, airing his mildewed clothes and re-lining his stomach, and then he bravely set sail again in a real Wellington northerly. Months later we heard that he was safe in Buenos Aires again. Salud y pesetas, Senor Dumas!

To N. C. Tritton, a BBC emissary who had come to learn, not to inform, and who spoke most guardedly of the BBC's policies.

Two War Correspondents

These three were all interviewed in our issue of January 15. A week later we found ourselves talking to an old companion of "the road," Osmar White, with whom we had once sat at press tables in meeting rooms and council chambers where the names of journalists already famous overseas were carved, though we little knew then that he was to carve out his own name years later as a war correspondent in the Pacific Zone. All his experience as a journalist



VITO DUMAS
104 days alone in a yacht

has not been in vain, for Osmar White told us that he will teach his two-year-old daughter to read, but not to write. He had both his ankles broken "owing to enemy action" not so long ago, but now, we understand, he is well again.

Following the same calling as Osmar White was Robin Miller, a New Zealander accredited to the U.S. Command in the South Pacific, who witnessed all or part of five campaigns—Libya, Greece, Crete, Libya again, and Guadalcanal; was twice rescued by the Royal Navy from German-occupied territory; and had flown with bombing raids against Germans and Japanese.

W. Bankes Amery, C.B.E., was principal assistant secretary to the British Ministry of Food. His subject was food, and he would bite at nothing else; he told us how radio was saving the food situation in England by changing the people's eating habits by sheer per-



ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
An exception who disproves a theory?

suation, and doing it at top speed, to beat Hitler's submarines. Since he left, we have had letters from Mr. Amery, seeking copies of *The Listener* of March 12, and copies of the photograph we had taken. A Happy New Year, Mr. Amery, and we are glad you liked the photograph.

To Dorothy Helmrich, Australian-born lieder-singer of the first rank, who arrived in Wellington not knowing anyone, and was so lonely that she went to five films in her first few days there, until *The Listener* discovered her, and her charming friendliness, and her taste for black coffee.

A Missionary

To Aldine Lantis, a charming American Methodist Missionary returning from India, where she said, "the trouble is largely misunderstanding."

A seaman, an accountant, and a writer of radio features was Francis Renner, who came here on the Finnish sailing ship Pamir, which was interned earlier in the war and taken over by New Zealanders. A happy New Year, Mr. Renner, should you happen to be on our side of the date line at this moment!

To Michael Traub, Zionist delegate who is here seeking the support of public opinion for the Jewish national home in Palestine. "Sympathy," said Dr. Traub, "is not enough."

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OSMAR WHITE
An old and good companion



DOROTHY HELMRICH
She was bored at first



ALDINE LANTIS
"The trouble is largely misunderstanding"



W. BANKES AMERY
Would bite at nothing but food