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# World-Wide Audience for NZBS Programme

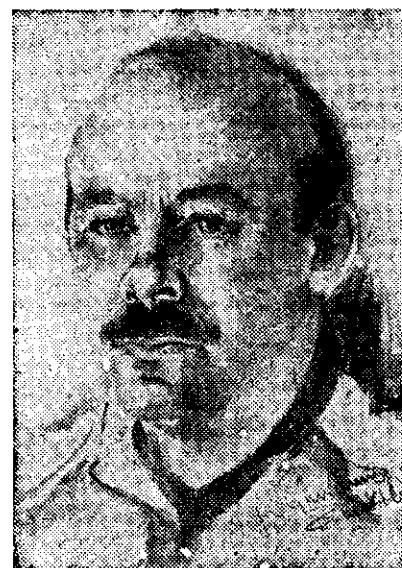
THE NZBS has had word that a programme which it specially produced for the BBC Transcription Service has been asked for by 26 Commonwealth broadcasting services, eight United States stations and seven armed forces stations in Europe, the Mediterranean and Africa.

The production of a special programme for the BBC Transcription Service is a new step in NZBS-BBC co-operation. In the past the BBC has selected programmes from its own transmissions and transcribed or recorded them for Commonwealth broadcasting services. Lists of these transcriptions are circulated and the various broadcasting services select what they want to use. The NZBS takes almost the whole transcription output.

Recently, however, the BBC suggested that as an experiment New Zealand and other Commonwealth countries should themselves contribute to the Transcription Service output. It asked that the programmes should in one way or another be characteristic of life in the contributing countries. The NZBS agreed to become a contributor, and a programme specially written by John Gundry was produced in the Wellington Production Studios by Bernard Beeby.

This programme, *Where the World Begins*, uses the story of Maui as a starting point for a series of conversations between two tourists and several representative New Zealanders, in which many aspects of New Zealand life and character are examined. Mr Beeby described parts of the programme as "very atmospheric." It makes use of a variety of sound effects and includes a song, sung by George Ayo, for which the music was written by Doris Sheppard. The principal members of the cast are William Austin, Patrick Smyth, Davina Whitehouse, Michael Begelman, Burke Honey, Roy Leywood, Alan Jervis and Laurie Sweetapple.

In a letter thanking the NZBS for *Where the World Begins* the BBC mentions that it has also issued contributions by Australia, Canada, South Africa and India; and it asks whether the



JOHN GUNDRY

NZBS would like to extend the exchange idea during the coming year.

Countries which have asked for the NZBS programme are Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, British Guiana, British Honduras, Canada, Ceylon, Cyprus, Fiji, Ghana, Jamaica, Hong Kong, Kenya, Malaya, Malta, Mauritius, Nigeria, North Borneo, Sarawak, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Trinidad and Uganda. It has also been requested by armed forces stations in Germany, Gibraltar, East Africa, Benghazi, Tripoli, Cyprus and Aden, and by KWSC (Washington), WFPL (Kentucky), WNAD and KAMC (Oklahoma), KUOH (Hawaii), WOI (Iowa), WBJC (Baltimore) and WFMT (Illinois).

Though this is the first New Zealand programme specially produced for the BBC Transcription Service, it is not, of course, the first NZBS programme sent to the BBC. In the past, however, they have all been sent for use in the BBC's own transmissions.

### Opera Guide

## THE TROJANS AT CARTHAGE

TOWARDS the end of his readable *Treatise on Orchestration*, Berlioz sketches out what he considers to be an ideal orchestra. In it he would have 242 strings, 30 grand pianos, 30 harps, legions of wind and percussion players, with complete families of brass and woodwind. Not one to do anything on a small scale it was unlikely, when he turned to opera, that he would leave it exactly as he found it. His *Beatrice and Benedict* was a charming comedy, but it was in *The Trojans* that his genius was able to expand, to overthrow the trifling plots and insincerities of his time and on a classical theme create an epic masterpiece.

Since his youth Berlioz had been a reader of Virgil and a lover of the ancient world of Greece and Rome. He took the Trojan war as his theme and wrote his own libretto, translating and adapting from Virgil as well as taking ideas from the plays of Shakespeare. He told of the destruction of Troy, of the wanderings of the Trojans, of the fateful meeting between Dido and Aeneas and foretold the defeat of the

Carthaginians and the rise of Rome. "It is beautiful because it is Virgil, it is striking because it is Shakespeare," wrote Berlioz, modestly forgetting the role his own music was to play. He divided the opera into two: "The Fall of Troy" and "The Trojans at Carthage," and it is this second part which will be broadcast.

He told his story in a straightforward way, taking pains to see that the music illustrated and reinforced the words. In the middle of the work he wrote a symphonic interlude, "The Royal Hunt and Storm," which is often played to-day at concerts. The whole work demands a large cast and orchestra, would last four hours 20 minutes, and is not often performed. In 1950, however, an almost full-length performance was given at Oxford. Miss Mandikian sang Dido, and its effect was reported to be overwhelming. It seemed that Sir Donald Tovey was right when he called it "one of the most gigantic and convincing masterpieces of music drama." (1YC, 8.0 p.m., Sunday, June 9.)



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