

New Zealand's Tribute to Anzac

Broadcast of Carillon Dedication



ANZAC DAY and all it signifies is past. In the main centres thousands congregated to do homage to the fallen; in the smaller towns the churches did their part in recalling the significance of the day, but for those in outback, where the surging crowds are not known and the township church is too distant, radio carried the message. To the homes less remote, where attendance to the ceremonies was not possible or convenient radio filled the gap and brought home the fact that this was no ordinary day.

All the YA stations were on the air to broadcast the services in their respective cities. In Wellington, the centre of interest was the dedication of the carillon, timed to commence at 2.15 p.m. The station, however, was on the air in the morning broadcasting the short but beautiful service at the Cenotaph, which was the scene of a somewhat similar service at its dedication eight days before. The broadcast in the morning was all that could be desired. Conditions were good and the speakers came over perfectly; the atmosphere of the solemn service was caught by the microphone and carried into thousands of homes.

The broadcasting in the afternoon was similarly successful. The speakers were lucid and had no difficulty in holding the interest of their vast audiences. They spoke of the campanile, the carillon, and what it stands for—henceforth the noble edifice that graces the city will have a real significance. Particularly impressive was the moment when the Governor-General turned on the light "that is destined to burn for ever." When darkness fell Wellingtonians realised that what had been an idea for years was now an accomplishment.

A short pause, then the beautiful strains of the trumpets in unison playing the "Last Post" came over the radio. The great moment was near at hand, and in a few minutes the long-awaited carillon was to peal. A short address by the Prime Minister—then his Excellency pressed the button that inaugurated the carillon and the bells pealed forth the strains of the National Anthem.

Those within the range of the bells will never forget the strange beauty of the music as they heard it for the first time. As was only to be expected, it was impossible for those around the campanile to enjoy its full beauty. One had to be at a distance. Perhaps one of the best points in the city was Mount Victoria, which is about a mile to the north-east. The heights were lined with motors, and the pealing melodies came up with all their majesty and fullness.

As was only to be expected, the broadcast, though good, fell far short of the actual thing. The music of the bells is far from simple. Overtones interweave to form the melody that is typically that of the bell, but the microphone is limited and unable to transmit fully this complex music. Then, again, the

melody is not formed until the sound has travelled some distance, and by this time the microphone would have difficulty in picking it up. Incidentally, the microphone used in the afternoon and evening broadcasts was situated in an upper window of the Mount Cook School, which is across the street from the campanile. A reflector was placed behind it to pick up and concentrate as much sound as possible.

Nevertheless, the board's engineers did well, and it must be admitted that any failure of the radio to bring the full beauty of the bells to listeners was not in any way due to the fault of the engineers.

Prior to the broadcast, Mr. Drummond, the 2YA announcer, briefly sketched an outline of the afternoon's proceedings, and presented a very neat account of the bells themselves. Had this idea been worked out more fully and the announcer been situated at a vantage point on Mount Cook, listeners might, perhaps, have been better able to visualise the sight that only Wellingtonians will remember.

Long before 2 p.m. the city was thronged with citizens making their way toward the campanile. A constant stream of cars filled every street leading in that direction, and at an early hour each side of every street within half a mile was lined with cars. The summit of Mount Victoria and other prominences were likewise lined at an early hour. Thousands blocked all the roads in the vicinity, and shortly after the commencement of the service the site of the Memorial Art Gallery and Museum to the rear of the campanile and the clearing round the memorial itself were densely packed with people.

The voices of the speakers were carried to this vast audience by means of loudspeakers mounted halfway up the campanile. Unfortunately portions of the speeches were lost owing to some defect causing garbled reproduction, but this was only spasmodic.

The response of this great crowd to the bells was immediate. When the first chords of the National Anthem pealed out a suppressed murmur arose, to be lost a few seconds later in silent

admiration. When the last reverberation died away there was for a moment complete silence. No one seemed to know quite what to do. After a moment or two a few applauded—probably one of the very few occasions when that particular anthem has been applauded—then a subdued babel of voices announced the fact that Wellingtonians had experienced their first thrill of pride for their very beautiful carillon.

Without announcement, that very beautiful hymn, "Oh, God, our Help in Ages Past," pealed out, and in a few seconds was accompanied by thousands of voices. At a distance the effect of this unusual blend was very beautiful indeed.

By this time the crowd on Mount Cook began to move away, and before the next selection, "Land of Hope and Glory," was finished, the traffic had begun to move. The Memorial had been dedicated.

At three minutes to four the Benediction brought the broadcast to a close.

Plebiscite Questionnaire

Closing Date Extended.

FROM remarks that we have heard from time to time, a great many listeners have not bothered to complete and return the plebiscite questionnaire, evidently believing that enough would be received by the Board to fulfil the purpose for which the plebiscite is being taken.

These listeners overlook the fact, however, that the more replies are received by the Board the better will the Board be able to form an opinion as to the desires of listeners in respect to the service, and all listeners are urged to complete the questionnaire as fully as possible and return without delay.

As the result of representations made to the Board, the closing date of the plebiscite has been extended to May 31.

Radio for the Government

THERE are indications in Britain that the agency of broadcasting will be used more and more for Government announcements, and for the dissemination of views of the party leaders. In the latter respect the B.B.C. recognises that it is on delicate ground, and therefore needs to observe the strictest impartiality, as it is very closely watched by the jealous eyes of politicians of all shades. It is felt, however, that the development of Empire broadcasting comes opportunely when momentous political events are taking place throughout the Empire.



The Light that is Destined to Burn For Ever.

His Excellency the Governor-General, Lord Bledisloe, turning on the switch which lit the perpetual memorial lantern on the National War Memorial

—“Dominion” photo.