

For the Record

Peter K. Robins

Members who treasure the two tape cassettes of some of Henry's radio broadcasts, should acquaint themselves with the National Sound Archive in London.

The British Library National Sound Archive (NSA), as it is correctly entitled, is one of the largest sound archives in the world. Opened in 1955 as the British Institute of Recorded Sound, it became part of the British Library in 1983 and now holds three quarters of a million discs and 50,000 hours of tape recordings.

The collection includes commercial recordings from the 1890s to the present day, broadcasts, including BBC material, and thousands of unique, unpublished recordings.

Matter held relating to Henry Williamson is as follows:

HENRY WILLIAMSON	DATE	REF. NO.
- Extract from <i>Men Talking</i>	16.12.1935	AA 13820
- Editor of <i>The Adelphi</i> reminisces in feature	16.5.1958	FA LP 26938-9
- Prologue to 'The Faith in Devon', programme in series <i>The Faith in the West</i>	23,12,1958	AA LP 24843
- Talks about his life and books in interview with G. Rees. Programme in series <i>I Remember</i>	4.11.1960	AC LP 26474
- Talks on the changes he has seen in the life of a Devon village	18.11.1960	AA LP 26442
- On 'The Flax of Dream' and 'Chronicle' series in <i>World of Books</i>	6.11.1961	AA LP 27094
- Talks about Devon in series <i>One Man's County</i>	18.9.1963	AA LP 28554
- Recalls the Western Front for <i>The Great War</i> (TV series)	Sept/Oct 1963	FE LP 30490
- On giving his manuscripts to Exeter University	13.5.1965	AC LP 29534
- In <i>Siegfried Sassoon</i> : composite picture by friends and fellow-poets	6.9.1966	FA T 30430
- In <i>Flanders Fields</i> : interviews with soldiers from the First World War. Programme in the series <i>Something in Common</i>	22.2.1971	AFT 33831

The National Sound Archive is open to the public from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday, with late opening to 9.00 pm on Thursdays.

The location is: The British Library, National Sound Archive, 29 Exhibition Road, London SW7 2AS. Tel: 071-589 6603. Nearest tube is South Kensington.

NOTE: It is essential, if you can make only one trip, to make an appointment and to advise staff what you wish to hear as it is sometimes necessary to have recordings transcribed to a suitable medium. You can call without prior arrangement if you wish to consult the catalogues or reference books and listen to a demonstration cassette. The service is free of charge.

If you can't get to London, there is a Northern Listening Service in the Reading Room of the British Library Document Supply Centre at Boston Spa, near Wetherby, West Yorkshire, and a charged service at the North Devon Library Services Headquarters, Barnstaple, Devon. Intending users should contact the Listening Service in London for further details.

The NSA archives are primarily for reference but a commercial Transcription Service is operated providing tape copies subject to copyright clearance. This bears further investigation by the Society.

Good listening!

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Further to this research, I have discovered an even richer source of material at the BBC Written Archives Centre at Reading, although some of it overlaps. Access to this material lies with the Copyright Holders, and accordingly I have sent a copy of the full list to the Henry Williamson Literary Estate.

[I thank Peter for his good detective work and assure you all that this will be dealt with as soon as time permits. Anne Williamson, Manager of the HW Literary Estate.]

HENRY WILLIAMSON LECTURE

*As part of the North Devon Festival to celebrate the
25th Anniversary of the Beaford Centre,
Richard Williamson will give his Henry Williamson Lecture
in the Henry Williamson Room at Barnstaple Library
on Tuesday 16th July 1991 (time not yet decided).*

*The Society display "The Dreamer of Devon" will be on
public view at The Studio, Ox's Cross, for the remainder of
that week. If members would like to congregate at the Field
at the weekend they would be very welcome (anyone like to
organise a barbecue on Saturday evening 20th July?)*