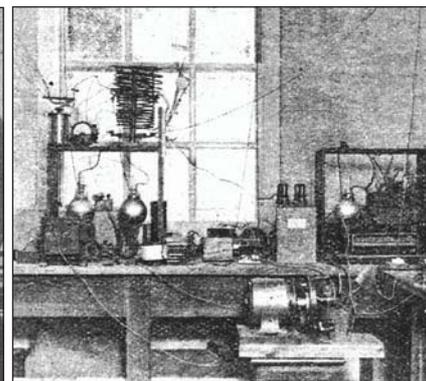
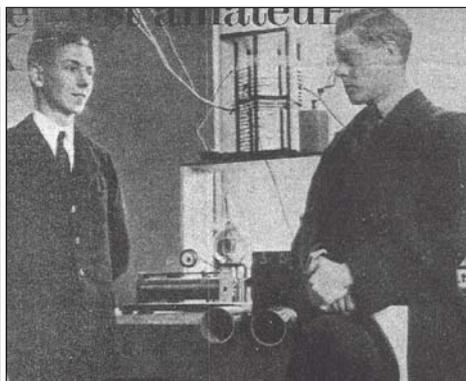


The ultimate DX

19 October marks the 80th anniversary of the first two-way contact between the UK and New Zealand. John Heys describes how a teenage student in London achieved the terrestrial two-way long-distance DX record that was unbeatable.



Through 1923 and 1924 the DX distance record was being greatly and rapidly lengthened.

Amateurs had been ejected from the medium and long-wave bands by the burgeoning number of broadcast stations, and had been relegated to what were then officially thought of as the 'useless' wavelengths below 200 metres. The amateurs' new short-wave spectrum allowed an unexpected dividend in the shape of exciting long-distance QSOs. By using wavelengths below 100 metres, trans-Atlantic and other long-distance contacts were being made.

On 13 October 1924 the station 1SF in Short Beach, Connecticut, USA, worked Frank Bell, Z4AA, in Palmerston South, New Zealand, for a new world distance record of 9000 miles. However, this record was only to stand for six days, for on Sunday 19 October at 0615UTC the distance record shot up to 12,450 miles. This was established by Z4AA in New Zealand and Cecil Goyder, who was operating 2SZ, the Mill Hill School Wireless Society station located in North London. Goyder had left the school and become a student at the City & Guilds of London College. He then lived at 44 Hale Lane, which was about one mile west of his old school. He had gone, early that morning, perhaps to catch some of the trans-Atlantic DX. Also on the lookout for DX was Ernest Simmonds, 2OD, in Gerrard's Cross, Bucks. Goyder heard Simmonds calling an American amateur station. All

From left: Mill Hill School, showing the 2SZ antenna (from *The Wireless Magazine*, April 1925).

HRH Edward the Prince of Wales visits the Mill Hill School Wireless Society station and speaks to Cecil Goyder.

A photograph of the shack at 2SZ some time after the historic New Zealand contact. In the right foreground is the synchronous rectifier and below the antenna coil at the window a second Mullard 0/250 valve has been added (from *The Wireless Magazine*, April 1925).

this took place on wavelengths close to 100 metres.

Goyder tuned his receiver away from the strong 'local' signals from 2OD and put out a 'Test' call ('CQ' was not allowed in the UK at that time). Then he heard a station with a fine 'DC' note sending '2SZ' for 10 minutes and eventually signing Z4AA. Goyder thought this was a joke but responded to the call. A QSO was achieved which lasted for 90 minutes and at its close Goyder still had some suspicions as to the other station's real status. He was only convinced that he had indeed just worked a station in New Zealand when three hours later that morning a cable arrived at the school which read: "Congratulations on first transworld message - Bell".

The two stations had just made the first radio contact between Australasia and Europe and the antipodal distance could not be beaten. Inspired by all this Goyder on the key at the Mill Hill station operated for a further 10 nights and worked the New Zealand stations Z4AA, Z4AG and Z4AK. It is ironic that the well-equipped and experienced DXer Simmonds, 2OD, had actually been heard by Bell on 16 October and on the 17th had received a cable to confirm this. It seems like sheer bad luck that he had been 'pipped at the post' by the young Goyder.

I am fortunate to possess the actual QSL card that was sent by Frank Bell to Cecil Goyder to con-

firm this historic achievement which had taken place 80 years ago. The card was written out three days after the QSO and it gives 90 metres as the wavelength used as well as the station details. At that time it was not considered necessary to give a signal report for then our RST reporting system had not been introduced. On his card Bell wrote: "Where next? Well OM we sure made history that nite and I think U and I helped to start a new era of World Wireless. Also would like to Sa that U R one of the best ops I hv ever wkld."

The Mill Hill School Wireless Society at that time had another operator, Mr W Brown. I also have a QSL card from 2GW to the Mill Hill station dated 20 October 1924 which is addressed to Mr Brown. Another card to Brown was from SWL H A Maxwell Whyte (later to be the well-known H A M Whyte, G6WY) dated November 1927. It suggests that Mr Brown was a member of the school staff, and in the 1925 Amateur Wireless *Handbook of Call Signs* W H Brown is listed as the 2SZ licence-holder.

Young Goyder's achievement was soon picked up by the press and he was interviewed at the school by none other than the Patron of the RSGB at that time, Edward, Prince of Wales, who later became the short-reigned King Edward VIII. This meeting at Mill Hill also included a look at the shack and equipment employed to make the historic con-

