

Home & Away

THE New Zealand habit of referring to the British Isles as "Home" is a persistent reminder (even to the third and fourth generation) of the sentimental nostalgia of our early settlers. To them "Home" was a reality, even after they had established a permanent home for themselves and their family in the Southern Hemisphere.

Peter Harcourt is one young New Zealander who grew up with romantic ideas of "Home": Buckingham Palace, and Baker Street permanently shrouded



N.P.S. photograph

PETER HARCOURT

with fog, streets peopled by Shakespeare, Scrooge and Sherlock Holmes, and a countryside that was one vast forest through which Robin Hood and Dick Turpin roamed unchallenged.

When he went to England after the war Peter Harcourt's romantic illusions were quickly dispelled. But if the "Home" of fiction proved to be a myth, the real England soon became a second home to him. He lived there for more than eight years, and came back to New Zealand on what he thought would be only a short visit about three years ago.

The holiday drew out into weeks, months, and then a year—until he was faced with the need for making a choice between living here or in England. So he went back "Home" again, on a sentimental journey—to settle the matter once and for all.

What he did, what he saw and what he thought on that journey is told in a series of six talks called "The Sentimental Traveller," now being heard in the Women's Hour at 2XN and 2XG. They will start from 1XH on Tuesday, October 1, and from 3XC on October 2, and will be heard later from the other Commercial stations.

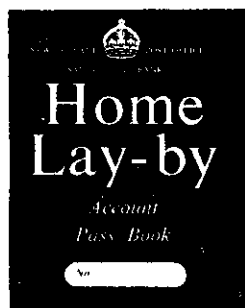
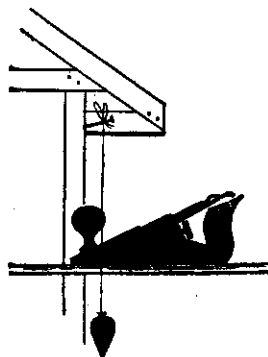
Naples, Rome, Paris and London are the cities through which he passed. In Paris he had the strange experience of being stopped in the street by an old school friend he had not seen for 20 years; at a French coastal resort he was mistaken for the writer Pierre d'Harcourt; and in a coal-mine in Shropshire he had a narrow escape from death. An objective look at the English scene after an absence of 18 months revealed things Peter Harcourt had once taken for granted, but that now seemed wrong and out of place.

Having made his pilgrimage, "The Sentimental Traveller" decided that, whatever its hold on his affections, "Home" would never really be the same as home in New Zealand.



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21.N.42