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ENGLISH-born Peter Bathurst, who plays the hero, Gils de Berault, in Stanley J. Weyman's historical romance, *Under the Red Robe* (3YA Mondays, starting 1YA April 12, and 2YD April 13) made his name as an actor and broadcaster in New Zealand and



PETER BATHURST

Australia. His family left southern England for New Zealand while he was still a child, and he did a variety of jobs before he made acting his profession. Bathurst first broadcast in 1931 and six years later joined the staff of the NZBS as an announcer and actor. From here he went to Australia, where he became a well-known radio artist as well as a regular film commentator. In 1950 he returned to England, and since then he has been kept busy by the BBC, both in sound and television.

ERIC SULLIVAN, of Petone, writes: "My wife and I are newcomers to New Zealand, having left Urmston, on the Cheshire side of Manchester, only four months ago. Imagine then our pleasure when we tuned

GLIMPSE in to the programme OF HOME 'Britain Sings' to find ourselves being introduced to the Sale and District Musical Society. Our connection with this Eisteddfod-winning choir is a very close one, as my father is deputy-conductor under Alfred Higson, and would, in fact, be singing in this particular recording. It was a grand experience to listen again to their rendering of Hubert Parry's 'Songs of Farewell,' and I would like to thank Station 2ZB for the brief glimpse of home and for a programme which must, in this way, bring pleasure to many."

THOMAS L. THOMAS, whose American ballads are familiar to many NZBS listeners, lives on a 125-acre farm in Jutland, New Jersey. FARMING He was born in South SINGER Wales and went with his family to Scranton, Pennsylvania, when he was 11. Young Thomas appeared first in a children's cantata in Wales. His tran-

# Open Microphone

sition from amateur to professional status was long and difficult, for, he says, he was auditioned 96 times before obtaining his first professional role. Now he travels 40,000 miles in a season, covering cities from coast to coast. "When I first went to my farm in 1943 I was Thomas L. Thomas the singer," he tells people, "but now I'm Farmer Thomas, sharing with other farmers a common interest in the soil and the uncommon joy of having good neighbours." Latest news of him is that he is still single.



Thomas L. Thomas

MAE ADAMS, of Auckland, writing about the song "Cruising Down the River," which won a competition she attended at the Hammersmith Palais in 1945, says that many of her Auckland friends are certain that the tune was written and played in New Zealand long before 1945. She asks if there is any truth in her friends' assertions.

"Cruising Down the River" was composed by two elderly Englishwomen, Eily Beadell and Nellie Tollerton, who were in the audience at Hammersmith when their success was announced. The finalists' tunes were recorded by Lou Preager's Orchestra, with Paul Rich as vocalist and Roy Rich (no relation) as compere. The song is famous for another reason. In 1949 the British sloop Amethyst, held hostage in the Yangtze River, made a sensational escape in pitch darkness under the fire of Communist guns. Later, when she was joined and welcomed by the cruiser Jamaica the cruiser's Royal Marine Band, with obvious allusion to the sloop's exploit, played "Cruising Down the River."

THE other Tuesday evening Jane mentioned an afternoon's tour round the dial and an interesting encounter with a session from Napier's 2YZ. It was Dorothy Rickard's AWAY FROM "For the Country- THE FARM Woman," which, in spite of the title, had practically nothing to do with farming. In reply to a letter asking her to tell

## ★ ONE ALL ★

I MENTIONED in this column a few weeks ago that Nancy Harrie, the Auckland pianist and novachordist, and Joy Nichols, of "Take It From Here" fame, were each expecting a baby about the same time. Two potential show business recruits have arrived—for Nancy Harrie (Mrs. Lee Humphreys) a son, and for Joy Nichols (Mrs. Wally Peterson), a daughter.

me something about it, Mrs. Rickard said: "I don't talk to the countrywomen as countrywomen; I try to get as far

## NEWS OF BROADCASTERS, ON AND OFF THE RECORD.

By Swarf

away from the farm as possible, and to give a period of entertainment. The session is designed to keep country listeners abreast of the latest fiction, biographies, plays and films, and news from London. Interviews with interesting people in or passing through Hawke's Bay are included with the idea of bringing to the women of the country news items that usually come more readily to townspeople." Mrs. Rickard, who is a daughter of the late Dr. A. C. Sandston, of Christchurch, has conducted "For the Countrywoman" for the last three years.

DURING the 57th session of the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts at the Royal Albert Hall last year, one of the conductors was John Hollingsworth, who conducted his BEFORE THE first concert (with the BIG THREE London Symphony Orchestra) when he was 21. After joining the R.A.F. in 1940 he became assistant conductor of the R.A.F. Symphony Orchestra, travelling widely



BBC photograph  
JOHN HOLLINGSWORTH

with the orchestra in Britain and giving concerts to troops and factory workers. In 1944 he toured with the orchestra in the U.S.A., and a year later flew to Potsdam to conduct three concerts before the delegations of the Three Power Conference, having in his audience Mr. Churchill, Mr. Truman and Mr. Stalin. Hollingsworth is conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra (4YZ, Sunday, April 20) in a Prom Concert programme which will include Mendelssohn's *Ruy Blas Overture* and *Italian Symphony*, and the *Liebeslieder Waltzes* of Brahms.

N.Z. LISTENER, APRIL 10, 1952.