

2YA Gives Impressive Service on Flying Night---A Radio Pageant---Special Message from Edison

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LIEUT. J. R. MONCRIEFF

THE TASMAN FLIGHT

2YA'S Fine Service



CAPT. GEORGE HOOD

AT the time of going to Press, almost a full week after the inception of the first attempt at a trans-Tasman flight from Australia to New Zealand, no definite news is available as to the whereabouts of the two gallant aviators, Lieut. J. R. Moncrieff and Capt George Hood. In those circumstances little reasonable hope can be entertained as to their ultimate safety. Should they yet be found, there will, of course, be general rejoicing at their escape from what was unquestionably a perilous adventure.

Into the general aspects of the flight, there is but little occasion for ourselves, as a specialised radio journal, to enter. It is material, however, for us to place on record the special relationship of radio broadcasting to the flight, and the service, station 2YA in particular was able to render the New Zealand public by keeping them informed of the course of events on the night of Tuesday, January 10/11. The service rendered on that occasion was, we think, memorable. Had the evening been crowned by the successful arrival of the aviators, it would have been joyously memorable; but even with the drawback of an absence of that confirmation, the occasion marked an outstanding demonstration of the utility of public broadcasting, and the service it is capable of rendering in bringing the public in touch with events of moment as they transpire.

It is, of course, impossible to compute the number of people who kept in touch with the evening's news by means of the broadcast by 2YA and the re-broadcast by 3YA. Unquestionably an intense public interest was evoked by the event, and the probability is that the great majority of listeners throughout the country kept in touch up till the time of 2YA closing down at 2.30 in the morning, when hope for arrival at that time was abandoned.

THE SCENE AT TRENTHAM.

The scene at Trentham during the course of that evening will linger long in the memories of those who were able to attend—and it is estimated that there were on the ground, between the

hours of 5 and 8 p.m., between 10,000 and 12,000 people. But not only will the scene remain with those who saw it, but a mental picture will remain with listeners, thanks to the generally able and trenchant description of the scene and incidents given by 2YA's announcer. Although individual praise to the units of an organisation is in general not desirable, we think listeners will agree that commendation is due to Mr. Ball for the caution and restraint, and at the same time enthusiasm, with which he handled the evening's work. In retrospect, the occasion might easily have been marred by either an undue laudation of assumed success, from which the rebound of disappointment would have been most marked, or marred by the adoption of the wrong tone. It is due to Mr. Ball to say that no such errors were made. Close contact was maintained with the officials of the Post and Telegraph Department and of the Defence Department; and every care taken to issue as official only that news derived from official sources. In the circumstances of the evening, the sifting of fact from rumour was more difficult than might be imagined, although the public, in the analysis of reports which has been proceeding for the past week, will appreciate some of the difficulties faced on that evening.

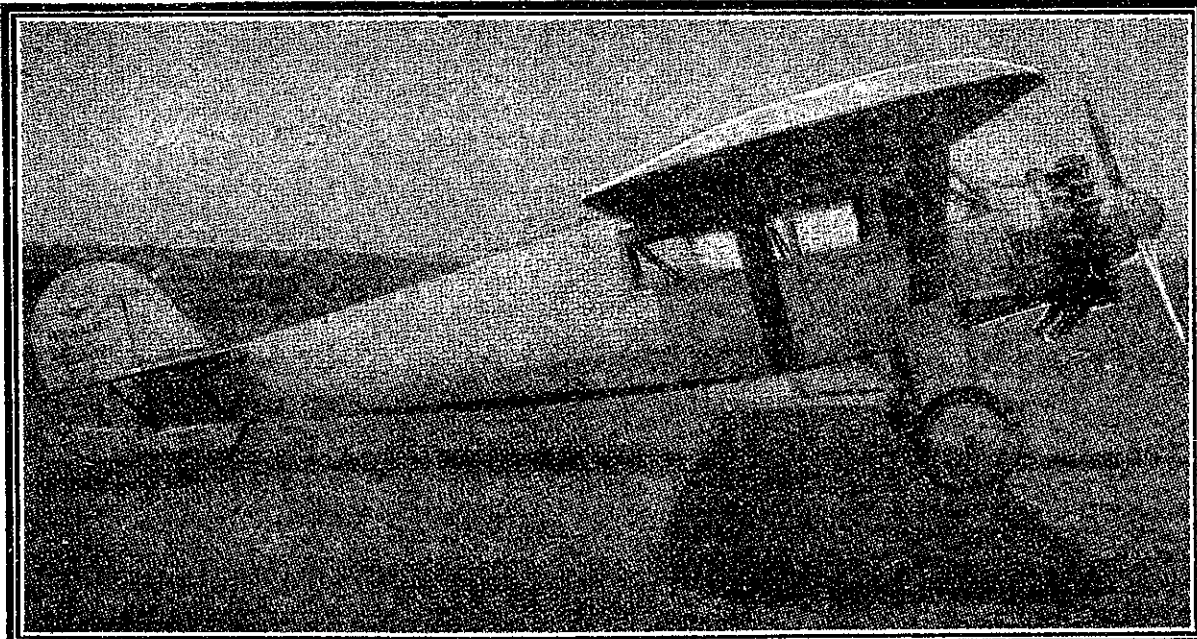
FINE SERVICE PLANNED.

From the inception of the news session at 7 p.m., 2YA listeners were informed of the Company's plans for keeping them in touch with the evening's developments. Speaking from the Trentham Park stand, where every facility had been granted for

the broadcast by the Trustees of the Tasman Flight Fund in recognition of the interest of the public in the occasion, Mr. Ball outlined the scene presented by the historic racecourse embosomed in the encircling bush clad hills and lying under the brilliance of a perfect summer sun. He called to his side Uncle Sandy, and indulged in a little interesting dialogue with that gentleman, whose aid he sought momentarily in placing before the numerous children in homes throughout the land a mental picture of the scene presented. At the time a note of expectant optimism was dominant, and a little facetious badinage as to the absence of refreshments, liquid and otherwise, which would have been welcome under the then brilliant sun, was indulged in. The aeroplane was expected to reach Trentham, according to schedule, between 7 and 8 o'clock p.m., and with advice of the radio note having been heard at 5.22, all were on the tie-toe of expectancy of the successful culmination.

After the initial announcements at Trentham, the studio proceeded with the ordinary news session, and closed down in the ordinary way till 8 o'clock. As a preliminary to the evening's programme, it was announced that a relay had been effected with Trentham, and that news would be given as developments occurred. Throughout the programme very little of moment occurred to report; and as 10 o'clock approached anxiety began

to be felt by the crowd on the course and also by listeners. With the announcement made on the conclusion of the programme that 2YA would remain on the air, there is no doubt listeners experienced relief at the service being given. From this time onward, anxiety grew, and the service from Trentham occupied more and more of the time, although, as it was impossible to give a continual stream of news or comment, relief was necessary by resort to the broadcast of gramophone records from the studio. The relay line, of course, was kept in contact, and frequently the announcer's voice cut across the studio music till that could be switched over.



THE AMERICAN AEROPLANE IN WHICH THE FLIGHT WAS ATTEMPTED.

—(Continued on p. 16.)