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# Other Ears

On two other occasions, over the years, TIGHAR has been approached by elderly women who think they heard Amelia Earhart on the short wave in July of 1937. Here's a summary of each story.

In a letter to TIGHAR dated March 21, 1991, Thelma L. of Ontario, Canada wrote:

On the seventh day of July 1937, early morning—before eight A.M. as my husband had to be at work at eight o'clock, I was listening to short-wave radio [on a] DeForest Crosley—cabinet model; while my husband was getting ready for work.

I had the radio on “short wave” as there was a program of Japanese music that I got every morning. As I passed back and forth across the dial near the station [where] I usually got the program, I picked up this voice, loud and clear—the message was “Can you read me? Can you read me? This is Amelia Earhart. This is Amelia Earhart. Please come in.” Then she gave her position. When she gave it a second time I picked up a book and jotted down the numbers, latitude [?]-longitude. She continued: “We have taken in water, my navigator is badly hurt; [repeat] we are in need of medical care and must have help; we can't hold on much longer.”

I rushed upstairs to tell my husband and asked him if I shouldn't get in touch with someone. His reply, “It's nearly a week since she's been missing. What you heard was no doubt a play, some theater group.” “But,” I said, “it was English spoken. I've never heard English spoken on that station.” I went back downstairs. Silence. I went back and forth over the area. Very faintly heard her voice

once and then all was quiet and later only static. At the time, Mrs. L. was living in St. Stephen, New Brunswick which is just across the river from Calais, Maine (far northeastern Maine). She has since looked for the book in which she wrote down the position but can't find it.



In a letter to TIGHAR postmarked October 11, 1990, Mabel D. of Vermont wrote:

On the first night of Amelia Earhart's disappearance I heard her SOS loud and clear, not on the frequency but on the one President Roosevelt said she might use. Her message stated the plane was down on an uncharted island. Small, uninhabited. The plane was partially on land, part in water.

She gave the latitude and longitude of her location. I listened to her for 30-45 minutes. After waking my family to listen—two sons and my husband (all three now deceased) and I had called our local paper to let them listen to her message also when one member of our family reminded me that our President had asked that no one give out any information if they heard anything, as it might endanger her life.

I heard her message around 2 A.M. daylight saving time from my home in Amarillo, Texas. She stated that her navigator Fred Noonan was seriously injured. Needed help immediately. She also had some injuries but not as serious as Mr. Noonan.

My family and myself decided not to discuss this with anyone. The government of the USA was sup-

posed to take care of everything, so did not even listen for any later messages from her.

I'm sorry I can no longer remember the latitude and longitude of the island. With that we had no trouble locating on map next day. I had it all written down once but over the years, lots of moves, and a second marriage it has been lost.

Of course, President Roosevelt never made any announcement about Amelia Earhart, but what's interesting about these stories is that—for all their differences in date, time and location—they seem to describe similar situations: water in the plane, Noonan injured, coordinates sent, urgent call

for help—exactly the situation Betty describes. Of course, all of those factors (except for the “Noonan injured” bit) might be considered to be no brainers for any description of Earhart's situation. Still, it is apparent that Betty's experience was hardly unique. What *is* unique in Betty's case is the existence of a transcription.

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## Progress Report

**A**fter roughly two weeks of research we have established that:

- The release dates and popularity of the films, song titles and lyrics in the notebook support the premise that the Earhart notations were made in July 1937.
- The notations do not fit the duration and format of the only known radio dramatizations about the Earhart disappearance (two half-hour “March of Time” broadcasts of fictional conversations between Earhart and the *Itasca* using musical cues to distinguish the characters).
- The question of whether it would be possible for transmissions from the Electra to be heard so many thousands of miles away is being being addressed by TIGHAR's radio

experts. Details of the antenna erected by Betty's father are being pinned down with Betty's help and by measurements taken at the house in St. Petersburg where she lived in 1937.

- So far, none of the “occult” information in the notes has been conclusively deciphered but some intriguing possibilities have been suggested. For example, the repeated “N.Y., N.Y.” may have been heard as “New York City” but may, in fact, have been “Norwich City,” the name of the ship on the reef at Nikumaroro and the island's only identifying feature to someone who did not know where she was.

We'll be visiting with Betty in person next month and will include the results of that interview in the next newsletter.



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