

NAB NEWS LETTER

Office of Executive Secretary
Urbana, Illinois
February 1, 1940

SUBSTANTIATING W H A CLAIMS

Regular telephonic broadcasting of weather information and reports was begun by the Madison office of the U.S. Weather Bureau on January 3, 1920, over the University of Wisconsin experimental station 9XM. This is verified by federal records.

Eric R. Miller, meteorologist now in charge, was in charge then, too, having taken over the Madison bureau in 1908.

Telephonic reports on the weather were broadcast as early as 1917 on an experimental basis over 9XM, the station which later became WHA. These are distinguished from telegraphic reports which were sent out as early as 1916 by the same office.

Mr. Miller recalls how in the early days he supplied the station's engineer Malcolm Hanson (later Admiral Byrd's chief operator on the first flight over the South Pole) with report forms to send out to the radio observers who had receivers, and these would be filled in and posted several hours before those sent by mail could be received in most communities.

In a twentieth anniversary broadcast over WHA on Wednesday (Jan. 3) Mr. Miller was interviewed by Carl Brose, state-station announcer, at the weather bureau office. Mr. Miller reviewed the early attempts at broadcasting and cited the changes modern methods have made possible in weather forecasting work.

At the present time three official broadcasts each day are given directly from Mr. Miller's office in the weather bureau. The preview is at 8:15 A.M. At 10:50 A.M. the complete morning summary and forecast is presented. The final review comes at 3:58 P.M. Other reports over WHA come at 12:30 and 1:00 P.M., and at station sign-off time. In extremes of weather the temperature is reported hourly on the hour. A microphone set-up and lines are maintained in the weather-bureau office and broadcasts can be picked up on a minute's notice.

Among Mr. Miller's listeners is Carl Sandberg, the poet, who listens at his home across Lake Michigan. He says the broadcasts have "an air of officiality" which he enjoys.

The reports from the weather bureau not only tell what the forecast is, but tell also why things are apt to happen as predicted. Farmers with crops to watch, motorists planning trips, sportsmen going hunting or fishing, shippers of stock and produce, skating rink tenders, and other weather-conscious individuals rely on the

broadcasts in making their plans.

The beginning of Mr. Miller's regular broadcasting, it is interesting to note, is earlier than the dates on which the so-called "pioneer" broadcasting stations began their operations. This is further evidence to support the Madison station's claim that it is America's oldest station.

NOTES ON WILL

"Historic Illinois" is the name of a new series of programs being carried 4:30-5:00 p.m., Tuesdays, on the University of Illinois station, WILL. This series, written by George Jennings, continuity editor of the Chicago Radio Council, seeks to present phases of our rich history, bringing to life past events, and making real some of the men and women who made Illinois the great state it is. It is especially suitable for the upper grades and high school students, as well as for adults. The first three programs: Joliet and Marquette; Abraham Lincoln; Robert Cavalier Sieur de la Salle.

War, floods, and politics; a record low in highway deaths and a renewed increase of them; death of Borah and others; world events with repercussions or potentialities for every Illinois community; local problems of interest because similar problems occur in many communities--all these have been discussed in more than 4,000 editorials read during the past three years in the "Illinois Editorial Review" of the University of Illinois radio station, WILL.

During the past year, nearly 1,500 editorials from the leading daily and weekly newspapers of Illinois were read in this unique program of the state's only non-commercial, educational radio station. Total circulation of the newspapers received is just short of two and a quarter million persons. More than 200 copies of newspapers are scanned each week in preparing the two 15-minute broadcasts--1:45 p.m. each Tuesday and Friday. The papers include 24 dailies and 66 weeklies.

MEET IN FLORIDA?

Garland Powell writes: "The thought occurred to me that our association should meet at different places from time to time. I mean by that, it is a logical thing to do, to meet at a central location, but on the other hand it may help out situations and would be just as cheap in the long-run to meet at distant points. In other words, I am trying to convey the thought that the University of Florida would like to have an NAEB meeting." Now there it is, a repetition of Major Powell's previous invitation to hold the next NAEB convention in Florida. Soon a mail vote on dates and place will be taken. Watch the News Letter for further details.

EDUCATION ON WNYE

There is quite an extensive story of the work being done by WNYE, in New York City's Board of Education ultra-high radio station, in the December issue of "Pick-up". Some of you may have heard M.S. Novik of WNYC describe the start of the ultra-high stations at the Ames Convention. In any case I think you will enjoy reading this article.

BROADCASTING AT MONTANA STATE

Montana State University, Missoula, is going to furnish between one and five hours a week to Radio Station KGZO. According to information from Professor E. M. Little of Montana State, plans are being made to set up campus studios so as to facilitate the handling of programs on the campus. The Montana State University Radio Station KUOM was discontinued in 1929. Preliminary plans call for a program from the Department of Music, Journalism, Speech, and others.

WTAW DIRECTOR NAMED

John Rosser is the new managing director of the Texas A. and M. College radio station, WTAW, and master of ceremonies of the institution's Texas Farm and Home Hour which goes on the air each week-day at 11:30 A.M. over the Texas Quality Network.

He succeeds Dr. E. P. Humbert, who has served for some eight years in that capacity. The job has grown to a full time one, and Dr. Humbert asked for relief so that he could give his full attention to his duties as head of the Department of Genetics.

Rosser began his radio experience as news editor and director of special events at KGKO, Fort Worth. He came to WTAW from New York, where he was the Herald Tribune's newscaster over WQXR and prepared scripts for the Consumers' Information Division of the Crowell-Collier Publishing Company.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS PAMPHLETS

Most of you have seen the pamphlets published by the Public Affairs Committee, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City. If you are not familiar with them, see listing of publication enclosed in the packet. The Public Affairs Committee is a non-profit, educational organization.

Some of the publications lend themselves well to adaptation for educational broadcasts. If any of the non-commercial educational stations desire to use these on the air, the Public Affairs Committee would be glad to receive your request, outlining the form in which you intend to use them.

Pamphlets scheduled for 1940 publication include: PROBLEMS OF PUBLIC HOUSING, MIGRATORY FARM LABOR, THE COSTS OF DISTRIBUTION, OLD-AGE SECURITY, CIVIL LIBERTIES, MONEY' etc.

TO INQUIRE INTO MANAGEMENT CONTRACTS

To determine whether broadcast licensees are themselves discharging the rights, duties, and obligations under their licenses or whether, on the other hand, such rights have been turned over to and are being exercised by outside operating companies under so called management contracts, the Federal Communications Commission has ordered hearing on certain pending applications for renewal of radio station licenses, and for other and similar renewal applications as they come before it.

Those stations already designated for hearing, under this move, at a date to be set later, are Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company licenses for WBZ and WBZA, both at Boston; KYW, Philadelphia, and KDKA, Pittsburgh; WGY, General Electric Company, Schenectady, N.Y.; WESG, Cornell University, Elmira, N.Y.; WWL, Loyola University, New Orleans; and WAPT, Alabama Polytechnic Institute and University of Alabama, Birmingham, Ala.

LONGER INTERVAL FOR ANNOUNCING RECORDS

In the interests of public service and radio station convenience, the Federal Communications Commission today agreed that station announcements of the use of mechanical records can be made at 30-minute intervals instead of the 15-minute requirement as heretofore. This is to avoid interrupting the entertainment continuity of a recorded series of records, or of the long records now quite generally used, particularly of recorded programs relayed by wire facilities.

At the same time, Section 3.93(e) of the broadcast rules has been changed to read:

"The identifying announcement shall accurately describe the type of mechanical record used, i.e., where a transcription is used it shall be announced as a 'transcription' or an 'electrical transcription' and where a phonograph record is used it shall be announced as a 'record'."

The Commission added religious service to the types of continuous recorded programs - speech, play, symphony concert or operatic production - of longer than half an hour for which the 30-minute announcement rule is waived. This change is already effective.

NEW TELEPHONE RATE REDUCTION STUDIES

The Federal Communications Commission has voted to institute studies as to the possibility of further reductions in the long line rates of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company.

Commissioner Paul A. Walker reported that figures before the Commission indicate a substantial saving to telephone subscribers might be made without reducing net earnings of the company below a fair return on the reasonable value of the property used in the interstate service.

The Commission will proceed under the order of September 9, 1936, authorizing an investigation which subsequently was stayed by negotiations with the company resulting in reductions.

"THE NEXT STEP FORWARD" TO BE DRAMATIZED OVER NBC STATIONS

Questions that touch as all in our daily living--such as "Who pays our taxes?", "Can we do without the 'middle man'?", "Are sales taxes fair?", and a score of others--will be posed and answered in a new series of dramatic radio programs called "The Next Step Forward" The Twentieth Century Fund, a non-partisan research foundation, is collaborating with the Educational Division of the National Broad-

casting Company in presenting this series which is based on the factual findings of surveys in current economics. Beginning February 7, the programs will be broadcast over WEAJ and stations of the NBC Red Network on Wednesdays, from 11:15 to 11:30 P.M., EST.

An unusual style of technique which is new in educational radio will characterize the dramatized portions of these programs. This technique which has proved brilliantly effective in radio drama has been adapted to give color and impact to research findings. At the same time the factual content, based as it is on the Twentieth Century Fund's scientific investigations, will be fresh material even to some of those who specialize in the field of economics.

Each dramatization in this radio series will be followed by a brief discussion by one of the eminent, nationally known experts who comprise the Fund's Special Survey Committees. In a terse dialogue with the characters of the drama he will explain his Committee's recommendations for "The Next Step Forward." (See Packet)

COURT RULING ON RECORDS

An Associated Press dispatch from New York City reports that by a 3 to 2 decision the Appellate Division of New York State Supreme Court has ruled that the musicians' and stagehands' unions should be permitted to use legal and peaceful means to oppose an opera company's use of "Canned Music".

The ruling reversed an order issued just a year ago by Supreme Court Justice Kenneth P. O'Brien which permanently enjoined the two unions from interfering with Opera-On-Tour, Inc., in a dispute over the use of amplified recorded music versus living musicians.

Opera-On-Tour, Inc., was organized in February, 1938. It was designed to take popular-priced opera to smaller cities and instead of an orchestra, the accompaniment and some choral singing was produced from records.

The company opened at Richmond, Va., November 4, 1938 and closed at Chapel Hill, N.C., on November 22 after the stage hands walked out at the request of the Musicians' Union. The suit for an injunction then was filed.

RESEARCH AT UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

The South's first radio research bureau recently started its machinery at the University of Texas, A. L. Chapman, director, has announced. This new agency, the University Bureau of Research in Education by Radio, has been set up by University Board of Regents as a subdivision under Dean B. F. Pittenger of the School of Education.

The term "education" Chapman expects to interpret broadly, extending it to adult fields and to the cultural and entertainment programs. Projected avenues of investigation embrace studies of listening habits of children and adults, consumer-popularity of radio-advertised products, school use of radio programs, effect of radio on teacher efficiency in the classroom.

One immediate project will be to determine the present status of radio as an instrument for education, whether in direct classroom use or in leisure-time home use, Chapman indicated. Place of the University in training people for the radio profession, either from a technical or a performer point of view, must be studied, he signified.

"The number of 'glamorous' radio performers is so small in comparison with the number of people who go into radio work as a job or profession," he emphasized, "that we must decide whether those people need professional instruction, whether adequate training is available in Texas--and whether a University should offer that type of education."

New statistical methods, gearing average pupil intelligent quotients to large scale testing of listening habits, will be used to measure Texas school children's responses to radio-vitalized education. Four graduate students have already started research studies in the radio education field, one having been completed this summer, Chapman said.

LITTLE EXPECTED IN CONGRESS

"Broadcasters are anticipating a quiet session of Congress as far as radio legislation is concerned. Although there are about fifty bills pertaining to radio in the Senate and House, there appears little prospect, according to Washington observers, that more than a half-dozen may arise to plague the broadcasters.

"Reorganization of the Federal Communications Commission and resolutions demanding investigations of networks and "radio monopolies" are definitely reported dead. Copyright legislation, which has been pending before Congress several years, may have a revival.

"Legislation which probably will have the best chance of enactment, observers believe, is that designed to forbid beer and liquor advertising on the air. Such a bill is now on the Senate calendar, having been reported favorably by the Interstate Commerce Committee.

"The FCC budget will be reported in the House within a few weeks by the House Appropriations Committee.

"President Roosevelt in his budget message to Congress asked for \$2,125,000 for total appropriations for the Federal Communications Commission for the fiscal year 1941, composed of \$2,100,000 for salaries and expenses and \$25,000 for printing. For the present fiscal year of 1940 the total appropriation for the commission is \$1,838,175, composed of \$1,800,000 for salaries and expenses, \$25,000 for printing and \$13,175 for special investigations." - New York Times, Jan. 14, 1940

Scanned from the National Association of Educational Broadcasters Records
at the Wisconsin Historical Society as part of
"Unlocking the Airwaves: Revitalizing an Early Public and Educational Radio Collection."



A collaboration among the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities,
University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Communication Arts,
and Wisconsin Historical Society.

Supported by a Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant from
the National Endowment for the Humanities



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