

The following two articles originally appeared in "Broadcast" the staff magazine of RADIO (1936) Ltd published in December 1948 and are reproduced here with due acknowledgment - Ed.

## R. J. ORBELL, B.E.

*Mr R J Orbell, Chief Engineer and a Director of Radio (1936) Limited, has been connected with radio in New Zealand, in all its phases, since the earliest days of the science.*

*A Bachelor of Engineering of Canterbury University College he became interested in Radio in the "Spark Transmitter" days before the 1914-18 War.*

*At his home near Timaru he, together with Mr Bell, another early pioneer of wireless made many interesting records. He became recognised, even in those early days, as an authority on radio.*

*During the Great War he served in France with the N.Z. Signal Corps. Went to England in 1924 to gain further experience and joined up with the General Electric Company in Birmingham. On the voyage home to England in 1924 he obtained permission to operate an amateur transmitter and receiver on the ship and again topped all previous performances, for those days, in long distance communication between the ship and New Zealand amateur stations.*

*Shortly after his return to New Zealand he joined the original New Zealand Broadcasting Company and was for a period in charge of the Transmitting Station, 1YA Auckland, when it was situated on George Court and Sons Ltd. Buildings in Kararangahape Road.*

*In 1927 he joined this firm as Chief Engineer, and was responsible for the production of the now famous "Ultimate" radio receivers, which are so well and favourably known throughout New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific Islands.*

*In 1929 he was invited by Admiral Byrd to accompany his expedition to the South Pole, and duly sailed together with an "Ultimate" Receiver on the s.s. "City of New York". He had many experiences with that expedition and played a large part in the success of their communications.*



*During the Second World War, 1939-45 he was responsible for the design and production of many thousands of Transmitter Receivers for use by the N.Z. Armed Forces. In 1944, he was selected by the New Zealand Government with a number of other New Zealand radio experts to go to England and assist in the production in that country of specialised Radar equipment.*

*Mr Orbell has always been active as an amateur transmitter and nowadays he spends a portion of his spare time contacting amateurs in all parts of the world with his 10 metre transmitter installed in his home at St. Heliers Bay.*

*It is extremely difficult to get him to talk of his experiences in various parts of the world but if one can get him to do so, one can be assured of a very interesting and amusing time. He is extremely popular with his staff, and it will be realised how wide is his knowledge of radio when we say that it is not only his job, but also his hobby.*