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DOTTED about New Zealand—some still working briskly, others long retired from active service—are people who love to recall this country's early sources of entertainment. They talk interestingly about plays, players and theatres and the parts they



EDWIN HILL
Eighty years of singing

themselves took in amusing the public. A few of them have been interviewed by *The Listener*—Frank Crowther, Jim McKenna and Bob Hardie, of Wellington, come to mind—and NZBS announcers have had some of the old hands in front of the microphone. Listeners to all the YC and YZ stations are soon to hear some of the reminiscences of Edwin Hill, aged 93, elder brother of Alfred Hill, as interviewed by John Gordon (formerly of the NZBS but now with the New Zealand Players). Mr. Hill does not keep to organised entertainment, but goes into all sorts of amusing events. For instance, he tells of a sports meeting at Foxton years ago in which a very tall competitor in a foot race carried a suitcase. Near the tape he dropped the case and out fell brother Alfred who finished the race and won a huge cup made by a local tinsmith.

Since taking part in the Auckland Competitions when he was a small boy "Ted" Hill has sung in all the main centres, and appeared in hundreds of performances, including Grand Opera and Oratorio and in music festivals both here and in Australia. Although his singing career has covered 80 years he has had no strictly formal tuition; but he never missed hearing a visiting artist and picked up all he could. His memory goes back to the days when the first Christy Minstrels visited New Zealand, and he claims he was the first man in this country to sing "Mollie Darling." Edwin Hill's broadcast, called *All Played the Cornet*, will be heard first from 2YC at 8.0 p.m. on Tuesday, June 30, from 3YC at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday, July 4, and from other YC and YZ stations later.

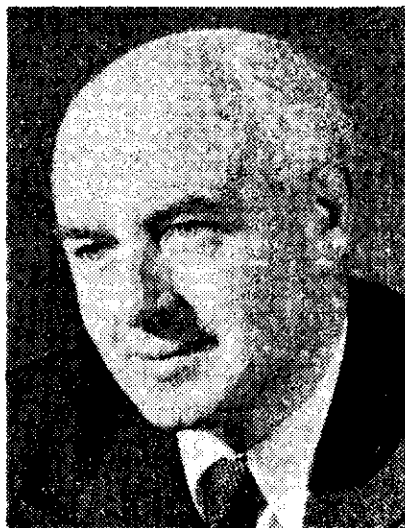
IT'S many years since white-gloved young men bowed formally and said, "I believe this is mine," young women consulted their dance programmes, returned the bow and waltzed off with their partners to the tune of "Three O'clock in the Morning." It's also quite likely that some of the telegraph messengers who

Open Microphone

helped to make the melody popular in New Zealand by whistling it as they trick-cycled round Christchurch's Cathedral Square are now I.P.'s in the P. and T. Department, if not Postmasters. That song made about a million pounds in royalties, according to Leslie Jeffries, whose Grand Hotel Trio is popular on the BBC Light Programme. "And to think I could have bought it by topping a bid of five pounds!" he says. Jeffries has never forgotten the time he spent as violinist of a trio playing in a Buenos Aires night club. During that period the pianist of the trio wrote the waltz tune which he sold outright for a few pounds. Jeffries was once employed by an American film studio as a "mood man." He had to stand behind a screen playing sad violin music so that the actors facing the cameras could more readily register the bitter sorrow called for in the script. Three stars he was called upon to depress in this manner were the Gish sisters and Mary Pickford.

JOY NICHOLS has been booked for a tour of the Australian Tivoli Circuit and also for a series of broadcasts for the ABC during a 17 weeks' Australian season. **TIDINGS OF JOY** It is reported that she returns to the Tivoli at a salary six times greater than the one she was earning before she left Australia.

SEVERAL appointments have recently been announced in the staff of the BBC's External Services. They include the return to England on completion of his tour of duty of Patrick Jubb, BBC representative in New Zealand and Australia. He is being suc-



BBC photograph
ROBERT STEAD

ceeded by Robert Stead, Head of North Regional Programmes since March, 1948, and deputy to the Controller of North Region. Patrick Jubb joined the BBC 17 years ago as an announcer with the Empire Service. He did a considerable amount of administrative work until 1942, when he enlisted with the Royal Engineers. In 1944 he was sent to the Middle East as Director of two broadcasting stations in Cairo and Jerusalem,

sending language broadcasts to South-Eastern Europe. He was later posted to Vienna as Senior Broadcasting Officer in the Information Services Branch. Patrick Jubb was appointed BBC representative in New Zealand and Australia in 1949, and since then has visited this country on broadcasting business periodically.

"I SETTA" (Wairoa, Hawke's Bay) writes: I have been an admirer of Joseph Schmidt for many years now and was very interested to read your article about him in a recent issue. In response to your request for further information, I would like to give a few details which I have collected over a number of years.

THE TENOR AND THE SCHOOLGIRL The sources of my information are radio programmes from New Zealand and Australia, and two Australian correspondents, one of whom was a close friend of Joseph Schmidt, living almost in the same street and growing up with him. They studied music together, sang alto in a church choir as boys, and were sometimes given small parts in plays.

According to my records, this is his story. He was not German, but was born in 1899 in Cernauti, Bukovina, province of Rumania, of poor parents. Because they were Jewish he met with a great deal of hardship and bitterness in his struggle for success. He studied singing and languages, and was ready to sing in German, Italian, French and Spanish. But he found it very difficult to get opera or concert engagements because of his very small stature—he was just over 4ft. tall. His friends helped him to get to Berlin, and he won a radio competition against thousands of competitors. Radio contracts, opera, operetta and concert work followed, and he became the rage of the Continent. He made several films there and then went to England, where he made two films, *My Song Goes Round the World* and *A Star Falls from Heaven*, and made a fairly successful concert tour. His first visit to England must have been in about 1934 or 1935, because I saw *My Song Goes Round the World* here in New Zealand in 1936. After I had seen that film I wrote a letter of appreciation to him, addressing it to the film studio in London, and some months later he sent to me from Vienna an autographed photograph, with the message on it, "Many Kind Regards" and the date, "16/2/38." *A Star Falls from Heaven* must have been made in approximately 1936, according to an English film magazine.

The following is an extract from an Australian periodical. The information contained therein was obtained from the Jewish Information Bureau: "When war broke out, Schmidt, who was in Vienna, escaped to Belgium. The Nazis captured him, but he again escaped, this time to Switzerland. Eventually he was again captured and placed in a concentration camp. He contracted a heart disease, and then the larynx became infected. On November 14, 1942, he was removed to Nuremberg, where, two days later, he died in the concentration camp." I heard the announcement of his death from Station 2GB Sydney in 1943, and later from the same station I heard that

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