AWESOME stories

Lionel Logue and His Wife Myrtle

Although Lionel Logue was successful in his hometown of Adelaide - where his "elocutionary recitals" attracted both audiences and great reviews - he decided to move west.

He wasn't satisfied just being "the happy possessor of a singularly musical voice, a refined intonation, and a graceful mastery of gesture, in which there is no suspicion of redundancy" (as reported by the *Advertiser*, Adelaide's local newspaper). Seeking another path, he took a job with an electrical engineering company in Western Australia.

The move brought him more than a new job. Lionel met Myrtle Gruenert in Perth (the capital of Western Australia). Five years younger, Lionel's future wife was tall and pretty. This is their engagement photo, taken in 1906.

Finishing his contract with the electrical company, Logue set up an elocution school in Perth. He and Myrtle were married in that city - on March 20, 1907 - at St. George's Cathedral.

Theirs was a happy marriage. When they first moved to London, they lived in a modest flat at Bolton Gardens. As Logue's practice became successful, they moved to a large home (called "Beechgrove") at 111 Sydenham Hill.

Lionel and Myrtle had three sons: Laurie, Valentine and Antony ("Tony" whom the family called "Boy"). They made the move, from Australia to London, with their parents.

In 1942, Logue appeared on a BBC program entitled "On My Selection." During that appearance, he described Myrtle as "the lass who has stood by my side ... and helped me so valiantly over the rough places."

When the war was over, Myrtle was invited to Buckingham Palace with her husband for VE-Day celebrations. The King was planning to broadcast a speech, for which he needed Logue's help. Myrtle was delighted to be included as a dinner guest.

Just a month later, Myrtle suffered a heart attack and died on June 22, 1945. Logue was devastated. The King sent a personal message, as soon as he learned the news:

> *The Queen and I are grieved to hear of Mrs. Logue's death and send you and your family our deepest sympathy in your loss - George.*

Then the King sent two more letters, including these words in one of them:

> *I was so shocked when I was told because your wife was in such good form on Victory night. Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can be of any help to you.* (King George's letter, quoted in *The King's Speech* by Mark Logue and Peter Conradi, at pages 209-10.)

Writing to Myrtle's brother Rupert, the following May, Logue said that he was still working - at age 66 - because "work is the only thing that lets me forget."

Credits:

Photo of Lionel and Myrtle Logue, online courtesy the Logue family. It is also featured in Mark Logue's book, *The King's Speech.*

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Lionel-Logue-and-His-Wife-Myrtle0

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