

**THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF RADIO  
BROADCASTING IN THE SOUTH, WITH  
PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE  
GREATER NASHVILLE AREA**



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THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF RADIO BROADCASTING IN THE SOUTH,  
WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE GREATER NASHVILLE AREA

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An Abstract  
Presented to  
the Graduate Council of  
Austin Peay State University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by  
Lee Unger Dorman

August 1975



## ABSTRACT

Scientific achievement has always been of pride to Americans. One of the greatest scientific achievements in the last one hundred years was the discovery that the human voice could be transmitted through the air without the use of wires. This was radio, a remarkable discovery whose effects are still being felt today, and through the evolution of broadcasting into television, or radio with a picture, will continue to be felt for many years to come.

As the nation moved into the Twentieth Century, many people in other parts of the country considered the South to be lagging behind the rest of America. In certain areas this may have been true. But not in the field of radio broadcasting. When radio began to grow and expand, the South was in the midst of all the activity and progress. It made its contributions and it reaped the rewards radio brought.

This study will examine the growth of radio in the South during its first decade--1919 to 1929, and in particular, reveal the dramatic growth and impact of the medium on the greater Nashville area.

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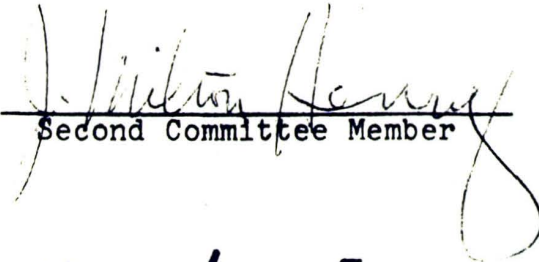


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Thesis written by Lee Unger Dorman entitled "The Origin and Growth of Radio Broadcasting in the South, with Particular Emphasis on the Greater Nashville Area: 1919-1929." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in History.

  
Major Professor

We have read this thesis and  
recommend its acceptance:

  
Second Committee Member

  
Third Committee Member

Accepted for the Council:

  
Dean of the Graduate School

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to acknowledge:

Six years of co-operation, help, understanding and advice from Doctors Preston Hubbard, Milton Henry and Wentworth Morris. They are truly gentlemen and scholars in every sense of the word.

The guidance and moral support of Mrs. Lillian Sharp and Doctor Wayne Stamper; the former for her faith, the latter for his hope.

The essential information from two pioneers in Nashville radio. John DeWitt and F. C. Sowell made the history, then helped the writer recreate it. Their contributions to their field is invaluable. They will always have the highest esteem of the writer.

Those close to him in his personal life. It's not always easy to love and be loved in absentia.

Finally, the writer dedicates this study to the late Herman Grizzard, who gave forty years of his life to Nashville radio, and was still a warm, lovely person who always seemed to have the time he shouldn't have had to help others.

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## Chapter 1

### THE BEGINNINGS

Radio as a means of mass communication actually began on Christmas Eve, 1906, when Reginald Fessenden, a professor of electrical engineering at Western University (later to be renamed the University of Pittsburgh), broadcast a violin solo, which he performed himself, a Bible reading and a wish for a Merry Christmas through a telephone microphone over a wireless transmitter.

Fessenden's program startled telegraphers throughout the western hemisphere, and, by popular demand, he repeated his performance on New Year's Eve.<sup>1</sup>

There are other claims to having produced this nation's first voice transmission over wireless radio. In Murray, Kentucky, surrounded by weeds, grass and other seemingly more important graves, is a tombstone naming the deceased, Nathan B. Stubblefield, the "Father of Radio Broadcasting." Stubblefield is said to have transmitted voice as early as 1892, and presented public demonstrations in Philadelphia and Washington, D. C. ten years later.<sup>2</sup>

Although Fessenden was the first to bring the voice and music to wireless broadcasting, his innovations could never have occurred without the pioneer work done by two others in the same field. These early radio engineers were

Guglielmo Marconi, who built the first successful wireless transmitters, and Lee De Forest, whose development of a "grid," or third element in vacuum tube, tremendously increased its effectiveness as an amplifier. These giant steps forward paved the way for Fessenden in his historic advance in 1906.

During the next six years several milestones took place. In 1907, De Forest broadcast from the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Two years later, the S S Republic sank after a collision at sea, but because of wireless messages for help, most lives were saved. In 1910, De Forest broadcast an opera featuring the great talent of Enrico Caruso.

By 1912, there were so many wireless operators transmitting in the United States, and often interfering with one another because of the limited number of wavebands on which they could broadcast, that the 62nd Congress was forced to pass a Radio Act regulating broadcast communications. Nowhere in this act is any mention made, however, of advertising or the selling of commercial time.<sup>3</sup>

In 1913, Harold J. Power, a student at Tufts College near Boston, and the founder of the school's campus radio club, took a summer job as wireless operator on the yacht of famed financier J. P. Morgan. In 1914, after graduation, Power went to Morgan and told him he believed in broadcasting and felt eventually everyone would have a receiver. Morgan questioned the statement, saying that to run a radio set required that an operator be an engineer. Power disagreed, ex-

plained his views, and expressed his interest in attending Harvard for a year of graduate work, where he would study his ideas and work up a plan. Morgan asked him how much this would cost and was told five hundred dollars. He opened his wallet, handed Power a five hundred dollar bill, and one year later Power was back with his plan. It called for the creation of a laboratory to develop equipment and begin broadcasting--at a cost of twenty-five thousand dollars. Morgan had his lawyers establish the corporation, and the result was the American Radio and Research Corporation in 1915.

The station began a schedule of news bulletins and phonograph records "for the entertainment of the ships at sea." But the war diverted their plans; they began building transmitters for the Army and broadcasting was halted. After the war they started up again, and in 1922 became WGI, Medford Hillside, Massachusetts. But they were never able to become financially self-sufficient and eventually sold out to the Crosley Corporation.<sup>4</sup>

In 1916, De Forest broadcast music and election returns of the Presidential race to New York. Not only was this the first widespread broadcast of a significant news event, but the first broadcast tragedy as well. De Forest announced that night that Charles Evans Hughes had been elected President of the United States.<sup>5</sup>

Between 1916 and 1920, there were no significant advances in radio broadcasting. The government had clamped a ban on amateur broadcasters from 1917 to mid-1919 during the



war years, stifling the growth of radio broadcasting.<sup>6</sup>

In 1920, KDKA in Pittsburgh broadcast the results of the 1920 election. By 1921, WHA in Madison, Wisconsin, WWJ in Detroit, WDAP in Chicago, KNX in Hollywood, California and WLK in Indianapolis were all broadcasting on a fairly regular basis. The next year was even more spectacular. During 1922, more than five hundred broadcasting stations across the nation were licensed.

In 1922, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company introduced "toll" broadcasting. The giant utility established its own wireless station in New York--WEAF--and leased its facilities to anyone willing to pay for the time. A T & T viewed this experiment in the same light as the pay telephone--a public utility open to anyone who wanted to accept the cost and use the service (a theory which would eventually lead to broadcasting's first major internal "war" and which will be studied in greater detail in a later chapter). The first income-producing program was the broadcast of a ten-minute message to the public to promote the sale of apartments by a real estate company.<sup>7</sup>

Later in the year, WEAF leased its facilities for the broadcast of a college football game. The policy of leasing the time to interested sponsors proved so successful that a second A T & T station, WCAP in Washington, D. C., was licensed the next year.

Stations owned by the large radio corporations,

General Electric, RCA and Westinghouse, under the terms of a 1920 patent-granting agreement with A T & T (later to be questioned by the government as it pertained to anti-trust laws), were not permitted to sell advertising in competition with the utility company. The making of receivers and parts would be done by GE and Westinghouse; the marketing of these receivers and parts would be done through RCA and RCA trademarks. The sale of transmitters would be mainly an A T & T concern. Telephony as a service belonged to A T & T, but RCA would have limited rights in wireless telephony.<sup>8</sup> This entire agreement would later be the cause of the internal "war" mentioned previously, when all involved parties would claim different interpretations of the wording. Amateur stations, independently-owned, were not included in this agreement, but were not at all eager to become commercial at the time, anyway.<sup>9</sup>

The apparent success, though, of WEAJ in 1923, with its "toll" broadcasting, had raised the important question of the financial structure of radio broadcasting as an industry. That question, and its ultimate answer, were to become increasingly more important in the five years to follow.

## Chapter 2

### THE EARLY DAYS OF ADVERTISING

When it first became apparent that it was going to cost a greater sum of money than perhaps had been anticipated to finance radio broadcasting operations, thoughts were turned to various means of financing the medium. Many possible methods were put forward. One called for the manufacturers of the radio receivers to bear the cost of broadcasting in order to stimulate the sale of their receivers. The money made from the sales of radios, supporters of this plan pointed out, would be used to pay for the programs broadcast on the air. This theory was short-lived when it became apparent that as the country became saturated with radio receivers, the sale of replacements or second sets could not possibly be enough to finance broadcasting indefinitely--particularly with the rapidly rising costs and expenses involved in securing and presenting talent on the radio programs.

Another plan advanced was the taxing of every radio receiver sold, and financial support of broadcasting by the government. Proponents of this plan compared the idea to the tax on a gallon of gasoline being used by the government to build roads. This theory faded quickly because of the prevailing economic mood of the early 1920's--opposition to any government participation in economic matters.<sup>10</sup>



The commercial support of radio as a method of financing the broadcasting medium appeared with the "toll" broadcasting initiated by A T & T in 1923, and was followed by WJR in Detroit in 1925. Some of the first sponsored programs were of a religious nature (this practice was by no means localized as will be seen in later chapters). In Royal Oak, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit, Father Charles Coughlin began to use radio to raise funds. He organized a "Radio League of the Little Flower"--named after his parish--and solicited contributions from his radio listeners. By 1933, he was paying two hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars a year to the radio station for his broadcast time, and was bringing in five hundred thousand dollars in contributions.<sup>11</sup>

As the A T & T "toll" broadcasting experiment continued, and other stations began to allow advertising, complaints began to be voiced. As early as May, 1922, the following appeared in Radio Broadcast, a monthly trade publication of the broadcasting industry:

...dribblets of advertising, indirect but unmistakable, are floating through the ether every day. You can't miss it...if it's only the mere mention of the name--and the street address--of the music house which arranged the programme [sic]...The woods are full of opportunists who are restrained by no scruples when the scent of profit comes down the wind.<sup>12</sup>

This was probably a reference to the so-called "song pluggers" then being heard on many stations. They would present music, then mention that the music was available at music stores and music departments in department stores.

The May, 1922 edition of Radio Broadcast offered sev-

eral alternative plans to finance radio broadcasting. One was "endowment of a station by a public-spirited citizen." This never caught on, probably because of a lack of public-spirited citizens. Another possibility mentioned was "municipal financing." This, in the early 1920's, was admittedly socialistic, but the magazine compared it to the cities' financing of museums, schools and libraries. A third plan was "a common fund to be controlled by an elected board." This idea was abandoned after an unsuccessful attempt in New York in 1924.

The magazine and various other critics were not the only voices heard in opposition to advertising on radio. One of the men most responsible for the creation and growth of broadcasting, Lee De Forest, also was against commerciality on the air. He was of the opinion that advertising posed a threat to the survival of radio:

'I sought to point out that a very real danger to the fullest usefulness and enjoyment which radio has power to confer, a menace steadily growing greater, more ruthless, more deserving of suspicion and more generally detested--the use of the broadcast for direct and blatant advertising.'<sup>13</sup>

Obviously, from the above-stated opposition to advertising on radio, not everyone felt it was the best means of financing the broadcasting medium. But, despite many attempts, no other successful way had been found.

## Chapter 3

## THE RISE OF RADIO ADVERTISING

As early as 1916, there was one man with the foresight to predict the future of the broadcast medium in regard to financing. David Sarnoff, years later to become the head of RCA, the Radio Corporation of America, stood in the midst of the non-believers and dared tell the future. In a memorandum to Edward J. Nalley, General Manager of the American Marconi Company, Sarnoff's employer, the 25-year old telegrapher detailed his prophetic ideas. He saw a future in which radio had become "a household utility in the same sense as the piano or phonograph." And he went on to predict correctly the means of financing radio broadcasting:

'...the possibilities for advertising...are tremendous; for its [the company's] name would be brought into the household...and receive national and universal attention.'<sup>14</sup>

During the years 1923 and 1924, subtle, low-key advertising began to appear on radio. An association of greeting card manufacturers presented a talk on the history of greeting cards. The Haynes Company told the story of the Haynes automobile. Gillette offered a talk on the fashion in beards, and ended with the praises of the modern safety razor. A toothpaste company offered one station a program on teeth and their care, but were delayed because station executives were unsure about whether anything as personal as toothbrushing should be



mentioned on the air. They finally consented, apparently persuaded by the pull of the dollar.<sup>15</sup>

One reason for the rather cautious approach to advertising on radio was the desire to remain "respectable," and the fear that advertising took away from this respectability. So stations established certain guidelines which were devised to preserve and protect the station's image:

Prices were not to be mentioned. The color of a can or package was not to be mentioned. Store locations were taboo. Samples were not to be offered. A vacuum cleaner company was not to use the line 'sweep no more, my lady' because lovers of the song 'My Old Kentucky Home' might be offended.<sup>16</sup>

During 1924, sponsored programs continued to increase in number and grow in popularity. Most of these programs were one of two types--the talk program or the entertainment hour. The talk show consisted of religious matter, health information and news. It was generally paid for, with the exception of the news, by persons soliciting contributions for their "goods for sale" or "services to the people."

The entertainment programs were usually live, featured bands and singers, and carried the names of their sponsors. The most popular pre-network era shows were the "A & P Gypsies," the "Goodrich Silvertown Orchestra," the "Cliquot Club Eskimoos," the "Lucky Strike Orchestra," the "Ipana Troubadors" and the "Gold Dust Twins (Goldy and Dusty)." These sponsored programs did not contain commercials for the sponsor's products as we would recognize them today. Instead, they based their approach on the goodwill they received by presenting the programs. In

fact, in 1925, H. V. Kaltenborn, the famed news commentator, remarked that "direct advertising has already been abandoned by most advertisers who have tried radio as a medium."<sup>17</sup>

In 1927, David Starch, Director of Research for the American Association of Advertising Agencies, wrote:

The experiment of direct advertising by radio, that is, actual radiocasting of a verbal advertisement for the product, was tried at first, but was discontinued because it was thought that such advertising would drive listeners away from the station...rather than attract them. The customary method now is an arrangement by which the advertiser pays the radiocasting station a certain amount for the privileges of radiocasting a program of entertainment during specified periods of time. The advertiser engages artists to furnish the program; the announcer provides the advertising element by giving the name of the 'Radio Hour,' that is, the sponsor for the program during that hour.<sup>18</sup>

As "toll" broadcasting and advertising on radio continued to grow in popularity, more criticism was heard. In 1924, Bruce Bliven wrote in Century magazine:

The use of radio for advertising is **wholly** undesirable, and should be prohibited by legislation if necessary.<sup>19</sup>

The next year, Democratic Congressman Sol Bloom of New York announced that he planned to introduce legislation to ban radio advertising.<sup>20</sup> But the only effect of this threat was the scare it gave the fledgling broadcast industry. No such ban ever came about.

The many paths open to broadcast companies during the early 1920's to finance their operations have all been discussed. Some of the plans existed only on paper. Others were tried and abandoned for lack of success.

Taxation and government operation was not acceptable to the people of the United States, radio executives claimed.

Income derived solely from the sale of radio receivers was insufficient to support the medium indefinitely. Municipally owned-and-operated stations were appealing neither to the people nor to the municipalities. The idea of radio stations endowed by public-spirited citizens failed because there were not enough public-spirited citizens.

Of all the methods put into operation in an attempt to finance broadcasting, only advertising was successful. In its first three years it became widespread and grew in acceptance. In 1926, the first year of operation on a commercial basis by non-A T & T-owned stations, four hundred broadcasting operations accepted thirty million dollars in commercial business from local and national advertisers.<sup>21</sup> And that was just the beginning.

It is interesting to note that during all the formative years of radio, when the discussions of to advertise or not to advertise were heard in every radio station, no one expressed the opinion that advertisements on radio were a service to the people. The sponsors were providing a service when they availed themselves and their products to the listeners. But no mention of that positive aspect of advertising appeared in the extensive research for this study.

Advertising as a means of financing the medium appeared at the right time. The broadcasters were beginning to face unexpected problems of financing their operations, and other methods of obtaining funds had failed to succeed. The success of advertising, however, could not be better docu-



mented than from the following:

During this year [1926], many broadcasting stations were converted from liabilities to profit-making assets. Probably 70% of the stations went into the business of 'toll' broadcasting.<sup>22</sup>

When later in this study the histories of many individual stations are examined in detail, it will become clear that those stations which made the decision to permit advertising became financially successful. On the other hand, those stations which did not become involved in commercial broadcasting, in most cases, struggled along for a few months or years before finally closing down. The exceptions, of course, were those stations owned and operated by educational institutions, and whose programing was generally directed toward a specific purpose.

## Chapter 4

FROM HOMEMADE HOBBY TO HOUSEHOLD HERO--  
RADIO AND THE ADVENT OF THE NETWORKS

As has been pointed out in the chapters on advertising as a means of supporting the broadcasting medium, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (A T & T) became deeply involved in broadcasting because of its control of toll lines necessary for remote, or "long-distance" broadcasting, or for programs involving the simultaneous hook-up of two or more stations for the purpose of broadcasting the same program. This was the first network, primitive as it was, but it served as the forerunner to the giants of the industry who were destined to dominate radio programing in the United States for more than three decades.

But let us go back to the beginning of the "network" and examine the power struggle which was ensuing between A T & T and the radio corporations--a struggle whose conclusion would have monumental effects on the future of radio broadcasting.

A T & T, in 1925, offered a "network" of **thirteen** stations in twelve cities (there were two stations in Philadelphia) to prospective sponsors, who had the opportunity to purchase the group of stations as a whole at a cost of slightly over three thousand dollars, or individual stations on a per-station charge.<sup>23</sup> The sponsor buying the radio time on the

"network" also furnished the programing. In the beginning, the stations received the programing free of charge, thus saving on the expense of local talent. On the other hand, they did not receive any revenue from the sponsor as this was all kept by A T & T. But as more and more sponsors committed themselves to increased annual expenditures on radio, various "station compensation" plans were worked out which allowed the stations to share in the expanding revenues.<sup>24</sup>

Ironically, the same attractiveness of its facilities for furnishing programing to broadcasting stations also caused the downfall of A T & T as a lasting "network." The continuing controversy over frequencies, or wavelengths, of stations, along with the struggle between A T & T and the radio corporations (RCA, GE and Westinghouse) over which had the rights to do what, finally brought about a showdown with the federal Government. The controversy, in its simplest terms, boiled down to this: who had the rights, and were they exclusive, to engage in the use of telephone company lines for "network" broadcasting?

A T & T claimed this exclusive right by virtue of the 1920 agreement it had reached with the General Electric Company:

...to the telephone company...exclusive licenses... to make, use and sell all wireless telephone apparatus connected to or operated as a part of a public service telephone communications system.

...to the General Electric Company non-exclusive licenses in the field of wireless telephony for its own communication or for purposes of convenience, or to save expense in connection with its commercial operation wireless telegraph systems, but not for profit or for transmission



of messages to the public.<sup>25</sup>

As A T & T understood these passages, the radio corporations (all of whom had joined in the original 1920 agreement with General Electric) producing radio receivers were prohibited from broadcasting any sponsored messages to the public. A T & T called its service "toll telephony," and claimed it exclusively. The radio corporations, claimed A T & T, could engage in radio telephony for their own purposes or to equip amateurs, but could not provide the general public with such a service.<sup>26</sup> As a result of this dispute, any and all revenues of a commercial nature to be earned in the future years of radio were at stake.

Under its policy, A T & T assumed no programing responsibility, but planned instead, as outlined earlier, to rent its facilities, which it compared to a public telephone booth, to anyone with a message for the world. "Frankly, it's an experiment," an A T & T official said, "but if this experiment succeeds, a commercial basis for broadcasting will have been established."<sup>27</sup>

The language of the 1920 agreement became more vague as the different sides looked for and found support for their respective contentions:

...it is agreed that the Telephone Company has no license under this agreement to make, lease or sell wireless receiving apparatus except as part of or for direct use in connection with transmitting apparatus made by it.<sup>28</sup>

According to the radio corporations, this meant that A T & T could make receivers for two-way telephones, but not

radio receivers. On the other hand, A T & T interpreted the agreement to mean that it could make radio receivers so that listeners would be able to listen to its "toll" broadcasting stations.<sup>29</sup> Obviously, the two sides were far apart in their views of their rights regarding radio broadcasting.

The dispute was intensified as a result of the battle going on in New York between WEAf, the station operated by A T & T, and WJZ, a station owned by Westinghouse. The dispute had begun as a feud involving fees paid for artists, musicians, singers and other performers, with each station claiming the other was operating in violation of the cross-licensing pact which had brought them together. This, coupled with a rumor that A T & T's Western Electric Company was readying its own radio receiver for the market, as well as other related incidents involving the controversy among all radio stations and their government-assigned wavelengths and power outputs, brought the situation to a climax.

Since January, 1924, Roland W. Boyden had been studying the dispute as an appointed referee (agreed upon by both A T & T and the radio corporations) to arbitrate the differences on behalf of both sides and reach a decision by which all parties had agreed to abide. For weeks he listened to witnesses and lawyers for both sides. One complaint about the existing situation where several stations often had to share the same frequencies and broadcast in different time periods with different power outputs came from Fred Laxton, manager of WBT in Charlotte, North Carolina: "Why should five hundred

watts output make one station a broadcast and two hundred and fifty watts make another station an outcast?" WBT had been operating at five hundred watts with a locally-made transmitter, later deciding to become licensed by A T & T in order to obtain telephone pick-up lines, now known as "remote" lines, to which it had been refused by the local telephone company. Because the A T & T license fee was four dollars per watt, WBT decided to use only two hundred and fifty watts and save one thousand dollars in fees. A short time later, Herbert Hoover, then Secretary of Commerce, gave stations with five hundred watts the "choice" wavelength, or frequency, assignments, and lower-power stations were tucked away in available, often miserable time-sharing slots. This led Laxton to claim that Hoover was paying too much attention to the advisory committee dominated "...by the manufacturers and their powerful stations who want the stage to themselves."<sup>30</sup>

It is obvious that the dispute over who had the rights to broadcast, to manufacture receivers, to utilize the telephone lines for broadcast purposes, to program stations, to allot frequencies to stations as well as time periods for broadcasting, to deal with the sale of receivers, headsets, loudspeakers and public address systems, had become a muddled mess from which a specific system had to be created and a new direction sought for broadcasting if the medium were to survive.

To enhance their own position, the radio corporations were now arguing over whether A T & T even had the right to



broadcast at all.<sup>31</sup>

Finally, in late 1924, after months of seclusion with stacks of testimony and documents, Boyden sent a draft of his opinion to each disputed party. If there were any objections, he noted, he would take them into consideration before putting his ruling into final form.

As the representatives of the radio corporations read the draft, they discovered that Boyden had found in their favor on point after point. They were given the exclusive right to sell receiving sets and to collect tolls for broadcasting. A T & T, Boyden had ruled, did not have any rights of broadcast transmission under existing patents filed with the Government.<sup>32</sup>

The victory was of huge proportions for the radio corporations, and the defeat backed A T & T against the wall, forcing it to fight back with its strongest weapon. Failing substantively to change Boyden's final ruling, released in March, 1925, A T & T hired John W. Davis, one of the nation's best lawyers, a former United States Solicitor-General, and Democratic candidate for President in 1924. Davis attacked with an advisory memorandum which stated that if the cross-licensing agreement of 1920 meant what referee Boyden said it meant, it was illegal in the first place, being a conspiracy in restraint of trade--a violation of anti-trust laws. Therefore, claimed Davis, all involved parties had been guilty of breaking the law. Because of Davis' high position, his words could not be taken lightly. The next move was then up to the

radio corporations, as both they and A T & T had agreed to abide by the decision of the referee. Should they force the issue and hold A T & T to its pledge, going to court if necessary? This would mean the resulting legal arguments would add further fuel to the monopoly and anti-trust charges raised by Davis. Representing the radio corporations, Owen D. Young, the man who had helped construct the Dawes plan to save Germany from economic collapse, and who had masterminded the creation of RCA, in his "...astute judgment" decided upon "a settlement instead of a fight."<sup>33</sup> With this in view, both sides settled down to hard bargaining, utilizing possible trading points to reach agreement. Heading the discussions for the radio corporations was David Sarnoff, President of RCA. The first major stumbling block was A T & T's demand that it be allowed to manufacture and market radio receivers. Once this was agreed upon--with a royalty feature designed to limit production (sales over five million dollars in one year would be subject to a fifty percent royalty to others holding radio receiver patents)--talks began to progress. Ironically, A T & T's hard-fought right to be allowed to sell radios virtually was to go unused.<sup>34</sup> Other crucial points in the negotiations centered around A T & T's web of cables--the only ones available for network broadcasting. When the radio corporations decided to enter "toll" broadcasting, they decided to claim it as an exclusive right. But to serve as a network to hook up their participating stations, they needed A T & T's wires, and they were costly. The radio corporations projected

tolls of eight hundred-thousand dollars to A T & T in the first year alone.

As the talks progressed, an agreement began to take shape. A company would be formed and the ownership would be as follows: fifty percent by RCA; thirty percent by General Electric; and twenty percent by Westinghouse. This new company would then purchase WEAf in New York, owned by A T & T. And WRC, an RCA-owned station in Washington, D. C., would take over the time of WCAP, also owned by A T & T. The new company would pay A T & T one million dollars for WEAf, and would sign a contract for the use of A T & T's wires for network broadcasting purposes. This contract, as both parties knew, would amount to millions of dollars a year if network broadcasting continued to grow in popularity as much in the future as it had in the past.

The impasse had been surmounted. A T & T had a secure contract to provide use of its telephone lines to broadcasting stations, and to receive in return lucrative financial returns. The new radio company, to be called the National Broadcasting Company, cleared the way for independent radio stations throughout the country, in cities both large and small, to hook up for wide-ranging programs of national interest, and share the increasingly-needed expected revenues from "toll" broadcasting.<sup>35</sup>

Network broadcasting actually began on a full-time basis on November 15, 1926, with the debut of NBC:

The network threw a wingding at New York's Waldorf-Astoria that made history. Advance notice called it 'the inauguration of a new epoch of American life.' The cream of



society and business attended, wearing ermine and swallow-tails. Merlin H. Aylesworth, the first NBC President, welcomed the socialites and celebrities. 'Twenty-six stations will be carrying tonight's broadcast,' he said. 'The same program that we hear will also be heard by as many as ten or twelve million persons. Think of that.' The audience gasped.<sup>36</sup>

Entertainment for the NBC debut included Will Rogers wise-cracking in Kansas City, opera star Mary Garden singing in Chicago, Dr. Walter Damrosch conducting the New York Symphony, plus other comedians, singers and musicians. The four-hour extravaganza was literally broadcast from all over the country, and network radio as it is known today was born.

## Chapter 5

THE NETWORKS AND THE NATION:  
AN AMERICAN SUCCESS STORY

NBC had a most promising commercial future. By January of 1927, it had been split into two networks, the "Red" network and the "Blue" network. These names were used because of the color-coded cables leading from each network engineering console to the outgoing remote lines which would feed the programs to the member stations. Each network featured many prominent sponsored programs. Advertising, however, remained very subtle and extremely well-mannered. By June, 1927, millions of listeners across the country were able to hear the ticker-tape parade given for aviation hero Charles Lindbergh by way of a fifty station network hook-up. NBC was aware of both the power and potential which it held. Hired were salesmen and advertising executives. Dreams of wealth and glory mounted, adding momentum to the accelerating stock market spiral--of which radio stock was among the leaders.<sup>37</sup>

In 1927, a second network made its debut. The Columbia Phonograph Broadcasting System was organized in April of that year to function as a sales agency for a group known as United Independent Broadcasters, Inc. Each of the sixteen stations in the network were to be paid five hundred dollars per week for ten hours of their broadcast time.<sup>38</sup> The network would buy talent for that programing at an additional cost of

about ten thousand dollars per week. To pay for all this, the network would have to sell those ten hours of broadcast time to national sponsors.<sup>39</sup>

Between 1927 and 1929, the going was often rough for the new network (as well as for the local affiliate stations, as this study will detail later). Expenditures were high--so high new capital often had to be acquired to meet the expenses. By 1929, however, radio networks were presenting programs that drew large audiences, and potential sponsors began to take notice. The "Amos 'n Andy" show, as an example, reportedly drew forty million regular listeners.<sup>40</sup>

The period of prosperity, however, was brief. After a short spurt of vigorous growth, the Depression struck.

With nearly every business short of money, advertising turned to "trade-out arrangements." Hotels, with seventy-five percent of their rooms vacant, offered radio stations free space (for their broadcasting facilities and for remote broadcasts) in return for commercial announcements. A restaurant often would pay for its advertising by providing free meals for radio station employees. And on several occasions, when payday rolled around, staffers found baskets of groceries or other merchandise in lieu of a paycheck.<sup>42</sup> Despite these adversities, the stations stayed on the air, overcoming the economic woes of the country.

By 1931, the deepening economic crisis began to ease, and radio again began to flourish. Advertising agencies began to handle the sponsorship of programs on radio for their clients.



In 1931, an hour of broadcast time on NBC's fifty stations cost a sponsor about ten thousand dollars. In 1932, approximately sixty percent of commercial time on radio was in the form of sponsored programs. The remaining forty percent was made up of "spot" announcements--brief commercial messages unrelated to sponsored programs. Direct advertising on radio was a proven and successful fact, and could be directly traced to its tremendous listener response. In New York, WOR was receiving twenty thousand letters a week addressed to "The Voice of Experience," sponsored by Haley's M-O, and product sales reportedly increased "several hundred percent" during the first month of sponsorship. At the same time, fourteen thousand people a day sent boxtops from Kellogg's cereals for "The Singing Lady's Songbook."<sup>42</sup>

Radio advertising was working, thereby securing the future of network broadcasting and setting the stage for the move on a larger scale of independent stations around the country into commercial broadcasting, a move that would put radio on a sound financial footing and allow for its continued growth and ultimate role in American society.

In 1931, just a little over five years old, NBC reported a net profit of nearly two and one-half million dollars. CBS, a year younger, topped NBC's earnings by slightly better than one hundred thousand dollars.<sup>43</sup>

## Chapter 6

## RADIO'S SOUTHERN ROOTS

To this point, this study has examined the origin and growth of radio broadcasting during its first decade in very general terms and on a very broad spectrum. When one thinks of the early days of radio, one usually thinks first of the big cities of the Northeast such as New York, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Philadelphia and Washington, D. C. For the record, these areas were the acknowledged leaders in the field of radio broadcasting, mainly because most of the scientific and technological research being done on radio was being done in that section of the country. But the South was not a barren wasteland concerning radio broadcasting by any stretch of the imagination.

Early radio stations in the South appeared not only in the urban centers but in the rural areas, too. And through their pioneer broadcasting efforts they bound together these two separate life-styles which had co-existed but never really come together. Uniting the farm and the city, their two economies and two distinctly different ways of life, radio brought the South, side by side with its neighboring sections, into the changing ways of the early years of the Twentieth Century. As much if not more than any other single factor, radio helped in the creation of the "new" South.

Radio served the needs of the people of the South--



both in the cities and on the farms:

The radio set has become the stock ticker down on the farm. It seems that there are now 107 broadcasting stations which send out market reports on regular daily and weekly schedule[s], and...the Federal Bureau...helps out by maintaining about eight thousand miles of leased telegraph wires connecting all of the market news branch offices.

As the service of broadcasting market reports has developed, the radio stations in the cities where the market news offices are located broadcast the quotations and the flash reports that must be handled quickly, and the summaries and reviews and comment reports are sent by mail to the more distant stations. In spite of the expense, a few stations have paid the telegraph charges on some of the reports, because the owners felt that the value of the service to the farmers justified the expense.

...it [is] an undisputable fact that 'radio promises to do more to stabilize the markets than anything we have discovered.'

It is the only thing giving the farmer information he can act upon immediately. For instance, down in Fort Worth, Texas, one day recently, a hundred carloads of cattle came in and there was a slump in prices. The situation was broadcast over Station WBAP by the government market reporter, and the next day there were only two carloads, and the market recovered at once. If the Southwestern farmers had been compelled to wait for the slower reports by mail and daily paper, the flow of cattle to Fort Worth could not have been stopt [sic] for two or three days. And in Chicago it is being noted that a broadcast of the estimates for the next day's arrivals of live stock reacts instantly on shipments. Animals already on the way are frequently diverted to other points if the radio says Chicago is about to be congested with cattle or hogs.<sup>44</sup>

Three months later another article appeared, reaching the same positive conclusions about the benefits of radio:

Wide-spread use of radio has proved the final step in releasing the farm family from isolation...

...now...radio has really pulled back the curtains of isolation and put the farm family at once closely in touch with the best of everything in the way of entertainment, education, travel, and religion. During the long winter days when farm work is slack and the weather and the roads are the worst, radio is at its best; and the farm family can sit comfortably before a cheerful fire and listen to sermons on religion and the better life, talks on citizenship and the affairs of state, or on science and education. Maybe the family tires of one speaker or program. If so, a turn of the dial will bring music by a great violinist a thousand



miles away. The radio is even greater than the telephone in annihilating distance.

The radio is already one of the great factors in keeping young folks satisfied with farm life. Some sort of radio entertainment is usually available, nearly always good, and varied enough to meet almost any demand. The radio furnishes good dance music, and the only preparation necessary for dancing is to push back the table and roll up the rugs. For those interested in sports there are the broadcasts of baseball, football, and basketball games, play by play, and the scores of the important games.

Another important radio service is the broadcasting of weather predictions. If rain is called for, the farmer knows better how much alfalfa to cut down, whether to start threshing, or whether it is advisable to start on a long automobile trip over dirt roads. Frost predictions are also valuable to truck growers and fruit raisers. Now that the combined grain must be so closely watched, these weather predictions will be even more valuable. Even the women use them, and listen to the weather predictions...[to] tell whether to wash Monday morning or not.<sup>45</sup>

It appears that radio's value was accepted in the South from the very beginning. In most instances, prior to 1922, anyone in the South wishing to listen to radio had to tune in a station in the Northeast. This, however, did not last long as stations quickly began to pop up all over the South. Tracing the history of the early southern stations so that they might be examined in this study depended almost exclusively upon direct personal correspondence with those pioneer stations, as very little has been written about them in detail. They have been discussed in general in books written about radio as an industry, and several stories about some stations in certain cities and states have appeared in various periodicals. But there have been no published works to detail the birth and early years of the pioneer radio stations of the South. Therefore, those radio stations which responded to the writer's letter of inquiry concerning their early history and details about their origin

will serve as a sort of concensus--representing not only themselves but the other pioneer stations throughout the South. It is the writer's opinion that the stations discussed in this chapter will provide an accurate cross-section of radio broadcasting in the South between 1919 and 1929. It should be noted, however, that conspicuously absent from this chapter will be histories of early stations in the greater Nashville, Tennessee area. Those pioneer stations will be discussed in greater detail in a separate chapter.

The greatest spurt in the growth of radio broadcasting took place between 1922 and 1924--in the South and elsewhere. Investing in broadcast equipment increased six-fold in the two years, and the birth rate of new radio stations was nearly as phenomenal.<sup>46</sup>

In 1921 and 1922, some of the first stations in the South went on the air as extensions of various colleges and universities. The idea that generated this type of station spread quickly, because every college had radio enthusiasts who would take the initiative and organize a campus radio club. This invariably led to the creation of a small broadcasting station for experimental purposes. At this point, the station usually either remained experimental and was treated more as a hobby for radio club members, or received strong administrative support from the school, usually at the urging of the School of Engineering when one existed. When the latter occurred, the station often grew into one of the industry's lasting pioneer stations. One of the most widely-known stations of this type is



WVL in New Orleans. This station was created at Loyola University of the South and went on the air on March 31, 1922. To this day it is one of the powerhouse radio stations in the South, operating at the legal maximum of fifty thousand watts, and is still part of Loyola University.<sup>47</sup> Other early stations licensed to educational institutions were WAAC, Tulane University, New Orleans; WCM, University of Texas, Austin; and WGST, Georgia Tech University, Atlanta.<sup>48</sup> And in Alabama:

The Alabama Polytechnic Institute at Auburn will have one of the best-equipped broadcasting stations in America under the terms of a gift just made by the Alabama Power Company of this city [Birmingham].

President Martin of the power company has donated the company's broadcast transmitter, formerly known to the world as WSY, to the Auburn college. For some time this station was operated in Birmingham by the power company. The outfit was built by the power company.<sup>49</sup>

Another type of station to go on the air in the early 1920's was that which was owned and operated by a local newspaper. One of the most successful was WSB in Atlanta, founded by the owners of both the Atlanta Journal and the Atlanta Constitution, which went on the air in 1922, and remains today one of the most popular and powerful stations in the South.<sup>50</sup>

On February 12, 1927, WNBK in Knoxville first went on air as a project of the Lonsdale Baptist Tabernacle, broadcasting at most only three hours a week with equipment situated in a coal shack behind the church, and with a power of fifty watts.<sup>51</sup> In March, 1925, WGBC, operated by the First Baptist Church of Memphis, became that city's third or fourth radio station. Records are clear that the first station in Memphis was WREC in 1922, followed by WMC in 1923. But the same records show that



both WGBC and WHBQ went on the air in 1925, with no indication as to which was first. WGBC's studios and transmitter were located in the church building. In 1927, for purposes of programing involving the religious broadcasts, the station divided into two separate operations which shared the day and night facilities. One station became WNBR; the other remained WGBC until the early 1930's when it was purchased by the Memphis Press-Scimitar and its call letters were changed to WMPS, reflecting the newspaper's initials.<sup>52</sup>

Memphis' second station, WMC, was owned by another newspaper, the Memphis Commercial Appeal, which wasted no time in doing what it could to provide services to its listeners:

...It has been the complaint of many of the farm listeners of WMC that the daily market reports are of little use to them because they are unable to listen in during the daylight hours, work on the farms and plantations keeping them from the radio at the hours the market and weather reports are broadcast. They have asked that these reports be repeated in the evening. Heretofore this has been impossible, but beginning tomorrow night these market reports will be read and will be followed by educational talks along various lines.

A regular programme [sic] of broadcast has been arranged for the week, covering farms, health, science, radio and general news features. Competent speakers have been secured for the broadcast and the schedule...will be continued for an indefinite period.<sup>53</sup>

Two weeks later, the following article appeared:

Working with the idea of being of the greatest service to the greatest number of listeners, WMC, the radio station of the Commercial Appeal, is announcing a feature that should prove beneficial to the planters and growers within the station's territory.

The United States Department of Agriculture each year issues statements of crop estimates, stocks on hand and estimated acreage. These reports will be made available to radio listeners hereafter. As soon as the reports are made available in Washington, the department will telegraph them to WMC and they will be broadcast, either on the 3 o'clock

market period or at 7:30 o'clock, when the popular lectures and the market reports are given.<sup>54</sup>

Another newspaper to enter broadcasting in the early 1920's was the Louisville Courier-Journal. In April, 1922, its owner, Judge Bingham, called up an associate, Credo Harris, and told him, "Credo, I want you to put a radio station on the air for me."<sup>55</sup> Three months later WHAS was on the air:

July 18, 1922. 7:30 p. m. The red light went on, and Credo Harris announced, 'This is WHAS, the radio telephone broadcasting station of the Courier-Journal and the Louisville Times in Louisville, Kentucky.'<sup>56</sup>

Reaction to the first broadcasts on WHAS were generally enthusiastic, but not always. A farmer once walked into the station with a complaint. He accused Credo Harris of "commuting with the devil," explaining that while he was walking on his property, a blackbird dropped out of a flock flying overhead and fell dead at his feet. "Your radio waves must have struck it," he told station personnel. "It's dead. It could have been me."<sup>57</sup>

In 1925, WHAS broadcast the Kentucky Derby for the first time, and in 1926, joined the new NBC radio network.

The radio station that claims to trace its history back farther than any other is KFJZ in Fort Worth, Texas. According to the station's records, it began in 1918 as a five watt station at Camp Bowie, Texas, as a communications unit of that training camp during World War I. When the war ended, the training corps ceased to exist, and the equipment was sold to W. E. Branch, who erected a small building in his back yard for the transmitter and used the living room of his home for a studio. He increased



the station's power to fifty watts.

In the middle 1920's, Branch sold the station, then licensed as KFJZ, to the Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary for five hundred dollars. After operating the station for a few months, the institution decided its maintenance cost was not worthwhile and returned it to Branch.

In 1928, Branch sold the station to Doctor H. C. Allison for nine thousand dollars, and the power was increased to one hundred watts. Allison operated the station for only two hours a day--from eight until ten o'clock p. m.<sup>58</sup>

KFJZ's claim to be the South's oldest station is disputed by another Texas broadcaster, WRR in Dallas, established in 1920 by the city of Dallas. Its purpose was to send information about fires to Fire Department trucks while they were away from their base station. Because radio broadcasting was so new, Dallas citizens became interested and began constructing receivers so they might pick up WRR's signal.<sup>59</sup>

The enthusiasm and interest in Dallas citizens prompted Henry Garrett, a young graduate electrical engineer working in the Fire Department, and other city officials, to expand the program services of the station. Attracted by the growing public interest, Dallas' leading newspapers soon established their own radio stations. In 1925, Edwin Kiest, owner of the Dallas Times-Herald, and George Dealy, President of the Dallas Morning News, organized a campaign fund to raise money to buy completely new equipment for WRR. In 1926, Kiest branched out from the group and the Times-Herald created KRLD, a five hundred watt



station. In 1927, the station joined the fledgling CBS radio network, and increased its power to ten thousand watts.<sup>60</sup> To this day, WRR remains licensed to the City of Dallas, and operates with five thousand watts.<sup>61</sup>

Texas' neighbor to the east, Louisiana, was host to several pioneer stations. WWL has already been discussed. Another early station was WCBE. A twenty-three year old radio store operator named Joe Uhalt staked his business and his future in a five watt station he built in the rear of one of his three stores in New Orleans. Although broadcasting was limited to only two hours a week when it went on the air on July 23, 1923, its success was immediate. Letters, telegrams and personal visits left no doubt as to its reception. And to make things even better, all of the radio components necessary to build receivers with which to listen to the station had to be purchased at a retail outlet, and Uhalt owned three such stores. Business picked up remarkably.<sup>62</sup>

Late in 1923, disaster struck. A fire destroyed the transmitting equipment of WCBE. Early in 1924, the station returned to the air, broadcasting from Uhalt's home. In 1926, the station's power was increased to one thousand watts, and studios were moved into the DeSoto Hotel. At the same time, the station's call letters were changed to WDSU. In 1927, the station joined the CBS network.<sup>63</sup>

The first station to begin broadcasting in Arkansas was KLCN in Blytheville. It went on the air unofficially in 1922 as a three watt station. It was not licensed, however, until

1927. By 1929, the station was broadcasting with a power of seven and one-half watts. As small as this signal was compared to other broadcasting stations at the time, the station was heard as far away as Canada, and pulled over two thousand letters and phone calls from avid radio listeners who would often sit up all night spinning their crystal sets in an effort to hear what distant stations they could pick up.<sup>64</sup>

In 1923, Arkansas' second station, KUOA (now KJBU) went on the air in the small town of Siloam Springs, home of John Brown University, a small Christian college which acquired ownership of the station in 1933.<sup>65</sup>

In 1924, KTHS in Hot Springs became Arkansas' third station. It operated with five hundred watts from the New Arlington Hotel. In 1927, it increased its power to one thousand watts, and in the 1950's changed its call letters to KAAV and moved to Little Rock. Original pioneer stations in Little Rock included KLRA in 1925, KALO in 1927 and KARK in 1928.<sup>66</sup>

Unconfirmed is a claim that the College of Engineering at the University of Arkansas operated an experimental transmitter as early as 1917. And Henderson-Brown College at Arkadelphia claims to have been given the components of what was to become WOK in Pine Bluff in 1920. If either or both of these assertions are true, then the previously-mentioned pioneer Arkansas stations would have to move down at least one or possibly two notches. The Arkansas Association of Broadcasters, however, has no evidence to support either of these claims.<sup>67</sup>

Mississippi also pioneered radio during the decade which

this study encompasses, but was one of the last to put forth a radio station in the 1920's. Only two stations went on the air in Mississippi prior to 1930. The first was WGCM in Gulfport, of which little is know. The first radio signal it broadcast was in 1928. But on December 1, 1929, WJDX was introduced to the residents of Jackson, Mississippi:

Good evening. This is Radio Station WJDX, the broadcasting station of the Lamar Life Insurance Company, Jackson, Mississippi. We are broadcasting on an assigned frequency of 1270 kilocycles according to the frequency assigned by the Federal Radio Commission in Washington, D. C.<sup>68</sup>

The station's formal opening came on December 7, when General Manager and Vice-President of the **Lamar** Life Insurance Company, C. W. Welty, announced:

WJDX was established in order that this section of Mississippi and the South may have dependable day and night radio service recognized as a necessity and a right by the Federal Radio Commission.<sup>69</sup>

Welty's words serve as a statement of intent for virtually all of the pioneer radio stations in the South. Whatever their specific reasons or goals, they all realized the opportunity they had to serve their communities and the responsibility they had to inform their listeners. They held the key which would open the door through which the South would walk to join her neighboring sections in opening a new era in the history of American communications.

Whether the founders of the stations in the South were engineers, newspapermen, churches or schools, they all joined together, as an institution, to give a new way of information and entertainment to millions of southerners. This new way is the topic of discussion of the next chapter.



## Chapter 7

PIONEER RADIO IN THE SOUTH:  
WHAT THE PEOPLE WERE LISTENING TO

As has been stated in passing on several occasions in this study while discussing certain individual radio stations, early programing in large part depended on who owned the radio station. On the church-owned stations, mostly religious material and sermons were featured, with some sacred music also broadcast. The engineers who built their own stations started out by talking on the air about radio as a scientific phenomenon, how it worked, why it worked, and how the listener could use it for his enjoyment. These broadcasters wanted as many listeners as possible so they could sell them radio receivers which they normally featured in their retail stores. But they soon found that to keep the interest of the listener, they had to do more than just talk. Therefore, they began to mix their discussions with music--either from records or live musical groups. The newspaper-owned stations started out by presenting news, weather and other pertinent information usually printed in the newspaper. They, too, found that they had to spice up their programing to keep an audience.

At WNBK in Knoxville, early programing placed most of the burden for musical entertainment on local talent. Two of the first personalities at the station, who later went on to greater

fame and fortune, were Tennessee Ernie Ford and Lindsay Nelson.<sup>70</sup> Early musical groups included: "the Harmoneers"; the James King Orchestra; Jack Perry and his "Lightcrust Doughboys"; and "the Hub Spinners." Early programs included "Stumpus," an old-time version of "Stump the Band," and "Meet Your Neighbors," which sent a station announcer into the home of a local resident for a friendly conversation.<sup>71</sup>

WHAS in Louisville was the originator of several unique programs. On July 31, 1923, the station actually conducted a broadcast from inside Mammoth Cave. In 1924, the station broadcast a speech by Democratic presidential candidate John W. Davis. Musical programing at WHAS included volunteer musicians broadcasting from remote studios set up in various music stores throughout Louisville. While one concert consisted of four banjos and a string bass, another was composed of one hundred horns.<sup>72</sup>

Early programing on WRR in Dallas included "recitals, western bands and studio orchestras."<sup>73</sup> Commercial announcements were first aired in 1926.

WDSU (formerly WCBE) was the first station in New Orleans to use more than one studio. It used three as early as 1928. Also that year, it broadcast a speech by Democratic presidential candidate Al Smith. WDSU lays claim to being the first station in the South to broadcast an NBC network program; first to broadcast from an airplane; first to broadcast a World Series game; and first to broadcast a prize fight (Dempsey versus Firpo in 1923). The method which the station used to broadcast the fight is a classic in itself. Station owner Joe Uhalt was years

ahead of his time when he dreamed up this idea:

...[Uhalt] journeyed over to see P. K. Ewing at the New Orleans States on Canal Street. Arrangements were made to get the telegraphic blow-by-blow description over the newspaper's wires from the ringside and get them on the air. Microphones in those days were not much of an improvement over the ordinary telephone mouthpiece, and since no station boasted of more than one it was decided to simply use the telephone on the telegraph editor's desk and call it a 'mike.'

The fight broadcast was widely advertised and many radio 'parties' planned in homes. The Uhalt home on Chestnut Street was called on the 'phone [sic] from the telegraph editor's desk, and the Chestnut Street end was then connected to WCBE's transmitter. Preliminary gossip began to come in over the wires, which was given out over the telephone mike...and New Orleans' first 'radio fight' was on the air.<sup>74</sup>

KLCN in Blytheville, Arkansas, was not as successful at local programming as stations in the larger cities, and even some of the other small cities, because of a lack of available local talent. With the exception of a few hillbilly bands, the station relied on records for most of its locally-broadcast musical programs.<sup>75</sup>

WJDX in Jackson, Mississippi, carried high school football games on radio as early as 1929. Some of the station's early regular programs included "Jitney Jungle," sponsored by a chain of grocery stores bearing that name; the "National Farm and Home Hour" with Don McNeil; and continuous local "on-the-spot" news reports. Local talent included the station's staff which produced live dramas on the air, and an area favorite, Armond Coulet and his Orchestra.<sup>76</sup>

Radio in the South in its early days was unique in nature because of its widespread listening audience. Instead of people being bunched together in urban areas, most were spread out over rural areas, with, of course, the exceptions of the



South's major population centers. But even they were surrounded closely on all sides by rural farmland. One often went directly from the city limits of a metropolitan area to mile after mile of sparsely-populated countryside. Because of this environment, the people were closer to country music than classical music. Hillbilly bands and Dixieland jazz were more welcome than Al Jolson and Eddie Cantor. But most of the network programing, which originated from New York and other major cities of the Northeast, was of the latter type. And since most stations in the South could not fill all of their broadcast time with local programing, it was necessary for them to present the network shows. In this way, the people of the South were exposed to the cultural and social environment of the Northeast with a great degree of regularity. The effect of this was a growing "urbanization" among southerners. By constantly being exposed to this "cosmopolitan influence" of the Northeast, their own cultural horizons began to widen. They were no longer isolated from the urban centers of the nation. Radio connected the farmer with the city-dweller, and the change was a substantial advance for the entire structure of the South--economically, socially and culturally.

Naturally, one hand washes the other. The South had an influence on other parts of the country, too:

Indications are that the fastest-growing type of entertainment in radio is hillbilly music, making a comeback after a few years of obscurity. The vogue may be at its peak now, but it shows no signs of letting down. Hillbilly acts have been getting the breaks lately, most of them leaving vaude [sic] for a much warmer welcome in the studios. Stations that did not have a single hillbilly program a few

months ago now run them several times a week.

Mountain ballads have been enjoying increasing sales, while stations report heavier fan mail than ever for the hillbilly boys. WMCA [New York] reports hillbilly stuff making the biggest gains in fan mail, while WINS [New York] is using three such programs weekly...altho [sic] it did not have a single one a month ago.

...CBS and NBC have both been giving increasing attention to mountain music.<sup>77</sup>

The situation, then, was one of give and take. The growth of radio in the South benefitted not only that particular section, but the people of America as a whole. The contributions of radio to the South and those of the South to radio are inseparable.

## Chapter 8

THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF RADIO IN NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE  
AND THE AREAS IMMEDIATELY SURROUNDING IT  
1919 - 1929

The purpose of this study thus far has been to examine the origin and growth of radio broadcasting in the South, and to accomplish this purpose has of necessity included delving into the background of radio as both a technological invention and an industry. Only when one fully understands what had to happen in the way of discoveries, inventions, innovations, advances, experiments, failures and successes--and only when the wide scope of radio has been narrowed down into a concise historical account of broadcasting's formative years--only then can one appreciate the many aspects of this fascinating medium.

In this study to this point, the writer has gone into only as much detail as was deemed necessary to provide an accurate picture of radio between 1919 and 1929. The study has encompassed scientific achievements, men who were responsible for the creation of wireless broadcasting, people who built the first radio stations and put them on the air, and the people who informed and entertained the listeners over the air. The study which examined the first decade of radio with major emphasis on the South will now narrow even more, as radio's first decade as it took place in the greater Nashville area is



placed under the writer's imaginary microscope and studied in great detail. What one will see is a microcosm of radio as it existed in any of a dozen major cities in the United States. There will be many interesting stories and humorous touches, and much local flavor. The previous seven chapters have just "skimmed the cream off the top" as the saying goes. In this chapter, we will dig in and uncover the drama of radio in the capital of Tennessee--the state's second largest city--and hopefully come up with an exciting story. As another saying goes, "the deeper you dig, the more you find."

As was pointed out in the very beginning of this study, one of the first men to experiment with voice transmission was Nathan B. Stubblefield, who is buried in Murray, Kentucky, just a little over one hundred miles from Nashville. Said to have transmitted voice as early as 1892, Stubblefield never found the recognition he sought and died of starvation in a shack in Kentucky in 1928.<sup>78</sup> While it is conceded that Stubblefield did transmit voice through the air, John DeWitt, Jr., former President of WSM Radio in Nashville, who as a sixteen-year old high school student built Nashville's first radio station, points out that the experiments performed by Stubblefield were not "radio" broadcasts of the same nature being made elsewhere in the early development of broadcasting. Stubblefield, says DeWitt, used what are termed audio frequency long waves instead of the shorter, electromagnetic waves being used by the early radio broadcasting stations and wireless broadcasters.<sup>79</sup> But regardless of the length of the wave, Stubblefield remains one of the

pioneers of broadcasting.

The first radio stations to be heard in the Nashville area came from hundreds of miles away. Until Nashville had its own broadcasting station, people tuned their crystal sets to pick up programs from New York, Pittsburgh and Detroit. The signals being sent out by the stations in those cities were powerful enough to reach deep into the heart of the South. Radio receivers began to sell more quickly as the broadcasting industry began to make an impact upon Dixie:

Elks Lodge #1279 of Trenton, Tennessee has this week installed a radio receiving set in their club rooms on High Street. This outfit...will receive successfully from practically every point in the United States. ...This is the fourth radio set installed in Trenton in the past few months.<sup>80</sup>

As other cities in the South acquired their own locally-controlled stations, Nashville was fortunate to be the home of young John DeWitt. In May, 1922, the sixteen-year old high school student built a twenty watt radio transmitter, installed it at Ward-Belmont School (now Belmont College), and called it WDAA. As has been previously pointed out, there were several other school-operated radio stations in the early 1920's, but Ward-Belmont was one of the first schools in the country to realize the potential advertising value of a radio station, and it was due to the enterprise of Doctor C. E. Crosland, Associate President of Ward-Belmont, that the station went on the air.<sup>81</sup> Recognition of this new facility spread quickly:

...a business meeting of the Springfield Kiwanis Club had as a feature a concert received by radiotelephone... given by Ward-Belmont School of Nashville, and its reception added much to the interest of the evening.<sup>82</sup>



Three weeks later the following appeared:

They usually have a full house at Ward-Belmont during commencement exercises, so those who fail to find accommodations are invited to pay a visit to the Norman Battery Service establishment on Broadway. By means of wireless...Ward-Belmont will broadcast its commencement.<sup>83</sup>

The station broadcast on an irregular basis, but when some prominent speaker appeared on the platform at the school, a microphone was placed in front of him and the proceedings could be heard over a fairly wide area around Nashville. It continued to operate until the college a year later decided it could not afford to finance this undertaking.<sup>84</sup>

Following the station at Ward-Belmont, a one hundred and fifty watt transmitter was installed at the Vaughn Conservatory of Music in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. This station, licensed in November, 1922, as WOAN, later increased its power to two hundred and fifty watts. According to Miller Watkins, former Chief Engineer at WLAC Radio in Nashville, WOAN's one hundred and fifty watt transmitter was sold by James D. Vaughn to the men who later would found WDAD, Nashville's fifth radio station.<sup>85</sup> But before WDAD was born, one serious attempt at radio broadcasting and two "club-like" (WEBX in 1924 and WABV, which will be discussed in greater detail later) private stations went on the air. In 1923, John DeWitt, who had built WDAA at Ward-Belmont, licensed WABV. This fifty watt station consisted of a ham radio transmitter in a shack in his back yard. The "ham shack" was actually a converted chicken house. The American Businessmen's Club, a men's luncheon club, through the efforts of Harry Stone, later to become a well-known Nashville



broadcaster, decided to sponsor broadcasts on WABV. One of the first concerts broadcast over the station featured record shop owner Mack Rowe playing a violin and Bob Cason as pianist. Their selection, "Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life," came from the drawing room of DeWitt's home. Other performers who later appeared on the station included Clarksville's Francis Craig and Beasley Smith and their orchestras.<sup>86</sup>

In late 1923, W. H. Marks, a member of the Businessmen's Sunday School Class at Nashville's First Baptist Church, conceived the idea of expanding the outreach of the church through a radio ministry. The class agreed to adopt and finance the project. On December 5, 1923, the church granted permission to install a radio station in the church auditorium "for the purpose of broadcasting the activities of this church." The station was to be called WCBQ, which stood for "We Can't Be Quiet."<sup>87</sup> Marks, who operated an automobile repair shop, contributed more than fifteen hundred dollars to the project. And who should be called in to design and install the new station? None other than John DeWitt, who as a high school senior was ready to build his, and Nashville's, third radio station. On March 18, 1924, a test program was broadcast, and the church services made their formal debut on the air on April 6, 1924:

...Dr. Hight C. Moore told how the first members of the church came to services horseback, afoot or in oxcarts... then the message of the church went out by voice and letter; later by telephone and telegraph; and now was being broadcast by radio.<sup>88</sup>

A photograph appeared with the above news story which showed the pastor speaking into the large round microphone on the pulpit.

Readers were encouraged to write to the Nashville Tennessean's radio editor to secure information about building a receiving set.

The church initially broadcast its 11:00 a. m. worship services every Sunday. It also planned to send out over the air from 7:30 p. m. until 9:00 p. m. each Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. A radio committee supervised the work.

When donating the station to the church, the Businessmen's Class agreed to continue to finance its operation, with the help of other friends. On April 7, 1926, two years and a day after its initial church broadcast, B. F. Byrd, chairman of the radio committee, reported to the church that operation of the station had been transferred to "Messrs. Braid and Waldrum" for the sum of one dollar and the pledge to "broadcast all religious services of the church without further cost."<sup>89</sup>

Meanwhile, in September, 1925, WDAD, owned by Dad's Auto Accessories, Inc., and operating on 1330 kilocycles with the old one hundred and fifty watt transmitter purchased from WOAN in Lawrenceburg, went on the air. This was a typical radio operation of the day, in which the incentive to broadcast was based on the desire to sell automobile and radio accessories by advertising them on the air.<sup>90</sup> The station was owned by Lovell M. Smith, and its Chief Engineer was Smith's brother-in-law, Miller Watkins. As an independent station, affiliated with no network, nor a national hook-up of any kind, WDAD relied solely on local programming. But the station proved to be an innovator:

...Mrs. Gordon Parman is the founder and the Director



of the Home Service Bureau of Station WDAD...  
 ...with this totally new idea of operating a permanent exhibit hall for Nashville food and home products, Mrs. Parman will probably inject many a new idea into local homes after the formal opening of the Bureau is held Monday. Every afternoon from 2:30 to 5:00 o'clock except on Saturday and Sunday there is a daily demonstration in home problems. At 11:45 o'clock each morning there is a home service radio program by remote control over station WDAD.  
 ...Last year [Mrs. Parman] inaugurated the noon recipes over WDAD.<sup>91</sup>

One month after the debut of WDAD, the station destined to become one of Nashville's two "radio giants" went on the air:

In 1922 Edwin W. Craig, then a Vice-President of the National Life and Accident Insurance Company, began listening to the pioneer radio stations. In time he became quite a radio fan and reportedly corresponded with some broadcast personalities. When Craig and Executive Vice-President C. R. Clements decided to plunge National Life into radio...Craig was chosen to act as a liason between the parent company and WSM. The call letters, reflecting Insurance Company ownership, stood for 'We Shield Millions.'

...Thomas Parks was the Chief Engineer...and with... John DeWitt installed the...transmitter.

WSM's first official broadcast day was October 5, 1925. Although the opening ceremony was to take place at approximately 8:00 p. m., Jack Keefe, the station's first announcer, relayed results of a world series [sic] game during the day.

As the time for the initial broadcast approached, hundreds of fascinated Nashvillians gathered beneath the loudspeakers mounted on the corners of the National Life Building. Meanwhile...Company executives, officials and guests prepared their notes for their dedication speeches and remarks.

...Mayor Hilary Howse spoke for the City of Nashville. Governor Austin Peay chose to attend the opening personally, for National Life was a close physical neighbor to the State Capitol. The Federal Government was represented by...D. B. Carson, head of the newly-formed radiotelephone division of the Commerce Department, representing Commerce Secretary Hoover.

Two orchestras provided the 'live' entertainment via remote lines: Beasley Smith and his Orchestra were in the Hermitage Hotel Ballroom...and Francis Craig [was] at the Andrew Jackson [Hotel] as the broadcast opened. The hallmark broadcast...continued until dawn the next morning.<sup>92</sup>

WSM wasted no time in building itself into a major radio powerhouse, commanding respect for its many accomplishments:



Opening the second year of its broadcast history...WSM has been heard in many places. Mail has come in from literal large sporting events which have created very large interest among radio listeners...the World Series of 1925 and 1926...the Dempsey-Tunney prize fight details...[Vanderbilt] football games at Dudley Stadium. Public acknowledgement of the character of the programs broadcast by WSM has been given most freely by the American press. Co-operation by Nashville artists has been whole-hearted and due to the fact that WSM is dedicated to the city of Nashville...[and] has been heard throughout the country nightly.<sup>93</sup>

The station continued to surge forward:

Cold weather has opened the paths of the air to clearer traffic than radio has seen for many a day. WSM...is pounding into the Pacific Coast with daily regularity. Letters are being received from Washington, Oregon, California, Arizona and Colorado. Especially do the listeners of the Pacific Coast enjoy the Tennessee barn dance programs which are broadcast every Saturday night.<sup>94</sup>

One week later:

Closing fourteen months of service during which Nashville has been heard from Labrador to Tampico and from British Columbia to Central America, WSM...will be silent...for the rest of this month during the installation of a five thousand watt Western Electric transmitter.<sup>95</sup>

And still another week later:

Responding to the farewell of WSM to its radio audience, listeners from Maine to California have sent in letters and cards expressing their appreciation of the service and their desire to hear the new station when it is put on the air in January...[when it] will be heard more clearly and with less interference with the new five thousand watt transmitter.<sup>96</sup>

WSM had truly become a station with national recognition and acceptance. Its effects were felt even when it was off the air:

After appearing on radio programs of Station WSM here, Mrs. Daisy Hoffman, one of Nashville's favorite pianists... has been invited to appear over Station WJZ, New York City. According to a telegram received by her family here Saturday, Mrs. Hoffman was speedily placed on the aerial programs of the big New York station after her arrival there.<sup>97</sup>

Just one month after it left the air for its power increase, WSM was ready to resume broadcasting:

From all parts of the country Wednesday and Thursday came words, telegrams, letters and cables of approval of the first test program of Station WSM since its resumption of the aerial appearances over its five thousand watt equipment. The program Wednesday night carried on until 2:17 a. m. Thursday.

While not a formal opening, the program Friday night which begins at 6:15 o'clock contains some of Nashville's best musical talent. Announcements and news bulletins will lead off the program...<sup>98</sup>

WSM's added power, though, apparently wasn't all it had pushing it into all forty-eight states:

Cold weather has come at a particularly opportune time, as it so happens that WSM and Jack Frost are broadcasting with regularity to the far corners of the United States, Canada and surrounding countries. Mail has been pouring into the office of WSM since it resumed operation.<sup>99</sup>

As a part of its regular programing, which, of course, was highlighted by the weekly presentation of the Grand Ole Opry on Saturday nights, WSM continued to throw the spotlight on Nashville's most popular talent. This included Francis Craig, who went on to fame with the million-selling record "Near You," Beasley Smith, Mary Cornelia Malone, the Fisk and Roger Williams Jubilee Singers, the Tennessee Industrial School Band, Daisy Hoffman, and musicians and singers from Vanderbilt, Peabody, Fisk and Ward-Belmont School for Girls. WSM also became one of the first stations in the South to join the newly-created NBC network, and carried the best programs selected from NBC's Red and Blue networks:

Three major broadcasting stations in the South have been added to the Sunday night hook-up for Atwater-Kent Concerts. WSM, WSB [Atlanta] and WHAS [Louisville] will go on the air [tonight] at 9:15, and will add at least a million or two listeners.<sup>100</sup>

While WSM was certainly making its mark on radio listeners, not just in Nashville but throughout the country, other



local stations were still striving for their share of the glory.

In April, 1926, WBAW, formerly WCBQ of the First Baptist Church, moved their transmitter to the corner of Tenth Street and Shelby Avenue, and set up studios in the old Capitol Theatre Building at the corner of Sixth and Church. Harry Stone, previously associated with John DeWitt's WABV, assumed direction of the station. During the period of its operation, WBAW faithfully carried the services of the First Baptist Church just as it had promised. It also eked out a living by transmitting commercial messages along with musical selections from recordings or from live talent. Its ownership was a partnership of the Braid Electric Company and Waldrum Drug Company. In November, 1926, the following appeared:

WBAW  
Nashville, Tennessee

Gentlemen:

It is truly a delight to listen to the program of the Atwater-Kent Radio Symphony last evening [sic].

The program was ideal and I only wish that every child in America could have heard that 'Rocking Horse Parade,' just to speak of one number. By the way, WBAW is very fortunate in having Harry Stone as announcer, for, in all respects, he's hard to beat along that line.<sup>101</sup>

In December, 1926, these two items appeared:

Each evening during the week, except Saturday, at 6:00 to 6:15, Santa Claus will make a special trip to the studio of WBAW in his airplane and talk to the kiddies for a few moments through the co-operation of Cain-Sloan Company.<sup>102</sup>

And,

WBAW announces the appointment of T. Fulcher Jones as commercial manager. The announcement was made by the Braid Electric Company and the Waldrum Drug Company, operators of the station. Mr. Jones is President of the East Nashville



Hardware and Radio Company, local retail radio dealers handling Atwater-Kent, Grebe and Zenith sets.<sup>103</sup>

In 1927, WBAW increased its power to five thousand watts and moved its transmitter to Pumping Station Road just off Lebanon Road. In February, the following report appeared:

Contrary to the belief that there are not too many radio listeners during the daylight hours, those in charge of Station WBAW found that after several months of afternoon broadcasting there is a surprisingly large number of listeners at that time of day. Reports have been received from as far away as Jacksonville, Florida, and Toronto, Canada.

...WBAW inaugurates this week a regular morning broadcast at 9:30 every day in the week except Saturday and Sunday. While the exact nature of these programs has not been decided upon, the schedule for the coming week shows two fifteen minute musical groups in the hour together with a short talk each morning on flowers, gardening or home decorating.<sup>104</sup>

WBAW continued to operate until it was sold to the Nashville Tennessean in 1929.

By 1926, radio had become an important enough factor in everyday life that the Nashville Tennessean printed a schedule of the day's radio programs which could be heard in Nashville. In his radio column in the Tennessean, "Tuning in with Nashville's Radio Fans," W. H. Binkley commented:

...Radio receiving sets seem destined to become a part of the regular paraphernalia of travelers both at home and abroad. WTAM, in Cleveland, owned by the Willard Storage Battery Company...has received...letters attesting to the popularity of radio among those who leave their firesides...including...auto tourists in the South.<sup>105</sup>

On November 15, 1926, remote radio broadcasting on a strictly commercial basis made its Nashville debut:

Automobiles and street cars may hum their lively roar down Church Street this week, but behind the big plate glass window of Lebeck Brothers store things are going to be hitting a more tuneful clip of speed. For radio,

that harbinger of 'the advancing age'...is to be in full view to the Nashville public. In keeping with a policy used by only a few of the most enterprising businesses in the country, Lebeck Brothers have arranged a series of noon and afternoon programs via the air route of Station WBAW from the store's own window front.<sup>106</sup>

And the next day:

There was music in the air on Church Street Monday afternoon, but it did not go to waste for beside the many radios that were rigged up in Nashville homes to receive the first show window concert...there were hundreds [of people] pressed against the storefront, leaning from nearby upstairs offices, and craning from passing street cars.<sup>107</sup>

In November of 1926, thirteen months after the debut of WSM, Nashville's second radio powerhouse was ready to take to the air:

Station WSM...WBAW...and WDAD...will be silent on Wednesday night, November 24, when Station WLAC, the 'Thrift' station of the Life and Casualty Insurance Company makes its formal bow to the radio world. The local stations... will send their staffs to WLAC to aid in the formal opening of the new station. The Company is proud of the record they have made and the sunshine they have been able to give in the homes where death has taken its toll and left the family without a breadwinner. Thrift has been the foundation of their phenomenal success and in the great strides they have made in the business world.<sup>108</sup>

Then, three days later:

...WLAC broadcasts its first program tonight. Two bands, five orchestras and scores of individual artists are scheduled to follow one another. All of Nashville radio fans everywhere are awaiting the bugle call at 7:00 p. m. that announces the opening of WLAC.<sup>109</sup>

WLAC proved very early how really valuable radio can be as a service to the public when it conducted a drive to raise funds for victims of the winter's floods:

With five thousand dollars beyond its goal of fifteen thousand dollars for flood sufferers, Station WLAC...has completed its flood relief program...during which special programs by a long list of artists were broadcasted [sic] and appeals made for contributions to take care of the destitute. E. H. Riner, director of the station and the one



whose voice has told of sufferers' needs, said 'The Life and Casualty Insurance Company is glad to have rendered this service to the people of Nashville.'<sup>110</sup>

This is a perfect example of the public service capabilities of radio. Unfortunately, it often takes tragedies to point out the good that exists.

Radio broadcasting in Nashville during these early days had its light moments as well as more serious ones:

Radio, the miracle of modern times, has been hand-cuffed...Just to show the world how much power a mouse has, [one] stepped on a wire in the broadcasting station of WLAC... and those who were listening to Wayne Munn, the wrestler, wrestle with words down at the Kit Kat Klub, thought Mr. Munn had fainted or been kidnapped or just left town. An investigation, however, revealed Mr. Mouse, electrocuted, and a blown-out fuse. In eleven minutes the radio was broadcasting again.<sup>111</sup>

Radio in Nashville did not fail to take neighboring communities into consideration, realizing the value of potential listeners anywhere:

...For the first time since its establishment, WLAC... will import a complete program from a neighboring community. The 'Thrift Program' Monday night...is to be opened [sic] solely of citizens of Paris, Tennessee.<sup>112</sup>

While on the subject of neighboring communities, it is interesting to note that WOAN, owned by James D. Vaughn, head of the Vaughn Conservatory of Music, to which the station had been licensed, was still in existence five years after it first went on the air in 1922. But in 1927, one read that:

...WOAN, owned by James D. Vaughn, has been leased by the Nazarene Church and in the future will be used for broadcasting services of that church. The station, which is only five hundred watts, will be enlarged to compete with the stronger stations.<sup>113</sup>

It is important to remember that all during the time



these stations were going on the air and taking their messages to the people of Nashville, the battle was going on throughout the country over station's rights to certain frequencies and powers. The situation only became more complicated as the number of new stations increased.<sup>114</sup> For example, in Nashville, WLAC was forced to share its daytime broadcasting hours in 1929 and 1930 with WTNT, formerly WBAW, alternating four-hour periods.<sup>115</sup> This was not only difficult for the stations involved, but was just as confusing to the listeners. Finally, Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover decided to utilize the Federal power over interstate commerce and make a serious effort to straighten out the ever-worsening crisis. Proposed legislation before Congress did not fare well in Middle Tennessee, however, with that area's representative to Washington:

Legislation to maintain governmental control over all channels of interstate...radio transmissions was put in final shape today by Senate and House conferees for action by Congress. Although Representative Evan L. Davis, Democrat of [the Fifth District of] Tennessee, declined to sign the report and may submit minority views, the conferees predicted the measure would be approved.<sup>116</sup>

Davis' feelings concerning radio and government were primarily the result of an unpleasant circumstance which had occurred during his re-election campaign in 1926:

Because he couldn't hear the state election returns in Tullahoma by radio and instead got only the powerful broadcasting stations of the East and the North, Fifth District Congressman Evan L. Davis is going back to Washington believing firmer than ever that a readjustment of radio control in the United States is necessary.

The Fifth District Congressman, whose knowledge of radio is considered as profound as his interest in shipping, says he couldn't even get Station WSM, Nashville, on election night, nor any other Tennessee station from which he might secure information on the state races...

Judge Davis favors the zoning of the country into seven zones, proportioned on area and population, [with] wavelengths and power distributed equitably among the various sections and zones.

'The Federal Government has treated the South like a stepchild in the manner of desirable wavelengths,' Davis said.<sup>117</sup>

So it appears that although Davis was very much in favor of bringing an end to the confusing frequency and power situation for radio stations, he wanted it to be done his way. As for his argument that the South had been mistreated, it would appear that the documented evidence in this study concerning the rapid growth, the rise to power and the Government permission granted to stations to increase their power and their hours of operation would all combine to make Davis' case appear very weak.

Following the success of Nashville's early radio pioneers, neighboring communities also began to become involved in broadcasting. The story of Jack and Louis Draughon of Springfield is fascinating.

In December, 1926, the 638 Tire and Rubber Vulcanizing Company of Springfield, owned by the Draughon brothers, traded five barrels of cylinder oil to Dad's Auto Accessories of Nashville (owner of WDAD) for the one hundred and fifty watt transmitter they had bought from Lawrenceburg's WOAN when the latter station increased its power. Then, when WDAD increased its power to one thousand watts, it no longer needed the smaller transmitter, and traded it to the Draughons. The Mayor of Springfield, feeling that the radio station would be a good advertisement for the city, was kind enough to supply the Draughons electric current to run the station from the city line, and also



had the Power and Light Company put up two ninety-foot poles on which their antenna was supported:118

Within a few weeks, the 638 Tire and Vulcanizing Company radio station will make its debut on the air. Work on it has already started and will be completed within two or three weeks. The station will be a one hundred and fifty watt station. Owners of the station announce that it will be operated principally for people of this community and will broadcast livestock markets, weather forecasts and tobacco reports. In addition programs of general interest consisting of music, sermons and talks on various subjects and local talent will be given regularly.119

A month went by before any more was said about the Springfield station:

The 638 Vulcanizing Company, managers of the Springfield broadcasting station, WSIX, put on a unique program Thursday night from 6 to 7 o'clock. The L. C. Cooper Rubber Company of Nashville broadcasted [sic] a feature of which was [sic] four jailbirds of African hue, accompanied by Sheriff G. H. Binkley and Deputy Sheriff Sam Martin, who sang the old time Negro songs and old Uncle Ned with his banjo. Following this, Col. Neel Glenn, manager and owner of the largest block of stock in that company, which is the largest store in a town this size south of the Mason and Dixon line, had the hour from 7 to 8.

...being an old newspaperman who believes in advertising, his introductory speech was a gem of advertising. He talked about the Springfield Woolen Mills' blankets... and the best type of dark fired tobacco the Robertson County farmers grow.120

After ten years in Springfield, WSIX moved to Nashville, where it remains, with WSM and WLAC, to this day.

Tennessee was not the only state considered part of the greater Nashville area with a city interested in broadcasting:

Radio broadcasting from Hopkinsville [Kentucky] through a powerful station will be a reality soon after the first of the year. W. B. Anderson, Jr., president of Acme Mills, Inc. announced today that his company has just purchased new equipment from the Western Electric Company. The new station will be of one thousand watts capacity, as strong as many in the South. WFIW, the call letters of Hopkinsville's first broadcasting station, are taken from the slogan on Veribest Flour, known throughout Dixie as the 'Whitest Flour In the



World.' After the opening, local talent will be largely depended on for the program broadcast three nights a week. The announcement was made two months ago that the milling company had obtained an option on a broadcasting station in Nashville, but the sale was not completed by the Nashville firm.<sup>121</sup>

Following this initial announcement, nothing more was known about the station's progress until January 1, 1927:

Present progress on construction of the new radio broadcasting station, WFIW, being erected by Acme Mills, Inc., indicated that the [Hopkinsville] station will be ready to go on the air about January 20.

Samuel Harness, Nashville radio engineer, has been employed to superintend construction of the new studio and broadcasting apparatus...Celebrities from Louisville and points in the East will be presented on the inaugural program...Sixteen thousand feet of ground wire is being laid under the recreation park in front of the studio, but completion of the new station will be delayed until the arrival of massive steel towers to carry the antenna.<sup>122</sup>

Although January 20 had been set for WFIW's debut, no word on the station's progress was forthcoming until eight days after the target date had passed:

Hopkinsville's own radio station, WFIW, the brand new one thousand watt broadcaster of Acme Mills, is expected to be on the air on the night of February 7, from eight until midnight, in a varied program selected from local talent.

...If there is considerable rain the opening night might be delayed a few days. Work on the aerial towers and other outside construction is being pushed to completion. The inside work and the studio is [sic] finished.<sup>123</sup>

It apparently rained in Hopkinsville, because WFIW's second target date came and went. Finally:

Station WFIW, radio station of the Acme Mills, Inc., will stage its inaugural program Friday night, February 11, at 8 p. m., and will broadcast until nearly daylight.

Governor W. J. Fields of Kentucky will participate in the opening exercises. Talent from all over the Blue Grass state has been gathered to help give WFIW a good start...

All radio fans in the country, and in the mid-South especially, are urged to tune in.<sup>124</sup>

Hopkinsville's sister city of Clarksville also noted the event:

Station WFIW, Hopkinsville, on the air! Many local fans will tune in to hear the opening program of our neighboring city's new broadcasting station this evening. Wednesday night was test night, a fiddling program coming in fine.<sup>125</sup>

And things apparently went as planned on opening night:

As an immediate result of the entirely successful broadcasting done at Hopkinsville on Friday night, station WFIW now bears the title 'baby of the air,' and dear old Hoptown itself is being heralded to the four winds of heaven as the 'pearl of the pennyrile.'

...As the first feature...a fine speech...every word came in. The honor guest of the occasion was W. J. Fields, Governor of Kentucky...tracing the history of transportation from the ox team and sailing vessel...to the present-day wonder, radio. There were many musical numbers of the highest class, including violin, voice and piano. Clarksville people sending congratulations which were read were E. E. Laurent, Adolf Hach, Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Tinsley, C. C. Brown and N. R. Bardwell.

...Local interest in the project is great, as the Acme Mills are owned and operated by 'Billy' Anderson and his father, W. B. Anderson, who are both Clarksville businessmen.<sup>126</sup>

Then, one week later, controversy reared its ugly head:

The report circulated last night in Chicago, Cincinnati and Washington that the Acme Mills new one thousand watt broadcasting station, WFIW, was operating without a license and therefore subject to a fine is untrue, according to officials of the local station. W. B. Anderson, President of Acme Mills, produced WFIW's operating license which was received this morning [February 18].

...the license granted that WFIW could carry on general broadcasting for public information, amusement and entertainment.

...when WFIW went on the air February 11, they did so on advice of persons who were in a position to advise.

...Quite a number of Canadian stations have raised an objection to WFIW and ten other United States radiocasting stations using wavelengths the same as their own. The Canadian stations say that there is a gentlemen's agreement between the Canadian broadcasters and the United States government that there be no conflicts in wavelengths between the stations of the two countries.

...Mr. Anderson said this morning he would gladly change wavelengths if there is such an agreement...<sup>127</sup>

The reach of radio in the greater Nashville area did not end in Springfield or Hopkinsville:



Citizens of Erin and Houston County enjoyed an exceptionally fine musical program at the Cumberland Presbyterian Church Thursday night...and have expressed a desire to have the company sing over radio, and it is likely they may be heard at an early date from station WFIW Hopkinsville or WSM Nashville.<sup>128</sup>

The last station in Nashville to go on the air during the period of 1919 to 1929 was WTNT, successor to WBAW:

Last August WBAW was dismantled...In March it was sold to other interests with the permit to become WTNT on August 29.

...when the sound 'Station WTNT broadcasting from Nashville, Tennessee' went on the air, ears in Nashville began to pick up. As a result, telephones began to ring and radio fans asked what was what? The new management of the station plans to supplement every program with the news events of the day. All events of athletic, political or international interest will be released on the air promptly.<sup>129</sup>

It had taken much longer than in many other cities, but at last Nashville had its first newspaper-owned station. WBAW had been sold by Braid and Waldrum to the Nashville Tennessean. WTNT remained on the air for only about one year. It ceased broadcasting in late 1930 after a suit was filed against the Tennessean, seeking to put the newspaper into receivership. The station never returned to the air, and turned in its license on October 1, 1931.<sup>130</sup>

The years 1919 to 1929 were exciting years for radio enthusiasts in the greater Nashville area. Radio was born, mushroomed in popularity, and continued to blossom. The early stations added a colorful touch to the city's history, and had a powerful effect on the people of Nashville. They were better-informed, better-entertained and richer for the experience of the development of radio in Nashville. As for the stations, some remain and some are gone. Financially, some were suc-



cessful and some were failures. But, in fulfilling their ultimate purpose as purveyors of public information and conveyors of the public trust, all succeeded. Individually and as a whole, Nashville's pioneer radio stations played an essential role in bringing the world closer to its inhabitants, and bringing people closer to people.

## Chapter 9

### SUMMARY

Radio broadcasting was a major contributing factor to the emergence of the "New South." It did for this section of the country what no other medium was capable of doing. It brought the world to the people, and took the people around the world.

Newspapers take hours to print. Telephone service in the 1920's was minimal at best. Telegraphy required a knowledge of code. But radio was simple. It spoke English. It traveled at the speed of light. It entertained. It informed. It was there when it was needed.

Radio served many purposes, and served them well. It told people about the weather and the news. It told them where they could buy the things they needed and how much they would cost. It took them on musical journeys and always brought them home.

Radio grew with America, and the South grew with radio.

## Appendix A

## GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF BROADCASTING

Much was discussed in this study of the confused state of radio broadcasting concerning the use of wavelengths by various stations and their power outputs. Also discussed were attempts by Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover to bring an end to the existing chaos. The following article appeared in the Nashville Tennessean, from the wires of the Associated Press, on February 24, 1927:

Designed to clear up chaotic conditions in the air, the radio control bill finally became a law with the signature of President Coolidge.

A commission of five members to have complete control of radio communication for one year is provided.

The commission will have authority to classify radio stations, prescribe the nature of their services, assign wavelengths and station locations...and prevent interference between stations.

The commission is authorized...to make special regulations applicable to radio stations engaged in chain broadcasting.

Although the Radio Act of 1927 covered most of the problems facing broadcasters at the time, it was unable to foresee the great changes which were yet to come in radio. The new law helped in clearing up controversies among stations and made it clear that the Government had the authority to control broadcasting, but the evolution of the industry was so rapid that it would not be long before new problems and new developments would call for new laws.



## Appendix B

## THE RADIO CORPORATIONS VERSUS A T &amp; T

## THE OTHER SIDE

An important part of this study was the dispute between A T & T and the radio corporations over who had what rights regarding radio receivers, transmitters, telephone lines and "toll" broadcasting. Although the writer feels the subject was treated with objectivity, this entire study has been written from the point of view of the broadcasting industry and some fifty years following the famous controversy. The writer felt it would be interesting to look at that controversy from the other side, that of A T & T.

On February 26, 1923, A. H. Griswold, assistant vice-president of A T & T, told an A T & T-called Radio Conference:

What I have in mind ultimately is, that in each locality an important group of people will get together and form a broadcasting association. In that group of people should be the type that the community looks to as being the leaders of the community. In it I would expect to see the chamber of commerce, the important newspapers, the department stores, especially the people interested in radio and the general public as well. For that association we would erect, own and operate a broadcasting station; they to provide all the programs; they to give the public what the public desires but we to have the latest facilities known to the art and all of the things that go with them including remote control lines and speech input equipment. That station is to be operated by the Bell System under definite guarantees from the association as to expenses plus a reasonable return....

We have been very careful up to the present time, not to state to the public in any way, through the press or in any of our talks, the idea that the Bell System desires to monopolize broadcasting; but the fact remains that it is a telephone job, that we are telephone people, that we can do

it better than anybody else, and it seems to me that the clear, logical conclusion that must be reached is that, sooner or later, in one form or another, we have got to do the job...

Whatever monopoly feature there is in it will be created by the local group itself which will get everyone interested in radio into that local group and if anyone desires to own his own private broadcasting station, they will say to him, 'Come on in with the bunch, we represent this community in radio broadcasting.' 131

No doubt many of Griswold's listeners sat in awe, as in his audience at the Radio Conference were representatives of all of the radio corporations involved in the broadcasting controversy with A T & T.

## Appendix C

### A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF PIONEER BROADCASTING



PROVISIONAL  
COPY

# LICENSE FOR LAND RADIO STATION

No. 13391

CLASS "A". LIMITED COMMERCIAL.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
BUREAU OF NAVIGATION  
RADIO SERVICE

Pursuant to the act to regulate radio communication, approved August 13, 1912.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,

a citizen of the State of ..... a company incorporated under the laws of the State of MISSISSIPPI, having applied therefor, is hereby granted by the Secretary of Commerce for a period of Three months on and subject to the restrictions and conditions hereinafter stated and cancellable for cause by him, the Licensee to use or operate the apparatus for radio communication (identified in the schedule hereinafter) for the purpose of transmitting to and receiving from ship stations and other land stations public correspondence, Government and service correspondence, and distress signals and messages, at rates of compensation not in excess of those fixed by the international agreement to which the Government of the United States has adhered, which have been submitted to and approved by the Secretary of Commerce, as indicated

License secured by First Baptist Church in 1924 to operate its own radio station

A rare and valuable photograph of KLCN Radio, Blytheville, Arkansas, in 1928. Although the telephone had served as a microphone, this console seemed to have a regular mike on a floor stand. The historic distance signal sent by KLCN in 1929 was powered by a

single UX210 tube in the power circuit, using four UX250 tubes as modulators, and a five tube speech amplifier, according to C. L. "DUTCH" LINTZENICH in his letter to the radio editor of the Cincinnati Enquirer in March of 1929, shortly after the broadcasts.



*David Sarnoff, young and  
ambitious, proposed a  
"Radio Music Box"—and  
proposed it and proposed it.  
One result—years later—  
was this handy gadget.*





• Air Concert  
"Picked Up"  
• By Radio Here

Victrola music, played into the air over a wireless telephone, was "picked up" by listeners on the wireless receiving station which was recently installed here for patrons interested in wireless experiments. The concert was heard Thursday night about 10 o'clock, and continued 20 minutes. Two orchestra members, a soprano solo—which rang particularly high and clear through the air—and a juvenile "talking piece" constituted the program.

The music was from a Victrola pulled up close to the transmitter of a wireless telephone in the home of Frank Conrad, Penn and Peebles avenues, Wilkensburg. Mr. Conrad is a wireless enthusiast and "puts on" the wireless concerts periodically for the entertainment of the many people in this district who have wireless sets.

Amateur Wireless Sets,  
made by the maker of the  
Set which is in operation in  
our store, are on sale here  
\$10.00 up.

—IV cat Basement

Take it  
wherever  
you go!



**U**NLIKE a tree, on a mountain top—there it is! Out on the sea, facing south on the deck—there it is! And all in a mere 100 yds. out into the cat-o'-nine-tails—a Eureka Super Herminette complete. Its headquarter is back in its keep at the coast, as happens much.

The *Patrola Supra* Hoverfly is a native, new, in two previous models. It is the same for format "Super II" - with the same late quality of use - the same consistent simplicity - the same dominant performance. But it is possible now - and you can take some interferences with no worry, where!

Baron Corporation of America  
New York

# Radiola

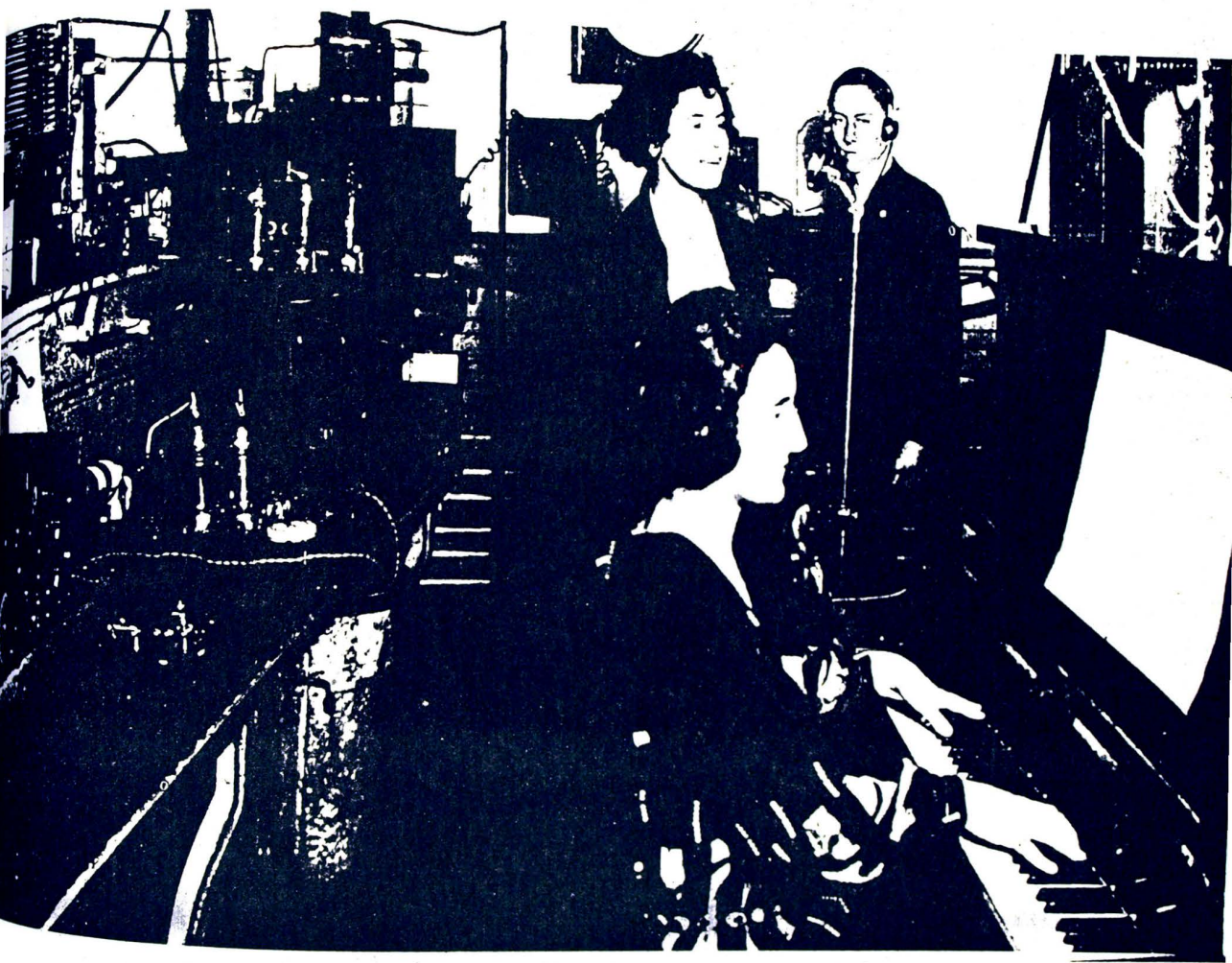
PRODUCED ONLY BY RCA 



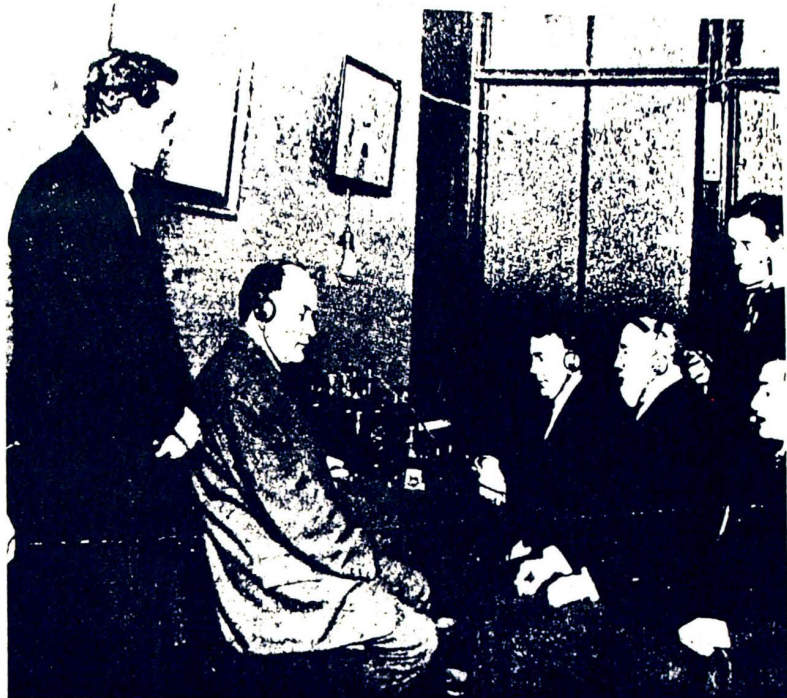
*Above: Probably the first retail ad to offer a "wireless telephone" to the public was this notice in a Pittsburgh newspaper. The price was \$10—and up. By 1925, the first "portable" appeared. RCA's Radiola was a lineal ancestor to the midget transistor that now covers the earth.*







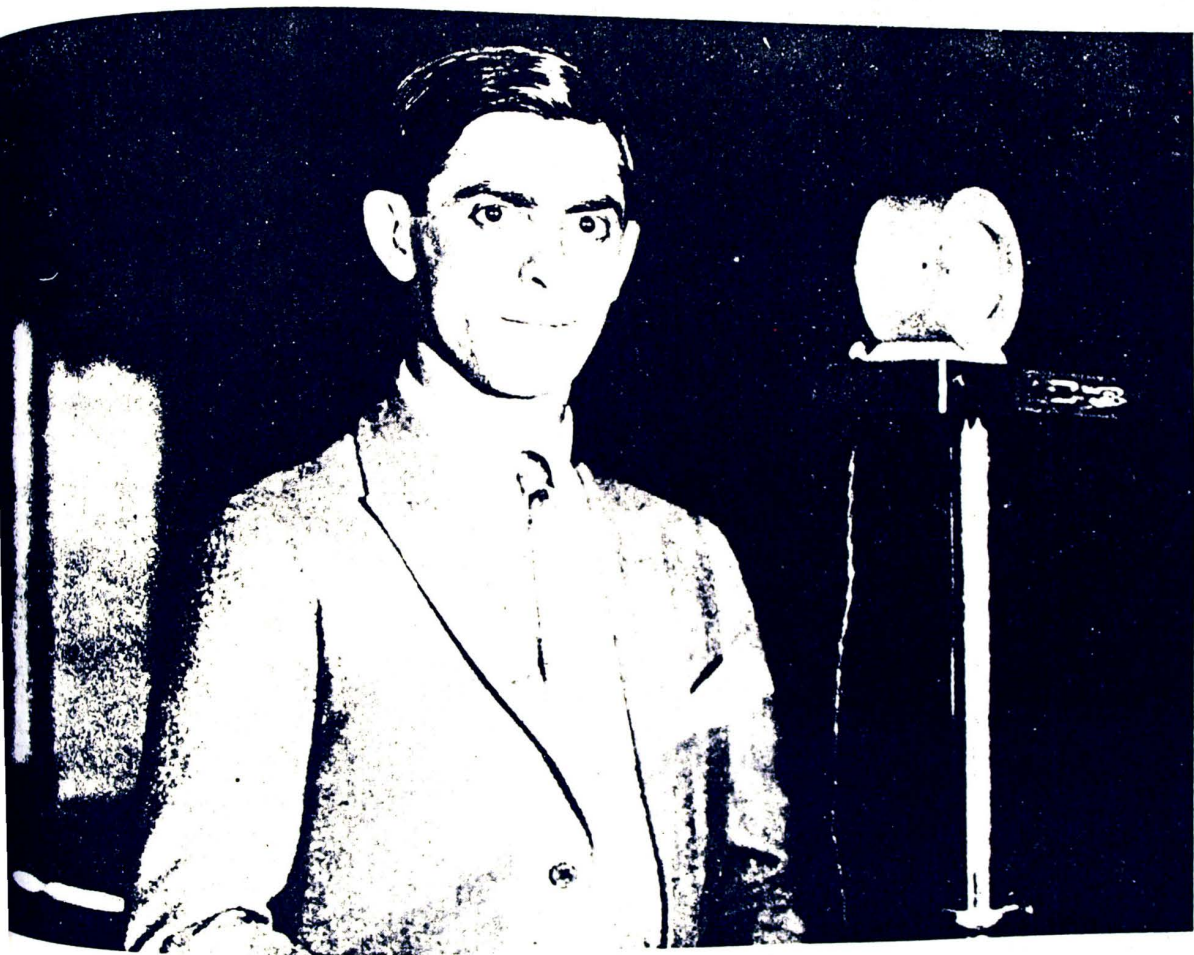




*Above, left: Amateurs and experimenters had a field day. This lad used the frame of an umbrella for his aerial. Above: Learned lecturers spoke to distant listeners. Left: The kiddies, helmeted and wired for sound, posed prettily through the bedtime story.*







EDDIE CANTOR



# HIGH LIGHTS of the WEEK

A revival of old time minstrelsy, Bones and Company, produced by Paul Dimont will begin as a Saturday feature, from September 4:30 to 5 p.m. This program is formerly heard each Monday night at 8:30.

—V—  
Employed Gibbons will be heard in "Adventures in Science" while the orchestra, under the direction of Erno Rapee will make selections during the General Electric program Saturday at 7 p.m. The musical numbers to be heard are all request selections, and will consist of "Overture to Prometheus" by Bach; "In the Hall of the Mountain King," Grieg, and "Hungarian Rhapsody" by Liszt.

—V—  
"Robbery Accomplished by Violence" will be the subject of the play by Dean Gleason L. Archer, Suffolk Law School, Boston, showing the Laws That Safeguard Society period Saturday at 5:15 p.m.

—V—  
Eddie Cantor, noted stage and screen comic, will be the guest artist on the Chase and Sanborn program on Sunday at 6 p.m. He will sing a program of late song favorites, in this, the first of a series of seven programs.

—V—  
The animals will troop by "two by two" when they go to the "Animal Fair," to be sung by a quartet singing the Enna Jettick Melodies program Sunday at 6 p.m. "Long, Long Ago" and "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere" will be presented by the Robert Arnbruster's orchestra.

—V—  
"The Lure of the Child" will be the topic of Rev. Frederick Stannum will discuss during the Family Hour program Sunday at 7 p.m. Among the numbers to be heard by the quartet will be "I Left My Lonely Caravan at Night."

—V—  
Do May Bailey will sing "What If?" and "Now That You're Here" during a program with Ted Demme and his orchestra from the Chicago studios on Sunday at 8:15 p.m.

—V—  
"Kirkman's Gift" is the title of a radio dramatization of one of Mark Bradford's Negro Biblical stories in the Over Jordan program to be heard Sunday at 5 p.m.

## COMPLETE PROGRAM for WEEK SEPTEMBER 13-19, 1931

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

- 6:15 AM—Morning Devotions.....(Religious Service)
- 6:30 AM—Cheerio.....(Inspirational Talk and Music)
- 7:00 AM—Popular Bits.....(Piano and Vocal Solos)
- 7:15 AM—Morning Glories.....(Neilsson Trio)
- 7:30 AM—Ward's Radio Research Program.....("Beautiful Thoughts")
- 7:45 AM—A. and P. Food Program.....(Talk by Col. Goodbody)
- 8:00 AM—Recordings.....
- 8:15 AM—Pick of the Town.....(Jack and Jill)
- 8:45 AM—Ford and Wallace.....(Harmony Duo)
- 9:00 AM—Studio Announcements.....
- 11:00 AM—Recordings.....
- 11:15 AM—Plough—Peggy Martin.....(Charm and Beauty Talk)
- 11:30 AM—National Farm and Home Hour.....
- 12:30 PM—Time—Weather.....
- 12:45 PM—Piano Moods.....(Lee Sims)
- 1:00 PM—Lum and Abner.....(Backwood Chatter)
- 1:15 PM—Theatre—Crops.....
- 1:20 PM—State's Business.....(State Forester)
- 1:30 PM—Chicago Serenade.....(Harry Kogen's Orchestra)
- 2:00 PM—Syncopaters.....(Popular Music)
- 2:15 PM—Radio Guild.....(Dramatic Program)
- 3:15 PM—Tunes—Old and New.....
- 4:00 PM—Rose Room Orchestra.....(Concert Music)
- 4:45 PM—Piano Pep.....(Lois McCormick)
- 5:00 PM—Major Bowes Family.....(Capitol Theatre Varieties)
- 5:45 PM—Hawaiian Duo.....
- 6:00 PM—Hymn Sing.....(Old-Time Hymns—Mixed Quartet)
- 6:30 PM—Boy Scout Reports.....
- 6:45 PM—Cecil and Sally.....(Youthful Episodes)
- 7:00 PM—Studio Orchestra.....(Dance Music)
- 7:30 PM—Armour Program.....(Picture Briefs, Orchestra, Vocal Solos)
- 8:00 PM—Paul Whitemans' Painters.....(Dance Music)
- 8:30 PM—RKO—Theatre of the Air (Film, Vaudeville, Radio Stars)
- 9:00 PM—Amos 'n' Andy.....
- 9:15 PM—Baseball Scores.....
- 9:20 PM—Dance Music.....
- 9:30 PM—Frigidairians.....(Ray Perkins, Quartet and Orchestra)
- 9:45—10:00 PM—Dance Music.....

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

- 6:15 AM—Morning Devotions.....(Religious Service)
- 6:30 AM—Cheerio.....(Inspirational Talks and Music)
- 7:00 AM—Popular Bits.....(Piano and Vocal Solos)
- 7:15 AM—Morning Glories.....(Neilsson Trio)
- 7:30 AM—Ward's Radio Research Program.....("Beautiful Thoughts")
- 7:45 AM—A. and P. Food Program.....(Talk by Col. Goodbody)
- 8:00 AM—Dance Miniature.....(Dance Tunes)
- 8:15 AM—Studio Announcements.....
- 9:00 AM—Celebrated Sayings.....(Famous Sayings and Orchestra)
- 9:20 AM—Keys to Happiness.....(Piano Lessons—Sigmond Spaeth)
- 11:30 AM—National Farm and Home Hour.....
- 12:30 PM—Time—Weather.....
- 12:45 PM—Piano Moods.....(Lee Sims)
- 1:00 PM—Rice's Dream House.....
- 1:15 PM—Weather—Theatre.....(Dr. Felix Underwood)
- 1:20 PM—Health Talk.....(Dance Tunes)
- 1:30 PM—Studio Orchestra.....
- 2:00 PM—Futurity Stakes Races.....(Concert Music)
- 2:45 PM—Southern Trio.....(William D. Mitchell)
- 3:00 PM—Constitution Week Talk.....
- 3:30 PM—Tunes—Old and New.....(Minstrel)
- 4:30 PM—Mr. Bones and Company.....(Song and Guitar)
- 5:00 PM—Nick Lucas.....(Gleason L. Archer)
- 5:15 PM—Laws That Safeguard Society.....
- 5:30 PM—Hawaiian Duo.....(Contralto and Piano)
- 5:45 PM—The Blue Birds.....(Hill Billy Music)
- 6:00 PM—Leake County Revelers.....(Floyd Gibbons and Concert Music)
- 7:00 PM—General Electric.....(Vocal and Instrumental)
- 7:30 PM—Popular Ballads.....(B. A. Rolfe and Orchestra)
- 8:00 PM—Lucky Strike Orchestra.....
- 9:00 PM—Amos 'n' Andy.....
- 9:15 PM—Baseball Scores.....
- 9:20—10:00 PM—Dance Music.....

YOUR LETTER IS THE ONLY APPLAUSE THEY GET--  
WHY NOT WRITE WHEN YOU ENJOY A PROGRAM?

# HIGH LIGHTS of the WEEK

Ray Perkins, "Old Topper," as master of ceremonies introduces the Landt Trio and White, vocal and instrumental trio, during The Frigidairians broadcast over an NBC network Monday and Wednesday evenings at 5:30.

—V—  
A thirty piece symphony orchestra under the direction of William Daly and a group of well-known vocal artists will present the "Voices of Firestone" Monday evening at 6:30.

—V—  
Two poems by Edgar Guest will be offered on the "Beautiful Thoughts" program by Gene Arnold, narrator, Monday at 7:30 a.m. from the Chicago studios. "When the Soap Gets in Your Eye" and "Unchangeable Mothers" are the titles of the poems. Chuck, Ray and Gene trio will offer songs and Irma Glen will officiate at the console.

—V—  
Internationally known electrical manufacturing executives headed by Owen D. Young, chairman of the board of directors and Gerard Swope, President of the General Electric Company, will participate in a symposium of stabilization of industry, Wednesday, September 16, 6:30 to 7:30.

The men will speak from the main ballroom of the Commodore Hotel, New York, where they are attending the formal dinner of the National Electrical Manufacturers Association. Mr. Swope in the formal address, of thirty minutes, will give specific proposals which will be discussed by his colleagues.

A. W. Robertson, chairman of the board of directors of the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, will speak for ten minutes; Ex-Governor John H. Trumbull of Connecticut, now president of the Trumbull Electric Manufacturing Company, for five minutes; Mr. Young for ten minutes and Clarence L. Collins, president of the Reliance Electric and Engineering Company of Cleveland will act as chairman and face the microphone for five minutes.

Graham McNamee will announce the program. The broadcast is made possible through the cooperation of Halsey Stuart and Company and the Vacuum Oil Company who have given their time on the air to make the program possible.

# FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Erik Barnouw, A Tower in Babel, New York: Oxford University Press, 1966, pp 19-20.

<sup>2</sup> James Johnson, Address to the Kentucky Broadcasters' Association, May 18, 1961.

<sup>3</sup> Public Law Number 264, August 13, 1912, passed by Congress.

<sup>4</sup> Erik Barnouw, pp 35-36.

<sup>5</sup> Gleason L. Archer, History of Radio to 1926, New York: American Historical Company, 1938, pp 132-134.

<sup>6</sup> Erik Barnouw, p 61.

<sup>7</sup> Erik Barnouw, pp 56-81.

<sup>8</sup> Erik Barnouw, p 81.

<sup>9</sup> Erik Barnouw, pp 79-83.

<sup>10</sup> Harry Field and Paul Lazarsfeld, The People Look at Radio, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1946, p 13.

<sup>11</sup> Curtis Mitchell, Cavalcade of Broadcasting, Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1970, p 123.

<sup>12</sup> Erik Barnouw, p 133.

<sup>13</sup> New York Times, August 24, 1930.

<sup>14</sup> Francis Chase, Jr., Sound and the Fury, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942, pp 6-7.

<sup>15</sup> Gleason L. Archer, pp 288-289.



16 William P. Banning, Commercial Broadcasting Pioneer, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946, p 58.

17 Brooklyn Daily Eagle, February 3, 1925.

18 Daniel Starch, Advertising Principles, New York: A. W. Shaw, 1927, pp 530-531.

19 Erik Barnouw, p 171.

20 Erik Barnouw, p 177.

21 Daniel Starch, p 531.

22 Albert H. Hart, The American Yearbook of 1926, New York: Macmillan Company, 1927, pp 615-616.

23 Gleason L. Archer, p 360.

24 William P. Banning, p 261.

25 Report to the Federal Trade Commission on the Radio Industry, submitted December 1, 1923, Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1924.

26 Gleason L. Archer, Big Business and Radio, New York: The American Historical Company, 1939, pp 109-165.

27 Curtis Mitchell, p 74.

28 Report to the FTC.

29 Erik Barnouw, pp 181-182.

30 Erik Barnouw, p 179.

31 Gleason L. Archer, Big Business and Radio, pp 109-165.



- <sup>32</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Big Business and Radio, p 170.
- <sup>33</sup> Ida Tarbell, Owen D. Young: A New Type of Industrial Leader, New York: Macmillan Company, 1932, pp 111-112.
- <sup>34</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Big Business and Radio, p 265.
- <sup>35</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Big Business and Radio, p 248-253.
- <sup>36</sup> Curtis Mitchell, p 102.
- <sup>37</sup> Erik Barnouw, pp 193-194.
- <sup>38</sup> Giraud Chester and Garrett Garrison, Television and Radio, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1950, pp 28-29.
- <sup>39</sup> Erik Barnouw, pp 220-221.
- <sup>40</sup> Erik Barnouw, p 225.
- <sup>41</sup> Erik Barnouw, p 235.
- <sup>42</sup> Erik Barnouw, p 242.
- <sup>43</sup> Gleason L. Archer, Big Business and Radio, p 397.
- <sup>44</sup> "The Radio the Farmer's Stock Ticker," Literary Digest, November 3, 1928, p 75.
- <sup>45</sup> "The Farmer's Debt to Radio," Literary Digest, February 23, 1929, p 34.
- <sup>46</sup> Erik Barnouw, pp 125, 210.
- <sup>47</sup> Broadcasting Yearbook, 1969, p B-92.

- 48 Broadcasting Yearbook, 1974, p B-201.
- 49 Memphis Commercial Appeal, March 8, 1925.
- 50 Broadcasting Yearbook, 1974, p A-103.
- 51 WATE Station History, Unpublished manuscript, date unknown.
- 52 Memphis Press-Scimitar, September 22, 1947.
- 53 Memphis Commercial Appeal, March 1, 1925.
- 54 Memphis Commercial Appeal, March 22, 1925.
- 55 WHAS Station History, Unpublished manuscript, date unknown.
- 56 Louisville Courier-Journal, July 19, 1922.
- 57 WHAS Station History.
- 58 KFJZ Station History, Unpublished manuscript, date unknown.
- 59 WRR Station History, Unpublished manuscript, date unknown.
- 60 KRLD Station History, Unpublished manuscript, date unknown.
- 61 Broadcasting Yearbook, 1974, p B-203.
- 62 Earl Smith, "Reminiscences," unpublished, date unknown.
- 63 WDSU Station History, Unpublished manuscript, date unknown.
- 64 Jan Darryl Lowry, "Radio Station History Series: Arkansas' Early Day Broadcasters," Broadcaster South, April, 1970. pp 6-8.

- 65 Jan Darryl Lowry, pp 6-8.
- 66 Jan Darryl Lowry, pp 6-8.
- 67 Jan Darryl Lowry, pp 6-8.
- 68 Jackson Daily News, December 8, 1929.
- 69 Jackson Daily News, December 8, 1929.
- 70 WATE Station History, Unpublished manuscript, date unknown.
- 71 WATE Station History.
- 72 WHAS Station History.
- 73 WRR Station History.
- 74 WDSU Station History.
- 75 Jan Darryl Lowry, pp 6-8.
- 76 WJDX Station History, Unpublished manuscript, date unknown.
- 77 "Hill Billies Air Popularity," Billboard Magazine, July 22, 1933.
- 78 Erik Barnouw, p 18.
- 79 John H. DeWitt, Jr., personal interview, July, 1975.
- 80 Nashville Tennessean, November 5, 1922.
- 81 John DeWitt, "Early Radio Broadcasting," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, Spring, 1972 (no month denoted), p 84.



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John DeWitt, "Early Radio Broadcasting," pp 81-85.
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John DeWitt, "Early Radio Broadcasting," p 88.
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- 95  
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- 96  
Nashville Tennessean, December 12, 1926.
- 97  
Nashville Tennessean, January 2, 1927.
- 98  
Nashville Tennessean, January 7, 1927.
- 99  
Nashville Tennessean, January 16, 1927.

- 100 Nashville Tennessean, January 9, 1927.
- 101 Nashville Tennessean, November 24, 1926.
- 102 Nashville Tennessean, December 12, 1926.
- 103 Nashville Tennessean, December 12, 1926.
- 104 Nashville Tennessean, February 27, 1927.
- 105 Nashville Tennessean, November 1, 1926.
- 106 Nashville Tennessean, April 6, 1924.
- 107 Nashville Tennessean, November 15, 1926.
- 108 Nashville Tennessean, November 16, 1926.
- 109 Nashville Tennessean, November 21, 1926.
- 110 Nashville Tennessean, November 24, 1926.
- 111 Nashville Tennessean, January 9, 1927.
- 112 Nashville Tennessean, January 19, 1927.
- 113 Nashville Tennessean, February 16, 1927.
- 114 Nashville Tennessean, January 24, 1927.
- 115 F. C. Sowell, personal interview, July, 1975.
- 116 Nashville Tennessean, January 27, 1927.
- 117 Nashville Tennessean, November 5, 1926.

- 118 John DeWitt, "Early Radio Broadcasting," p 92.
- 119 Nashville Tennessean, December 17, 1926.
- 120 Nashville Tennessean, January 16, 1927.
- 121 Nashville Tennessean, December 13, 1926.
- 122 Nashville Tennessean, January 1, 1927.
- 123 Nashville Tennessean, January 28, 1927.
- 124 Nashville Tennessean, February 11, 1927.
- 125 Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, February 11, 1927.
- 126 Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, February 12, 1927.
- 127 Nashville Tennessean, February 29, 1927.
- 128 Nashville Tennessean, February 21, 1927.
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## H. ACTS OF CONGRESS:

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