

The History Behind the Ceremony

WHEN France was ruled by kings they were anointed with oil from a vessel known as the Sainte Ampoule. This was said to have been brought down from heaven by a holy dove which had placed it on the altar for the coronation of Clovis. France's kings thereafter were anointed from this miraculous vessel. Later, on the other side of the Channel, the story of a similar miracle arose. The Virgin Mary was said to have appeared to Thomas Becket and to have given him a vessel with holy oil for the anointing of future English kings. This vessel, which takes the form of an eagle, is the Ampulla which will be used at the Coronation of Elizabeth II in June.

The story of the Ampulla and of Thomas Becket, who bore it back from exile with him, is one of the 13 programmes in *Coronation*, an Australian-produced series now being broadcast from the ZB stations and 2ZA.

The series is designed to inform listeners of the origin and significance of each of the Coronation rites and symbols. This is done by turning back into history to the moment and particular circumstances which gave each rite and symbol its birth, then tracing it through to the Coronation ceremony of 1953. For instance, the episode which deals with the presentation of the spurs and the sword takes the listener back to the legend of St. George and includes stories of the age of chivalry and the Crusades; of Richard Coeur-de-Lion and of the riot at his coronation. The putting on of the crown evokes the story of Alfred the Great—and the histories of the precious stones contained in the crowns today. The most interesting of these stories is perhaps that of the famous diamond, the Koh-i-Noor (Mountain

of Light), which became one of the Crown Jewels during the reign of Queen Victoria.

Later episodes in *Coronation* deal with the Inthronisation, and the legends and authentic history of the Stone of Scone; with the Homage, and the hereditary right of the Queen's Champion to challenge on her behalf; with the position of the Consort; and, with the Recess, when the newly-crowned sovereign and her consort must obey the injunction, "And they shall go forth unto the people."

The series will finish one week before the Coronation, so that listeners to the actual broadcast of the event will by then have a broad idea of the sequence of events in the Abbey and of their significance.

Coronation was produced by Paul Jacklin, at 2UE, Sydney. It was written by Barbara Woodward, who last year won the "Actor's Choice" Award for the best-written play of the year. The series plays from the four ZB stations and 2ZA on Wednesdays and Fridays between 9.30 and 10.0 p.m.



THE AMPULLA, from which the oil is poured on to the Anointing Spoon during the Coronation ceremony

IN THE SERVICE OF CHILDREN

MENTION Great Ormond Street to a Londoner and he will think at once of the Hospital for Sick Children which has made its name famous throughout the world. The poor quarters of London were a festering warren of alleys and courts—a death trap for children—when Dr. Charles West founded this hospital in a large house that was being used as a dance hall. That was 100 years ago. To mark the anniversary the BBC broadcast last year a feature about the hospital, which is now to be heard from National stations of the NZBS, starting from 3YA at 8.0 p.m. on Thursday, April 30 (and re-playing from the same station the following Sunday).

At his hospital Dr. West was able to have the control over the nursing conditions of his little patients that would

give them a chance of life. Great Ormond Street, which started with 10 cots for in-patients and an out-patients' department, became not only a hospital but a centre for medical research into the diseases of children. Its fame spread all over the world. Doctors from many lands went there to study and to take the newest ideas in child medicine back to their countries. Today the hospital has room for 450 beds, more than 100 doctors, 500 nurses and a great teaching school. There is also a country branch.

In *Children in Hospital* listeners can hear the recorded voices of children at the hospital and the country branch. They can also hear Emlyn Williams, famous for his re-creation of Charles Dickens's public readings, give the speech that Dickens delivered at a dinner in aid of the hospital in 1858.

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