

ERNEST THOMSON WRITES ABOUT RADIO AND TELEVISION PERSONALITIES AND PROGRAMMES

ALL THE FUN OF THE TATTOO

Recalling the days of the cavalry

THE days before tanks and armoured cars almost completely put cavalry out of business will be gloriously recalled this Friday. BBC television cameras will open up on the Algerian Spahis at the SSAFA Tattoo at London's White City Stadium.

Among all horsemen, I think you will agree that these famous French colonial troops come near to being the most picturesque. Mounted on Arab chargers and wearing flowing cloaks, they are one of the last remaining cavalry units in the French Army. They are making their first appearance

in Britain in an equestrian display which is one of the sensations of the Tattoo.

If you have seen previous SSAFA Tattoos, you will recognise the 751st U.S. Air Force Band as old friends. Twice before they have delighted Tattoo audiences with their swing drill and unusual marching steps. This time they will be joined by the American 3rd Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps.

Viewers will also see massed pipe and drum bands of the Royal Scots Greys and other British regiments.



The splendid Spahis at the salute

The proof is in the eating

HOLIDAY PIE, starting a BBC Children's TV series next Monday, is having its ingredients mixed by chief cook George Clouston. This is specially interesting because, although he has never been far away from the cameras in the past ten years, George has never spoken before on TV. All that time this cheer-

ful man with the look of a City financier has been manager to Eric Robinson, conductor of the Television Orchestra. Sometimes George himself conducts.

"I'm delighted to get this chance," George Clouston told me. "But, frankly, I don't know how the Pie will turn out. The proof will be in the eating."

The recipe sounds good—rhythm, song, and laughter in holiday mood. George will open the pie with his Rhythm Five. He himself plays the clarinet; the others are piano, bass, drums, and guitar.

One of the first guests will be the dance-mad magician, Roy Earl.

I do not doubt that the keenest viewers on Monday will be the Clouston children—Pamela (15) and John (10). They do not miss much on Children's TV. Also, they are regular readers of CN.



George Clouston

Life with the fur traders

A FUR traders' outpost, complete with look-out points and palisades, is being built in Lime Grove studios for Tom the Trader, next Tuesday's new play in BBC Children's TV.

It has been written by a Canadian, Monica Muga, now living in London. Producer Barbara Hammond tells me it creates a striking and convincing picture of the days of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1690 and the clashes between the white settlers and the Red Indians. The author has been to most of the places mentioned.

Tom, a 14-year-old English boy, is persuaded to risk the adventure of life with the trappers in the North-West. When he gets there he strikes up a friendship with Amik, an Indian boy of his own age. Tom will be played by Christopher Sandford and Amik by Leonard Davey. Raymond Rollett, well known in Children's TV, has the part of the crusty and gouty old Governor.

Thanks to the dairy maid

JOHN BETJEMAN is one of the few people on TV who can make a history lesson seem like a romantic adventure. If you saw his recent tour of gloomy Berkeley Castle in the Englishman's Home series, I think you will agree.

Do try to watch this friendly guide on Thursday when he takes the cameras to Up Park in Sussex. We have to thank a dairy maid for much of what we shall see. It happened this way.

Up Park, one of the most perfectly preserved of England's great houses, was built in the 17th century. A hundred years later the owner, Sir Harry Fetherstonhaugh, when over 70, married his head dairy maid. So devoted was she to him that after his death she honoured his memory by keeping everything exactly as it was in his lifetime . . . and so it remains today.

Holiday round-up

TOSsing in a launch, commentator Alan Gibson will be heard giving his recorded account of surf riding at Bude, Cornwall, in a holiday round-up. Beside the Seaside, in BBC Children's Hour this Thursday (August 8). This is probably the most exciting of five holiday snapshots from different Regions which "Jo" will link into one programme from the London studio.

We can hear Herbert Smith at the top of the Blackpool Tower, and join Graeme Roberts on a jaunt to Cushendon on the Northern Ireland Coast, and then sail with Ralph Tuck on the Norfolk Broads and with Jameson Clark on the Clyde.

CLIMBING CAN BE SAFE

Watching the experts at work



Beginners' class on The Pinnacles, Capel Curig

IF you have ever wanted to climb a tree you do not need to be told why mountaineering is so popular. In recent years more and more people have taken up the pastime, which gives a special interest to Climbing, a new BBC Television film to be shown on the evening of August 23.

Stanley Williamson, who made it, says most mountaineering films until now have dealt mainly with accidents and the dramatic work of mountain rescue teams. But climbing, he insists, can be safe if you tackle the risks the right way and his film concentrates on a party of young people being taught the correct methods.

Some of Britain's leading climbers took part in sequences filmed in North Wales, the Lake District, and the Peak. Outstand-

ing is Joe Brown, of Manchester, said to be the finest rock-climber of our time. He was one of the first pair to scale Kangchanganga. His companion was George Band. Each is seen climbing in the film—Joe on one of the new and sensational climbs he has pioneered in North Wales.

Gwen Moffat, only qualified woman guide in Britain, is in the picture, and we can also meet John Lees, trainer of the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue team, and Monica Jackson, who led the first women's Himalayan expedition. The two oldest mountaineers in the story are Colonel "Rusty" Westmoreland (71), still actively climbing in the Lake District, and Geoffrey Winthrop Young, "father" of the climbing world, now over 80.

Another ITV station

INDEPENDENT TV is rapidly straddling Britain. Only a fortnight ago I was telling you of first tests at the end of this month with ITA's new South Wales and West of England transmitter at St. Hilary, due to open before Christmas.

Now there is good news for people living in that great stretch of Southern England spreading from Dorset eastwards to Sussex and north as far as Newbury, Berks. Their new ITA station will transmit to them across water

from Chillerton Down, 550 feet above sea level in the Isle of Wight. Its directional aerial, on a 750-foot mast, will be concentrated landwards, so as not to waste any picture power over the empty spaces of the English Channel.

The programmes will be supplied by a group formed by the Rank Organisation, Associated Newspapers, and the Amalgamated Press.

ITA tell me they hope to have the station ready next summer.

Tenth anniversary for Eric Robinson

ERIC ROBINSON, the chubby smiling conductor of the BBC Television Orchestra, is celebrating his tenth TV anniversary in a special programme and concerts.

Before the war Eric was leading second violin in the TV Orchestra at Alexandra Palace.

A tale of Thomas Telford

ON page 8 you can read the story of Thomas Telford, the great bridge builder, who was born in Eskdale 200 years ago. Maurice Lindsay has written a radio play about how this son of a Dumfriesshire shepherd became internationally famous. You can hear it in Saturday's Children's Hour.