

In Wellington

nui station which has since been dismantled. The power used in short wave transmission is only a fraction of that which was used in the days of the old spark transmitters. This is illustrated by the fact that, whereas the old spark transmitter at Awanui used up to 30,000 watts to "work" Apia successfully, the Wellington station can to-day "work"

First Wireless Messages that Were the Beginning of New Zealand's Service

Apia—and with a much stronger signal—with a transmitter of 500 watts input.

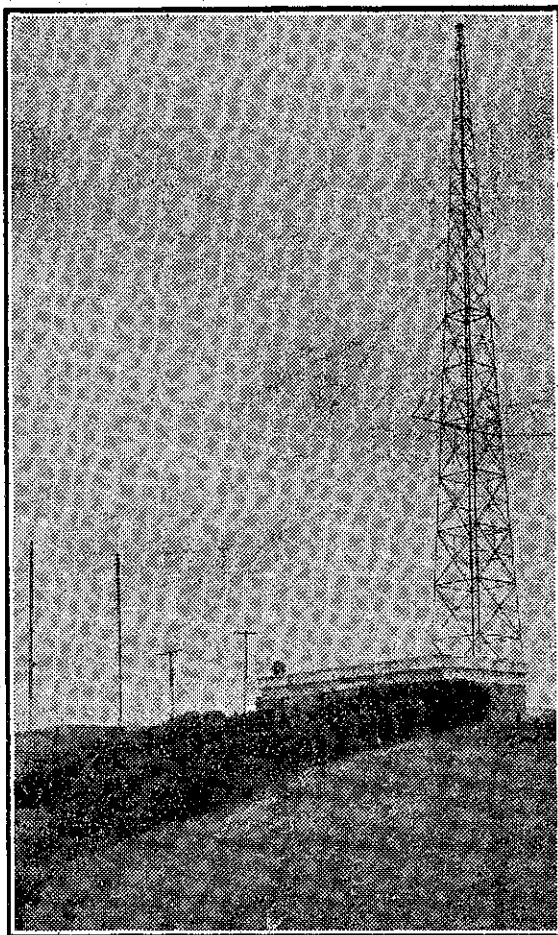
"Short wave wireless is becoming more and more popular," said one of the Government radio officials to a "Radio Record" representative. "It has considerably greater range which is shown from the fact that the Wellington station can 'work' a ship from the time it leaves New Zealand until it ties up at an English port. All the New Zealand stations on the mainland have been fitted with short wave receiving and transmitting apparatus for some time now. A service is also given to the small coastal vessels which are not fitted with 600 metre gear."

In 1930 modulating apparatus was added to the Wellington short wave transmitter, enabling the station to use telephony as a method of communication. After some negotiations with the Australian authorities a public radio telephone service was inaugurated between the Commonwealth and New Zealand on November 25, 1930. On July 23, 1931, the service was extended to Great Britain and now includes most of Europe. The growth of the overseas radio-telephone service since its inauguration has proved that this means of communication is rapidly becoming popular. With the return of normal times it is hoped that the service will grow to such an extent that a reduction will be made in the charges.

Awarua, the station in Southland, serves another very useful purpose. Not a daily paper of any consequence appears without the words "British Official Wireless" printed above a European cabled report. This means that the information has been sent out from Rugby, England, for the use of newspapers and it is picked up at Awarua and disseminated to various newspapers by telegraph. Last year 300,000 words were transmitted in this way. These news bulletins are sent out on a long wave (18,740 metres) and a short wave suited to the time of the day and the season of the year, thus providing an extremely reliable service between the Antipodes and Europe.

A number of New Zealand lighthouses have also been equipped with wireless. The lighthouse at Puysegur Point in the far south has been brought out of its isolation by this means and so have the lighthouses at Stephens Island, Portland Island and Cape Maria Van Diemen. The latter is fitted with a radio beacon of fixed type erected in 1925.

Mention was made at the beginning of this article



A view of the Government wireless station on Mount Etako, Tinakori Hills, Wellington. This station, one of the oldest in New Zealand, has played an important part in the history of radio in the Dominion, and it is now being remodelled and enlarged.

that the Marama was one of the first ships in the New Zealand service to be fitted with wireless. Last week the Marama advanced a further step in her career when she was fitted with a radio direction finder. When the vessel left the Queen's Wharf, Wellington, shortly after three o'clock last Friday, the crowd that lingered on the wharf was surprised to see the vessel making in the direction of Petone, instead of heading down harbour on her usual course. Many inquiries were made at the Union Steamship Company's offices, and the explanation was forthcoming that, during the previous week, the Marama had been fitted with a radio direction finder and, before setting out on her passage to Sydney, she went up the harbour to calibrate the receiving apparatus. Radio signals were sent out from the steamer express Rangatira, lying at the Clyde Quay Wharf, and taken in by the Marama, which was swung on various compass bearings to check and record any errors in the receiving apparatus of her direction-finder. The vessel left the harbour shortly before five o'clock. Under the provisions of the international convention for the safety of life at sea, all passenger ships of 5000 tons gross register and upwards are required to be fitted with radio direction finders.

Wireless has brought out little country back from the "fringe of Antarctica" (as one American paper described the position of New Zealand) and put it in constant touch with the busy world of Europe and America. Plans are being advanced for more comprehensive radio communication between New Zealand and the rest of the world, and the time is not far distant when the Dominion will know of happenings in Europe as soon as Europeans themselves.