

ERNEST THOMSON WRITES ABOUT RADIO AND TELEVISION PERSONALITIES AND PROGRAMMES

HISTORY WITHOUT TEARS

Stirring serial of the days of Elizabeth I

No one should expect the strict facts of history in the novels of Sir Walter Scott. That great writer sometimes shaped events to suit his plot. All the same, he succeeded wonderfully in portraying the atmosphere and manners of a period, and it will certainly be "history without tears" watching BBC Television's serialisation of Kenilworth which follows Vanity Fair next Friday.

With Queen Elizabeth I, Kenilworth's central figures are the Queen's favourites, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, with whom she is in love, and the beautiful Amy Robsart, secretly married to Leicester.

Producer Chloe Gibson has had some of the scenes filmed in advance. Films were taken the other day in the BBC's Ealing studios of Queen Elizabeth (Maxine Audley) arriving at Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire, where, in 1575, the Earl of Leicester (Robin Bailey) entertained her for 18 days. Outdoor scenes were shot in Richmond Park and at Osterley. The stables at Osterley Park, built in 1575, represented the Black Bear Inn outside Cumnor Park, Oxfordshire, where Edmund Tressilian (Paul Eddington) rides up in search of Amy Robsart (Ann Firbank).

Other famous historical characters in the series, which will run for six weeks, include Sir Walter Raleigh (Stuart Hutchinson) and the Earl of Sussex (Olaf Pooley).



Tressilian meets Wayland Smith (Alan Edwards)—a scene from Kenilworth

They will be making their first attempts

You will notice a change in First Attempts in BBC Children's Hour on Saturday. After four years of flitting first to one region then another, but only one at a time, the programmes now become inter-regional. Each one, beginning on Saturday, will include young performers broadcasting from three different regional studios.

We start with North Wales (Bangor), Manchester, and London.

One London regional contributor is Jack Cornwell from Icknield Boys' School, Luton. He is a baritone, and at the age of 16 must be one of the youngest in the country. With him in the London studio will be Nina Whitehurst (violin) and Caroline Butcher (piano), who come from Surrey. Both 13, Nina and Caroline have been close friends for six years, ever since they began studying together at Trinity College of Music. When I telephoned Caroline at home I found

Nina was having tea with her before practising their piece for the broadcast.

In Bangor listeners will hear Jean Jones, who sings folk songs. As I write the Manchester performers have still to be chosen.

Marie Parotte, who organises



Caroline Butcher (on left) and Nina Whitehurst

First Attempts, tells me the BBC is always glad to hear from children who wish to join in. They must, however, include a letter of recommendation from a music teacher. First Attempts is intended for children who are definitely taking up music as a career.

Remembering the birth of B-P

THE 100th anniversary of the birth of Lord Robert Baden-Powell falls on February 22. Already the BBC has completed plans for this important occasion.

On the actual birthday the annual Children's Hour Thinking Day message to Girl Guides will be given by Olave, Lady Baden-Powell, widow of the founder of the Boy Scout movement, and herself the first Chief Guide. Next day, February 23, in In Town

Tonight, Lady Baden-Powell will talk about her husband's wonderful work throughout the world on behalf of youth.

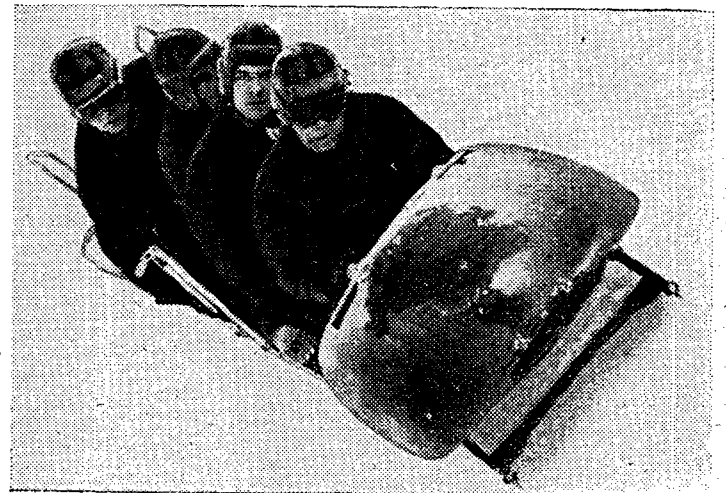
Next summer, I hear, both sound radio and TV will cover the Boy Scouts' jubilee year World Jamboree, which is being held at Sutton Park, Sutton Coldfield, from August 1 to 12. Scouts from all over the globe will be there. Events to be broadcast will include their camp-fire singing.

Sliding along at 60 mph

MAX ROBERTSON of the BBC is going to Switzerland to give a commentary for British viewers next Saturday afternoon (February 9) on the bob-sleigh four International Championships at St. Moritz.

This should be one of the most thrilling events that Eurovision has

yet given us. Swiss engineers will mount their cameras at intervals beside the course, which extends exactly one mile from a point north of the ice stadium to the Cresta-Kulm Hotel, a descent of 395 feet. The bob-sleighs, which are timed electrically, reach speeds around the mile-a-minute mark.



Hurting down the course at St. Moritz

Awkward questions

BEING technical doesn't mean being solemn. To prove this, Barrie Edgar, the popular Birmingham TV personality, will ask the funny sort of awkward questions when BBC motoring expert Bill Hartley takes the cameras on a Children's TV excursion to a Midland motor factory next Tuesday (February 12).

Power Propelled is the title of this magazine programme about car engines, and the people, including trusty veterans, who make and operate them. How It Works is one subject; Cars of the Future will also be discussed, along with Skill at the Wheel, and Sports Car Racing.

Headache for this producer

MOST young viewers know Michael Bentine, who runs The Bumblebees in BBC Television. Next Monday he teams up with his old friend of the Goon Show, Peter Sellers, for a comedy series in Associated-Rediffusion called Yes, It's the Cathode Ray Tube Show.

Producer Kenneth Carter says this show is going to be a real headache in the control room. Scenes will switch rapidly from fish-and-chip shops to stately mansions. Constant costume changes, peculiar sound effects, and rapid cuts from film to live shots will mean more work, says Carter, than a full-length TV drama!

It's a matter of sound

How sharp are your ears? BBC Children's Hour has a programme on February 14 which might well tempt a lot of people from TV. It is S for Sound, an unusual quiz which ran for a short time a year ago but has not been heard since.

From Mrs. Lorraine Davies, who invented the game and runs it from the Welsh studio, I hear that it is a contest between a panel of two boys versus two girls. They must identify all sorts of recorded sounds under different groups. Listeners can have fun by joining in to see whether they can beat the panel for speed.

Here are some examples. Wash and Brush up will involve distinguishing sounds like children brushing their teeth, polishing

shoes, or scrubbing their nails. Head Cook and Bottle Washer covers kitchen noises; in Where Do I Stand? players must guess where they are supposed to be—in a train, perhaps, a market place, or a big store.

What a Din! is more difficult; listeners must try to distinguish between four or five different sounds at once. Rock-a-Bye Baby gives animal noises from piglets to puppies.

Some of the effects are from the BBC records library. Others were recorded by Mrs. Lorraine herself. "I always carry my tape recorder around," said Mrs. Lorraine. "There are always interesting noises to pick up."

The programme will be introduced by Alun Williams.

At the Dog Show

I AM looking forward to a doggy weekend on BBC Television.

On Friday evening we can have a ringside view of the judges at Cruft's Dog Show at Olympia, choosing winners in the hound, terrier, and toy classes. On the Saturday afternoon Stanley Dangerfield will bring dogs of all shapes and sizes to a special BBC ring to try to answer the question What Makes a Champion?

The best answer comes in the evening when viewers will be introduced to the supreme champion of the show.

Jolly hard work for Snoozy

SNOOZY the Sealion took on a big job the other day in Jolly Good Time. He invited children wishing to have birthday cards from him to write to Snoozy, care of Associated-Rediffusion, Television House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2, giving their birth-dates, of course.

The response has been overwhelming. More than 12,000 requests have already been received, and Snoozy has needed the help of a special staff to deal with this avalanche.