

A TRIP TO PERTH.

By B. JERMYN MASTERS (3LM)

Victoria's Delegate to the Second Annual Convention of the Wireless Institute of Australia.

ACCOMPANIED by Mr. Fysh (7PF) of Tasmania, and Mr. Stowe (2CN) of New South Wales, I left Melbourne by the Adelaide express on the afternoon of Monday, August 3rd, arriving in Adelaide early next morning. Here we were met by Mr. Kauper (5BG) and Mr. Williamson (5AH) and spent the hour's wait in discussing many things pertaining to amateur wireless and the convention.

Leaving Adelaide we travelled through a very rich wheat belt until we reached Terowie at half-

much advertised "Transcontinental," leaving here about an hour later for our trip across the great Australian desert, and in the words of our American cousins, "believe me, it is some desert."

I had heard a great deal about this train, but after living on it for a couple of days was very disappointed. Granted that it is operated under great difficulties, there are many small things that could be done for the greater comfort of the travellers. I consider that the sleeping cars are very ordinary after our own Adelaide express, the fare



The Convention Delegates and some of the West Australian "Hams" at Munaring Weir, near Perth.

past three in the afternoon, where we again changed trains, this time into a narrow gauge one even worse and more antiquated than some of those supplying some of our own mountain resorts. At 6.30 we reached a place called Eureka, where we were served with what was styled dinner. As the chef and the waitresses had been partaking in that well-known Australian pastime—striking—and this particular one had been settled only just before the arrival of the train, I can leave it to the imagination of the readers to realize the kind of meal we had, but they did not forget to charge full price for it.

At 10 p.m. this night we arrived at Port Augusta, and once more transported ourselves and all our luggage into the fourth train, but this time into the

is quite ordinary, and the service is generally poor. The person who compares this train with an English or American Pullman is just about crazy, the only added comfort being one shower, which in hot weather is expected to meet the needs of a train load of hot and dusty people, who nearly all want to use it at the same time.

The trip across the desert was most interesting to one who has not previously experienced this "pleasure." Waking up on Wednesday morning we got our first view of this desolate country. Nothing but red sandy hills, sparsely covered with small scrub with a few gum trees here and there, and every time there is the slightest breeze the train and all its contents, including passengers, are covered with a film of fine dust.

About 420 miles from Port Augusta the train runs out on to the Nullarbor Plains, which are even worse than what has gone before. The trees, which for some time had been getting smaller and fewer, have now disappeared entirely, and for hundreds of miles nothing over two feet in height can be seen as far as the horizon, and as the country is as flat as a billiard table, there is absolutely nothing to relieve the monotony.

The last 200 miles to Kalgoorlie is again slightly hilly and well timbered with gums, sandlewood, and gimbletwood, and the never-ending salt bush and blue bush. Reaching the highest lever of the trip near Kardnie (1186 feet above sea level), the line drops in easy stages to Kalgoorlie, a town with a very interesting past, but one with slight hopes of any future. We arrived here just after lunch and after a wait of over 3½ hours changed into the fifth and last train for the trip.

Mr. Cecil met us at the Kalgoorlie station with his car and took us for a tour along the "Golden Mile," where all the large and only mines are located. After visiting his station (6AB) we paid a visit to the School of Mines, where he is physics instructor, and were surprised at the completeness of the apparatus. Mr. Cecil made our wait here most enjoyable and instructive, and we are glad to be able to take this opportunity of thanking him.

The only recollection I have of the last stage of the trip, from Kalgoorlie to Perth (375 miles), was the continual growl from everyone about the accommodation on the "best train in Western Australia." The least said about it the better.

We arrived at Perth only one hour late and were simply overwhelmed and most agreeably surprised at the welcome we received from the "hams," in fact it seemed to us that the whole of Perth was there to greet us. After a few days amongst the gang we were not surprised at anything they put across, even to their farewell ceremonies at the station on the night we left.

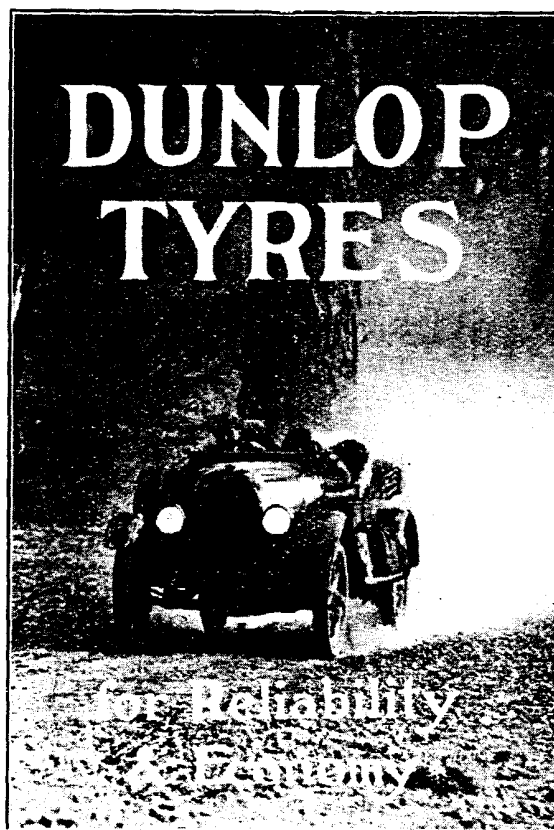
After being duly installed in the hotel we all had lunch together and were then taken across to 6WF, the broadcasting station of Westralian Farmers, and personally conducted over the whole station by the general manager, W. Coxon, Esq. The convention, by the courtesy of the management, was held at 6WF, and at 3 p.m. was officially opened by the chairman, Mr. Holt, M.I.E.S., and the serious part of our tour begun. A complete account of the convention will be published next month after the report of the delegate has ben dealt with by Council.

At the end of the second session (10 p.m.) we paid a visit to Peter Kennedy (6AM) and endeavoured to get into communication with the Eastern States. This we found very difficult, but even-

tually connected with Tasmania, and after all having a shot at the key, returned to the hotel at 12.45 a.m.

The whole of Saturday was taken up with three sessions of the convention, but on the completion of the last session at 9.30 we adjourned to the experimental station of Mr. Coxon (6AG). His apparatus was partially dismantled, as portion of it was being used at 6WF, while the latter's was being repaired after a blowout. Small things like this did not bother Mr. Coxon, who, with only portion of his regular apparatus, was still able to bust the ether, and we were again enabled to communicate with N.S.W. and one Victorian country station.

Sunday was wholly taken up with a wonderful motor trip of over 80 miles to Mundaring Weir, the source of Perth's and Kalgoorlie's water supply. After lunch at teh hotel we were conducted over the Weir and the large pumping station, and again boarding the cars took a trip round the water shed, where we saw some wonderful scenery and passed over some very bad roads, arriving back in Perth just in time for tea, after having spent a most enjoyable day. In the evening a second visit was paid to Mr. Coxon's, but his generator broke down, and



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by the time it was repaired all the eastern operators must have gone to bed, as none could be raised, which was funny, as it was only 2 a.m. eastern time.

On Monday morning we visited the State Museum and Public Library, where we saw many interesting relics of the early mining days, and whole rooms full of native weapons and curios, etc. In the afternoon we were the guests of Professor Ross at the University, who conducted us over the Nat. Phil. School, and performed many interesting experiments for our edification. The Professor, notwithstanding his many University duties, still finds time to take an active part in Institute doings and the general activities of the members.

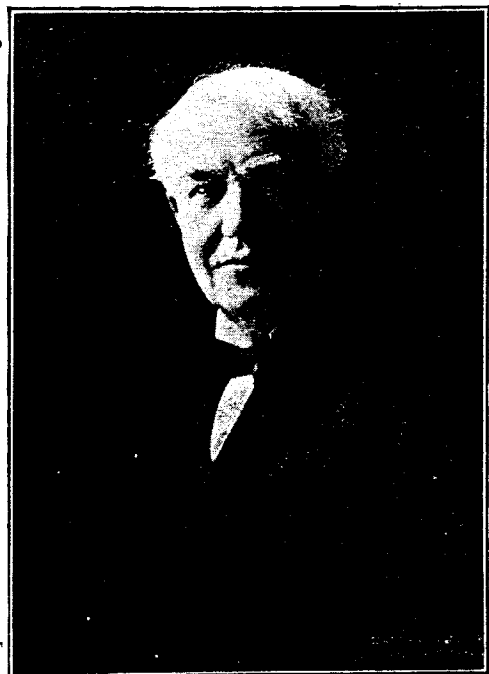
Monday night was THE night. A dinner in honour of the visiting delegates, when we were given the opportunity of personally meeting the large body of general members of the affiliated societies. There is not sufficient space in this magazine to fully report this function, but suffice it to say that there were nine toasts and the festivities were not concluded until nearly midnight. Oh! what a time we had! Two very happy incidents were the presentations. The first one being a W.I.A. Pennant, presented to the W.A. division by the visiting delegates, as a small mark of appreciation for the wonderful time they were giving us, and the second one, a fountain pen, presented by the convention to Mr. Goldsmith, who acted as honor-

ary reporter, and prepared the report, which consists of 30 pages of closely written foolscap.

On Tuesday morning we visited Mr. Scott, the Radio Inspector, and after having a chat with him about things in general, went round to 6WF, where all the local hams brought their wave meters to have them calibrated by Mr. Stowe. We also found time to go up on to the roof of the G.P.O. (the highest point in Perth), when we obtained a splendid view of the city, and from where we were able to get some splendid photos of the surrounding terrain.

In the afternoon we paid a visit to 6BN, the station of Mr. Stephens, and had the pleasure of having afternoon tea with him and his wife.

All the stations we visited were a credit to their owners, and the workmanship generally is of a much higher standard than that which prevails in Victoria. Very little modern American apparatus can be obtained in the West, and I consider they are doing very creditable work considering the disadvantages under which they work. There are only about a dozen licensed stations, and as they do not use their transmitters until after broadcasting hours (midnight in the Eastern States) it is not much wonder that they are very seldom heard over here. The Convention has given amateur activities a wonderful stimulus, and as several schedules have been



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arranged there should be quite a lot of testing between the East and the West in the near future.

On Tuesday evening the delegates were the guests of 6WF at a dinner, and afterwards at a theatre party. The thanks of all the delegates, and of the Eastern delegates in particular, are extended to this company for the very concrete interest shown in our doings. Coming from the Eastern States it is truly remarkable to find such close co-operation existing between an Australian Broadcasting Co. and a division of the W.I.A. It is a splendid thing for the Institute, and the management of 6WF very early realised the benefits to be gained by them from this co-operation. It is a point that could be well investigated by the Broadcasting Companies in the East.

On Wednesday morning we were left to our own devices for the first time. In the afternoon we went by car out to Applecross, a run of about ten miles, where we were welcomed by the operator-in-charge, and shown all over V.I.P. The power house gives one the idea of efficiency, with modern, first-class machinery and generators, but the wireless house was the usual Australian coastal commercial station. On the return journey we caught a launch at Canning River, and after about three-quarters of an hour's run along and across the Swan River, reached Perth just in time for dinner.

In the evening we went by ferry across to South

Perth, and visited the station of Mr. Darley, 6CJ. This was the first station that reminded me of the East, in fact it could have been one of 3BD's discarded sets that had been transported whole to Perth, even to the high tension lines wandering all over the floor and all about the operator.

We again tried to raise some of the second or third district stations, but without avail. One station in Tasmania was worked, and this seemed to be the only consistent district, followed by N.S.W. a bad second. The only Victorian station that could be raised was 3AF at Geelong—fb OM.

Thursday morning was spent in rummaging through the old stores of the City Electric Light Company, and many pieces of apparatus were collected for shipment to the Eastern States, amongst which were five d.c. generators, which were acquired for a mere song. There are many more of these articles available, and particulars can be obtained from the writer. For lunch we were the guests of Mr. McCallum, the Minister for Public Works, at Parliament House, who personally conducted us over all the buildings. It having now started to rain, we returned to the hotel and packed up ready for the return journey.

After a farewell dinner at the hotel we adjourned to 6WF, from where Mr. Stowe broadcasted a farewell speech, thanking one and all for the wonderful time we had, and then the farewell at the sta-

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tion. They were all there again to see us off, and I may state that it cost us several shillings to square the conductor and train crew for clearing up the mess in our part of the train after we had left Perth.

The return journey was a repetition of the journey over. Mr. Cecil was at Kalgoorlie again to see us, but this time we only stopped for half an hour, but managed to give him a fair idea of the deliberations of the Convention. At Adelaide we parted company, Messrs. Fysh and Stowe continuing their journey, while I stepped off for a couple of days to see what the gang were doing over in this State. Messrs. Kauper and Williamson were again, at the station to see us, and after arranging for quarters at a hotel, I went out to Mr. Williamson's (5AH), where we again tried to raise one of the Eastern States, but once again without success. One thing I saw here which made me very envious was a smoothing condenser which even 3JU would never blow out.

Monday morning was spent in seeing the sights of the City of Adelaide, and after lunch I paid a visit to 5CL, who have a temporary station in the Grosvenor Building, and believe me, it is very temporary.

After a visit to 5DN, a "B" class broadcasting station, and a jolly fine station, too, I went round to

5BN, the station of Mr. Austin, and after having tea with him and his family, finished the day with Mr. Kauper (5BG). This station is too well known to need any comment.

After spending the whole of Tuesday with Mr. Austin in his car, travelling over a hundred miles to see the many interesting sights surrounding the city, I caught the Melbourne express and landed home next day after having spent sixteen hectic days, packed full of incident from daylight to midnight. The only thing which now remains is to present my report of the Convention to the council and members of the Victorian division, and if there is any of me left after this, to write up a full report of the Convention for the next issue.

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