

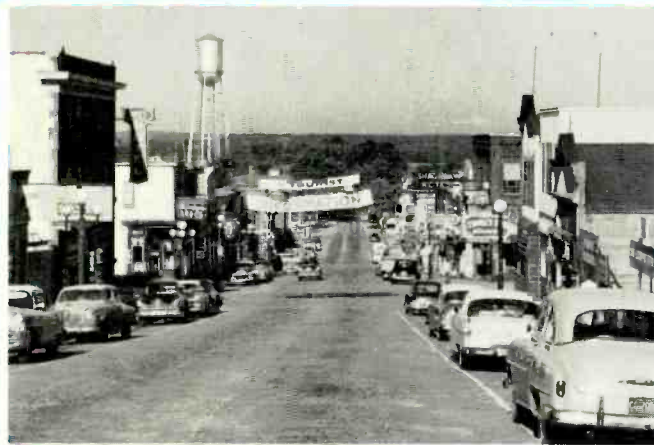
THE FIRST FORTY



**WCCO
Radio**

1924 * 1964

GOOD NEIGHBOR TO
THE NORTHWEST



THE FIRST FORTY

THE STORY OF
WCCO RADIO

*"Good Neighbor to the
Northwest" . . . to people
who listen everywhere.*

EDITED BY
CHARLES F. SARJEANT





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Minneapolis, Minnesota



To
WILLIAM J. McNALLY

chairman of the board of Midwest
Radio-TV, Inc., scholar, author,
critic; for his inspired leadership,
this book is respectfully dedicated.

THE MEN WHO BUILT A RADIO STATION

Wonderment is frequently expressed as to how and why over the decades WCCO Radio has succeeded in combining such high standards of performance, taste, and community service with its well-known giant mass appeal. In this respect students of broadcasting declare that out of more than five thousand radio stations in the country WCCO belongs in the first five. Which at once prompts the very natural query: How come?

The answer, I believe, lies largely in the people who have represented WCCO since it was first heard on the air. WCCO has been remarkably fortunate over the years in having the right people at the right posts at the right time. Collectively the efforts of these individuals account for the position that it has won and the unique reputation it has gained and maintained. In its infancy, it had Mr. Henry Bellows presiding over its destinies—a rare piece of good luck. The profile of Henry Bellows, a man of sterling principles and distinguished intellectual attainments, became permanently the profile of WCCO Radio. Mr. Earl Gammons, who succeeded Mr. Bellows, brought unusual promotional talents and keen insight into public tastes to WCCO. Here we find some key to the mystery of its later phenomenal audience acceptance.

Columbia Broadcasting System, which directed the operation of WCCO for many years, did a particularly outstanding job in choosing a succession of managers, many of whom subsequently took over top executive positions in CBS. In fact, it is sometimes jestingly said that the key executives of CBS today are largely the alumni of WCCO.

Twelve years ago the dominant ownership of WCCO was transferred from New York to the region itself. The new ownership-management (that is to say, the present regime) selected as its new manager a veteran of the Northwest, Mr. Larry Haeg. He already had been associated with the station for many years and was intimately familiar with its traditions. Under Mr. Haeg's direction, despite the advent of competitive pressures arising from numerous additional radio stations, not to speak of four television stations, WCCO Radio has prospered and expanded beyond anything previously known. In all echelons, low as well as high, WCCO Radio has always abounded in creative talent. This creative talent has consistently been encouraged and given the widest possible latitude by the management. That same creative talent, whether directly visible or hidden from the public view, has had a bearing on the fact that WCCO's on-the-air personalities for two generations have been the talk of the Northwest, unrivaled in popularity in this or any other region. The sun has never shone on WCCO Radio more brilliantly than it does today. Notable as its first forty years have been, every prospect is that its brightest days lie ahead.



Robert B. Ridder,
President
Midwest Radio-TV, Inc.



F. Van Konynenberg,
Executive Vice President
Midwest Radio-TV, Inc.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William J. McNeely".

Chairman of the Board
Midwest Radio-TV Inc.



**Lawrence F. Haeg,
General Manager,
WCCO Radio**

"GOOD NEIGHBOR TO THE NORTHWEST"

We are proud at WCCO Radio of the title that first was given us by a listener. She was describing her feelings toward the whole family of WCCO Radio people who are responsible for the station's service. She wrote that she felt as though we were her friends, and mentioned even the people she had never heard . . . the engineers and the office girls and the management people and producers. After a later visit to the station, she wrote that the WCCO people were just like she expected (though some were fatter or taller or younger than she had imagined them).

To this day, WCCO Radio uses the name "Good Neighbor to the Northwest" as a constant reminder of its goal. While we do reach all parts of the nation and we do hear from all seven continents, we still think of ourselves as your good neighbor down the street. It's more fun to run our business that way. And it seems that listeners and advertisers, and even others in our same business, welcome this spirit.

WCCO Radio hardly could be otherwise. We grew up with the crystal set when everyone knew his neighbor well . . . when spelling bees and quilting bees were marks of the country and when city people mowed each other's lawns and gathered in the alley Saturday to fix each other's cars.

With all the special electronic devices that engineers have given us, with all the technological changes we are working on, our people on the air and the folks behind them still try to be like the good neighbors of years ago. We want to stay that way. We want to be helpful friends to all who listen and with whom we do business.

**General Manager
WCCO Radio**

The story of "The First Forty" years of WCCO Radio is tightly woven into the history of the Northwest. As we recall those years, we tell something of the life of those times as it was lived by hundreds of thousands of WCCO listeners . . . something of history as it was known to the hundreds of men and women who served on the staff of WCCO Radio and who shared those adventurous days from 1924 to 1964.



Cedric M. Adams
May 27, 1902 – February 18, 1961

"I'm a friend of Cedric's!"

Working with Cedric every day of the week, we heard that phrase hundreds of times. It came in telephone conversations with the voice on the other end saying, "We're dedicating a new baseball field here and I know Cedric would want to know about it." The conversation invariably concluded with the line, "Of course, I'm a friend of Cedric's."

People said it at the remote broadcasts that Cedric originated in high school gymnasiums and armories throughout the Northwest; they said it at the State Fair. It came every time a WCCO listener stepped up, curious over what we were doing and, receiving the answer that we were preparing to put Cedric on the air, would respond with the inevitable line: "I'm a good friend of Cedric's."

The truth is that Cedric was everybody's friend. Here was a man who had a genuine affection for people. Though he worked a round-the-clock schedule that few men can tolerate, he had time—always—for a friendly smile, a brief chat, a quick joke followed by his hearty laugh. To his colleagues, he was congenial, untemperamental and cooperative.

How do you explain Cedric Adams? He was not a comedian—yet, he could be uproariously funny at times. He was not a master of ceremonies, but he could be entertaining. He was not a public speaker, though he did appear before countless audiences in the Northwest. He was simply "Cedric." His hallmark was an eye for the detail, the trivia of life that comes from living in a small town. That quality he brought with him to the big cities and turned it into success throughout the entire Northwest.

WCCO and Cedric were made for each other. Cedric brought human qualities to a radio station which had become an institution in the region, and WCCO made an institution of Cedric Adams—a personable, likeable human being. The two together fit perfectly as good neighbors to the Northwest.

How Cedric Started

It was in 1931 that Cedric Adams' voice was first heard on WCCO. He was 29 years old then and had something of a reputation as a writer. He had written gags for Captain Billy Fawcett's risqué cartoon magazine, "Whiz-bang," in Robbinsdale and was trying to get started as a columnist. Earl Gammons, then WCCO manager, heard about Cedric and hired him to do some bit parts on dramatic shows.

Gammons tells the story this way: "Well, I knew Cedric . . . used to run into him when I was working for Washburn Crosby and running their magazine. He was over at the University and he was doing a little writing on the side and becoming quite famous for the things he was doing. We put him on the air several times and Cedric found it a little difficult to take his work too seriously. He would get to laughing in the middle of a program, if something funny happened, with the result that we finally figured there wasn't much of a future for him so we dropped him.

"It was about that time or shortly after that Stuffy Walters came to Minneapolis to be editor of the Minneapolis Star. And he was looking for somebody who could write a column and also broadcast on WCCO. We were sitting around talking one night and I said, 'Just the man is Cedric Adams if we can get him calmed down and put him to work.' Well, Stuffy thought that sounded good and he turned to Mr. John Thompson who was then publisher of the Star and said, 'How about it, Mr. Thompson?' 'Oh,' Mr. Thompson said, 'he'd never do.'

"Cedric was always saying things on the air that were somewhat questionable or writing them in the paper that way and they had let him go.

"Stuffy said, 'We can never stand for that. Where do I reach him?'

"Well, the next day we found Cedric. Stuffy and I, between us, hired him and it was a fine arrangement for all of us, I believe . . . and one of which Stuffy and I were very proud. Cedric was probably the best known and the highest paid broadcaster on any single station in the United States."

Packed and ready for Northwest Airlines' inaugural flight to Alaska, here is a debonair Cedric in 1939.



Slim, trim, handsome—the youthful Cedric Adams about the time his voice was first heard on WCCO. This picture was taken about 1931. Cedric would have been 29 years old then.



Older, more mature, here is Cedric reading 10 p.m. news. He started for Maurice L. Rothschild in 1934.

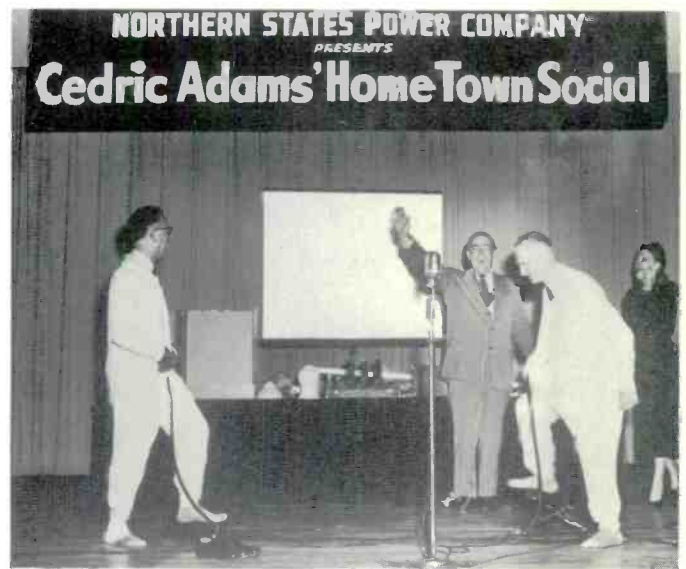


**Cedric was
in demand
everywhere**

One night in 1940 he did his 10 p.m. newscast from his fraternity, Chi Phi, at the University of Minnesota. This was a party for rushees.



Cedric put on a show at Pipestone in 1946 as shown here. The gimmick was that men dressed in women's clothes and vice versa. The audience was convulsed.



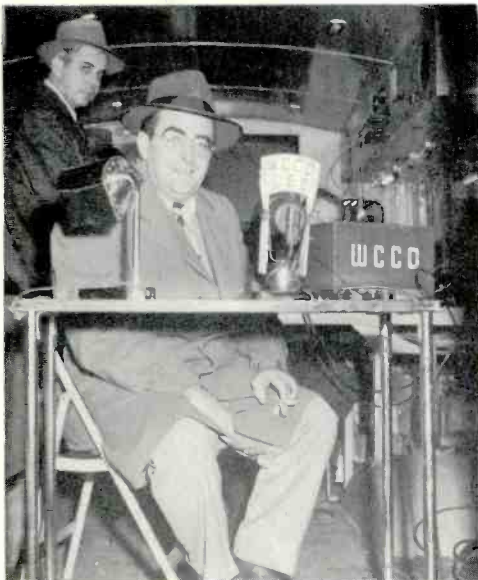
This gag brought down the house too. Each man operated a foot air pump connected to a balloon in the "tummy" of his rival's "long johns."

Cedric wowed the girls at Minneapolis Aquatennial Queens luncheon, 1940. Adjusting the "mike" is Marion Campbell of Minneapolis.





During World War II, Cedric was master of ceremonies at a ship-launching at Walter Butler shipyards in Superior, Wis. Featured guests seated behind Cedric were none other than the famous Dienne quintuplets.



Sometimes he did his newcasts from the WCCO mobile unit. Standing behind Cedric is Engineer Ivan Anderson.



While returning from a personal appearance and broadcast at Annandale in November 1951, Cedric was involved in a car accident. (He was not driving.) As a result, Cedric broke both ankles but he broadcast the news every day.



Cedric with ardent admirer.

He Talked with Everyone

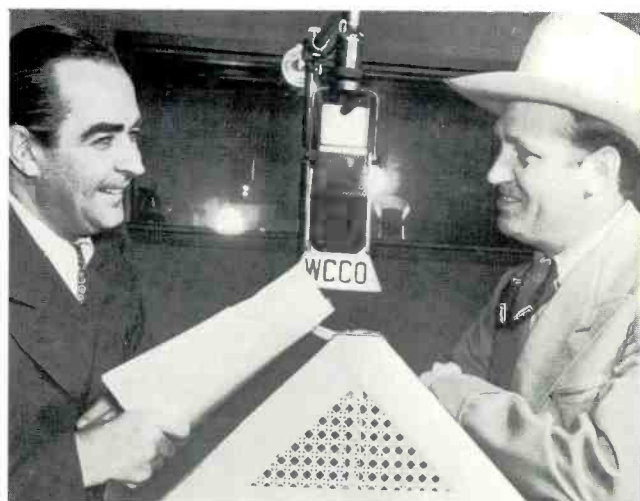
Somehow it made no difference to Cedric whether the person was rich and famous or lived on a farm in Rice county. He was equally interested in and equally kind to all who sought his attention. And his fame spread throughout the land. No wonder that airline pilots flying over WCCO-Land at night reported an unusual phenomenon—one that was not apparent anywhere else. At 10:15 p.m., right after Cedric finished his nighttime news, the lights blinked out in farmhouses and city and small town homes all over the area. As one elderly woman phrased it in truth as well as innocence, "Why, Cedric, I go to bed with you every night!"



Cedric and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt.



Cedric with Philip W. Pillsbury.



Cedric and Gene Autrey.

"You should have been there last night"

By the time Cedric Adams came along in the early '30's, radio was a husky adolescent. Nearly half the nation's families owned a radio set by then and by the end of the '30's, there were radio sets in nearly every home in America.

But during the 1920's, that was a different story. At the beginning of the decade, Mr. Marconi's invention was a plaything of a few amateur "nuts," or was a part-time activity of telegraphers or telephone company technicians who knew a little something about electronics. These were the people who put the first radio stations on the air.

Magazines and newspapers published articles about "wireless" and printed elaborate instructions on how to build the old set with cat's whisker, galena crystal and earphones. Sets were built by adventurous teenagers and fanatical adults. The really "sane" people of the era, though, wouldn't have anything to do with the newfangled nonsense. Youngsters, forbidden to listen to radio, took the earphones to bed with them and listened under the covers far into the night.

Gradually the fad caught on. Excitement rose. Talk the next morning was, "I got Schenectady last night," and everybody rushed to the dictionary to find out how to spell the place. That was the thrill—sitting up late at night, listening to static by the hour, and then finally hearing some distant announcer say "Pittsburgh," "New Orleans," "Denver," or "St. Louis."

Then came the one and two tube receivers. What an improvement! The Atwater Kent, DeForest, AMRAD, the Majestic—to name but a few—brought with them the loudspeaker. Now the whole family could listen all at once!

Not everyone, however, could afford a radio set. They cost about \$100 in those early days and besides there was the constant upkeep expense of the "A" and "B" batteries. The real "swingsters" bought them anyway and invited all the neighbors in to listen.

"I was brought up on a farm in northern Minnesota—near the Iron Range," relates WCCO's Maynard

Speece. "Our neighbors two miles down the road had a set and they'd tell us to come on a clear, cold night when the temperature was about 15 below zero because reception was best then. Well, we'd sit there by the hour and listen to the static and the squawks and the whistles and not much else. Like the fisherman who is constantly told, 'You should have been here last week—they were jumping right into the boat,' so the owners of early-day radio receivers would explain helplessly, 'You should have been here last night. I got Pittsburgh clear as a bell.'"

That's the way it was—always—"You should have been here last night."

And, as radio sets improved, so did the programming on the stations. Talent gradually became better. The amazing thing was that most of the talent was home-grown, consisting of musicians, comedians and emcees who were performing in local theaters and vaudeville houses. For a time, a flood of amateurs-wanting-to-be-professionals flooded the radio stations, offering to perform for no fee. Radio station executives soon grew wary of these kind offers and by the early '30's had learned to stick with the professionals.

Along came a new generation. Fresh out of high school they were. They had studied public speaking and debate. These young extroverts from the senior class and other walks of life more or less "fell" into radio.

In the early days of WCCO, that's where the announcers came from. They weren't imported from New York. They came out of the family down the block or the town down the road a piece. Just ordinary people, but their names were soon heard in every household every day. These names, out of the past, were Cedric Adams, Al Chance, Ed Abbott, Eddie Gallaher, Clellan Card, Al Sheehan, Rod O'Conner, Larry Haeg, Jerry Harrington, Al Harding, Paul Johnson, Herb Paul, Ed Viehman, Max Karl, Frank Butler, Rolf Hertsgaard, Rollie Johnson and many more.

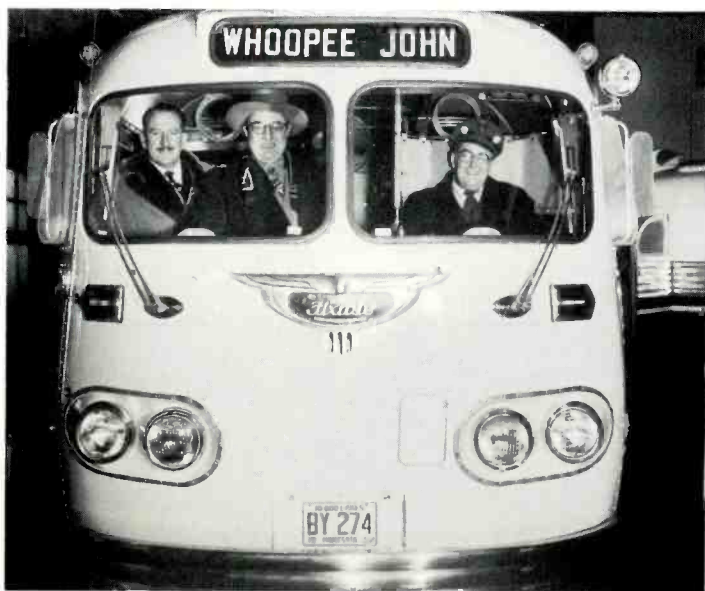
That's the way it is to this very day.

The Sausage Maker from Stockholm

Oscar Danielson had been a sausage-maker in Stockholm, Sweden, when he decided to come to the United States and go into show business. He put together a band which, critics acknowledge, was the finest musical group of its type. He played Scandinavian music exclusively in vaudeville houses around the Northwest and was playing at the old Schubert Theater in Minneapolis about the time WLAG became WCCO in 1924. Henry Bellows hired him to perform on the air and he became a huge success. So popular was Oscar Danielson that WCCO listeners flocked to the Nicollet Hotel studios to get a glimpse of him. On one occasion, recalls Al Sheehan who was his announcer, police reserves and the fire department had to be called out to handle the crowds.



This picture of Oscar Danielson's Orchestra was taken sometime in the mid-1920's. Oscar is at extreme right holding megaphone which later became Rudy Vallee's trade-mark.



"Whoopee" John and Cedric preparing to leave on tour in special bus. At left is Robert Sutton, former program manager of WCCO.

The Farm Boy from New Ulm

If the Scandinavians were delighted with Oscar Danielson, the people of German origin were delirious over "Whoopee" John Wilfahrt. As Oscar and his band played the Scandinavian communities, "Whoopee" and his group toured the German towns on the Northwest vaudeville circuit and played at The German House in St. Paul (renamed The American House during World War II). Dancers twirled, feet stomped on pine floors, and the dust rose as "Whoopee" called out his famous "whoo-whoo-whoo" during the schottisches and polkas.

In those days, there were still lots of folks from the "old country" around and they loved hearing the music of their own lands. "Whoopee" John was a regular feature on WCCO for 35 years—not all the time—because people turned to the big dance bands for a while. But with the revival of the folk dance in the late '40's, "Whoopee" John came back again, stronger and lustier than ever.



Will Osborn's "Original Nicollet Hotel Orchestra" broadcast over WCCO in the early 1920's. Osborn was hired by the New Nicollet Hotel shortly after the hotel opened in 1920. He and his orchestra were heard frequently on WCCO.



Elsie Olson, who played the accordion at WLAG in the Oak Grove Hotel, continued with WCCO when studios were moved to the Nicollet. She is the wife of George N. Super, long-time music teacher in Minneapolis public schools.



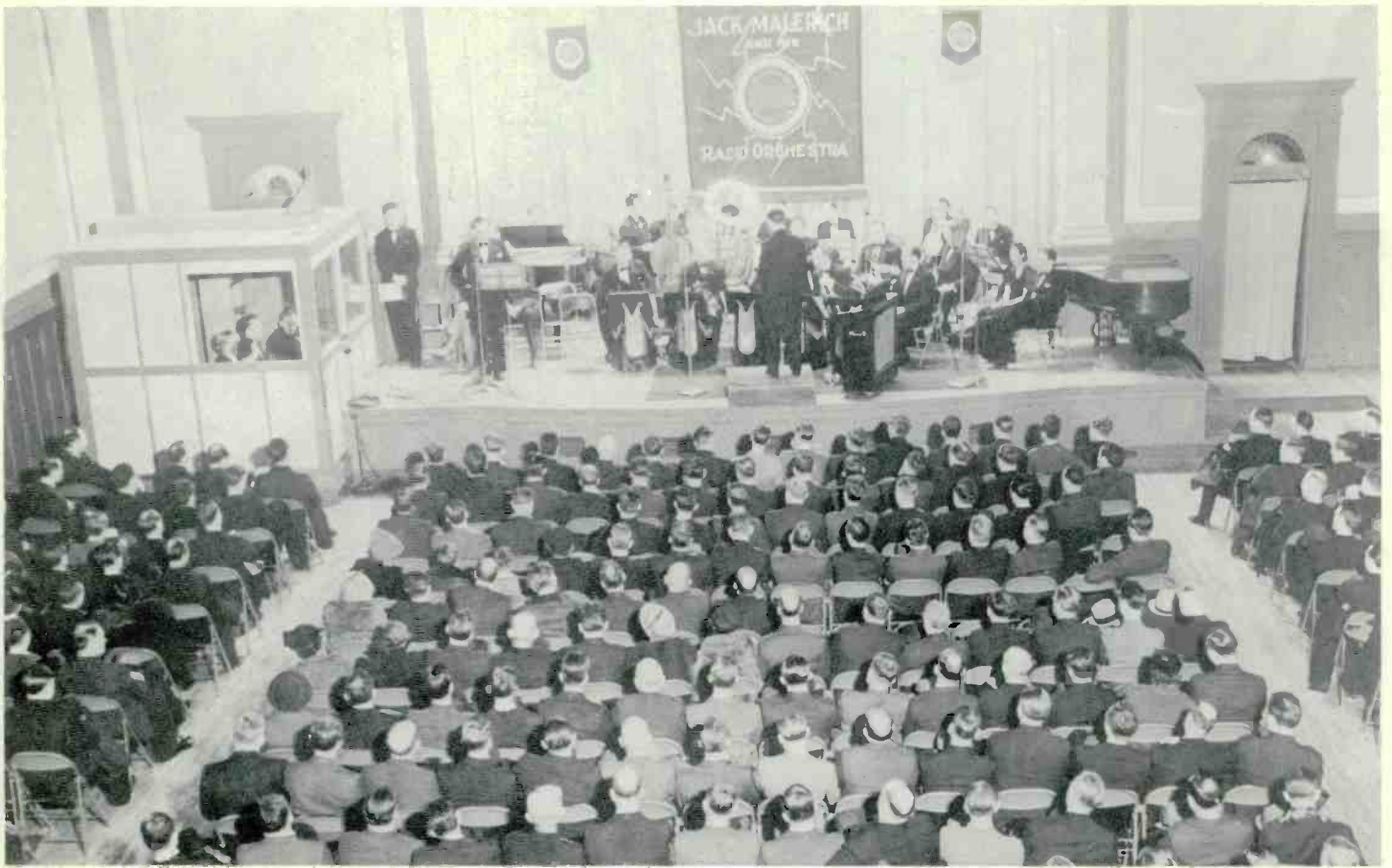
Wendell Hall, "The Red-Headed Music-Maker," appeared on WCCO in the mid-1920's. Later, Hall was heard on the networks where he produced programs for the old Majestic Radio Corporation.



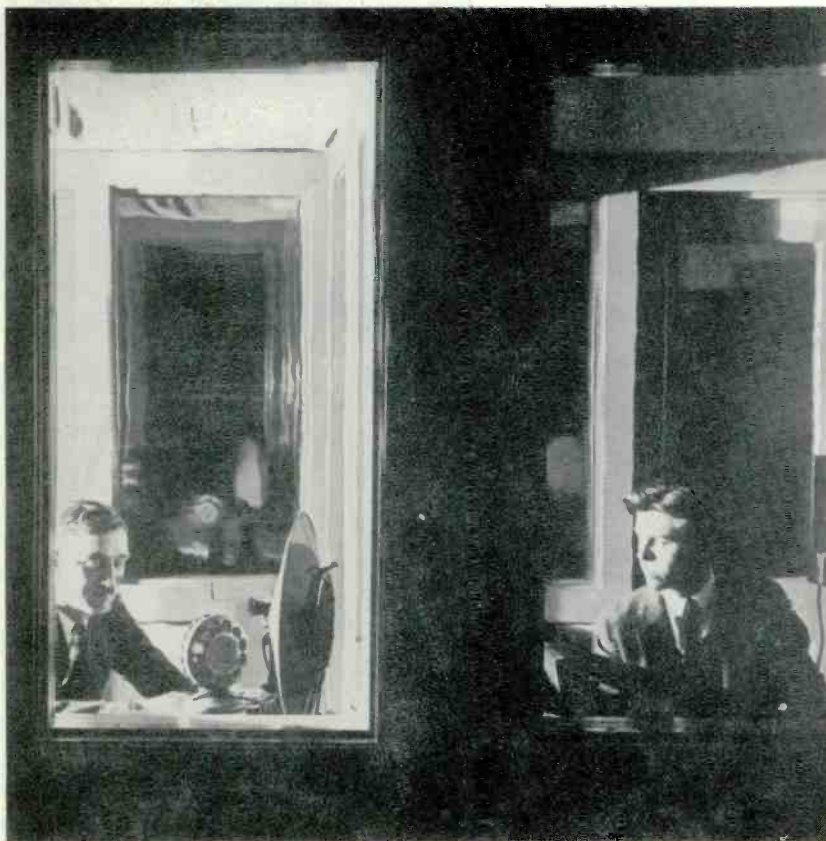
There was top quality music. In this 1925 picture, cracked with age, is the Verbrugghen String Quartette as they broadcast over WCCO. Henri Verbrugghen, Conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, played first violin. Jenny Cullen, second violin; David Nichols, viola, and James Messeas, cello.



Dick Long and his orchestra were heard over WCCO as early as 1924 when the station was still known as WLAG. The orchestra played at the Nankin Cafe in Minneapolis and later at the Curtis Hotel. Long, in this picture taken in the 1930's, is standing in the center with violin tucked under his arm.



"Pure Oil Potpourri" program with Cedric Adams, Clellan Card and Jack Malerich's Orchestra originated from WCCO Studio Auditorium in April 1938. This picture was taken shortly after Minneapolis studio facilities were moved from Hotel Nicollet to present location at 625 Second Ave. So.



Paul Johnson, first announcer hired at WLAG, is broadcasting from WCCO Nicollet Hotel studios in this 1925 picture. Johnson is now an M.D. at Canon City, Colo. Engineer at right is Ivan Anderson.



Hayle Byers, announcer and newscaster, as he appeared on WCCO in 1930's. Byers is now retired and lives in Minneapolis.

“Birdie with the Yellow Bill”

Clellan Card, a Minneapolis dentist's son, was hired as an announcer at WCCO in the early 1930's. He was so clever at dialect, particularly Scandinavian, that soon he was doing specialty work on the station.

Styling himself, “Clellan Card, the working girls' friend,” he entertained audiences for years on his early morning “Almanac.” The program consisted of jokes, musical variety, and coffee and doughnut dunking. Once a year, on the Saturday morning which fell nearest to April Fool's Day, Card opened his program to studio audiences.

Listeners by the hundreds flooded the Nicollet Hotel ballroom to drink coffee and dunk doughnuts with Clellan “no-fair-dunking-above-the-second-knuckle” Card.

The program always concluded the same way, with one of Card's famous “Birdies” done in Swedish dialect: “B-i-i-r-r-die with the yellow bill,
“Hop upon my window sill,
“C-o-o-ck a shining eye and said:
“ ‘What did you do with the light . . . socket?’ ”

WCCO listeners with long memories undoubtedly recognize some of the Card overtones in Roger Erickson's early-morning characterizations on WCCO today.

This observation led Card to remark recently, “Well, the faces may be different but the jokes are the same.”

When all the kidding is done, Clellan Card still rates as the most famed “stand-up” comedian this region ever produced.



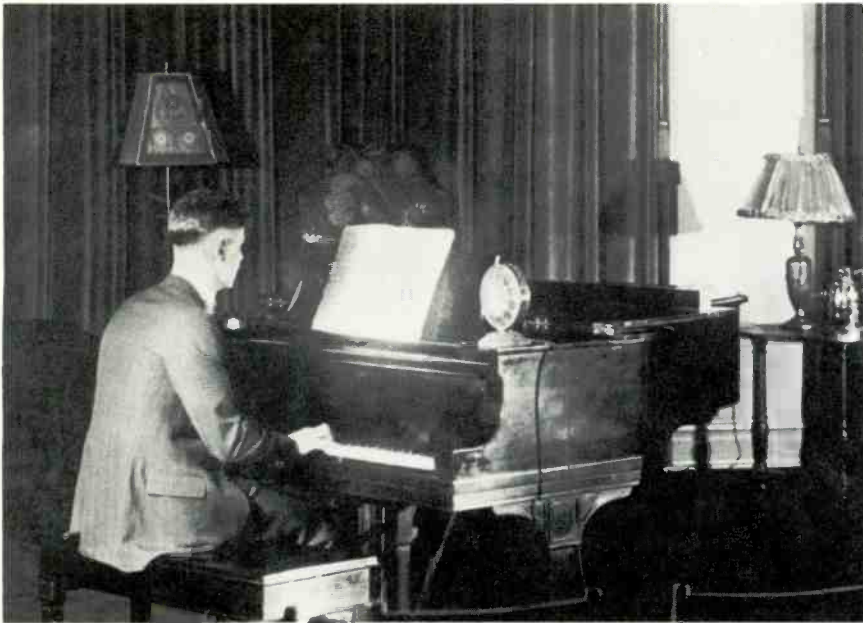
Clellan Card dressed in nightgown and nightcap to promote his “Morning Almanac” program about 1939.



“The Quiz of the Twin Cities” was a popular show on WCCO in the late '30's and early '40's. WCCO personnel working before the studio audience included Bill Souder, production assistant; Ray Tenpenny, announcer; Clellan Card, and Gene Wilkey, producer, hands spread in applause. Wilkey became program manager, assistant manager, then general manager of WCCO.

Dramatized news of the day was one of the features heard on WCCO in the 1930's. In this narration, George Grim used plungers and a box of sand to make the sound of hoofbeats; Max Karl fired a pistol and Clellan Card read the part.





WCCO has always maintained studios in both St. Paul and Minneapolis. This 1924 picture shows a pianist in the studio located in the St. Paul Union Depot. The rumble of trains passing beneath sometimes drowned out the program. The pianist is not identified.



The Rev. Roy L. Smith conducted a noon "Meditations" program on WCCO in 1924 and 1925. Mr. Smith was pastor of Simpson Methodist Church in Minneapolis for many years.



Eleanor Freemantle, accompanist, was caught primping for her appearance on WCCO in this picture. Her tightly curled marcel hairdo was "the latest thing" in the 1920's. So was this microphone.



Mrs. E. M. Stevens was director of musical programs at WCCO's St. Paul studios in 1925.



"Girl Runner" is the only designation under this picture of a fashionably dressed young woman taken from an early WCCO photo album. Her job was to guide visitors around the "new" WCCO studios which opened at Hotel Nicollet, March 4, 1925.

The First Announcer

Paul Johnson, who is now a doctor of medicine at Canon City, Colorado, was the first announcer hired at the old WLAG and continued with the station after it became WCCO on October 2, 1924. For a time, in the early days, he was the only professional announcer. That doesn't mean there were no other voices heard on the air. Everybody on the staff—secretaries, engineers and executives—took turns reading markets and introducing musical numbers. But Paul Johnson was the number one voice.

Johnson had been a part-time entertainer, doing emcee work at Dayton's Tea Room. He studied voice with Mrs. Eleanor Poehler when she taught at MacPhail School. When Mrs. Poehler was hired to handle the programming of the new station, she brought Johnson along to do the voice work.

"I remember very well the day the station opened in the then-new Oak Grove Hotel," Johnson said. "It was on Labor Day, 1922. At first, we only broadcast two or three evenings a week, but by the end of the year we had programs on the air every day.

"Sports were done by Herbert Paul who often was confused with me because my name is Herbert Paul Johnson. Thus I got a lot of credit I didn't deserve. Once, though, I was sent to the newspaper to announce the Dempsey-Firpo fight off the ticker because the broadcast line had failed. The fight was slow in starting and nothing came through on the ticker. I had to think of something. So, I ad-libbed that Firpo was waiting to start because he wanted the Argentine Consul at the ringside to make sure he got a fair deal.



"Fortunately for me, the fight was over quickly and I breathed a sigh of relief. But not for long. As I emerged from the newspaper building a man with a thick Irish brogue asked me, 'Did you hear the fight, now?' From the tone of his voice, I thought best to keep my identity secret so I simply said I had.

"'Faith,' said he, 'And who was the numbskull announcer?'"

"But all was not over. A few days later I was summoned to the office and asked where I got that thing about Firpo. Then I was told that some smart Associated Press reporter had put what I had said on the wire and the State Department in Washington was quite upset. So ended my sports career.

"Paul Oberg (now Dr. Paul Oberg, head of the Music Department at the University of Minnesota) was studio manager during my tenure as announcer. This calm, competent musician was always on hand to see that the rough spots that might have occurred were avoided. He was accompanist and also did announcing. Our voices had a similarity that was to some indistinguishable.

"Because I was on the air so constantly and WLAG had such a wide coverage, I placed seventh in the Radio Digest popularity poll of announcers all over the country. This, I think, was instrumental in my being taken on after the station became WCCO. I was, as I recall, the announcer there until 1928."



“Big Bob” DeHaven

Probably no one in the history of WCCO has had more nicknames than Bob De Haven.

The scales groan under his 260-pound, 6-foot-2-inch frame, and from this physical fact come some of the titles that have been applied to him. Others derive from his good-humored but unabashed acknowledgment that he is a WCCO-Land personality.

He started with WCCO in the early 1940's as “Friendly Fred,” doing a soothing, lie-in-bed-and-listen nighttime program for Grain Belt, known as “Friendly Time.” He became “Our Own Bob” a few years later when he and a troupe of WCCO musicians and singers originated Saturday morning programs in Our Own Hardware stores throughout the entire Northwest.

Since he was never bashful about proclaiming his virtues to all who would listen, his cohorts referred to him, ironically, as “The Star.” De Haven jovially accepted the title and turned it to his advantage by hanging a gilt star on his office door.

His good friend, “co-star” and partner on the handball courts, Howard Viken, applied the nickname that he thought would be the crusher: “What’s His Name.” Big Bob took that in stride with the same amiability.

Howard Viken is still working the great De Haven over. His latest title: “The Dinosaur.”

“Holy Cow” Halsey Hall

There will be only one Halsey Hall. No carbon copy exists anywhere. Halsey broadcast the first Minneapolis Millers baseball game over WCCO in the early 1930's and continued for a time as sports announcer. He broadcast sports over other Twin Cities radio stations for a time but returned to WCCO in 1944.

Newspaper sports writer, columnist, ace storyteller in addition to sports broadcaster, Halsey has left behind him a long trail of “laugh” material that can keep an audience in stitches far into the night.

His famous “handle” was attached to him in his early baseball broadcasting days. An out-of-the-park home run at old Nicollet Field would bring from Halsey the exclamation, “Holy Cow!”

There was the time that the Minnesota Gophers were playing the Michigan Wolverines at Memorial Stadium. “Here they come, now, out on the field . . . the Michigan Wolverines in blue jerseys and maize pants. Now what do you suppose May thinks about that?” This was followed by guffaws from Halsey and pandemonium in the broadcast booth.

From an amazingly accurate memory, Halsey Hall is still recalling facts and anecdotes for WCCO listeners on the Minnesota Twins broadcasts.



On many a Saturday morning the WCCO staff got up before the birds, boarded a bus to broadcast from the "Our Own Hardware Store" in your home town. This is one such occasion. First four persons grouped around bus door are not identified. WCCO staffers are: Irv Wickner (pin-striped suit, hand in coat pocket); tenor Burt Hanson; John Pikkala, advertising agency representative; vocalist Jeanne Arland, Norwegian folk singer John Aarthun, announcer Bob De Haven, and tenor Ernie Garvin.



Always willing to play it for laughs, here is De Haven as an old prospector on a visit to Shakopee.



A popular show in the 1940's was "De Haven's Date." Here is the cast: (standing) music director Wally Olson, Frankie Roberts, Bidy Bastien, Irv Wickner, Ernie Garvin; (seated) Sally Foster, Kenny Spears, Bob De Haven, Burt Hanson.



"The Bernie Bierman Show" was a football season favorite during the years the famed "Gray Eagle" was head coach of the Minnesota Gophers. P. B. Juster, the clothing man, standing at Bierman's right, was the sponsor. Halsey Hall is at Bierman's left. Back row: football star Babe Le Voir, announcer Gordon Eaton and the musicians, Bob Link, Hal Garvin, Ernie Garvin, Toby Prin and Dick Link.



Thousands watched the WCCO mobile unit in the 1940 Minneapolis Aquatennial parade. The announcer was Rod O'Conner who went to the west coast and became the announcer on the Red Skelton program for a number of years. O'Conner died recently in Hollywood.



Can you find the famous actor in this picture? This is the cast of "Front Page Parade," a daily Minneapolis Star newsdrama aired on WCCO in 1939. The young man in the back row, extreme left, is Kevin McCarthy. He was a district circulation manager for the Star and got \$3 a show for doing bit parts. Next to him are Ed Abbott and George Grim. Front row: Eleanor Shaw, Louise Youngren, Sylvia Dahl and Hal Parkes.

Look at that crowd! Bob Hawk brought his CBS network "Take It Or Leave It" show to Minneapolis in 1939 with the program originating from the Lyceum Theater. WCCO announced at the time that tickets would be free but listeners would have to come to the studio to get them. This view of the WCCO Building before recent remodeling shows the crowd backed all the way up Seventh Street. The record states that 30,000 persons requested tickets.



Remember Major Edward Bowes and his "Original Amateur Hour"? A special corps of telephone operators was required in 1935 to take calls from WCCO listeners naming their amateur hour favorites. They worked in the old Tri-State Telephone and Telegraph Co., 5th and Cedar streets, St. Paul.



Ray Tenpenny who, with George Johnson, was co-emcee of the WCCO "Night Owls" program in 1945, is getting the "pitch" from the famed Count Basie.

"The Red River Valley Gang" rides again! "The Singing Cowhands" are Hal Garvin, Ernie Garvin and Dick Link, known as "Gus," "Jim," and "Curly." Irv Wickner played the violin and Sally Foster sang. Emcee Bob De Haven stands next to the Plehal brothers, Tom and Eddie, harmonica merry makers.



“Ramona”

One of the outstanding musical personalities all through the 1930's and '40's was Ramona Gerhard. She played the piano and organ on countless WCCO programs and played with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. Teamed with Bea Bailey, she was half of the “Twenty Flying Fingers,” probably the best piano duo ever to be heard in the Northwest. Her theme song was, of course, “Ramona.”

Al Sheehan recalls that Ramona came to WCCO in about 1934 from Watertown, South Dakota, where she grew up. Her musical ability was so outstanding that her home town Kiwanis Club raised the money to further her musical education.

Though she committed to memory complicated passages of organ and piano music, Ramona had difficulty remembering times for rehearsals and for program broadcasts. Many times she came into the studio breathless . . . just seconds before a program was to start. To anguished Musical Director Wally Olson she would say merely: “I forgot.”

The girls of WCCO—secretaries, singers and on-the-air personalities—held a party for her once. Each girl brought as a present an alarm clock for Ramona.

Now living in Los Angeles with her husband, Robert Sutton, general manager at KNX, Hollywood, and former program manager of WCCO, Ramona probably still has a half dozen of the alarm clocks that were given to her at that party so long ago.



Ramona as she is remembered by WCCO old-timers—at the piano. Here she is rehearsing the George Gershwin “Concerto” which she played at a Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra “Twilight Concert” in 1940. With her are Alyds Nelson and Andrea L. Peterson of the YWCA—one of the groups which sponsored the concert.



Florence Lehmann came to WCCO about the same time as Ramona Gerhard, and was the “Mistress of Ceremonies” on the afternoon “Listen Ladies” program. In this picture, Florence Lehmann is boarding a train with Mary Jane Bather, then a student at Minneapolis Washburn High School. Florence and Mary Jane were guests in 1939 of a Hollywood motion picture studio which was promoting its new movie “Seventeen,” starring Jackie Cooper.



Belle Winston, the “Dayton Reporter” was heard on the “Dayton’s Musical Chimes” program for many years on WCCO. This picture was taken in 1944.



Darragh Aldrich succeeded Florence Lehmann as Women’s Director in 1942 and began her own program, “Calling All Women.” Here she is interviewing Estelle Sloan Davis.



Darragh Aldrich, author, when she became head of Women's Activities for WCCO.

The Difficult Years

Darragh Aldrich had the task of helping women listeners during two of the most dramatic events in Northwest history. One, of course, was World War II when the women and girls were eager for any word at all from their loved ones in the armed forces. She frequently interviewed men in military uniform and workers for the International Red Cross, trying in her way to relieve anxieties.

The other was the extended polio epidemic which stretched from the late 1940's into the early '50's. As thousands were stricken with polio and deaths mounted into the hundreds, Darragh Aldrich again brought information and spoke reassuringly to the women throughout WCCO-Land.



In this World War II photo, Darragh Aldrich is interviewing Henry Soderber who represented the Swedish YMCA working with American prisoners of war.



Darragh Aldrich, with help of a nurse, interviewed polio victim Marian Oliver during Minnesota's dread polio epidemic. She brought facts from clinics, homes and hospitals to overcome rumors and fears that bordered on panic during the height of the scourge.



This farewell coffee party for Darragh was initiated by the girls of WCCO on September 13, 1954, when she announced her retirement. Only male allowed in the room at the "hen party" was Larry Haeg, general manager of WCCO, and then only for a quick greeting.

"How Time Flies"

It was ten years ago, on October 21, 1954, that WCCO observed its Thirtieth Anniversary with a broadcast party that went on for an hour and a half. Some of the old-timers returned to remind WCCO listeners of voices, programs and events of the years gone by . . .

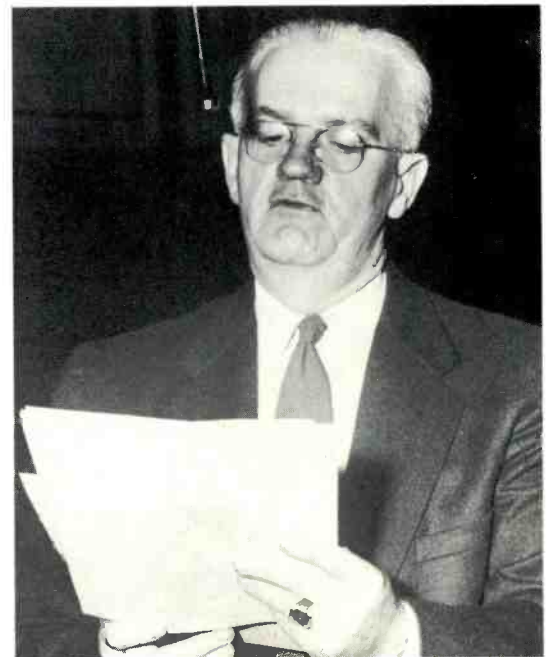


Members of the original Wheaties Quartette appeared on the WCCO Thirtieth Anniversary Show: Phillip C. Schmidt, Ernest Johnson, William Elliott (deceased), Nels Swensen.



Dr. Paul Oberg, director of the Department of Music at the University of Minnesota, played the piano on WCCO Thirtieth Anniversary program. He started at old WLAG at the Oak Grove Hotel in 1922 and was the station's musical director. He also did some announcing.

Selma Erickson returned to sing "Solveig Song" on the Thirtieth Anniversary program. She repeated her part in the five-hour program which had dedicated WCCO's studios in Hotel Nicollet on March 4, 1925.



Jerry Harrington was known as "The Little Irish Tenor" in the early days of WCCO. Jerry could do anything around the station. He was a good singer, a good announcer and a good actor. He was one of the many "Tims" who were heard on the "Teena and Tim" series on WCCO and the CBS Network.



Eddie Gallagher, former WCCO announcer, came back to the Twin Cities to emcee the Thirtieth Anniversary show. Eddie is now at CBS station WTOP in Washington, D. C.

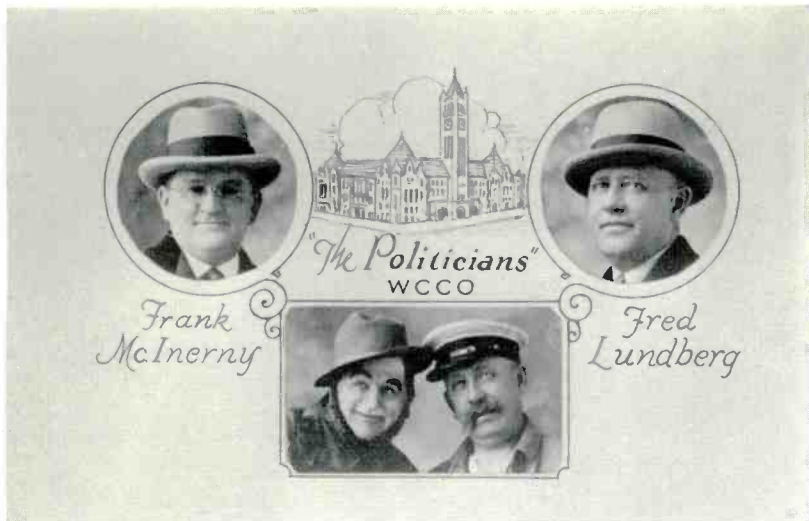
Another popular WCCO announcer in the early 1930's was the late Douglas K. Baldwin, later secretary of the Minnesota Fair Board. In the Thirtieth Anniversary program, he told about the close relationship between WCCO Radio and the Minnesota State Fair over the years.



A birthday requires a birthday cake, of course. At the cake with thirty candles are F. Van Konynenberg, executive vice president, and Larry Haeg, general manager of WCCO.



There was romance, too. In the 1930's, Betty Brewer was a vivacious young singer and Kenny Spears was a handsome young musician. They fell in love and were married. Here, on the Thirtieth Anniversary show are Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Spears working together again as they did in their "courting" days.



An early-day WCCO Radio show that had wide appeal was "The Politicians" with Frank McInerny and Fred Lundberg. They spoke as an Irish cop and a Swedish politician during the early 1930's and thousands of listeners asked for this postcard.

Not unlike the satire of "The Politicians" are some of the skits that Charlie Boone and Roger Erickson do on WCCO today. Erickson, the latest in series of dialect experts, has made famous to WCCO listeners his character "August," and Boone has become noted for his British dialects.



Gordon Eaton was probably one of the best "straight commercial announcers" in the business. Here he is emceeing a program with Eddie Fisher, right, as his guest star.



An announcer during World War II years, Paul Wann also broadcast the 7:15 a.m. news on WCCO. He is shown here in 1944 reading his part in "Northwest News Parade" — a weekly dramatized news feature.



A pre-World War II announcer, Ed Abbott did not return to the station when the war was over. He did come back for a visit, however, and he and Cedric Adams had a great time discussing the old days.



Joan Iden and Tony Grise were a favorite singing combination in the early 1950's. Grise now leads his own orchestra in the Twin Cities.



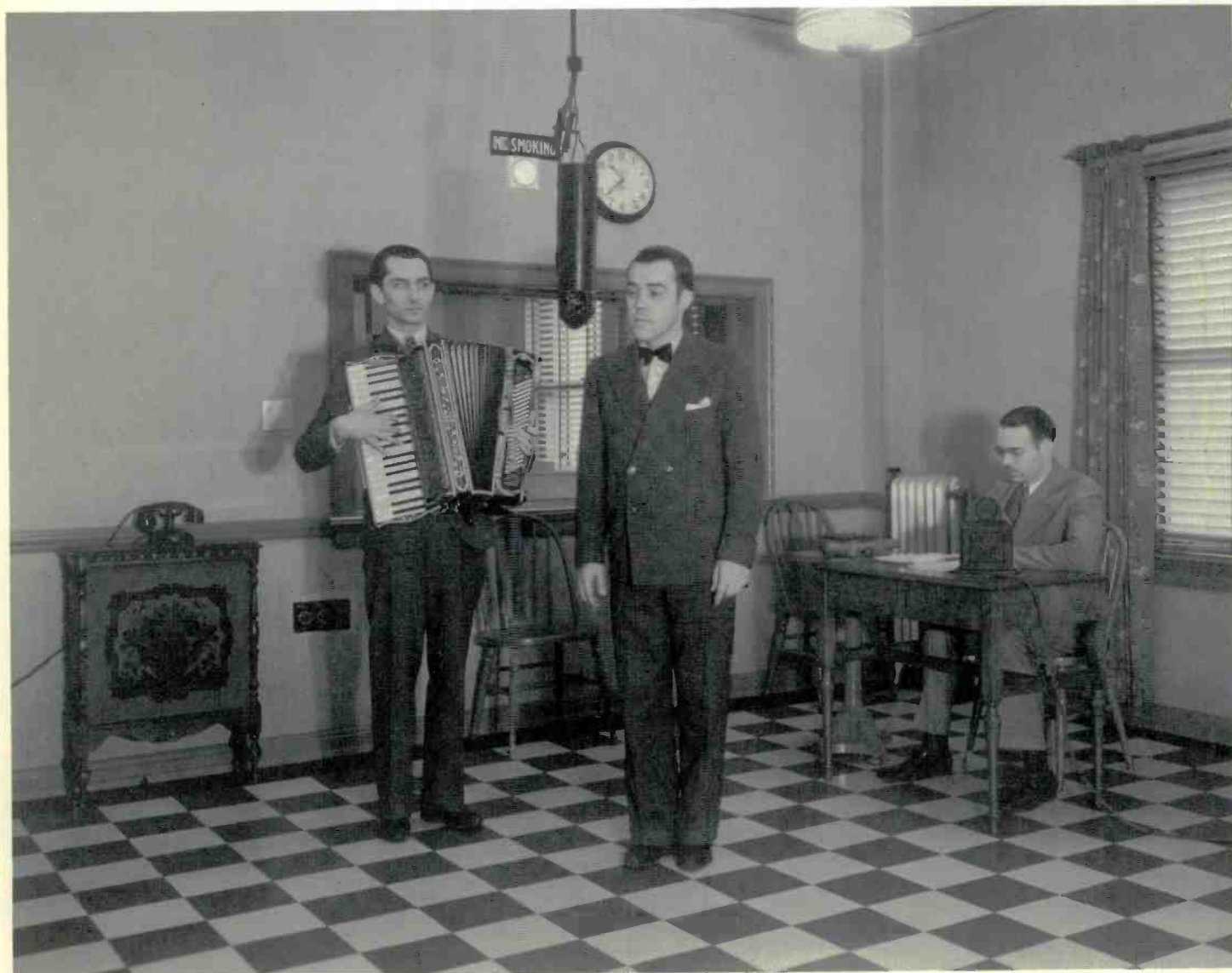
Another voice familiar to WCCO listeners was Frank Butler, shown here with ballad singer Burl Ives. Butler is now a free-lance commercial announcer in Los Angeles.



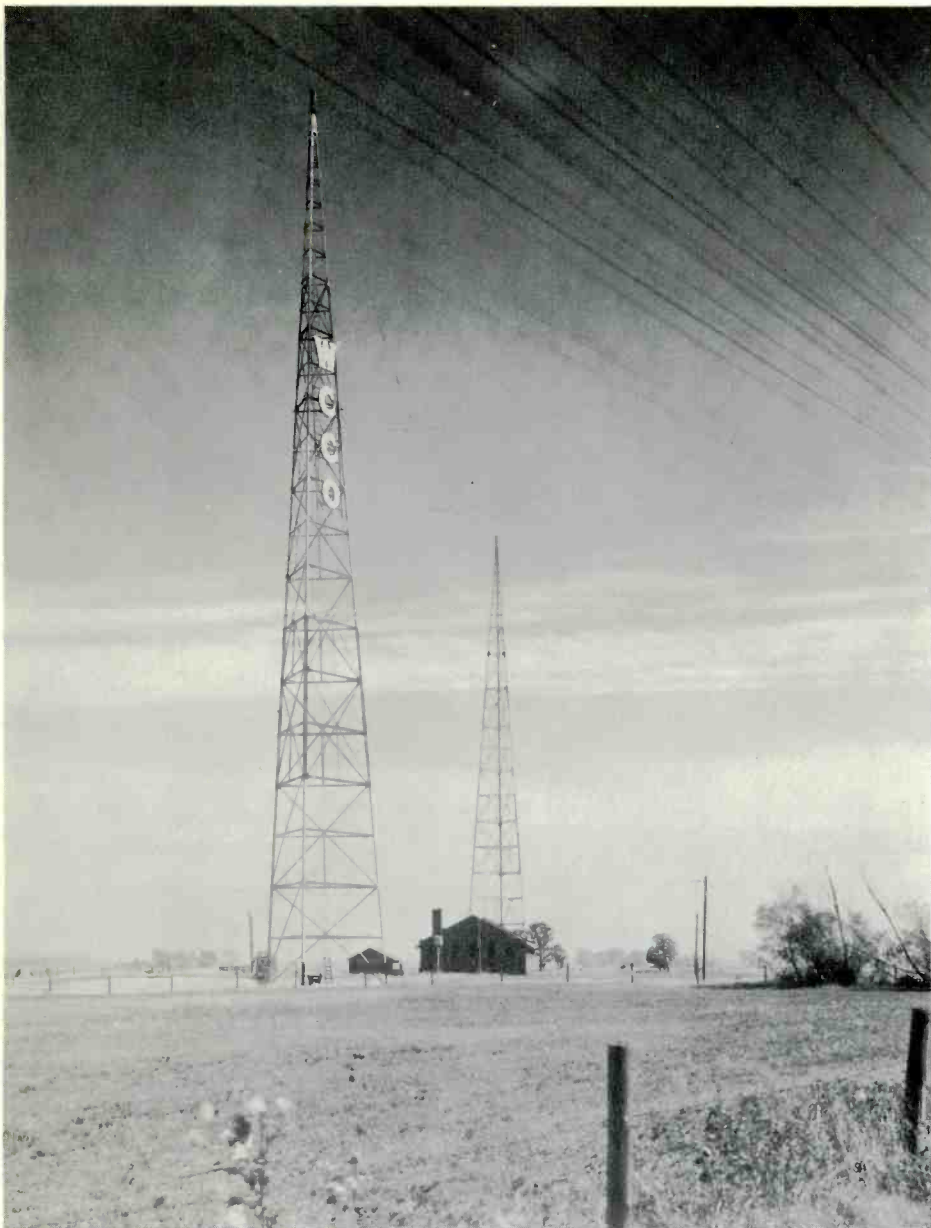
The late and beloved Dr. William A. O'Brien, whose homey talks on health were heard on WCCO in the early '40's.



Going way back to 1930, here are the people who chatted on the morning "Hospitality House at WCCO" program. Ladies seated around table are: Marjorie Pilney, Elizabeth Roberts, Mildred Simons, Grayce Lindgren, Jean Walden and Janet Brown. Standing are Paul Oberg, music director, and Al Chance, announcer.



Here are three WCCO personalities as they performed in the old Nicollet Hotel studio in 1929: Mert Floe, accordionist; Don Tuttle, tenor soloist, and (seated) Ken Titus, announcer.



WCCO transmitter at Anoka, as it looked in 1930 at the start of the Depression era. The station operated at 5,000 watts power and broadcast on 810 kilocycles. In 1932 WCCO's power was boosted to 50,000 watts at 830 kilocycles and it became a Class 1-A clear-channel station, heard far beyond the United States.

Depression and War

A question for historians to decide is whether the Great Depression of the '30's or World War II of the '40's had the greater impact upon the people of the nation and the Northwest. Both were catastrophic. Both left their scars on nearly every family in the land.

The Depression was longer lasting and its accompanying economic and social upheavals caused anger, frustration and embitterment. World War II was different in that it produced heart-wringing anxieties and emotions—concern for members of the family who went to distant places perhaps never to be seen again.

There had been earlier depressions and wars . . . but

this time it was different. This time there was radio to bring instant communication and knowledge into every home. The social reformers of the '30's presented their arguments in their own voices, using their own emphatic inflections, to carry their messages to all of the people. "My friends" was the greeting from President Franklin D. Roosevelt in fireside chats that reached expectant millions at their radios. As for the war, never had one been so thoroughly reported and never had information reached the people so quickly. "This is London" was an electrifying notice as Edward R. Murrow spoke into every home and office and school and shop in the Northwest. WCCO Radio, the big bell-

wether station of the Northwest, was an integral part of every home. During these critical years, Northwest listeners developed the habit of keeping the radio dial tuned to WCCO from dawn until bedtime.

There were other slightly less critical events—less critical only in the sense that they affected persons in a single geographical area rather than the entire nation. These included the mass polio outbreaks of the '40's and early '50's and blizzards, floods and tornadoes that threaten each season even now.

But there were also gay moments—the fun times.

Among them were the Minnesota State Fair, St. Paul Winter Carnival, Minneapolis Aquatennial, Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra and hundreds of local events ranging from “Box Car Days” at Tracy to the Willmar “Kaffee Fest.”

Sports provided welcome relief from the frustrations and anxieties of the somber years; the Minnesota Gophers became national football champions. The Millers and Saints excited baseball fans and hockey, golf and the State High School Basketball Tournaments spotlighted the vigor of youth.



Earl H. Gammons was manager of WCCO Radio during the critical 30's and during the early years of World War II. In 1942, he was named vice president of Washington operations for the Columbia Broadcasting System. Now retired, Gammons still serves as consultant for CBS in Washington.



Drought and depression gave new meaning to intimate, personal radio communication. For the first time, public leaders spoke to millions at the same instant in a single audience. The Great Plains dust bowl had reached by 1940 to this farm near Gary, Minn.

When they marched off to war, WCCO Radio was a major link between the home front and battlegrounds. Radio journalism came into its own with World War II reporting from overseas.





Effects of the depression were being keenly felt in Minnesota in 1930, a factor which led to the election of Hennepin County Attorney Floyd B. Olson as the state's first Farmer-Labor governor. Here is Governor Olson at the 1932 Farmer-Labor convention in the St. Paul Auditorium. He advocated a "cooperative commonwealth" which his opponents said was "state socialism" and made much of Olson's statement that "I'm not a liberal. I'm a radical." Off the platform he numbered many business leaders as his friends.



Governor Theodore Christianson was the first Minnesota governor to use WCCO Radio to reach the people of the state. This picture was taken in WCCO's new Nicollet Hotel studios in about 1925. Governor Christianson served three terms from 1924-1930. In the latter year, he announced he would not run for re-election, thus opening the way for Floyd B. Olson and the Farmer-Labor Party.

“Let ’em jump”

When the stock market crash struck full force in October 1929, most WCCO listeners gave it little concern, particularly those in the towns and on farms. Life appeared to go on as usual. But by early 1930, it became widely apparent that America’s economy was seriously ill.

“I was a boy then, but I used to hear my dad and the other farmers talking at the general store in town,” recalls WCCO’s Maynard Speece. “They’d talk about all those millionaires jumping out of skyscraper windows in New York. They didn’t give a damn. ‘Let ’em jump, we got too many of the blankety-blanks anyway,’ was the prevailing opinion.

“Well, it wasn’t too long before we began to realize what it all meant. The price of butterfat dropped to 16 cents a pound in June and July 1932 and it wasn’t worth hauling the stuff to the creamery. We never went hungry, but we surely didn’t have any money, either.”

Maynard Speece was lucky. He grew up on a northern Minnesota farm where the drouth never struck with the intensity that it did in other parts of the Northwest. During the hot, baking summer days of the ’30’s, the wind whipped up huge clouds of topsoil which darkened the skies for weeks at a time. In big cities, it was as dark as twilight in midday. Farmers planted, despaired as the crops withered, replanted and despaired again. Corn dropped to 13 cents a bushel in 1933. Farmers burned it in their stoves because it was cheaper than coal. Merchants in small towns were ruined—unable to cash in their mounting pile of debts. The inability to pay swept like a plague across the land to the big cities. Factories closed down. Unemployed walked the streets and stood in soup lines.

On the radio, some new voices were being heard across the land. Two of the spokesmen for agriculture are shown here.



J. S. Jones, Executive Sec’y.-Treas., Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation.



Norris H. Carnes, General Manager, Central Livestock Association, South St. Paul.

“The Four Horsemen”

In 1930, the word “cooperative” was not new in Minnesota. In fact, the cooperative idea had come to Minnesota from Denmark to Clark’s Grove in the 1880’s and from there cooperative creameries had spread across the state.

The problem, however, was to figure out a way to make the cooperatives cooperate among themselves. And this was an old problem which was only intensified during the depression. For instance, every small town creamery produced its own butter—much of it bad—and consequently suffered price penalties on the eastern markets.

Into this situation, stepped John Brandt, a young Litchfield farmer. Brandt, with his famous “Committee of Eleven” organized the Minnesota Cooperative Creameries Association. Their first objective was to eliminate the practice most farmers had of bringing sour cream to town to be made into butter and to provide, instead, a sweet cream butter, a product of uniform high quality.

The second objective—and one more difficult to achieve—was to market the butter themselves and eliminate the so-called “centralizers.” Thus was born a cooperative marketing organization bearing the trade name “Land O’ Lakes” and advertising sweet cream, 92-score, high-quality butter. This took some doing.

What John Brandt did for the creameries, William S. Moscrip did for dairymen also in the marketing of milk under the banner of the Twin City Milk Producers Federation.

These two, with Norris Carnes of the Central Livestock Association in South St. Paul and J. S. Jones, head of the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation, constantly preached to and cajoled farmers into the idea they had better pay attention to higher quality products in order to obtain better prices. In that difficult era of the '30's, they were known collectively as “The Four Horsemen of Minnesota Agriculture.” All four frequently made use of radio and of WCCO to get their message across.

From creameries, the philosophy of cooperation spread to the marketing of grain and resulted in the 1920's in the formation of the Farmers Union Grain Terminal Association. From this activity there arose another famous name in Minnesota agriculture in the '30's and '40's—M. W. Thatcher, who headed FUGTA's far-flung marketing activities in Minnesota and both Dakotas.

These were among the voices heard speaking on behalf of the farmer during the critical years of the Great Depression.



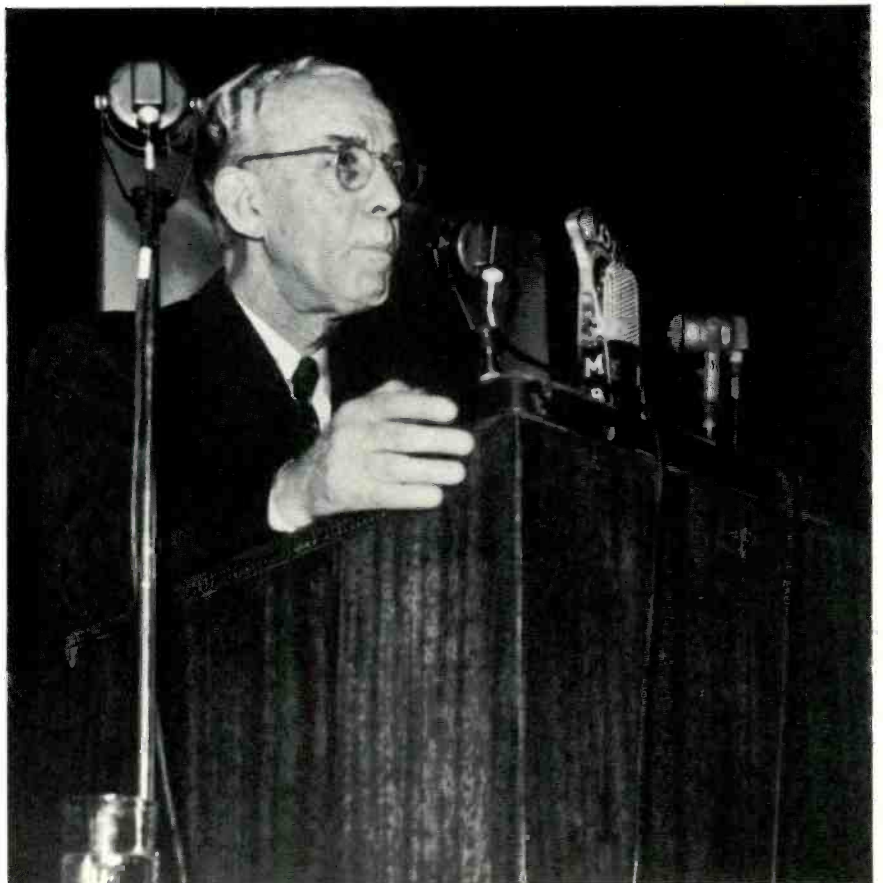
The late John Brandt, president of Land O’ Lakes Creameries, covered nearly every community in Minnesota preaching the doctrine of cooperation. Under his leadership, Minnesota became a leader in the production of quality butter.



An outstanding leader of Minnesota agriculture during the 1930's, William S. Moscrip was the longtime head and one of the founders of the Twin City Milk Producers Federation and a frequent guest on WCCO Radio agricultural programs.



Selling Land O' Lakes sweet cream, high-quality butter was the objective of this program aired on WCCO in the mid-'30's. Performers are (left to right): Toby Prin at the piano, Eddie and Tom Plehal, Don Allen at the bass fiddle, Irv Wickner, and announcers Eddie Gallaher and Clellan Card. Picture was taken in the old Nicollet Hotel studios of WCCO.



Coordinating the activities of a group of disconnected grain cooperative was one of the accomplishments of M. W. Thatcher, now head of the Farmers Union Grain Terminal Association.

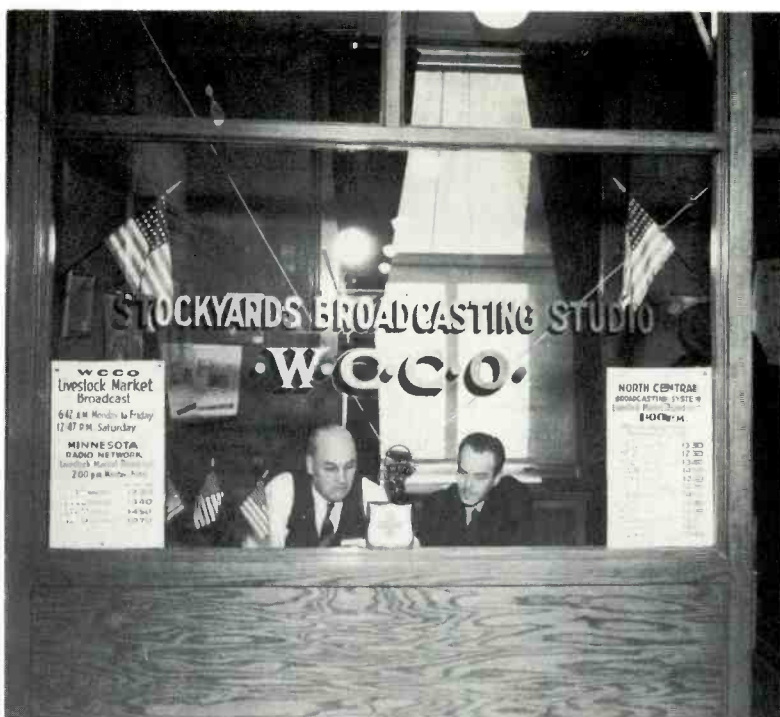
Market Information

So far as the farmer was concerned, WCCO Radio not only brought him entertainment, it also provided market information daily from the old Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce (now the Grain Exchange) and from South St. Paul.

Mildred Simons, a secretary on the WCCO staff, broadcast the grain market prices for years during the 1920's and '30's. She was known by farmers throughout the state as "The Market Lady."

WCCO had a studio at the South St. Paul stockyards and the daily voice offering information on prices and arrivals on hogs, cattle and sheep was Al Smeby.

Instant market information by WCCO gave the farmer, for the first time, equality with buyers and processors. He could determine whether it would be better to sell his grain, corn or livestock right away or hold it for a better price.



Al Smeby is broadcasting from WCCO Broadcasting Studio at the South St. Paul Stockyards in this picture taken sometime in 1930's. Smeby is the man in vest and shirtsleeves; person at his left is not identified. Smeby's daily broadcasts made him one of best-known WCCO on-the-air personalities, especially to Northwest farmers.

In an old photo album, this picture was merely labeled "The Girls of WCCO," and is believed to have been taken about 1925. The young lady standing second from the left is Mildred Simons, known for years as "The Market Lady." Girl in center is Ruth Brinley, longtime WCCO accountant and secretary, now retired.



The Farm Boy from Plymouth

It was in the heart of the depression '30's that a young man named Larry Haeg took over operation of his family's farm in Plymouth Township, Hennepin County.

"We held a family council and I was the one who was picked to run the farm," Larry remembers, "and it was tough going. I ran into nothing but trouble. The first year my cattle started dying on me and I had to get a loan to replace them. Then I got hailed out a couple of times. It just seemed as though I couldn't do anything right.

"So, finally, I went to the banker at Wayzata who held the mortgage and told him to go ahead and take the farm—let's get it over with."

"He asked, 'Does that mean you're quitting—that you're giving up?' I said it sure did. Then he replied, 'Oh, no you're not.'

"He asked me how much money I needed to keep going and I told him. Then a friend of mine and I took part of the money and we rented some land and put it into grain. We had terrific crops all the way around that year and we both made money. From then on, everything was all right."

Larry had worked for Henry Wallace's Agricultural Adjustment Administration during the depression and had dabbled around in local politics a bit. He was elected in 1940 to the Minnesota legislature as representative from Hennepin County, north half, and served 16 years.

In 1942, Larry Haeg was hired to be the first Farm Service Director at WCCO. Previously, announcers or other staff members of the station had done agricultural reporting and interviews along with their other chores. But with "the farm problem" still appearing as though it would remain unsolved for years, WCCO management decided that farm broadcasting needed full-time attention. And this it got from Larry Haeg who established the WCCO Farm Service Department.

He became the first president of the National Radio Farm Directors Association, continued to serve in the legislature and behind the microphone at WCCO. His voice became as familiar to Northwest farmers as the voice of Cedric Adams.

The youthful Larry Haeg interviewing Fred S. Wallace, under-secretary of Agriculture, shortly after he took over as WCCO Farm Director in 1942.



Another World War II guest on WCCO was Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace being interviewed here by Haeg who had arranged the CBS network broadcast by the Secretary to American farmers. Haeg had worked in the Secretary's information service when the Triple A was established.



The time was World War II and Larry Haeg is doing a remote broadcast atop the WCCO mobile unit from the South St. Paul Stockyards. Those were the days of meat rationing and shortages of livestock which is apparent from the nearly empty pens.



"Alphabet Soup"

The detractors of New Deal policies during the 1930's soon came up with a title for the proliferation of governmental agencies which functioned during those difficult years. There were the NRA and the NIRA, WPA, AAA, PWA, CCC—to name but a few. The word for them was "Alphabet Soup."

A flock of other terms came into common usage during the period and they included "parity," "ever-normal granary," and "supports."

The head of the Minnesota Triple-A during the Depression years was Charles Stickney of Clear Lake. Years afterward, a WCCO reporter working on a news story had occasion to quiz Stickney about some of the old policies and he asked, "Was it really true that you plowed under little pigs as some say you did?"

"Of course it was true," snorted Stickney. "What do you think you raise hogs for anyway? To put 'em on old-age pension?"

Slowly, like a tractor working in gumbo, the nation pulled itself out of the long, exhausting Depression. But it was a full ten years and by that time World War II was looming around the corner.



Secretary Clinton Anderson chose St. Paul for a major farm policy address in 1946. Here he is at the St. Paul Auditorium, speaking over WCCO and the CBS Network.



The annual "Turkey Day" celebration at Worthington on October 3, 1946, gave Larry Haeg an opportunity to interview then-Secretary of Agriculture Clinton Anderson.

Maynard and Jim

Maynard Speece as Farm Service Director and Jim Hill as Associate are the heirs to the WCCO Farm Department which was established by Larry Haeg.

Dapper, addicted to bow ties, Speece hardly looks like the rural part until one studies his solid physique and observes the shoulders of a lumberjack (which he was). A graduate of the University of Minnesota, Speece served for a time as a county agent and then was employed in Washington by the U. S. Department of Agriculture during the '40's. He headed the farm department in 1952 when Haeg became general manager.

Jim Hill was born James Hilgendorf on a southern Minnesota farm where he grew up. Early in his career, he injured his back in a farm accident and was told by doctors that he could never farm again. Seeking another endeavor, Hilgendorf decided that he liked radio and, after working for several stations in the Northwest,

joined WCCO. He adopted the on-the-air name "Hill," he says, because "Hilgendorf is quite a mouthful to say on radio."

As a team, the two are an unbeatable combination. Both are folksy and chatty and they know their farming. They are on the go constantly to farms, county fairs, farm meetings, conventions, church suppers, high school classes . . . you name it. They are well known in the big cities, small towns and farms all over WCCO-Land.

Since both are familiar with "corn" they dish it out in discreet amounts. Speece dispenses his on his Sunday morning "Pot Luck" program where he reads poetry and jokes from listeners. Hill satisfies his "corny" urges by playing straight man to Roger Erickson's "August" every morning.



Maynard Speece, ex-lumberjack and county agent whose chuckle is famous, is director of the WCCO Radio Farm Service Department.

Jim Hill, farm boy turned broadcaster and business reporter, visits farms to bring latest news. He's Associate Farm Service Director.





In one of the grimmest moments of history heard on WCCO, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appeared before Congress on December 8, 1941, and asked for a declaration of war against the Axis Powers. With him were Vice President Henry Wallace (left) and Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn as nearly every radio in the region was tuned to hear WCCO report history as it happened.



In the '30's, one of WCCO Manager Earl Gammons' good friends was Basil O. (Stuffy) Walters, executive editor of the Minneapolis Star. Stuffy frequently came to WCCO and interviewed foreign correspondents when they came to the Twin Cities. On February 25, 1941, "Stuffy" interviewed foreign correspondent Leland Stowe (left).

"Dastardly, unprovoked attack"

World War II struck the United States with a suddenness that left Americans gasping in disbelief. You may remember that quiet Sunday afternoon on December 7, 1941, when the CBS Network announcer cut into the New York Philharmonic concert with: "The Japanese have just attacked Pearl Harbor."

The next day, a grim Franklin Delano Roosevelt addressed an equally grim Congress. The President declared Japan guilty of a "dastardly, unprovoked attack." He asked for and got an immediate declaration of war against the Axis powers.

In retrospect, the nation and the Northwest should not have been surprised for there had been plenty of warnings. Foreign correspondents passed through the Twin Cities from time to time, were interviewed on WCCO and had spelled out the danger.

But there were also the isolationists who had as their leader a native-born Minnesotan, Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh. They aired their views on WCCO frequently and the net effect was to overcome the warnings from others. Students at the University of Minnesota had held a rally where their battle cry was, "The Yanks Are Not Coming—Let God Save the King!"

The fact was, however, war was now here. There was nothing to do but fight. Thousands of young men volunteered or were drafted. Railroad stations and airport terminals were jammed with men in uniform. Travel, for the civilian, became next to impossible. Meat, sugar, gasoline, butter all but disappeared from the market and had to be rationed.

America's time of trial had come.



Americans at home helped wherever they could and so did WCCO. This is one of a series of War Bond rallies held on WCCO which produced thousands of dollars for the war effort. Listeners were urged to call in with their pledges. Among those taking the phone calls is Rollie Johnson (standing with telephone), former WCCO Radio sportscaster.



Men in uniform were frequent guests on Cedric Adams' news programs on WCCO. Seated with Cedric is Major General William G. Livesay. Standing behind Cedric is Sig Mickelson, wartime news director of WCCO, who later became vice president in charge of CBS News in New York.



Jeanette Campbell, home economist for Minneapolis Gas Company, was featured regularly on Darragh Aldrich programs during the war. She gave women listeners helpful tips on sugarless cooking and recipes to stretch meager meat supplies. She is now the wife of Minneapolis advertising agency executive George O. Ludcke, Jr.



Wartime news writer and Associate News Director of WCCO was Richard E. Stockwell, at typewriter. Stockwell won a Nieman Scholarship at the end of the war and is being congratulated by Manager A. E. Joscelyn. Note the detailed maps on the News Bureau wall on which news writers followed the action on both European and Pacific fronts.



Tearing copy from teletype machine, Mitchell V. Charnley, professor of Journalism at the University of Minnesota, worked as WCCO news writer in the summer of 1943. A skilled magazine and newspaper journalist, Charnley was studying radio journalistic techniques.

From this Room...

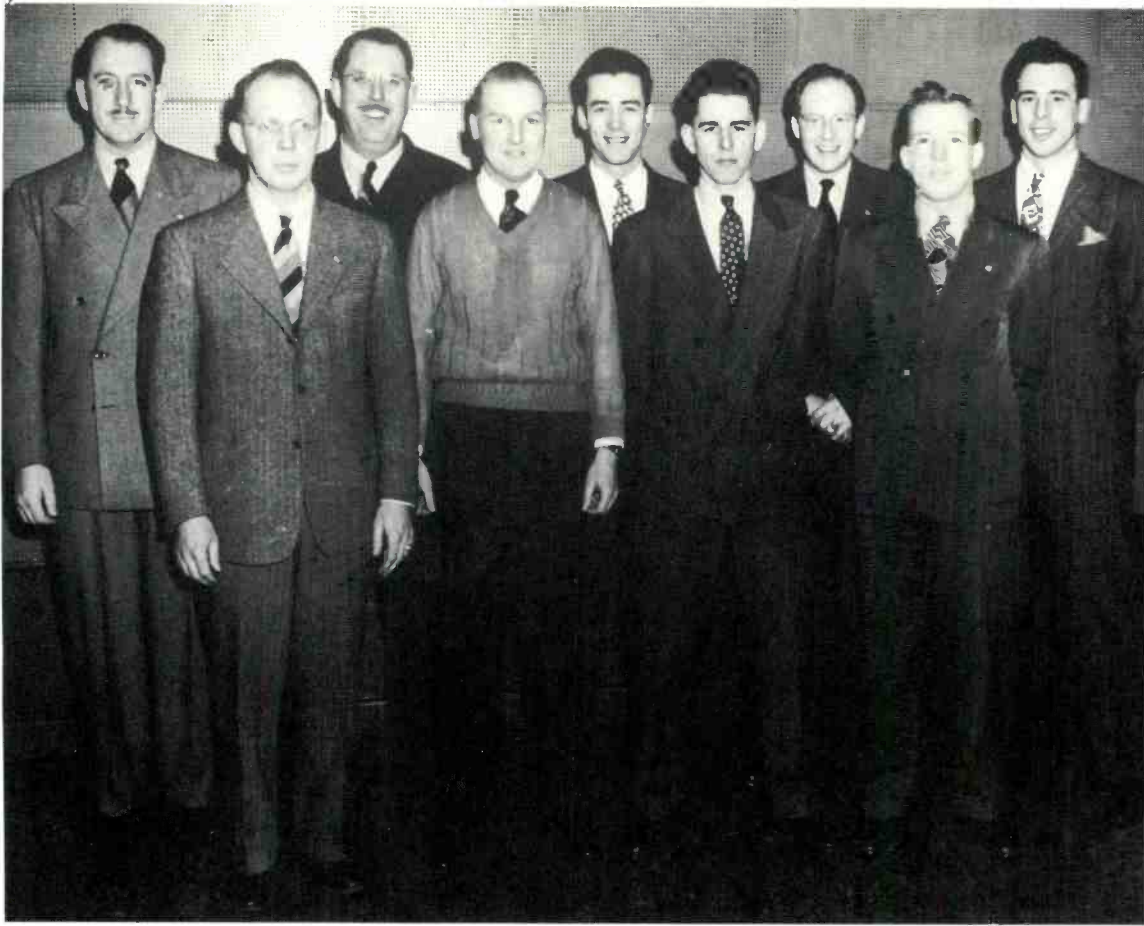
came the story of World War II which you heard every day on WCCO. It was here that a night-shift WCCO news writer got the first tip from the Associated Press, United Press and International News Service wires that something big was happening on the coast of France. They flashed word that the Normandy invasion had begun.

Here were written the stories on Bastogne, the breakthrough across the Rhine, General Patton's race across Germany and, finally, Hitler's downfall and Germany's surrender. The Pacific war was reported to you also from this room: New Guinea, Guadalcanal, Leyte, MacArthur's return to the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and the big A-bomb blasts that knocked Japan out of the war.

WCCO had its own staff of news analysts commenting daily on the progress of the war: Professor Lennox A. Mills, Professor Harold C. Deutsch and Dr. E. W. Ziebarth, all of the University of Minnesota. Dick Stockwell and John Raleigh also prepared news analyses with the Northwest viewpoint in mind.

From this room came the heartbreaking news to Northwest families, the long lists of dead, wounded and missing. And here, on April 12, 1945—a bright spring afternoon—came the news of President Franklin Roosevelt's death at Warm Springs, Georgia.

This room has been replaced by a larger, more modern news bureau at WCCO, one that brings the news even more swiftly and efficiently. But a lot of history and a lot of your daily information came from the old one.



Members of the WCCO family served in the war also. In 1946, when all had returned home, they got together for this picture: (Front row, left to right) Lyman Swenson, Ernie Jacobson, Bob Woodbury, George Culbertson; (back row) Bob Sutton, George Collier, Chuck Kunze, Frank Butler and Jack Nadeau.



Toward the end of the war, the newly commissioned U. S. Navy Cruiser St. Paul was to take a shakedown cruise to South America and personnel from the news media were invited to join, along with dignitaries from the city of St. Paul. Cedric Adams and A. E. Joscelyn, spic and span in war correspondent uniform, are saying their "farewells" before departing on the cruise.

“Let’s try it!”

Back when WLAG first went on the air in 1921 and in the years following 1924 when the station became WCCO, there was no one who actually knew how to “program” a radio station. No one knew for certain what the audience wanted to hear. Happily, the small audience was uncritical and so delighted with the new medium of communication it didn’t much care.

The prevailing spirit among radio station personnel in the '20's and early '30's was: “Let’s try it and see if it works. If it works, we’ll do more of it. If it doesn’t, we won’t do it again.”

It was natural, therefore, that the radio airwaves in the early days were filled with odd assortments of program material which would not be considered for broadcast nor listened to today. Every noted visitor who came to town was requested to appear on the radio. The early WCCO manager, Henry Bellows, a man of good taste and high principles, drew the line at dance marathons and flagpole sittings. Nearly everything else, however, was considered possible material for radio broadcast.

There was the occasion in early 1923 when the great General John J. Pershing came to town. WLAG was located in the Oak Grove Hotel then. Anxious to do things up right for the General, a zealous employee hired a gaggle of trumpeters to herald the General’s arrival in the studio. The sound was so deafening that the General became terribly upset. He almost refused to go on the air for the scheduled interview.

Always some radio listener was asking the management for a chance to try his “bright idea” on the air. With a coil of wire, a couple of vacuum tubes and several dollars some marvelous results could be obtained. Such persons usually volunteered their services for the honor and glory of having their names used on the air. The amazing thing is that some of the low-cost, “bright ideas” worked—a fact that makes management look wistfully back into time, considering the enormous costs now of public events coverage.

There was the time also when the Mayor of St. Paul was delivering his congratulatory remarks to the owner of a prize Poland China hog at the South St. Paul Stockyards. The porker, all “ham,” began to oink and squeal, drowning out the Mayor. Back at the studio, the announcer went into the routine: “We are very sorry, but due to circumstances beyond our control . . .” and took the program off the air.

Funny things still happen in radio. But nothing is as wild and woolly as it used to be in the old days.



General John J. Pershing appeared on WLAG in 1923, though eight trumpeters hired for the occasion made the General nervous and angry.



In 1923, Paavo Nurmi, “The Flying Finn,” broke the world’s distance record for the mile run at 4:10.4. Two years later, Nurmi came to the Twin Cities and appeared on WCCO at the Nicollet Hotel Studios.



Wendell Hall, "The Red-Headed Music-Maker," with Paavo Nurmi. What Nurmi had to say to the WCCO audience of that day is not recorded.



An actor named Glenn Hunter came to town and was promptly brought before the WCCO microphone. Does anybody remember Glenn Hunter?



The railroads inaugurated "dawn to dusk" service between the Twin Cities and Winnipeg in 1925. Colonel Ralph H. Webb, mayor of Winnipeg, told of his journey on WCCO.



On January 24, 1925, a total eclipse of the sun was broadcast from a World War I airplane. Point of totality stretched from Duluth to Long Island. Since the day was overcast, it was decided to take to the air. Here are the four men responsible: Lt. G. M. Palmer, Sergeant Foote, Hugh McCartney, who was WCCO chief engineer, and Howard Kelley.

By means of this gadgetry in the cockpit of the plane, the eclipse was broadcast to WCCO radio listeners.



Using a microphone specially designed to reduce noise from the airplane engine, Howard Kelley broadcast the story of the eclipse from this cockpit. The effort was purported to be "highly successful."

“Lucky Lindy”

Paralleling the growth of radio is the rise to maturity of the airplane. In the 1920's, the same scoffers who jeered radio gave the same treatment to the airplane, using the time-honored argument, “If God had intended man to fly, He'd have given him wings.”

The entire countryside was electrified, therefore, when they heard the news on WCCO Radio that May 21st, 1927. Charles A. Lindbergh, a son of Minnesota and Army Air Corps pilot and barnstormer, had flown nonstop alone from New York to Paris, 3,605 miles in 33 hours and 39 minutes. While Lindbergh was not the first man to fly across the Atlantic (Alcock and Brown had done it eight years earlier), he had flown it alone in a light, single-engine monoplane “The Spirit of St. Louis.”

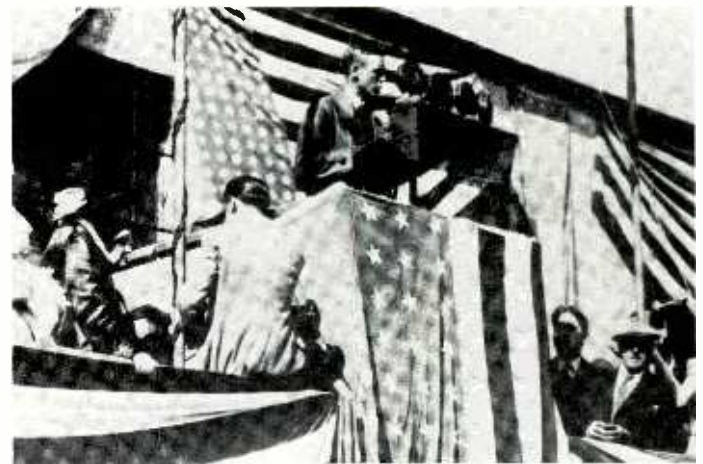
Lindbergh, born and reared at Little Falls, Minn., was a sensation overnight. He returned to New York City for a triumphal, ticker-tape parade along Broadway. During the summer of 1927, Lindbergh toured city after city throughout America where he was showered with attention, adulation and honor.

He landed at Wold Chamberlain Field to an elaborate welcome. He was feted by dignitaries of both cities and then traveled on to Little Falls, his home town, for still more celebrations.

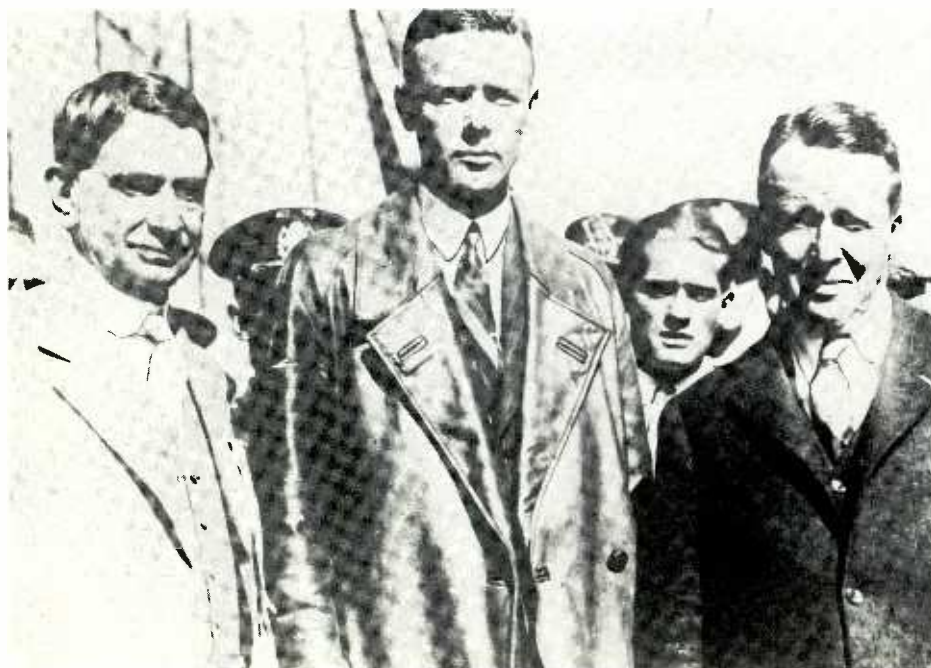
It was six years later that personal tragedy struck with the kidnapping of Lindbergh's first-born son. But that was far in the future. In 1927, he was known as “Lucky Lindy.”



Captain Charles A. Lindbergh rides in an open car up Broadway during the ticker-tape welcome given him by New York City on his return from France.



Later in the summer of 1927, Lindbergh flew into the Twin Cities for another in a long series of “welcomes.” He spoke over WCCO from this bunting-draped platform at Wold Chamberlain Field.



Both St. Paul and Minneapolis arranged parades and banquets in Lindbergh's honor. Standing with “Lucky Lindy” in this 1927 photo are Mayor Larry Hodgson of St. Paul at Lindbergh's right and Mayor George Leach of Minneapolis at his left.

WLAG had just been re-named WCCO when this picture was taken of a 1924 WCCO Radio broadcast of a University of Minnesota football game from Memorial Stadium. Seated before the microphone is Herb Paul, later business editor of the Minneapolis Star, who died in July, 1964. Paul was the WCCO sportscaster on the famous day that Memorial Stadium was dedicated, November 15, 1924. On that day the underdog Minnesota Gophers routed the Illini 20 to 7, stopping great "Red" Grange.



Over the years, WCCO has covered many meetings of local government throughout the Northwest. WCCO page is holding microphone for Alderman Romeo J. Riley in Minneapolis City Council chamber. Alderman seated next to Riley and leaning back in his chair is Leonard Ramberg, later Minneapolis Postmaster and school director, now a vice-president of Northwestern National Bank. Other alderman is H. P. "Red" Christenson, still on the council. Picture is from mid-1940's.

It started with a light drizzle, turned into sleet, and then into a full-scale, howling blizzard—the Armistice Day storm, November 11, 1940. This picture was taken in Minneapolis looking west on Excelsior Boulevard with the Minikahda Club overpass in the background. WCCO had the grim task of reporting that nearly 100 duck hunters and citizens caught outdoors in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin and Michigan were caught—frozen to death—in the storm. That, of course, was before hunters could be warned over transistor radios.



"The Good Neighbor" and Polio

"Polio!" The word, short for poliomyelitis, left a chill in every household in the Northwest during the 1940's and early '50's.

During the steamy, hot months of July and August when polio seemed to strike most frequently, public bathing beaches were closed. Not a swimmer was to be seen. Motion picture theaters played to near-empty houses. Public gatherings and civic celebrations were cancelled during those critical months.

WCCO newscasts every day carried the latest polio figures issued by the Departments of Health in five states. Those official records seem scarcely believable today, but they were all too real then:

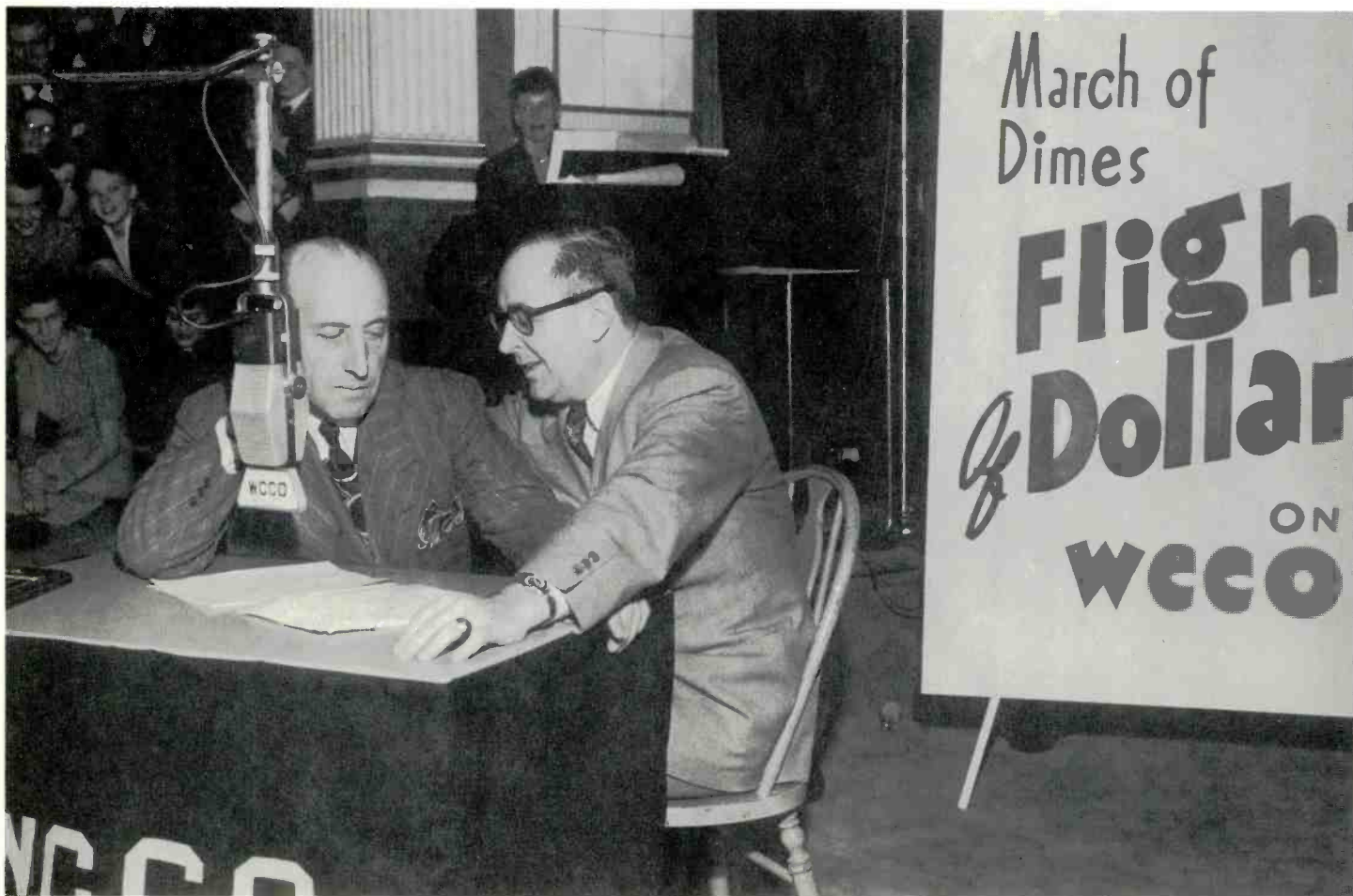
- 1946 — 2881 polio cases, 226 deaths.
- 1948 — 1387 polio cases, 110 deaths.
- 1949 — 1715 polio cases, 110 deaths.
- 1952 — 3926 polio cases, 206 deaths.
- 1953 — 2137 polio cases, 83 deaths.

These grim figures are for Minnesota alone.

Into this situation, stepped WCCO Radio, filling once again the role of "Good Neighbor to The Northwest." In cooperation with the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, contests were conducted during three successive years, with prizes for the top winners. WCCO listeners were urged to: suggest "A Descriptive Phrase for the State of Minnesota," "Name the Polio Baby," and "Name the Highway" extending from St. Paul to Duluth . . . all to raise cash to fight polio.

In these three contests, conducted in 1949-1951, WCCO Radio and its family of "Good Neighbor" listeners raised \$483,000 which was used to meet the enormous cost of treating polio sufferers. Part of the money also helped to speed research and resulted finally in the Salk, Sabin and Cox vaccines which have made polio little more than a dread memory.

Two other "Polio Party Line" marathon broadcasts for the March of Dimes were held in 1952 and 1953. Altogether, WCCO Radio listeners gave nearly \$600,000 to aid in the fight against polio during those years.



Cecil Karcher (left) of Ortonville was interviewed by Cedric Adams after he won the 1949 "Flight of Dollars" polio contest on WCCO Radio. Karcher's prize-winning "Descriptive Title for the State of Minnesota" was "Minnesota — Theater of Seasons." He won a new car and \$5,000 cash.

Cedric Adams and WCCO received the congratulations of Basil O'Conner, National Chairman of the March of Dimes, for the part the station played in raising \$600,000 to combat polio.



Hubert H. Humphrey, now U.S. Senior Senator from Minnesota, was Mayor of Minneapolis during the difficult polio epidemic years. Mayor Humphrey is shown with Sig Mickelson, then WCCO Director of News and Public Affairs, and Dr. E. W. Ziebarth, educational consultant for CBS and WCCO.

“The Best State Fair in Our State”

Those lines from the title song of the movie “State Fair” were intended to have an ironic twist—a subtle touch of humor supplied by the lyricist. Hollywood never made a movie about the Minnesota State Fair, but it should have. The Minnesota State Fair is—by all yardsticks applied to such events—one of the largest and most successful state fairs in the entire nation.

What Hollywood failed to do for the Minnesota State Fair, WCCO did. The station set up its first booth in the old Electrical Building in 1925, moved to the old Agriculture Building in 1926, joined the “Auto Show” in the Grandstand for several years, moved back to the old Agriculture Building and remained there until the structure burned on November 10, 1944. It was replaced by the new Agriculture-Horticulture Building where thousands came every day to see their WCCO friends until 1963 when the station obtained its own building on the grounds.

In the early days, the accent was on “corn” and everybody loved it. “Teena and Tim,” the Swedish dialect pair, were great favorites in the late 20’s and early 30’s. There was a comic horse race show with phony names for the horses and a “Milk Maids Knee” contest. Since the short-skirted “flapper” fads of the 20’s never penetrated very deeply into rural America, the contest was a good-humored effort to entice comely lasses into exhibiting expanses of leg from ankle to thigh. Scores of milk maids entered the fun.

WCCO Radio’s “Come to the Fair” appeals since 1925 have had a great deal to do with building the Minnesota State Fair into the large, ten-day, million-plus attendance institution that it is today.

The audience was seated in the wide aisles of the old Agriculture Building back in 1943, waiting for a WCCO Radio show to begin on the small stage in center of exhibit. Note overhead broadcast lines and, at right, turn-table where musical selections were played.



This was the way the WCCO State Fair headquarters looked in 1941. The announcer talking to the crowd is Al Harding who later became sales manager of WCCO. Pictures on the wall included Cedric Adams, Rollie Johnson, Eddie Gallaher, Max Karl, Bob Campbell, Kay LaVelle, Flo Seidel, Florence Murphy, Tom and Ed Plehal and others.



The 1942 WCCO Radio headquarters at the Minnesota State Fair were in the old Agriculture Building which burned to the ground on November 10, 1944. Then, as now, throngs of visitors gathered around the exhibit to meet WCCO personalities. Two white-hatted officers were making an appeal for Navy recruiting.



Cedric at the Fair

It always seemed there were two kinds of weather at the Fair: steamy hot or drizzly. Never was the weather "in between." Rain or shine, the man with the glasses and the infectious laugh was there in the Agriculture-Horticulture Building during the 1940's and 50's. Cedric Adams did his news for a time—as many WCCO listeners will remember—on the rotunda bandstand of the vast building. Sometimes, he broadcast from Lee Auditorium and the crowd filled the place, spilling out into the rotunda beyond. Probably most of you were there and saw and heard for yourself.

Cedric's routine for "warming up" his audience never varied from year to year.

"This is for you ladies, now," he'd say. "It's a test of your character. All right, all you ladies, clasp your hands—like this. That's right. Don't look down, though,

until I tell you. Everybody has their hands clasped? All right, now look down. Girls, if your left thumb is on top, that means your old man is hen-pecked. (*Up-roarious laughter*). You don't have to tell your old man which thumb was on top—he knows darn well!" (*More laughter.*)

Another "teaser" Cedric used for years was aimed at reserved but unsuspecting males in the audience.

"All you ladies who are here with your husbands, raise your right hand. Oh, that's fine. Now, all you men who are here with your wives, raise your hands. That's good. But I see some of you didn't raise your hands. Some of you guys must be here with strange dames." (*More laughter.*)

Hearing Cedric give his "Noontime News"—that was a regular part of Fair-going for 15 years.



A typical, warm, State Fair day in the 1950's with Cedric Adams reading his "Noontime News" in Lee Auditorium of the Agriculture-Horticulture Building. Incidentally, Cedric always thought that was a mouthful to say, so he shortened it himself to "Ag-Hort" Building.



Your WCCO favorites took turns hosting at the WCCO State Fair headquarters. Rolf Hertzgaard, WCCO announcer during the 1940's, and Halsey Hall were the "hosts" on this day.



Governor Luther W. Youngdahl was Minnesota's chief executive when this 1940's era picture was taken. Talking about the Fair are (left to right): George Grim, WCCO newscaster; the late Harry A. Bullis, then President of General Mills, Inc.; Gene Wilkey, WCCO manager; Gov. Youngdahl, and Donald C. Dayton, President of The Dayton Co.



Crowds continue to gather at WCCO Radio headquarters at the Minnesota State Fair, now in this building on Minnesota Street down the hill from "Ag-Hort." More than 250,000 visitors stopped to say "hello" in 1963. During WCCO's 1964 Fortieth Anniversary year, this building houses the "Museum of Old Time Radio Sets" and new "Studio Seven" from which some 10 hours of State Fair radio broadcasts originate daily.



Minnesota Speaker of the House, E. J. Chilgren, and State Legislator Roy Dunn, Pelican Rapids, take part in the 1952 "WCCO Radio Political Straw Vote." This voting machine was used as a feature of Editors and Legislators Day when machines were relatively new.

"Bringing You the News"

An expression commonly heard on the nearly 5,000 radio stations in this land is, "Bringing you the news." Saying it is a great deal easier than doing it—because the costs are very high in assembling and maintaining a first class news team and the elaborate technical facilities to match.

WCCO Radio, during most of its 40 years, has been one of the leading news stations in the entire nation because it has assembled the resources to be a leader. It has used the world-wide news-gathering and reporting facilities of the Columbia Broadcasting System, Associated Press, United Press International, Western Union sports wire. It has maintained its own News Director, News Editor and staff of writers, reporters and newscasters.

From WCCO's first day 40 years ago, listeners expected to hear the news and they did hear it. There were, however, periods of trial and error.

Early radio news pioneers, as Cedric Adams certainly was, supplied themselves with scissors, paper, paste-pot and daily newspapers. News stories were cut out of the newspapers, pasted down and were read on the air. By the late 1930's, wire services began supplying news to radio stations. The stations ripped news from the machines and read it on the air. Many radio stations never advanced beyond the rip-and-read in news service, but WCCO did.

Sig Mickelson came to WCCO as News Director in 1942 and established a News Department. He hired the qualified, journalism-school trained personnel to staff it. Even in those years there were difficulties. The tape-recorder had not been perfected. Broadcasting from the scene of a news event meant bringing along a mobile unit and a truck-load of electronic gear. Reporters, too, were handicapped by lack of experience in broadcasting eye-witness accounts of dramatic events.

A WCCO announcer, ordered to report a spectacular grain elevator fire in the 1940's, arrived breathlessly and blurted out his first words of pop-eyed and irreverent amazement, "Oh, my God! What a fire!"

Another announcer in similar circumstances, drawing himself to the full height of his pomposity, exclaimed, "Ladies and Gentlemen! This is the greatest fire it has ever been my privilege to witness."

But a WCCO Radio News Department had been established and soon experienced WCCO reporters were showing up everywhere. They were present when the floods came and the tornadoes struck. They were in the Minnesota legislature and in the city council chambers. They followed the candidates on the campaign trails. They interviewed national governmental and political figures. Engineers developed elaborate methods to take WCCO microphones to distant points.

In 1950, when Sig Mickelson became chief of CBS News in New York, he was succeeded by Jim Bormann, Director of News and Public Affairs. In the intervening years, the highly portable and unobtrusive tape-recorder has become a "tool of the trade" used by the radio newsmen. Through its electronic magic, voices of people who make the news are heard on every news broadcast. The pioneers paved the way for what is now commonplace and a slogan that describes today's service: "You're On the Go with WCCO."

As for the listener, the equally portable and no less amazing transistor receiver permits him to hear the news anywhere: out in the boat, on the tractor, at the beach, or out in the back yard.

And when the announcer uses that phrase, "Bringing you the news," today's radio listener is aware there is a difference when the words are said on WCCO.



News "Nerve Center"

One of the busiest spots at WCCO Radio is the News Bureau which is the point of origin for all the news and special events coverage you hear on the station.

In the large photo at the top of the page are (left to right): the news director and his secretary, newswriter, news editor, morning news supervisor, sportscaster, newswriter (standing), another newswriter, and the night shift news supervisor.

This staff prepares news from a variety of sources: the Associated Press and United Press news teletypes in the background, U.S. Weather Bureau wire, from CBS News and its correspondents in every corner of the globe, and from reports by WCCO Radio's own newswriter-reporters who take their microphones wherever Northwest people make news.

The accent is on "immediacy" at WCCO the sounds of "history as it happens."



WCCO Radio news personnel are likely to appear in Washington, D.C., as Cedric Adams did in 1952 to interview Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota. Elected in 1948, Senator Humphrey was in his fourth year in the Congress at the time. Senator Humphrey is now majority whip in the U.S. Senate.



Clad in St. Paul Winter Carnival hats, Earl H. Gammons, former WCCO Manager; the late Minnesota Congressman August H. Andresen, and Larry Haeg, then WCCO Farm Director, chatted at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C., February 5, 1952. They were calling national attention to the St. Paul festival.



Governor Elmer L. Andersen, speaking at the dedication of Interstate Highway 35 near Hinckley on November 1, 1962, while Jim Bormann (in white raincoat) holds WCCO microphone. The Highway 35 controversy was a serious point between Governor Andersen and his DFL opponent, Karl Rolvaag. After a bitter campaign and vote recount, Rolvaag was declared governor in April, 1963 by a margin of 91 votes out of more than a million votes cast five months earlier.

“Operation Good Neighbor”

June 3, 1958, had been a typical, sticky, sultry, summer day.

In the late afternoon, a line of thunderstorms moved just north of the Twin Cities. WCCO flashed a warning as the storms moved on into western Wisconsin. The boiling, dark, angry clouds touched earth in Dunn County at a dozen places. One giant twister smashed farm homes and barns, uprooting trees and then struck hardest at the little town of Colfax.

News of any tornado trickles through slowly because of downed telephone lines and roads blocked by fallen trees. It was soon apparent, however, this had been a real disaster with a number of persons dead and many injured.

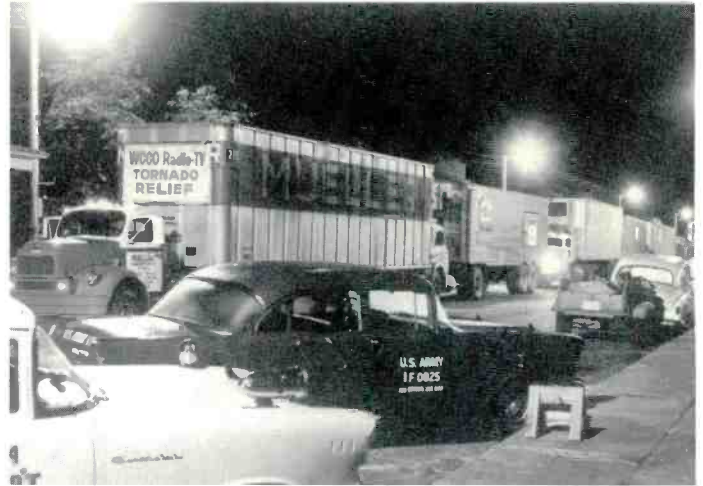
The Red Cross first asked for blood. By noon, WCCO listeners had given twice the requirements. Then WCCO Radio launched “Operation Good Neighbor.” On-the-air appeals went out for clothing, bedding, and canned foodstuffs for the tornado victims. And WCCO-Land “Good Neighbors” responded with amazing speed. They brought needed items in their cars to WCCO Radio studios and to hastily established depots at stores. Some even sent clothing and bedding in taxis. In all, they gave five huge truck trailers of goods.

By midnight the five trucks were backed up to the shattered school building in Colfax and unloaded tons of supplies in the roofless school gymnasium.

The toll: 27 persons dead, 250 injured, scores homeless. Two of the injured later died for a total of 29 killed — one of the worst tornadoes in the history of WCCO-Land.



Utter and complete destruction was everywhere as the “Operation Good Neighbor” team from WCCO Radio rolled into Colfax, Wisconsin, the night of June 4, 1958. A year earlier, the stations listeners gave \$100,000 to local Red Cross units for relief after the Fargo, N.D., tornado and Crow and Minnesota river floods.



WCCO listeners responded as good neighbors. Eight hours after the first plea for help was broadcast, five trucks of supplies arrived at Colfax, Wisconsin.



All through the evening hours of June 4, 1958, WCCO people and volunteer truckers of Mueller Transportation Company labored to load the five semi-trailer trucks.



WCCO Radio “Good Neighbors” drove up to the station with cars loaded; WCCO personnel helped them unload.



When cloudbursts tore out dams at Sand Creek near Jordan, Minnesota, on May 21, 1960, floods marooned dozens of people. WCCO Radio broadcast instructions to them and Jim Hill used his motor boat to rescue some through swirling floodwaters. WCCO broadcast from the scene through its mobile unit, both from shore and from boats in the flood.



Allan Gray, former WCCO Radio staff member, interviewing one of the Good Neighbors who brought food for tornado victims.



There were many other disasters and WCCO was there to report and help victims of all of them. Among them was the Marshall, Minn., flood which was the result of cloud-bursting rains on June 17, 1957. National Guardsmen in this picture are rescuing a soaked driver from his stalled car.



Scene in the roofless school gymnasium as Wisconsin National Guardsmen and volunteers unloaded relief supplies.



National Guardsman is on patrol duty at the Armory in Anoka after it was demolished in the tornado which swept Champlin and Anoka on June 18, 1939. WCCO announcer Eddie Gallaher was on duty that afternoon and rushed to Anoka to report that disaster. Nine persons were killed and 222 injured.

"Plowville, U.S.A."

One of the biggest outdoor rallies Minnesota has ever seen happened on a farm near Kasson in Dodge County on September 6, 1952. The occasion was the National Plowing Contest and demonstrations by the Minnesota Soil conservation districts. But the two big attractions were General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Republican candidate for President, and his Democratic Party rival, Governor Adlai E. Stevenson of Illinois.

More than 200,000 persons flocked to the scene to hear the two candidates deliver what had been billed in advance as "major farm policy" speeches. Thousands more heard the addresses on WCCO.

Only six months before a group of Minnesotans headed by Bradshaw Mintener, then General Counsel for The Pillsbury Company, had pushed the "write-in" of Eisenhower's name on the Minnesota preferential primary ballot. The amazing strength the General won in that primary was instrumental in launching him on the trail that took him to the Presidency.



General Dwight D. Eisenhower



This is part of the huge crowd that gathered at "Plowville, U.S.A.," to hear the rival presidential candidates General Dwight D. Eisenhower and Governor Adlai E. Stevenson. Cedric Adams is shown at the microphone as he broadcast the "Noontime News" before the throng.



Governor Adlai E. Stevenson

"Good Neighbor" Again

During the late 1940's and early 1950's, WCCO Radio was asked to assist in boosting public interest and participation in both the Minneapolis Aquatennial and the St. Paul Winter Carnival. The result was a series of WCCO Radio Aquatennial and Winter Carnival shows, staged in the Auditoriums of the two cities.

The roster of stars appearing in these "spectaculars" reads like a Who's Who of show business. There was Bob Hope, Arthur Godfrey, Art Linkletter, Robert Q. Lewis, Eddie Cantor, "The Chordettes," Jan Davis, Garry Moore, Edgar Bergen, Dennis Morgan, Ken Murray, Coleen Gray, Victor Borge and many more.

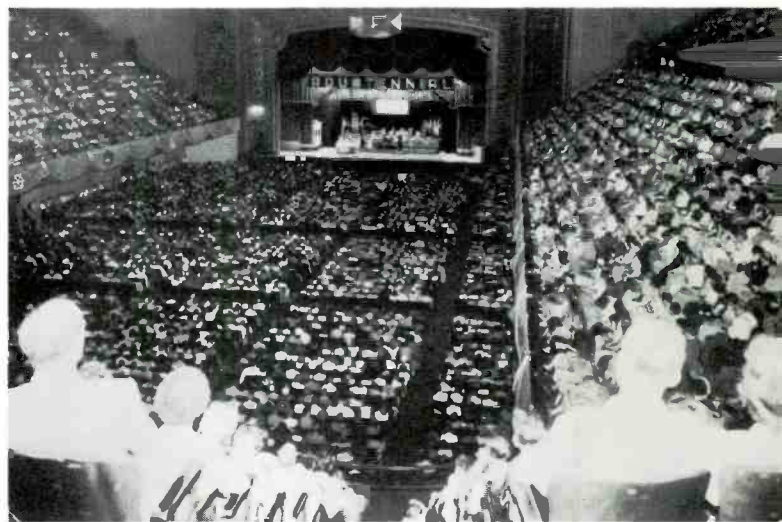
All of them two hours in length, the shows attracted "full houses" in both cities. They were broadcast over WCCO so that millions of Northwest listeners could join in Winter Carnival and Aquatennial fun.

These were the "fun" times.

Vice President Alben W. Barkley gave Cedric Adams this autographed picture as a memento of his appearance on the WCCO Radio Aquatennial Show.



When "Ski Nose" Hope went into his monologue at WCCO Radio Aquatennial show, the audience went into stitches. You can tell by noting Cedric Adams' expression.



Every seat in the Minneapolis Auditorium was filled for the 1948 WCCO Radio Aquatennial show. Stars were Bob Hope, Arthur Godfrey and Vice President of the United States, Alben W. Barkley. "The Veep," as Barkley was known then, turned out to be an amazingly good show business performer.



Cedric and Arthur Godfrey played it for big laughs at the 1947 WCCO Radio Aquatennial Show.



Another Aquatennial show, and Stew MacPherson interviews the star, Victor Borge, at the Airport.



Robert Q. Lewis put on not only the warmest coat he could find but also ear-muffs to ride in the St. Paul Winter Carnival parade.



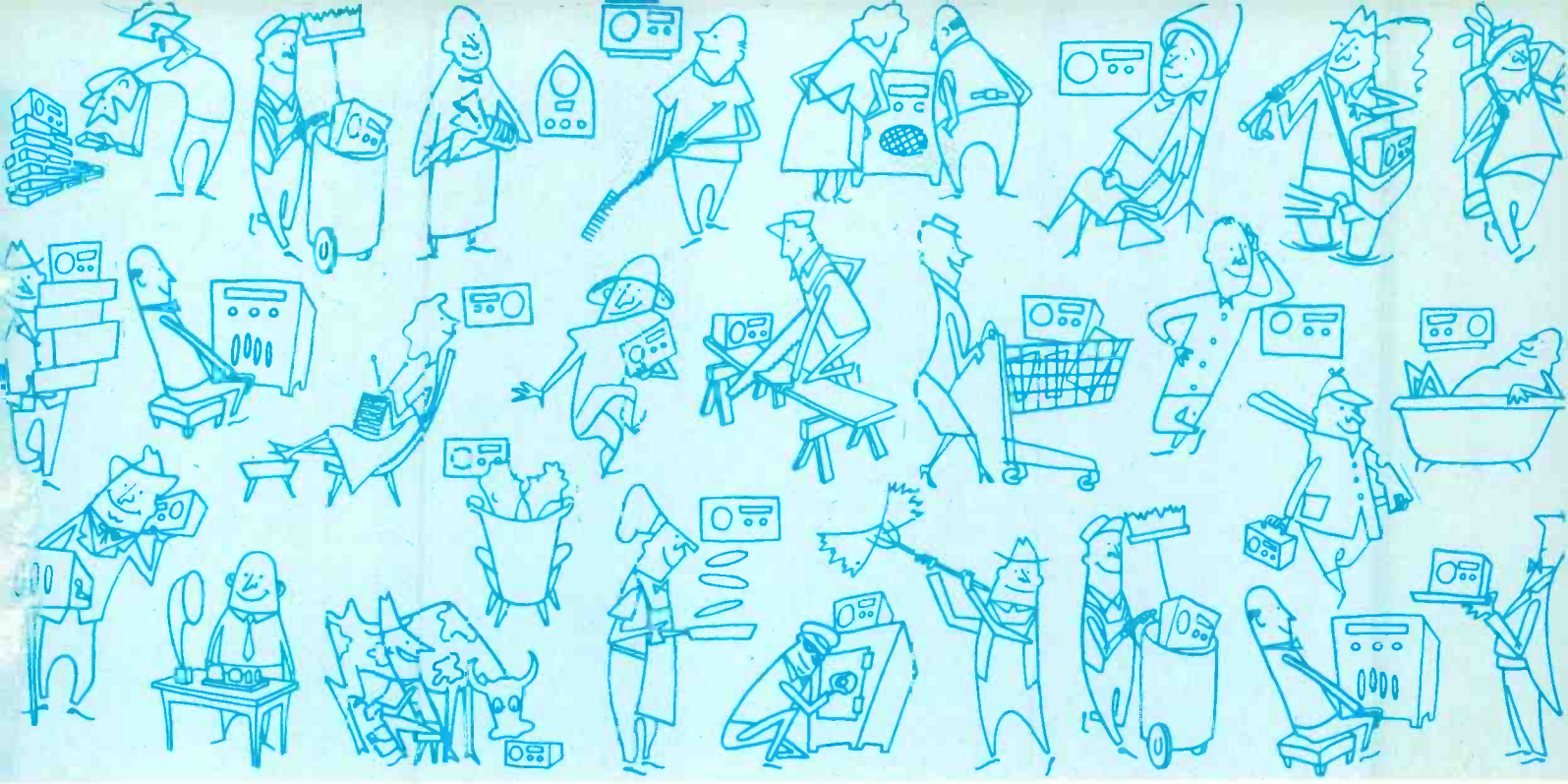
Bundled against the cold, Joyce Lamont and Howard Viken read their lines at WCCO Radio Winter Carnival show in St. Paul.



Irish-born Carmel Quinn proved to be a big hit in St. Paul at several WCCO-Radio Winter Carnival shows. She is shown here with Robert Q. Lewis who co-starred with her.



Art Linkletter set up one of the funniest skits ever staged in any of the WCCO Radio special shows. He arranged a "Truth or Consequences" gag in which a woman from the audience had to sew, blindfolded, a patch on the seat of Cedric's trousers. Linkletter is holding the patch and his assistant is about to blindfold the seamstress. The entire act was marked by loud cries of "ouch" from Cedric as his posterior was punctured.



THROUGH the YEARS

FROM CRYSTAL SETS TO TRANSISTORS



How it Started

This is the story of not one, but two, radio stations—WLAG and WCCO. WLAG was the pioneer station of the crystal set era in the Northwest. Only the “old-timers” remember that it ever existed at all. It was succeeded by WCCO which survived the critical, formative years of radio because a few persons had the vision to see far into the future though none imagined the 50,000 watt giant that is WCCO Radio today.

In the days before World War I, numbers of young men in the Twin Cities and elsewhere in the Northwest were intrigued by a new gadget termed “wireless.” That was a system whereby messages in the form of Morse code dots and dashes could be transmitted through space without telephone or telegraph wires. They were not known as “ham” radio operators then. That came later when Lee DeForest perfected the vacuum tube which paved the way for transmission of the human voice through the air by radio telephony.

Among the early-day radio enthusiasts were Walter S. Harris, member of a prominent Minneapolis family, Jim Coles, Mark Fraser and many others. Coles is believed to be the first man in Minnesota to obtain a “radio-telephone” operator’s license.

One favorite gathering place for a group of radio amateurs was Walter Harris’ home at 1929 Vine Place, now LaSalle Ave. On the back of the Harris property was a large, three-story, brick building which had served as stable and carriage house. Harris took over



Walter S. Harris when he founded WLAG in 1922.

the third floor servants’ quarters and there he and his friends did their experimental work in radio.

World War I intervened, meantime, and many of the young men joined the services and “ham” radio was temporarily forgotten.

Cutting & Washington

When the first World War ended in 1918, Mark Fraser did not come home immediately. He remained in New York and became associated with Cutting & Washington Radio Corporation, manufacturers of early-day radio receivers, owned by Fulton Cutting and Bowden Washington. Cutting & Washington was interested in obtaining distributors throughout as much of the nation as possible.

So it was that Fraser returned to Minneapolis and set up a business at 28 So. Tenth St., to distribute Cutting & Washington radio receivers. Fraser also had in his pocket an agreement whereby he could manufacture radio sets under the Cutting & Washington label provided he could find a way to establish a commercial radio station which had a 500-watt Western Electric transmitter.

Quite independent of Fraser’s efforts, Tom Dillon, managing editor of the Minneapolis Tribune, had become impressed with the possibilities of radio. Working with Jim Coles, one of the city’s pioneer amateurs, he established a small 50-watt radio station with a transmitter in the Minneapolis courthouse. Dillon went to the trouble of checking with the people who were operating KDKA, Pittsburgh, which with WWJ, Detroit, was one of the pioneer radio stations in the U.S. What Dillon learned about costs of commercial radio station operation discouraged him and he abandoned the project.

Rival newspapers, the Minneapolis Journal and the St. Paul Pioneer Press, got wind of Dillon’s activity in radio. They rushed on the air with small commercial radio stations. Both came to the same conclusion as Dillon . . . too expensive . . . and the stations were short-lived.

By this time, Fraser had returned to Minneapolis, talked to Walter Harris and had interested him in the Cutting & Washington proposal. Cutting & Washington Radio Corporation of Minneapolis was founded with Walter S. Harris as president, Fraser as vice president and Elmer F. Johnson, the bookkeeper, as secretary. The firm opened offices in the Kasota Building on Hennepin Ave. and 4th St. in 1921 and then moved to the old American Hardware Mutual Building on upper Nicollet Ave.

Mel Foster, who now has his own distributing business, recalls working for Cutting & Washington. The radio sets were actually built at the Minneapolis Heat Regulator Company, now Honeywell.

The next problem was to raise the funds to put a 500-watt station on the air as Cutting & Washington demanded. Businessmen in both St. Paul and Minneapolis were solicited and, after months of effort, a substantial list of subscribers was assembled. The original subscribers were: E. E. Atkinson & Co., Cutting & Washington, Donaldson Department Store, Findley Electric Co., Minnesota Loan and Trust Co., Northwest Farmstead magazine, Northwestern National Bank, Powers Mercantile Co., Purity Baking Co., and Sterling Electric Co. Total operating costs the first year, including charge-out for depreciation, were to be \$35,000. That sum did not include payment for program artists, lecturers and other performers who—it was believed—would be happy to donate their time for the privilege of appearing on radio.

Enter WLAG

With the money in hand, Cutting & Washington was able to order the 500-watt Western Electric transmitter. Studios were opened on the sixth floor of the Oak Grove Hotel, then newly-completed, and WLAG went on the air for the first time on Labor Day, September 4, 1922. The time was 9 a.m. Ray Sweet, chief engineer, was the man responsible for actual technical installation of the transmitter and studio equipment.



The Oak Grove Hotel was new when WLAG studios were opened here and the station went on the air September 4, 1922. Note the antenna and tower on the roof.



This is the WLAG transmitter room in the Oak Grove Hotel. Engineer seated at desk is Henry Peterson who remained with WCCO for many years. He moved to Los Angeles as engineer for KNX and died in a car accident there in 1954. Ray Sweet, chief engineer, is at far right. Man standing in center of picture is not identified.



The managing director of WLAG, Mrs. Eleanor Poehler, remained with the station when it became WCCO. She resigned in 1927, moved to Seattle where she died in 1949.

None of the original incorporators had the slightest notion how to “program” a radio station so it would have listener appeal. Walter Harris concluded that a person of musical talent and ability was needed.

Such a person was Mrs. Eleanor Poehler. She was a soprano soloist with an excellent voice and was prominent in Twin Cities musical circles of that day. Mrs. Poehler and Minneapolis Tribune music critic James Davies conducted a running feud for years because he stubbornly maintained in his reviews that she was a “mezzo.” Mrs. Poehler fought back just as hard, insisting she was a true soprano. That conflict notwithstanding, critic Davies agreed that Mrs. Poehler had an excellent voice. In addition, she was a teacher of voice at MacPhail School. Unquestionably she knew music so Walter Harris hired Mrs. Poehler and named her “managing director” of WLAG.

One of Mrs. Poehler’s voice students was a young man named H. Paul Johnson. She believed that Johnson had the voice timbre and quality for radio announcing and hired him for the job. It was Johnson who first uttered the words “WLAG, Your Call of the North Station,” on the air in 1922.

From that first Labor Day beginning until the end of 1922, WLAG was heard by crystal set owners only two or three days each week. Programs consisted of temperature, weather forecasts, market reports and some music with long gaps of silence.

Mel Foster recalls, “Back there in 1922 we played phonograph records by placing the Western Electric carbon microphone in front of either the Edison or Victrola talking machines. The quality, as you can

imagine, was not good. As I recall, the station had a library of not over a few dozen records. Of course, they were continually loaned records by the various department stores who sponsored some of the programs.”

By early 1923, WLAG was on the air every day. Paul Johnson remained the only professional announcer and he was assigned to the evening hours primarily—a fact which helped him to become known throughout the Northwest and the entire nation as crystal set owners tuned in from distant points and listened to WLAG.

Other members of the staff—in fact, nearly every member of the staff—took his or her turn at the microphone reading markets, giving temperature information and weather forecasts, introducing the musical and dramatic programs during the daytime hours.

Mrs. Poehler, who was a classical musician, programmed the classics on the station liberally. She and Walter Harris came into conflict upon one occasion because Mrs. Poehler insisted that the beauties of classical music should be separated from the harsh tones of the human speaking voice by a dead-air interval of at least 15 seconds. This policy caused the station to be known in the trade as “Willie-LAG.”

Mrs. Poehler relaxed her strict classical music policy and then lived to regret it. In an interview some years later, she recalled ruefully it was she who had turned loose upon the public “the curse of the country fiddler” only to have him spread like wildfire to every radio station in the land.

Old Program Fare

WLAG was not strictly a local station. Mrs. Poehler, in her recollections, talks about receiving letters from all parts of the nation and beyond—from Hudson Bay and Alaska in the north to Mexico and Puerto Rico in the south. Even as Northwest crystal set owners, headphones clamped over their ears, were straining to hear the magic names of distant cities, so were radio listeners elsewhere fingering the dial hoping to catch the sound, “WLAG, Call of the North, St. Paul and Minneapolis.” And they did hear it frequently.

In fact, nearly all radio stations had a “Tune-out” period listed in their mid-evening schedule. Listeners were encouraged to take the next half hour to try to bring in other and more distant stations.

Programs on old WLAG would lull audiences into slumber today. Then, however, the excitement, the glamor and the wonder of radio were so great that listeners sat glued to their earphones, completely enchanted with everything they heard.

Since there was no budget to pay professionals, many performers were instructors or students from MacPhail School who sang, played instrumental num-

bers and told stories on children's programs merely for the glory of saying they were "on radio." An old program log shows that typical musical selections were "Chicago," "Starlight Bay," "Saw Mill River Road," and a snappy little selection which sounds as though it could be redone in rock 'n' roll and sell today, "I've Got to Cool My Doggies Now."

Lectures were prevalent on the air in 1923 and the list of topics sounds most deadly today: "Varnishes and Shellac, Origin and Use," "Where Garden Seeds Come From," "Bees in April," and one entitled simply, "Traffic Talk."

Gopher Football

Sports were popular with crystal set listeners even as they are in the transistor era today. The late Herb Paul was sports announcer for WLAG back in 1923. Before his death, he told how he covered Minnesota Gopher football games at old Northrup Field where there was nothing even resembling a weather-protected broadcast booth.

Herb sat at a table in the wooden bleachers and stabbed his pocket knife through his hand-written lists of player names and numbers to keep them from blowing away in the Fall breeze.

Though all of the original subscribers were allotted time on the air to give their commercial messages, some of them became dissatisfied and thought they were not receiving full value. They dropped out and other subscribers had to be found to replace them. For the second year, the proposal was to increase the operating budget from \$35,000 to \$50,000 and the money was raised, or rather it was promised.

By the end of June, 1924, it became apparent that many of the subscribers would not fulfill their pledges and WLAG ran head-on into hard times. The original founders of the station, Cutting & Washington, were having financial difficulties as well.

WLAG was taken over by receivers in July and on the last day of the month, crystal set owners heard the dismal news the station would leave the air entirely. On July 31, 1924, WLAG signed off with a weather report at 9:15 p.m. Paul Johnson was dismissed with regrets. Mrs. Poehler and a handful of office personnel remained to close out the station's affairs.

It happened that another radio station in the community left the air with a farewell concert that very same night. In 1922, about two months before WLAG began broadcasting, The Dayton Co. had founded its own radio station WBAH. Its studios were in the record shop on the second floor of the company. The two stations had been bitter rivals during 1923 and early 1924. The rivalry reached the point where Mrs. Poehler attempted to cut off the local supply of 250-watt trans-

mitter tubes for WBAH—a move that failed because The Dayton Company with its nation-wide merchandising contacts had no difficulty locating a new source of tubes in Chicago.

For reasons quite apart from the rivalry that existed with WLAG, directors of The Dayton Company came to the conclusion in July their firm should no longer be in the radio broadcasting business.

Suddenly, the community was faced with the prospect of no radio station. Crystal set owners were unhappy, of course. Particularly alarmed, however, was the Northwest Radio Trade Association which consisted of radio set dealers and distributors in the region. H. H. Cory, who was association secretary at the time, recalls the feeling of alarm that spread among his members. No radio station, of course, would mean no sales of radio sets. Meetings were held in an effort to come up with a solution.

Cory had a publicity man working for him named Harry Wilbern who had helped him promote radio set trade shows in the old West Hotel and at the Kenwood Armory in Minneapolis. The association decided to put Wilbern to work canvassing the business community more intensively than ever before in an effort to save WLAG.

WCCO Radio is Born

As he toured the business offices in both Minneapolis and St. Paul, Wilbern was rebuffed many times. At last, he struck gold and, in this instance, it happened to be "Gold Medal." Donald D. Davis, then vice president of Washburn Crosby Company, was most receptive to the idea of saving WLAG. He talked the matter over with James Ford Bell, president of the company,



Donald D. Davis, "The Father of WCCO-Radio." Davis made the defunct WLAG "The Gold Medal Station" in 1924.



This is the way the Washburn Crosby Company "A" mill looked in 1925 shortly after its corporate initials became the call letters, WCCO. A part of this mill in Minneapolis was destroyed by fire two years later.

and on August 5, 1924, submitted a proposal to the Minneapolis Civic & Commerce Association and the St. Paul Association of Commerce.

Gist of the proposal was that Washburn Crosby Company would buy the physical properties and assets of WLAG and would contribute \$50,000 a year for three years toward support of the station if the businessmen of St. Paul and Minneapolis collectively would match that sum. It was up to the two commerce associations to arrange for the matching funds. Davis further stipulated the name of the station would be changed; it would be known as "The Gold Medal Station," and it would carry the label of both cities. If the proposition was accepted, Davis said, Washburn Crosby Company would immediately place an order for a new 5,000-watt transmitter and would improve studio facilities.

Executive committees of the two commerce associations met jointly and, at the urging of the Northwest Radio Trade Association, decided to accept the Washburn Crosby Company offer. Further details were arranged: since Minneapolis was the larger city, it would raise 60 per cent of the matching funds and St. Paul the remaining 40 per cent. As for re-naming the station, that proved to be no problem. The Minneapolis association had objected to the sub-title "Call of the North" which WLAG used, believing it gave a nationwide impression of Minnesota as a frozen wasteland.

On September 12, 1924, "The Gold Medal Station" became a reality. The firm hand of Washburn Crosby Company was felt immediately. The interest of the Cutting & Washington ownership was purchased for \$7,500. Mrs. Poehler became program director of the station. Paul Johnson was re-hired as the station's announcer. Broadcasting schedules were promptly restored to the pre-July level.

It was on September 12 also that WLAG was selected by the War Department to be one of 15 radio stations carrying the farewell message of General John J. Pershing to the nation. The reason was that WLAG was one of a handful of stations in the country which had 500-watt transmitters. Most were 250 watts or less.

Harry Wilbern, the publicist who had made the original contact with Donald Davis, was named manager—though he did not hold that position more than a few months.

There remained the problem of selecting new call letters for the station and that involved some discussion at Washburn Crosby Company. It is not recorded who actually came up with the designation "WCCO," an abbreviation of Washburn Crosby Company, but the decision was made and the call letters were approved by the Department of Commerce which then licensed stations.



Harry Wilbern was named manager of WCCO by Donald D. Davis — a move that aroused opposition among members of Northwest Radio Trade Association.



The call letters "WCCO" were heard on the air for the first time at 8 p.m. October 2, 1924, immediately preceding a talk by Lt. Lowell Smith of the World Fliers.

The sub-title "Gold Medal Station" was used on the air for the first time the evening of October 1, 1924. That night a banquet and celebration were arranged in the board of directors room of Washburn Crosby Company. The program lasted for two hours and consisted of talks by officials of Washburn Crosby, business leaders in both St. Paul and Minneapolis, and the mayors of the two cities.

It was on the evening of October 2, 1924, at 8:00 p.m., immediately preceding a talk by Lt. Lowell Smith, Commander of the World Fliers, that the call letters "WCCO" were heard on the air for the first time. WLAG was no more.

Late in 1924, W. H. Bovey, vice president and superintendent of milling for Washburn Crosby Company, arranged for purchase of the approximately 500 by 700 foot tract of land near Anoka, 18 miles north of both cities, where the WCCO Radio transmitter is located today. Being a businessman and knowing what would happen to the price of the land if he disclosed its intended use, Bovey told the seller he was thinking of retiring and wanted to put a chicken farm on the property.

This historical fact has produced the inevitable wisecrack that even though there were never any chickens around "a lot of eggs have been laid out there over the years."

Bovey deserves his share of credit for establishing a firm base that would carry WCCO forward for many years. He handled the technical details: purchase of the transmitter property, construction of the transmitter building and towers, and the leasing of space on the 12th and 13th floors of the new Nicollet Hotel which was then nearing completion.

Donald D. Davis

It was Donald Davis, however, who exhibited amazing foresight when he talked the directors of his company into purchasing the defunct WLAG. Historically, Davis is remembered primarily for the fact that he became a highly effective president of General Mills when Washburn Crosby was merged into a combine of milling interests a few years later. Davis should also be remembered as "The Father of WCCO."

He had no evidence that WCCO would ever be commercially successful because no other radio station in the land was showing a profit at that time.

Davis did have an economic motive in mind, of course, and that was to use the station to promote and sell Gold Medal flour. Huge, lighted signs in the Minneapolis milling district and messages on every sack of flour testified to the intense competition between Washburn Crosby and The Pillsbury Company. Gold Medal's suggestion to the buying public was "Even-



W. H. Bovey, vice president and superintendent of milling for Washburn Crosby Company, arranged purchase of land where the WCCO Radio transmitter is located in Coon Rapids, near Anoka, Minn.

Breaking ground at the new WCCO transmitter building site near Anoka in October, 1924. Arthur E. Nelson, who was then Mayor of St. Paul, is driving the plow horses. The ladies riding the steeds are Mrs. Sumner T. McKnight, Minneapolis, and Mrs. Edwin White, St. Paul.



Another view of the ground-breaking ceremony at Anoka. Again, the two ladies wielding pick and shovel are Mrs. McKnight and Mrs. White. They were named "society hostesses," representing both cities.

tually, Why Not Now?" The answer crackled back from the competitor's advertising, "Because Pillsbury's Best."

Whatever his reasons, Davis moved quickly to strengthen the personnel of the station once his decision was made. An early move was to assign Earl H. Gammons to handle publicity for the station.

Gammons, who had been a reporter on the Minneapolis Tribune, was editor of the Washburn Crosby Company house organ, "The Eventually News."

"I was pretty cold on radio when they bought the station and I kind of questioned the sanity of some of the directors," Gammons recently admitted.

"But I soon became so interested that I forgot everything but radio. In radio, I found a sort of combination of the entertainment field and newspaper work. We had programs to write about. There were interviews. I interviewed a lot of people. We did features and ran quite a publicity bureau. It was a lot like my old work I had done on the newspaper and I enjoyed it. It had more of a thrill to it."

The Gala Opening Night

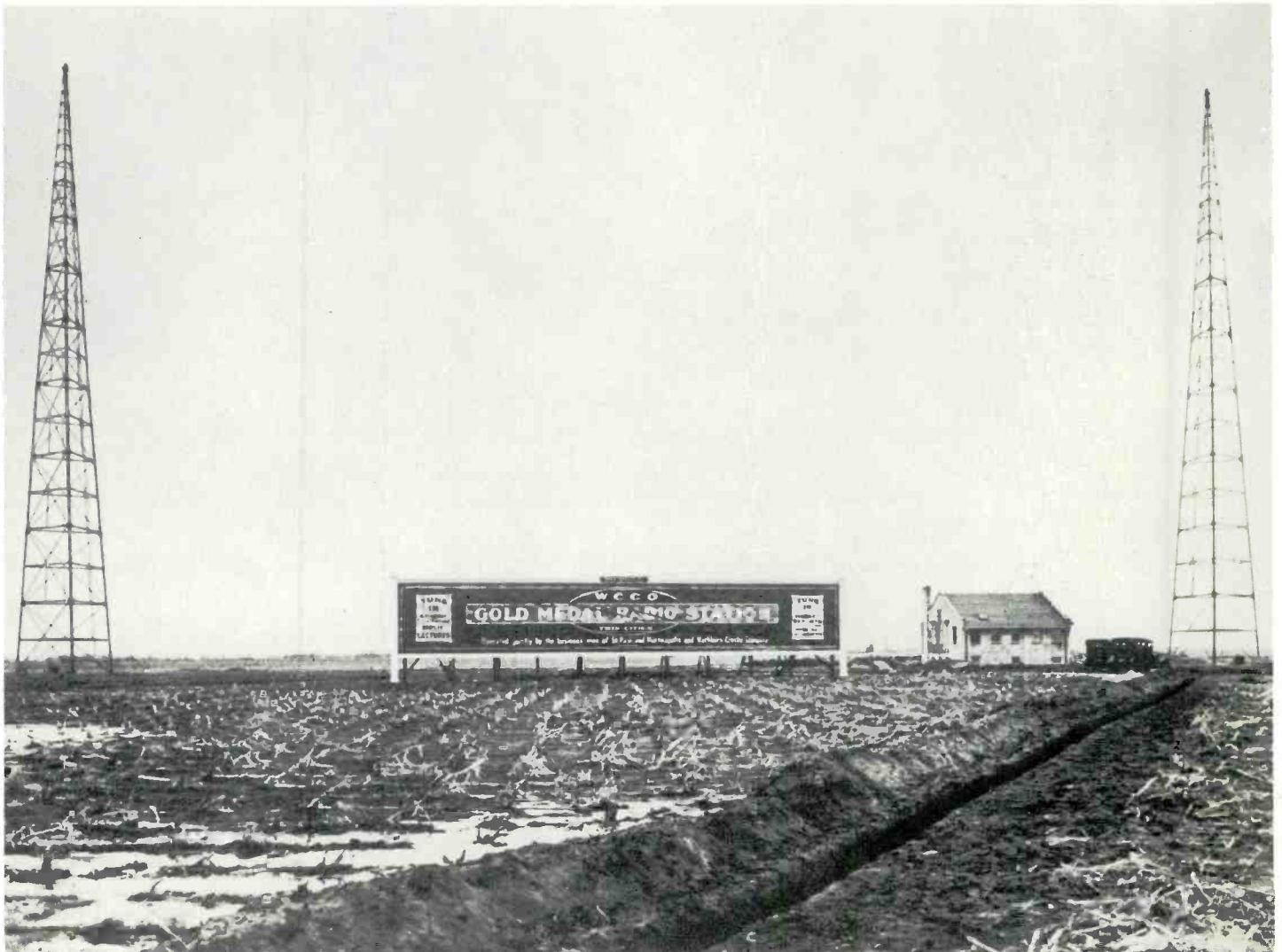
Earl Gammons had a most thrilling project to work on during the winter of 1925. That was the opening of the new 5,000-watt WCCO Radio transmitter at Anoka and the dedication simultaneously of the station's new studios on the 12th and 13th floors of the Nicollet Hotel, scheduled for March 4, 1925.

The day ended in a blaze of glory for WCCO, even though it began with a disappointment. March 4 also happened to be the date of President Calvin Coolidge's inaugural broadcast, the first event of its type ever to be aired over a nationwide link-up of then-existing radio stations.

Preparations to broadcast the inaugural had been elaborately laid months in advance. WCCO announced on the air the fact that it was one of the select stations to carry the inaugural. Twin City radio dealers had installed receiving sets in all the schools of Minneapolis and St. Paul, and many Northwest dealers did



Following the ground-breaking, construction proceeded swiftly on the new WCCO transmitter building at Anoka. This mid-winter scene shows the progress that had been made early in 1925.



The WCCO transmitter building had been completed, the two 200-foot towers had been erected, and the Gold Medal Radio Station sign was in place. This 5,000 watt transmitter was used for the first time on March 4, 1925, and broadcast the inauguration of President Calvin Coolidge.

the same in their home communities. It was estimated that upwards of 500,000 persons were prepared to tune in and hear the historic event.

The program went on the air at 10:15 a.m., midwest time, with the great Graham McNamee announcing from Washington.

All went well, except for one small detail. Nobody had thought to alert crystal set owners that WCCO's transmitter was now 18 miles out into the country and was no longer in their very midst. Owners of tube receivers heard the inaugural broadcast without difficulty, but crystal set owners heard not a sound and they were angry.

Earl Gammons estimates there must have been some 15,000 crystal set owners and every one of them tried to reach the station for an explanation.

By that time, the crystal set era was fast fading. Many of the receiving sets were home-made affairs consisting of wire coiled around an oatmeal box, galena crystal and "cats whisker." The Coolidge inaugural incident killed the crystal set on the spot. The demand for tube radios soared immediately.

Though the day had begun badly, the night of March 4 proved to be one of the largest, most spectacular in the history of WCCO. Governor Theodore Christianson delivered the dedicatory address.

The program was intentionally planned so there would be a bare minimum of speech-making. Instead, entertainment followed entertainment for five hours until 1 a.m. the next morning. Among the musical groups that played that historic night were the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, University of Minnesota Orchestra. Dick Long's Nankin Orchestra, Osborn's Nicollet Hotel Orchestra, the Minneapolis Athletic Club Orchestra and the Third Infantry Band from Fort Snelling. There were soloists, quartettes, octettes, comedy skits—every sort of entertainment then available. In all, there were 300 entertainers.

It was announced that night also that WCCO would soon open studios in St. Paul. These studios were opened in the new Union Depot. This move proved to be somewhat unsatisfactory because the rumble of trains passing beneath tended to drown out the programs being aired.

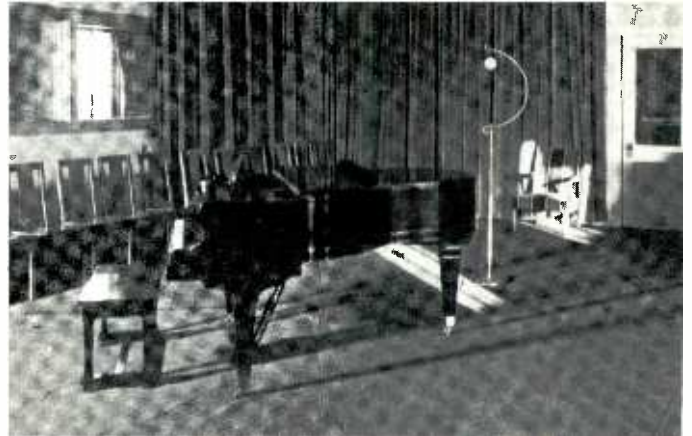
Henry A. Bellows

Donald Davis, the highly-competent executive of Washburn Crosby Company, had cleared away many problems by the Spring of 1925. He still had to select a strong manager for WCCO. Davis spotted a man but the man chosen would not at first accept the position.

He was Dr. Henry A. Bellows, a 1906 Ph.D. graduate of Harvard University. He had come to Minneapolis



A WCCO engineer adjusted voltage at the control panel of the station's new 5,000-watt transmitter in 1925. This transmitter has an interesting history. It is the one that Twin Cities crystal set owners could not hear on the morning of the Coolidge inaugural, March 4, 1925, because it was too far out in the country. When WCCO's power was increased to 50,000 watts, this transmitter was sold to old WDGY, the Dr. George Young station. It was sold again in the late 1930's and recently was being used somewhere in South America.



Words like "sumptuous" and "modern" were used to describe this the largest of the WCCO Radio studios in the Nicollet Hotel when it was opened in 1925. The ceiling was suspended and deadened, the floors were built upon cork and covered with a heavily-padded carpet. Heavy wall drapes moved on a track to adjust the sound.



"Just one of the many luxurious corners which may be found in the new Minneapolis studios of the Gold Medal Station," the scrapbook label said in 1925 in describing these furnishings.



"Luxurious studios" in the St. Paul Union depot were established soon after the big 1925 opening celebration.

to take a position as assistant professor of rhetoric at the University of Minnesota. Why Bellows decided to leave the University after teaching there for a number of years is not too clear. Persons who knew him have the notion he became bored with academic life.

Bellows had written Symphony notes while at the university. When he left, he became editor of "The Bellman," a Northwest magazine of literary review and criticism and of "Northwestern Miller," an internationally known grain trade magazine.

The Bellows family lived at 2400 Pleasant Ave., Minneapolis, in the same neighborhood where many milling industry executives resided. As was the custom, the men would walk to work when the weather was enjoyable and would discuss business problems on the way. During one of these walks in the Spring of 1925, Donald Davis startled Bellows by asking him, "What would you think of running a radio station?"

"I wouldn't think of it—not for a minute!" was Bellows' first emphatic reply.

Davis could be most persuasive. On the daily walks, he went into more detail.

Mrs. Philip W. Pillsbury, Henry Bellows' daughter and a child at the time, remembers many evenings after she had gone to bed there were discussions between her father and mother that lasted far into the night—all about WCCO. At last, one evening Bellows returned home, assembled the family in the kitchen and announced that he would become WCCO manager.

Thinking back over the years, Mrs. Pillsbury knows it was a most difficult decision for her father to make.

"At the time," she recalls, "the station was highly unsuccessful and he knew that. But he had a basic

interest in public information media, appreciated its importance and felt the integrity of the mass media should be regarded as a trust."

This time Donald Davis' instincts were correct. Henry Bellows poured all his intense energies into WCCO to such a degree that it could not possibly have failed. He became familiar with every detail of broadcasting, performing even the most routine chores himself so that he would understand the business thoroughly.

"He came home exhausted many times, but he was a man of enthusiasm and, in radio, he became immersed as enthusiastically as he had with every other phase of his life's activity," Mrs. Pillsbury said.

WCCO Radio now had the ingredients to ensure its success.

But there were many problems. Late in 1925, the St. Paul Association of Commerce withdrew its support of WCCO. The reason given was that St. Paul was not receiving its fair share of attention on the station.

By the end of the year, the Minneapolis Civic & Commerce Association also lost interest and withdrew its support. Money under the original matching fund agreement was too difficult to raise, or so it was stated.

Davis, acting with the decisiveness which marked his career, returned to his directors and convinced them Washburn Crosby Company should abrogate the agreement and operate the station alone. This was done. WCCO became the sole property of Washburn Crosby Company.



Henry A. Bellows, Ph.D., rhetoric professor and editor, was the man Donald D. Davis picked in 1925 to be manager. Bellows left in 1931 to become vice president of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

Another problem involved money to pay persons who appeared on the air. Orchestra leader Dick Long appeared on the station many times for five dollars a performance. Singers and other performers received as little as two dollars and fifty cents in the early days.

Mrs. Pillsbury recalls the summer she was 16 years old and was asked by her father to work at the station to fill in for the regular staffers on vacation. She read markets, temperature and weather reports on the air for no salary. She mentioned the fact one day to Wally Hustad who, by that time, had joined the station's program department.

"Wally Hustad and others thought it was shocking," she reports. "They told Father that if he didn't pay me something, they would report the fact to the authorities as a violation of the child labor laws. Father relented," Mrs. Pillsbury remembers, "and I did receive a small salary."

The Networks

The idea of selling "commercial time" on radio was spreading, but the practice came from the National Broadcasting Company network which had grown rapidly since the days of the Coolidge Inaugural on March 4, 1925. WCCO, being the most powerful station in the Northwest, became the area's key station in the NBC network.

In 1927, for example, some of the popular programs heard on the station were "Ipana Troubadours," sponsored by Bristol Myers; the "Goodrich Silvertown Cord Orchestra Band with the Silver Masked Tenor"; "The Cliquot Club Eskimos"; "Cities Service Sales Orchestra"; "Wheaties Quartette," and "The Eveready Hour."

The "Wheaties Quartette," of course, was locally originated at WCCO Radio studios in the Nicollet Hotel and was broadcast over the NBC network.

One of the early commercial programs sold on WCCO involved the Minneapolis Symphony and Northwestern National Bank—known as "The Banco Opera." Unfortunately or, perhaps, fortunately in the light of ensuing history, this attempt by WCCO to exert its commercial independence from the network led to an open break with NBC.

Earl Gammons recently recalled the event:

"We were then carrying a few commercial programs," Gammons recalls. "It was back in 1928 I believe. Mr. Bellows had succeeded in selling the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra program to the Northwestern National Bank on Sunday night. It was a great thing for the country, for the town and the orchestra.

"He had no sooner done it than we got word from the NBC Chicago office, where Niles Trammel was then vice president, that they had sold the Standard

Oil Company of Indiana the Chicago Symphony for a similar program which would come on just ahead of us on Sunday night.

"Mr. Bellows told them he would not carry the program.

"They said that if we did not carry it, they would give it to KSTP, which was just getting started and had no network affiliation," Gammons says.

"Mr. Bellows said that if they gave the program to KSTP we would begin to take some Columbia Broadcasting System programs—as he knew William S. Paley and thought he was quite a man and was going places in the field.

"It finally ended up that NBC asked us to leave—or told us that we were off their network and gave all their programs to KSTP. We kept the Minneapolis Symphony on for the Northwestern Bank and we also took the CBS programs, of which the only two I can remember were 'The Two Black Crows' and 'Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra.'"

It was on June 22, 1928, that Washburn Crosby Company became part of a larger combine of milling interests known today as General Mills, Inc. Ramifications of this large event had their effect on WCCO Radio. Directors of General Mills by 1929 believed they should get out of broadcasting and concentrate on the milling business.

The opportunity came quite unexpectedly. In August 1929, a young cigar salesman from Philadelphia—actually he was sales manager of the family-owned La Palina Cigar Company—came to see James Ford Bell, then chairman of the board of General Mills. His name was William S. Paley—a name not well known to Bell—and he made the startling proposal that he wanted to buy WCCO.

CBS is Formed

In the summer of 1927, Paley had been in Europe. He returned to find that his company had bought some advertising time on a small and then insignificant radio network known merely as "Columbia." Paley didn't like the idea, but he resolved to go to New York and learn about radio himself. He became so interested that he decided to buy the network. He paid an insignificant sum and re-named it "Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc."

Earl Gammons once talked with Paley's sister about the early days of CBS.

"She told me that Mr. Paley 'went around among his relatives—his father, his uncles, his brothers-in-law—raising money to buy Columbia,'" Gammons says. "She told me 'We all thought he would lose it all, but if he made a success of the idea we'd be very proud of him.'"

By 1929, Paley was looking for radio stations to add to his CBS network. He had heard about WCCO from Henry Bellows who, during the waning days of the Coolidge administration in 1923, had been appointed a member of the Federal Radio Commission, forerunner of the present Federal Communications Commission. Though he remained as manager of WCCO, Bellows made frequent trips to Washington on FRC business during 1929, when Herbert Hoover was president, and came to know William Paley.

Conversations between the two on the subject of WCCO is known by Paley alone, since Henry Bellows died in 1939 without recording them.

In September, 1929, it was agreed that CBS would purchase a one-third interest in WCCO for \$150,000 with an option to buy the remaining two-thirds for \$300,000 additional in three years. A new corporation was established to operate WCCO, Northwestern Broadcasting Company, Inc. Henry Bellows was president and manager and Earl Gammons was vice president and assistant manager. For the time being, the company

was a subsidiary of General Mills. Owners agreed to improve even further WCCO's facilities.

Toward 50,000 Watts

In that same year, 1929, the Federal Radio Commission made a decision with far-reaching effects on WCCO. It set aside 40 "clear channel" radio station frequencies and chose WCCO as one of the 40. The term "clear channel" means that only one full-time radio station may operate on the frequency: At the same time, WCCO was assigned the frequency of 810 kilocycles and power was increased to 50,000 watts.

As a first step a new transmitter building and two 300-foot towers were built on the Anoka site. Construction began in 1930 and was completed in 1932. The transmitter equipment, the first of its type that Western Electric had built, is still in use at WCCO today as a "standby" and a newer and more efficient 50,000-watt transmitter carries most of the load.

Studios were improved, too. Only half of the 12th floor of the Nicollet Hotel had been leased originally. The remainder of the floor was taken over in 1930.



The expanded transmitter was completed in the summer of 1932. This building still houses the original equipment and an additional 50,000 watt transmitter and special emergency and remote broadcast communications apparatus.



Paramount Pictures bought a giant Wurlitzer organ for WCCO studios in the Nicollet Hotel. In the wall back of the console were hundreds of pipes and valves and special effects instruments. Here is Eddie Dunstedter playing that organ.



One of the WCCO Radio State Fair exhibits in the mid-30's was devoted to a display of sound effects equipment used in dramatic shows. The wind machine consisted of canvas draped over a slatted wooden drum which was turned by hand. Walking in sand or walking in gravel was simulated by using rubber "plumber's friends." Beyond that are the automobile horn and siren.

The Expanding 30's

During 1929 to 1932 there was rapid change at WCCO Radio, but it heralded a long period of steady growth.

Henry Bellows was appointed vice president of Columbia Broadcasting System in Washington in 1931 and was immediately succeeded by Earl H. Gammons. The following year, CBS exercised its option with General Mills and became the sole owner of WCCO.

It was in this period of change that WCCO acquired the famous Wurlitzer pipe organ which was played by Eddie Dunstedter, Ramona Gerhard, Eddie Fortier, Rollie Altmeyer and many others over the years.

Recalling the incident, Earl Gammons states that in about 1930 the Paramount Motion Picture Company bought stock in Columbia Broadcasting System.

"They owned it only two or three years before Mr. Paley bought it back. Somebody said the only thing that Columbia got out of Paramount was convincing them to buy a pipe organ wholesale which they put in the WCCO studios. For years, we had what was said to be the biggest pipe organ in any radio station in the country."

In fact, the pipe organ was so large that a hole was cut through the roof of the Nicollet Hotel and the organ was lowered into the 13th floor studio.

Both programs and personnel were expanded enormously during these years.

Marjorie Pilney, actress; Al Chance, announcer, and Bobby Jellison, actor, had a program which they called "Lights Out." It was a real spook show complete with screams and the thud of falling bodies. The actors turned out the lights in the studio and read their scripts by flashlight to put themselves in the proper, "scary" mood.

One of the programs originated at WCCO and became nationally-known for a time was "Teena and Tim."

This is the way "Teena and Tim" began, as recalled by Earl Gammons:

"The Crowell Collier Company started a program with us in the early 30's and they had a girl doing shopping for them. Hayle Cavanor, who was our program manager and responsible for many of the things we did in the early days, hired this girl later known as Teena. Peggy Beckmark was her name. Peggy was half Irish and half Swedish. One night we were out to dinner with her and the man she worked for from the Crowell Company and she began telling us Swedish stories in dialect.

"She was so good that I talked her into writing a skit. She finally worked out 'Teena and Tim' with a little Irishman who had been with the Shubert Theater in Minneapolis. They were our first local script act and they became terrific. They had the biggest following of any show we had. They were on for several years and two or three "Tims" worked with Peggy during that time."

The plot involved Mrs. Hutchinson and the trials and tribulations she had with her Swedish maid, "Teena," and the Irish handyman, "Tim," who were always plotting some embarrassment behind her back. Florence Murphy, now retired, played the part of Mrs. Hutchinson.

Al Sheehan, who was head of the WCCO Artists Bureau and later program manager of WCCO, started as an announcer in March, 1928.

Al handled broadcast originations of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, interviewed celebrities when they came to the Twin Cities and handled play-by-play of Minneapolis Miller baseball games. He broadcast nightly from the balcony of the Shubert, describing the acts on stage.

Sheehan was the popular announcer for Oscar Danielson's orchestra in the late 1920's. Though he could not speak a word of Swedish, he was carefully coached by Danielson before each broadcast.

Andy Kenney and his band were popular on WCCO in the early 30's. Most popular of all was Andy's dog "Julius." Since the band made a number of personal appearances throughout the area, it became necessary to produce a "Julius" when the band was on the road. A mongrel was usually obtained from the dog pound and was returned after the trip was over. "Julius" became so popular with WCCO listeners that he received fan mail and presents from them. On the air, "Julius" was played by a barking actor.

Eddie Dunstedter, though known primarily as an organist, was also the leader of an orchestra. One difficulty was that Eddie's orchestra was just too big and too good to sell on a single radio station. It was network material.

Many other fine orchestras were heard on WCCO. Among the most famous were Jack Malerich and his "Singing Strings," one of the finest musical combinations heard anywhere. There was Cliff Reckow, who came from Winona; Clarence Olson and then Wally Olson who, for nearly 30 years, was leader of the WCCO Studio Orchestra and from 1960 until his retirement in 1963 was music director under Val Linder, program department head.

One of the finest tenors on WCCO in the early days was Walter Mallory who sang on the "Pence Buick

Program." Jerry Harrington was both an announcer and a singer. Some WCCO listeners may recall Harrington as he was billed in those days, "The Little Irish Tenor."

Other noted announcers were Ken Titus, Stewart Drill, Cy Seymour and Carl Burkland. Arthur Snyder, another announcer in the early 30's, starred in a program known as "The Old Producer," a show business type program.

A staple of WCCO programming in the early 30's was the "Mellerdramas." The actors came from the old Shubert Theater in Minneapolis and many of them later went on to fame and fortune in Hollywood and the Broadway stage. Among them were Johnny Dilson, Victor Jory and Gladys George.

One of the big nighttime shows on WCCO in the 30's was "The Hormel Show," with Jacob Heydrich as leader of the orchestra. Billed as "A Night In Old Mexico," the show featured Spanish songs and dances and actors talking in Latin accents as they sold Hormel Chili Con Carne.

"The Quiz of the Twin Cities" was a show that many WCCO listeners will remember. It started in 1938 with Max Karl in St. Paul and Eddie Gallaher in Minneapolis as co-emcees. The program was so popular that it continued through the 1940's.

Bursting at the Seams

WCCO Radio was growing rapidly. The 12th floor office space consisted of hotel rooms, each with an attached bath. Overcrowding reached the point where four and five persons were working in a single office. Filing cabinets were stacked in bathtubs. Kenena MacKenzie, who was continuity director, had a bathroom for an office for a time.

In 1937 the decision was made to move into new quarters. As Earl Gammons recalls it, "We had used the Elks Club auditorium in their building at 625 - 2nd Ave. So several times for special shows. They were giving up the club. It had a lot of room for offices and an auditorium on the fourth floor where we could put on shows. So we moved over there and fixed it up and it was a very satisfactory arrangement."

That old Elks building is now the WCCO Radio building.

On April 7, 1938, WCCO Radio opened what were then described as "the most modern and elaborate broadcasting headquarters in the Northwest. Styled, architecturally and mechanically, much like the CBS Hollywood studios at 'Columbia Square,' the studios of WCCO rank with those of the largest broadcasting centers in the world." The old Wurlitzer moved too—in through a wide window.

There was a giant civic celebration. The new studios were open to the touring public on the dedication day. The girls of WCCO, dressed in formals and wearing corsages, guided the guests through the new quarters. That evening, a dedicatory banquet was held in the ballroom of Hotel Nicollet to which business, civic and governmental leaders were all invited.

In 1938, you heard Al Harding, Bob Campbell, Ed Abbott, Roy Brant, Clellan Card, Eddie Gallaher and Charles Ross—all announcers. Cedric Adams had risen to be the top personality on WCCO.

Carl Burkland was sales manager; John McCormick, assistant general manager; Hayle C. Cavanor, program and production manager; Max Karl, educational director, and Wally Olson, musical director. Al Sheehan was head of the WCCO Artists Bureau, though he became program director several years later. Hugh S. McCartney was chief engineer.

Other popular personalities were the two harmonica-playing brothers, Tom and Eddie Plehal; the "Bob-O-Links"; Ramona Gerhard and Bea Bailey; Florence Lehmann; Dr. William A. O'Brien; Harry Habata, the accordionist; "The Red River Valley Gang"; Jerry Gardner, billed as the "Blues Singer"; George Grim, and Bruce Patterson, the Negro banjo player who was one of the finest ever heard in the Northwest.

From the CBS network, WCCO listeners were hearing Ted Husing; Barbara Luddy and Les Tremayne in "The First Nighter"; Andre Kostelanetz; Kate Smith; Benny Goodman; Paul Whiteman; "Professor Quiz," with Bob Trout as his announcer; Cecil B. DeMille on the "Lux Radio Theater"; Major Bowes and Eddie Cantor.

The Soap Operas

And then there were the "soap operas." For nearly 20 years, from the mid-1930's to the early 1950's, the dramatic serials dominated daytime radio.

The usual formula was 15 minutes of trauma, triangle, tears, a little bit of sex and, of course, the soap commercial.

Women loved them.

Men hated them . . . or pretended they did when they described the story and commented in detail on each adventure.

"Helen Trent," career girl, was flitting about constantly in that outside world of office glamor which, of course, did not exist—the world where handsome executives took Helen Trent to lunch and whispered little indiscretions in her ear. The theme on Helen Trent was, "Can a woman find happiness after 35?" Helen Trent never found it, though she remained an ageless "just over 35" for nearly 20 years. She had a new ro-



Hayle C. Cavanor was WCCO Radio director of programs and production throughout the 1930's. She started with the station in 1927 in the sales department. At the time, K. Wallace Hustad was handling programs and production. The two exchanged jobs in 1929. Hustad became sales manager and left WCCO to go to WLW in 1938.

mance every week and, when the love affair collapsed, she had the shoulder of good, faithful, understanding, loving, kind, sympathetic Gil upon which she could have a good cry.

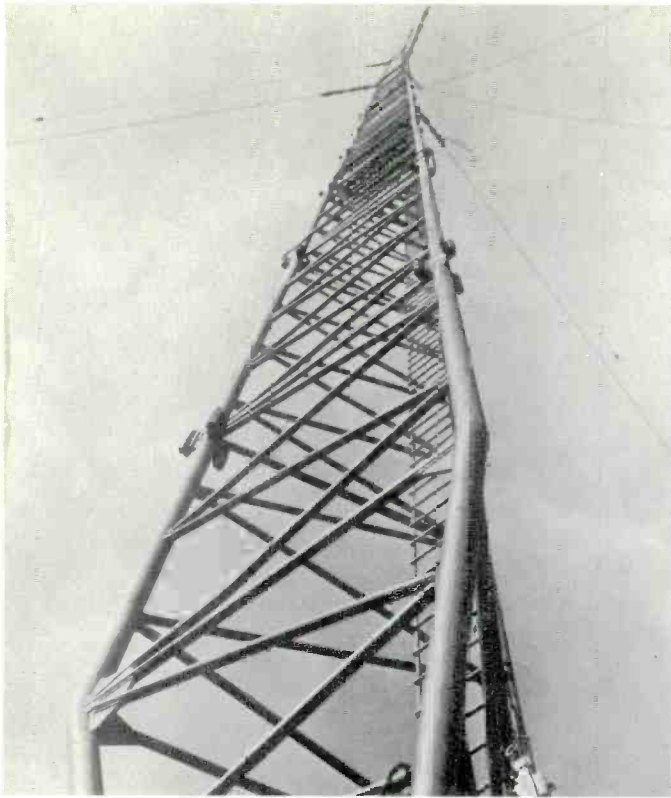
On "Road of Life" things never ran smoothly between Dr. Jim Brent and his wife Carol. Carol Brent was constantly flirting with marital disaster. Good Dr. Jim let her have her little flings and then brought her back with kisses and affection.

At times, tears dripped into the dishwater as women at home identified themselves with their heroines.

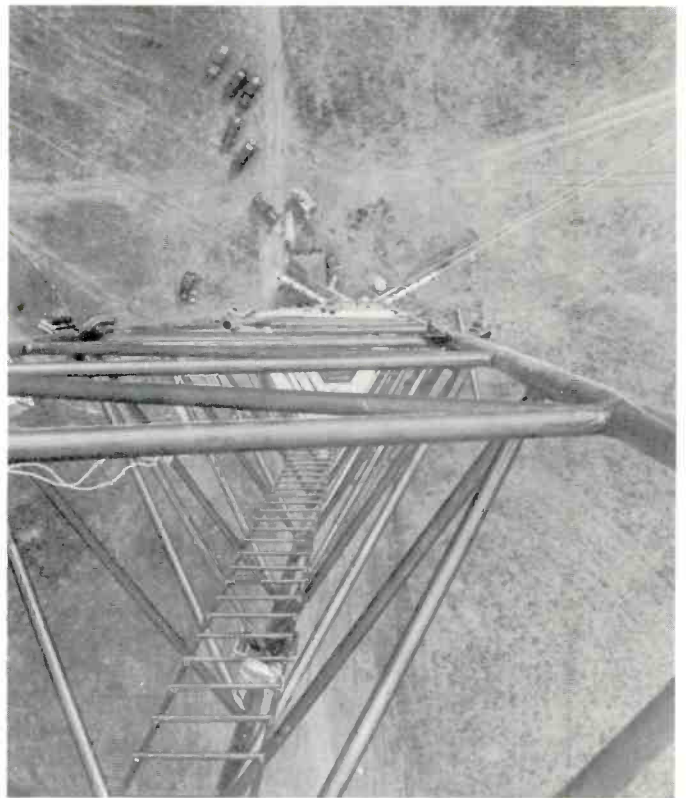
Then there was "Our Gal Sunday." "Can a girl from a little mining town in the west find happiness with England's richest and noblest Lord?"

Poor Sunday! She tripped, stumbled, foot-in-mouthed her way around Britain's cool upper crust for years and never found more than a fleeting moment of happiness.

The grandmother of them all was "Ma Perkins." "Ma" and "Shuffle" ran the lumber yard in town, or tried to run it, from Ma's kitchen where they sat philosophizing over the "goings-on" of the younger generation. Though "Ma Perkins" was popular with the



The present WCCO Radio antenna near Anoka was constructed in 1939. It is 654 feet high, the tallest structure in Minnesota when built. The entire tower radiates the signal. It is electrically "hot" from top to bottom.



This picture was taken from the slender top of the WCCO Radio antenna by Russell Person, WCCO engineer, now deceased. He was the only WCCO employee who had the nerve to climb up and take this historic view.



WCCO Radio had just moved into its new studios at 625 Second Ave. So., when this 1938 picture was taken. Personalities are (left to right): Clellan Card and George Bradley; Toby Prin, at piano; Tom and Eddie Plehal, playing harmonicas; Harry Habata, accordionist; Kenny Spears and Irv Wickner; Wally Olson, playing violin; Rollie Altmeyer, seated at piano; Ernie Garvin, Elton Bjorklund, Paul Fillmore, Clem Borland, Bob Link, Hal Garvin, Dick Link, and Sheldon Gray — all gathered around the microphone.



The entire staff of WCCO Radio assembled for this 1942 Earl Gammons farewell party picture. After ten years as WCCO manager, Gammons became vice president in charge of the Washington office of Columbia Broadcasting System.

older set, the “young marrieds” had a sneaking suspicion that their own relatives were borrowing huge chunks of Ma’s philosophy and were lecturing them with it.

“Ma Perkins” immediately preceded Cedric Adams’ “Noontime News” on WCCO Radio in the 40’s. Many is the day in the old fourth floor studio auditorium that Cedric told his audience just before he went on the air, “Well, you’ve all heard Ma Perkins. My, but that old bag has a lot of tragedy in her life.”

This remark brought laughter from the men, but it sometimes brought stern looks from grim-jawed women in the audience. Cedric could joke about other women, but not their “Ma Perkins.”

At Christmas-tide, all the problems, the pent-up emotions, the triangle love affairs suddenly disappeared from the soap operas. The characters embraced one another for one week of syrupy affection. When the vacuum cleaner was picking up the last needle from the discarded Christmas tree, there they were at it again—busily tearing one another’s lives into shreds.

The Changing Scene

In the immediate years before and in the early years of World War II, WCCO underwent another period of rather drastic change.

One of the major changes came from Washington where the Federal Communications Commission re-allocated all the radio channels in the U.S. WCCO was changed from 810 to 830 kilocycles, the 8-3-0 spot where you find it on your radio dials today. On October 26, 1939, the station also was granted permission to erect a “vertical radiator” type antenna.

WCCO’s new antenna was the tallest structure in Minnesota—654 feet to the top of the flashing red beacon. The new “radiator” antenna sent WCCO programs still farther into the Northwest, serving even more radio listeners.

With the U.S. entry into World War II in 1941, some WCCO Radio men went into uniform.

New voices and new personalities were heard on the air. Some of them were Ray Tenpenny, George Johnson, Rolf Hertsgaard, Paul Wann and Frank Butler.

In 1942, Earl H. Gammons, ten years manager of WCCO, was appointed vice president of Columbia Broadcasting System in Washington.

To many members of the WCCO family, Earl Gammons was WCCO. He made it a point to know each member of his staff well and personally.

"When Gammons came into the office in the morning at the old Nicollet Hotel," Clellan Card recalls, "he would start way down at the end of the hall and stop in at every office—gradually working his way back to his own office up front."

"An inveterate pipe smoker, he left a trail of matches behind him as he zigged and zagged from one office to the next.

"The word went ahead of Gammons, the people in the first offices he visited alerted those up the line: 'The boss has a real good joke this morning,' or 'He's telling an old one today—get ready to laugh good and hard.'"

Everyone at the station turned out for the Gammons "farewell party," and there were many misty eyes as Gammons made his farewell speech.

Gammons was succeeded by William E. Forbes who was placed in charge temporarily by CBS. In December, 1942, Austin E. Joscelyn arrived from Charlotte, N. C., to take over the managerial duties at WCCO, and remained for the next five years.

It was under Joscelyn's direction that the WCCO Radio News Bureau was established with Sig Mickel-

son as News Director. A new era of public service and information was started that continues to grow today.

There were a succession of WCCO managers during the 40's and 50's: Merle S. Jones from June, 1947 to September, 1949; Wendell C. Campbell, for a brief five-month period, succeeded by Eugene B. Wilkey, manager from February, 1950 until the change in WCCO ownership in 1952.

Within CBS, WCCO was coming to be known as a training ground for network executive personnel and many "graduates" moved from the station.

Gammons had become a network vice president. Carl Burkland became manager of the CBS radio station in Washington. Harvey Struthers, who had been WCCO sales manager, became manager of CBS Boston. Tom Dawson, another WCCO sales manager, now is vice president in charge of network television sales. Merle Jones is today president of the CBS-TV network. Carl Ward, who also had served as sales manager at WCCO, became manager of station WCBS, New York. Wendell Campbell was named head of CBS Radio Sales. Sig Mickelson went to New York where he became vice president in charge of CBS News.



Esther Baldwin was secretary to five general managers from 1943 until she retired in 1958. They were Joscelyn, Campbell, Jones, Wilkey and Haeg. In her quiet, efficient way, she kept order in a frantic world of quick decisions. "By her example, she taught a dozen men how to succeed," one manager said.



Merle S. Jones was manager from mid-1947 to the end of 1949. Shown here, Jones is addressing a Minneapolis luncheon group. Jones would never divulge what his middle initial "S" stood for.



Earl Gammons "on the air" with Clellan Card in 1942, shortly before Gammons left to become a CBS executive.



Taking over from Wendell Campbell, Eugene B. Wilkey was manager of WCCO from early 1950 to the summer of 1952 when WCCO was purchased by Midwest Radio-Television, Inc. and Larry Haeg was appointed general manager.

In the post-war years, WCCO Radio achieved nationwide recognition for documentary programs conceived by Mickelson and written by two newly-returned servicemen, Ralph Andrist and Ralph Backlund.

"Neither Free Nor Equal" was a documentary on racial equality which was aired over the full CSB network. Some of the conditions depicted in "Neither Free Nor Equal" are as pertinent today as 20 years ago. Another award-winning documentary was "Arrows in the Dust," which examined the plight of the Indian minority throughout the United States.

It was in the 1940's that the WCCO-Radio Aquatennial and Winter Carnival shows were inaugurated for the benefit of both St. Paul and Minneapolis organizations as community service programming increased and entertainment shows brought new names.

After the famous postwar "raid" upon NBC, WCCO listeners began hearing Jack Benny, Fred Allen, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy and Amos 'n' Andy on the CBS network.

Television Arrives

A new entertainment force attracted Northwest listeners with the arrival of television. It had been seen in New York for some time and came to the Twin Cities in 1948. CBS, which owned WCCO Radio's 50,000-watt, clear-channel voice, agreed to merge WCCO with WTCN.

The merger took place August 15, 1952 when owners of WTCN radio and television purchased control of WCCO Radio, with these executives of the new Midwest Radio-Television, Inc.: William J. McNally, chairman of the board; Robert B. Ridder, president, and F. Van Konynenberg, executive vice president. They assumed the WCCO call letters for the sister television operation two days later.

A key decision was made that shaped WCCO Radio as it entered a new era of change and growth. The owners decreed that the radio would assume neither burdens nor benefits of the corporate affiliation with television.

Larry Haeg, a veteran radio man who loved the microphone and knew radio communications, was made general manager of WCCO Radio. He was charged with continuing a completely separate and competitive organization.

Radio operates in its own building, blocks away from television. News and program and public service and sales organizations are keen rivals.

An illustration comes from the remark of a radio newsman who was questioned by a visiting foreign



This team aired WCCO's award-winning "Neither Free Nor Equal" documentary on racial discrimination over the national network. At far left is Ramona Gerhard, who played the musical score. Standing next to her is Ralph Andrist, one of the writers; one of the actresses on the show; Robert Sutton, producer; Ralph Backlund, writer; Sig Mickelson, news director of WCCO. Man at extreme right is the late Ed Viehman, announcer.



On August 15, 1952, Midwest Radio-Television, Inc. purchased controlling interest in WCCO Radio. Two days later the owners announced the television station would be called WCCO-TV. Executives in the new ownership are (left to right): Larry Haeg, manager of WCCO Radio; William J. McNally, chairman of the board of Midwest Radio-Television, Inc.; Gene Wilkey, who had been WCCO Radio manager and soon would be appointed manager of KMOX, St. Louis; F. Van Konynenberg, executive vice president; and Robert Ridder, president of Midwest Radio-Television, Inc.

study team. He explained that “we are broadcasting the news now that you will see on television tonight before it’s published in the papers tomorrow.”

That spirit had been emphasized in 1951 when Jim Bormann succeeded Mickelson as news director. It was intensified after the merger. At first many radio employees were disappointed that their cherished call letters were used on a television station. They seemed to put extra energy into retaining the prestige that WCCO Radio had earned on its own.

By 1954, the radio staff had accepted the new member into the family. That was when WCCO became wholly locally owned. CBS sold its 47 per cent interest to the Minneapolis Star and Tribune Co.

In many cities, the novelty of television had hurt radio. Audiences gathered around blinking sets for fuzzy pictures as they had tolerated the static of crystal sets in early radio. Heavy budgets for the new medium compelled owners of joint operations to put first attention on their new investments.

WCCO Radio showed only a mild reaction to the picture tube invasion. But within its own field, new sounds were heard. Scores of new radio licenses had been granted after the war. To win attention, some of the new broadcasters hammered brash and noisy sounds that reached thousands of youngsters.

This was possible because the tiny transistor was replacing the vacuum tube. Receivers were small, portable . . . and cheap. Nearly every member of a household now had “my radio.” And that meant that the teen-ager had his own. It was possible for mother and dad to hear WCCO while the younger set delighted in the rock and roll music that was beamed for them—in the vain hopes it would turn all the household to the new “all-music” station.

In some cities, the new stations succeeded. In all cities, they attracted new attention to radio itself just as the picture tubes were reaching for the nighttime stage show audiences of old-fashioned radio.

By the late 1950’s, giant after giant in the radio field had given ground to the “single-sound” station, whom the oldtimers spoke of as “wireless juke boxes.”

WCCO Radio was well into changing its old-time sounds when the national debate on “noisy radio” reached its peak about 1956.

Engineering at the studios had kept pace with the transistors in the receivers. WCCO was equipped to make radio as portable at its end as the receivers were.

And WCCO saw that there was a new role for radio . . . the intimate, personal communication that was possible now because each listener had “my radio.”

Many listeners had enjoyed the old stage show entertainment where they were spectators in an audi-

torium, so to speak, while they watched the performers from the sidelines. The soap operas were slipping, but still enjoyed loyal fans. Television was staging the old spectator shows, with pictures, and three or four listeners gathered before the improved tubes just as they had gathered around the big speakers of their radio superheterodynes 35 years earlier.

But no medium could supply some of the services that had been developed so fully at WCCO Radio. And here WCCO built its modern program philosophy . . . “full-size, complete radio.”

Information services were expanded. To the 25-year-old school closing announcement service was added a new tornado warning service. It was based on the post-war development of the Conelrad defense service. Conelrad was established nationwide to warn of enemy attack while denying hostile bombers a radio beam on which to find their target.

Newsmen were equipped with new portable tape recording devices and two-way radios to mobile units.

New Engineering

And then engineering developed an unusually fine quality system for linking any telephone in the country to WCCO.

The late Kermit Sueker, asked by a staff member to provide the special phone equipment, gave his typical first answer: “It can’t be done. You just don’t know engineering, you program people.” And again typically, he started that very night to design the devices without word to anyone.

The Sueker creation was developed with the help of three other engineers—Bob Wallinder, assistant chief who succeeded Sueker on his death in March 1963, Fred Herrmann, day supervisor, and Chuck Kunze, a research ham operator away from the station. His devices opened new opportunities for all kinds of programs, assuring high quality transmissions.

“Open Mike” brought listeners by telephone into direct touch with controversial figures in the news for personal confrontation before a vast radio audience. WCCO placed microphones all over the country to reach prominent persons for questioning by its listeners on this forum.

The devices became the key to a new quiz program that was named “Honest to Goodness” when television quiz scandals hit the news. The WCCO program was built around Randy Merriman, back home from New York network stardom. Randy boasted properly that “this is the quiz that’s rigged for you to win. We post the answers at gasoline stations. Get the answers, then listen for us to call you with the question.”

Engineers got into the act. They would interrupt a Merriman conversation with a mischievous voice or



Chief Engineer Kermit Sueker in 1958 devised new equipment that made high-quality telephone broadcasts possible and directed changes to remote automatic control of transmitters.

sound effect. Merriman and Chapman identified the intruder as "Abner." He became a national figure. To this day he gets fan mail from all over the country because the evening "Honest to Goodness" is widely heard on the clear channel skywave signal.

Solid, serious programs were coming, too. To help celebrate the 1958 Minnesota centennial of statehood, WCCO Radio produced some of the most elaborate programs ever undertaken. Twelve hour-long historical programs were broadcast, each twice. Each "Minnesota Milestones" told one aspect of 100 years of history.

Another series in 1960 combined documentary reporting on the scene with the new "Open Mike," made possible by high-quality two-way telephone broadcasts. After each documentary, listeners discussed the topic with specialists in the studio. The topics: "Bachelor Girl," problems of small town women working in big cities; "Wasted Wisdom," the idleness of retired citizens; "Suburban Story," describing booming suburbs, and "Working Wives," the story of the one fourth of the married women who work outside their homes.

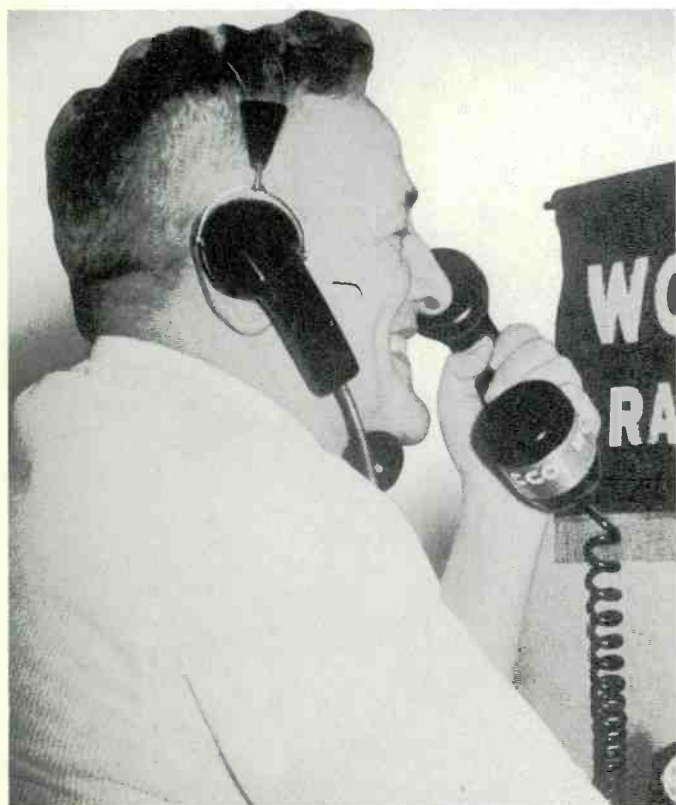
While the mobility of the microphones was emphasized in the late 1950's, so was mobility of the staff.



Crazy quiz shows bring crazy fan mail, like this sketch by Frank Antoncich of St. Paul. He sent it to Randy Merriman and Dick Chapman. He included everything from Abner's chickens who interrupt "Honest to Goodness" to a computer to figure the boss' prize money.



Governor Karl Rolvaag of Minnesota, like earlier governors, submitted to monthly "Open Mike" discussions in his office with Bob DeHaven as moderator. This was part of the modern emphasis on person-to-person programs.



Governor William Egan of Alaska spoke from Washington, D.C., and discussed recovery from the 1964 earthquake on "Open Mike."



FCC Commissioner Lee Loevinger, former Minnesota Supreme Court Justice, returned from Washington in 1963 to answer "Open Mike" questioners.



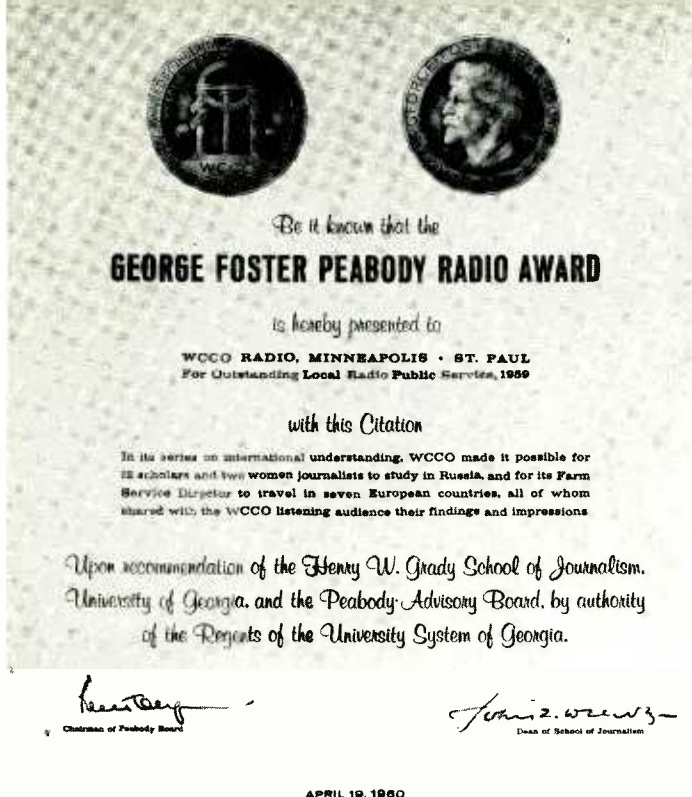
Orin Lee Staley, founder of National Farmers Organization, was "Open Mike" guest from his office in Iowa when he first made news in 1963. NFO later sponsored regular broadcasts, just as farm leaders of depression days had used WCCO to tell their story. Program Director Val Linder, on phone, is shown with Staley and engineer.



Governor George Wallace of Alabama in 1964 answered listeners' questions about his beliefs on racial segregation. He also spoke at WCCO-University symposium.



Teamster President Jimmie Hoffa found "Open Mike" listeners friendly as well as critical before his 1964 convictions.



Highest honor in broadcasting was awarded WCCO Radio in 1960—the Peabody Award for outstanding public service.

Dr. Ziebarth went to Russia on a study team and took his WCCO microphone along, recording from the most distant interior points reached by American correspondents. Maynard Speece reported from Europe with the Secretary of Agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson.

The station helped send two Minnesota women journalists to Russia. They took with them recorded greetings to the Russian people from WCCO listeners and reported back on “Open Mike.”

For these international relations activities and for a long series of regional public service activities, WCCO Radio was awarded the highest honor in broadcasting.

In 1960, the Peabody Award was given to the station for “promoting international understanding and for outstanding public service to the communities it serves.” Where several awards usually were given each year to various size stations for several kinds of programs, only one award was given for radio in 1960 and it came to WCCO.

One critic at the awards luncheon in New York observed that the station was making a mark for “talking with its audiences rather than to them.” The new electronic devices and new concepts of mobile radio were responsible. Many programs regularly give the listeners their chance to speak up, to question, to comment, to advise, to share information with each other.

This reaching out and this close contact with listeners was carried into other fields. Off the air, WCCO brought hundreds of people together for travel.

It arranged foreign airplane tours for listeners. Bob DeHaven and Howard Viken took groups to the Orient, as far as Bangkok. DeHaven, Charlie Boone and Joyce Lamont took holiday visitors to Hawaii. Jergen Nash and his Scottish wife Mary led more than 120 through eight countries of Europe in three weeks. Nearly 2,000 persons have enjoyed the hospitality of WCCO personalities on group tours abroad and to holidays at Florida baseball camps.

Big time professional baseball came to the region in 1961 when the Washington Senators became the Minnesota Twins. WCCO joined in purchasing broadcast rights for what industry magazines said was upwards of \$250,000 a season. Howard Viken organized a trip for listeners and took them to New York to see the first game by the new Twins—and they shut out the Yankees, 6 to 0.

Merriman has been taking listeners to spring training in Florida each spring on his “Fan in the Stands” tour. After the Minnesota Vikings were organized in 1962, Merriman took football fans to see them play on the West Coast.

These professional sports have become an important program feature, following a WCCO tradition based on Big Ten sports coverage.

When Minnesota played in the Rose Bowl on New Year’s Day, 1961, the station faced an unusual problem. It had covered every Minnesota football game for many years. But this important national event was an exclusive play-by-play program for another network.

WCCO made itself the “Rose Bowl station” anyway by sending a team of personalities, producers and announcers to Pasadena ahead of the game. They broadcast numerous short features each day and an hour-long live show from Pasadena every evening for a week. Right up to kickoff, WCCO reported Rose Bowl activities. Then Dick Enroth thrust a microphone in front of Gopher heroes as they left the field after losing to Washington University 17 to 7. At the hotel studios others picked up the team and coaches for two-way “Open Mike” broadcasts immediately on their return. WCCO also followed the Gopher crowds to the coast for the repeat contest in 1962 when Minnesota beat UCLA, 21 to 3.

The mobile WCCO staff adopted a slogan to describe the greatly increased remote broadcast activities. “On the Go with ‘CCO,” they announced, and you could expect to hear reports from anywhere.

When the major outdoor sports seasons opened, WCCO established extensive programs from around the region. Two days of broadcasts opened fishing seasons at Detroit Lakes, Mille Lacs, Bemidji and Alexandria, Minnesota. The pheasant hunting seasons were opened at Marshall, Minn., bass fishing at Minnetonka



Howard Viken took 86 fans to New York to see the first game by new Minnesota Twins who beat the Yankees April 12, 1961. WCCO broadcasts every play of Twins baseball and Minnesota Vikings professional football.



Jergen Nash was host to 123 listeners on a three-week European trip through eight countries in October, 1962.

and Forest Lake. Winter fishing specials originated at White Bear Lake, Mille Lacs and Minnetonka.

Most listeners wondered if it was a gag, but Dick Chapman in dead seriousness developed a research project with some fish biologists. He figured you could predict angling success by studying where fish were gathering the day ahead of the season and measuring water temperature, weather and feed conditions.

That's when WCCO Radio "fish finders" popped up from lakes all around the region. They were skin divers who were assigned by the station to hunt for fish the day before the season and report on the outdoor broadcasts. Their forecasts, to Chapman's glee, were amazingly accurate.

To support the newer, mobile broadcasting, WCCO had rebuilt its Minneapolis studios and offices in 1960 and had improved transmitter operations.

Old theater-type shows had required large studios. The space of old Studio One became five modern offices. The massive organ loft and machinery room provided space for a new engineering shop near master control,

a tape recording studio and control room and a new announce studio. The old numbers were retained and there is no "Studio One." A new and complete State Fair Studio has been added as "Studio Seven."

New Reliability

The transmitters were equipped with elaborate remote control devices and a sturdy standby generator. With two independent power sources and the station's own generator, WCCO was off the air only a minute in a whole year's operation. That was big contrast with several hours of outages in early days and with the disruption in 1957 when a gigantic power failure had darkened the entire Twin Cities area.

Conelrad gave way to the Emergency Broadcasting System as missiles replaced the manned bomber. It is not considered necessary to try to confuse possible attackers with only two radio signals at the old 640 and 1240 kc Conelrad positions. Now WCCO would broadcast at its regular 830 kc position even in great emergency. The transmitter has a fallout shelter from which



Jim Hill broadcast reports of three WCCO Radio "fish finders" from his boat on Lake Winnibigoshish in 1962.



The slam-bang action of Minnesota Vikings professional football was added to the air in 1961. Here Vikings' quarterback Fran Tarkenton (10) has just tossed a pass and Grady Alderman (67) starts his downfield blocking assignment. Packer players are Ray Nitschke (66) and Urban Henry (83). Sports Director Paul Giel, a collegiate All America, and Ray Christensen report the Vikings games over WCCO.



They report every inning of every Minnesota Twins baseball game . . . and live with the team at home and away. Herb Carneal, Ray Scott and Halsey Hall, the WCCO Radio baseball team. Engineer above them in the broadcast booth at Metropolitan Stadium is Chuck Kunze.

it would be possible to operate 14 days without resupply or outside help.

CBS changed programs too, as WCCO emphasized its direct, informal and intimate broadcasting as compared with the earlier formal "productions." The "soaps" gave way to numerous briefer information-type programs. Network experts from a dozen fields broadcast daily on news background, foreign affairs, show business, politics and government, science, fashions and human relations. The network provides only 30 hours of the 164 that WCCO broadcasts each week. Most of the CBS material is news and related information.

The WCCO emphasis on news was dramatically shown on Friday, November 22, 1963. From fragments on a newswire, WCCO broadcast the first word in this region: "President Kennedy has been seriously wounded in a shooting at Dallas, Texas." That was at 12:39 p.m., just as Jergen Nash was finishing the "Noontime News." From then on, radio news made history with the speed of its coverage. The somber weekend until

President John F. Kennedy was buried Monday, November 25, was reminiscent of radio broadcasts when President Roosevelt had died in 1945.

With the increased public reliance on radio for news and information, the FCC has faced new problems as the air waves became crowded. Some 4,900 commercial radio stations broadcast in the United States. To make room for even more, FCC is considering whether to reduce the number of clear channel stations. One plan calls for retaining only 12 of them, including WCCO Radio. The 12 new clears would broadcast not at the 50,000 watts maximum now allowed, but at something much greater. As "the First Forty" closed, WCCO Radio applied for a license in 1964 to develop its services at 750,000 watts, to serve better within the traditional WCCO area and to reach vast areas without radio service.

The story of the next 40 years may be based on exciting new services, broadcast at greater power . . . still designed to deserve the title, "Good Neighbor to the Northwest."

After covering 1960 Winter Olympics, WCCO staged a tribute to world champion U.S. hockey team in St. Paul. Governor Orville Freeman, left, awarded trophies to 17 squad members, including Thomas Williams, as Halsey Hall presided.



on December 2-5, 1963-Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago
WITH SPECIAL BROADCAST ON WCCO PRESENTED BY
The Peavey Co. ... The Production Credit Associations of Minnesota

WCCO
RADIO
Dial 830



In Chicago, Engineer Bob Johnson fed 4-H Club Congress broadcasts to WCCO studios. Maynard Speece and Jim Hill are interviewing Glenn Frietag of Litchfield, Minn., and Mary Geurs of Hamel, Minn.



High school athletes, bands and coaches are honored weekly on WCCO Prep Parade broadcast. The year's all-state teams, coaches and band directors met at the annual awards dinner on University of Minnesota campus just before the state basketball finals.



Farm and city people understand each other well in the Northwest. One reason is the annual Farm-City Day project of WCCO. Joyce Lamont and Howard Viken were treated royally in 1963 in the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Most, Jr. near Prescott, Wis., from where they broadcast. WCCO people have broadcast from 22 Minnesota and Wisconsin farms in five years.



Franklin Hobbs is a favorite on college campuses with his "music all night from 'Hobbs House.'" He broadcast from the Gustavus Adolphus campus in October, 1962.



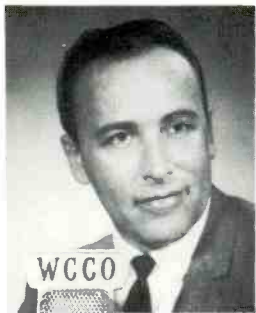
WCCO Radio entertains more than 5,000 young people each year at the state basketball tournament party in Minneapolis. Favorite combos of the moment and a top band entertain with WCCO personalities.



OUR FAMILY TODAY...

AND PEOPLE BEHIND THE SCENES





CHARLIE BOONE



JIM BORMANN



RAY CHRISTENSEN



BOB DE HAVEN



DICK ENROTH



DICK CHAPMAN



PAUL GIEL



HALSEY HALL



SID HARTMAN



ROGER ERICKSON



ARV JOHNSON



JIM HILL



FRANKLIN HOBBS



JOYCE LAMONT



JERGEN NASH



HOWARD VIKEN



RANDY MERRIMAN



MAYNARD SPEECE

The Voices of WCCO Radio

You hear their voices. Here are the faces of the people who visit you on WCCO Radio. You have seen most of them with sleeves rolled up during a typical day at WCCO in earlier pages of this anniversary volume. Now they are dressed for their formal family portraits arranged from "B" to "Z."

Among them are specialists in every field. They tickle a funny bone. They explore the background of a complex government question. They entertain with a vast array of music or they report the details of baseball, golf, football, basketball and hockey either play-by-play or in the day's sports summary.

They are skilled in analyzing and reporting the day's news. They are interpreters of sometimes confusing weather data. They are experts in agriculture and business affairs. They keep you posted on your community events and even outdoor recreation.

All of them are carrying on the traditions of WCCO service established through many years . . . and they are building new radio sounds and service concepts which will continue to grow and change in the next 40 years.



UNCLE FOGGY



JOHN KUNDLA



SAM MELE



HERB CARNEAL



RAY SCOTT



BOB CARLSON



NORM VAN BROCKLIN



MURRAY WARMATH



DR. E. W. ZIEBARTH



BERNIE BIERMAN

"On Mike-Off Mike"

It takes a small army of specialists to keep a radio station as large as WCCO functioning smoothly. In fact, it requires four persons behind the scenes to support on the air each and every voice that you hear daily.

These "Off Mike" persons include writers, salesmen, executives, electronic specialists, statisticians, news reporters, promotion and public relations people, advertising specialists, accountants, those skilled in program production, music librarians, secretaries, stenographers, clerks, and maintenance personnel.

Their names are seldom, if ever, heard on WCCO Radio. You do not hear their voices. Yet, they are as much a part of the WCCO Radio family as all the names with which you are familiar.

Naturally, all these members of the WCCO Radio family work in teams by departments: executive, program, commercial, traffic, engineering, news and public affairs and maintenance.

In the pages which follow, you can see what happens at WCCO Radio on a typical day as "On Mike — Off Mike" work together to bring you entertainment, information and WCCO community services.



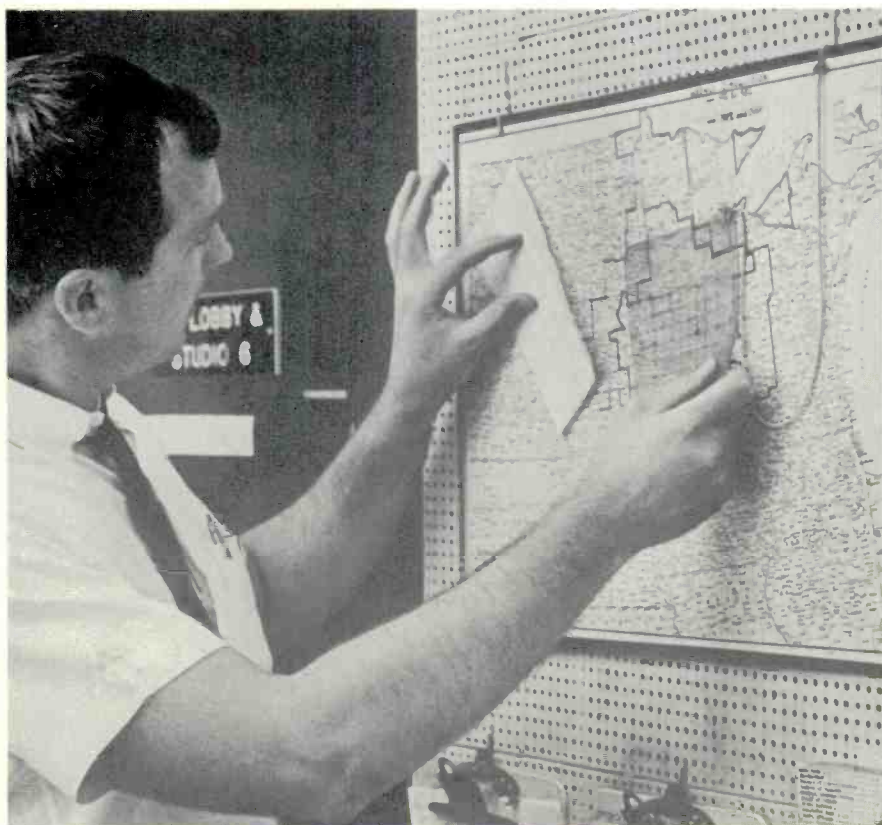
Studio engineer, Harland Gabrielson, works controls at the "patch panel." All WCCO Radio programs from home studios, CBS network and remote points come in and go to the transmitters through this panel. Typical programs are broadcasts of the Minnesota Twins, Vikings and Gophers, fed from here on WCCO network.



Jergen Nash is on duty in "Studio 5," the basic announce studio. From this spot, you hear most music programs, time, temperature, weather reports and commercial announcements.



Roger Erickson, announcer, speaks on the "talk back" system. He is checking signals with his engineer during his "After Noon" show. The clock, above Erickson's hand, is accurate to the split second.



WCCO Radio newsman Jerry Brennan has just received word of a tornado alert from the U.S. Weather Bureau. He is plotting the possible course of the storm on the WCCO-Land map and will have the information on the air in seconds.



Discussing a program idea that you will shortly be hearing on the air are Val Linder, Program Director; Jim Bormann, Director of News and Public Affairs, and Larry Haeg, General Manager.



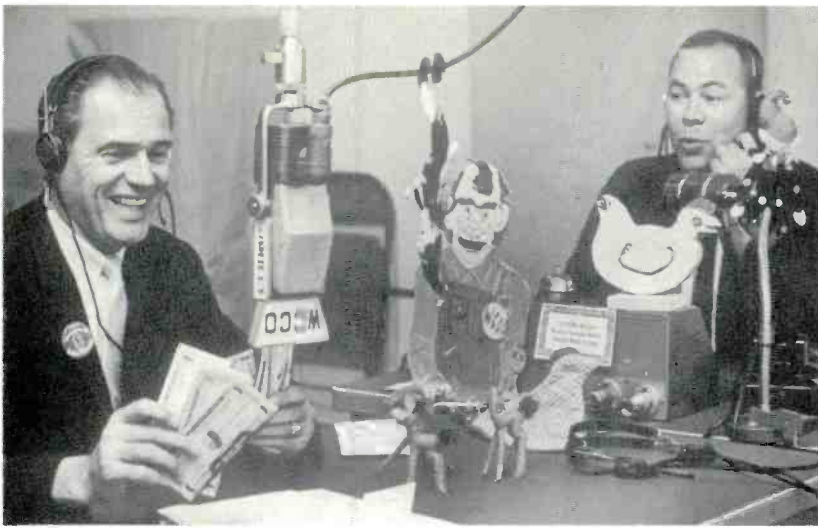
Preparing a program for the air often involves "editing," "mixing," and "dubbing," in this tape recording studio. Working out the problems are Jerry Miller, Engineer; Bill Balch, Producer, and John Howe, Engineer.



The WCCO Radio music library holds 8,000 LP records, 7,500 78 RPM records and 7,100 45's — plus sound and other special effect records. John Herrick, Assistant Librarian (on ladder), and Music Director Ernie Garven keep this vast library of more than 71,000 tunes accurately arranged for the choice of air personalities and producers.

Howard Viken enjoys teasing Joyce Lamont — just a little — when she is giving "special events" news on the morning "Howard Viken" show.



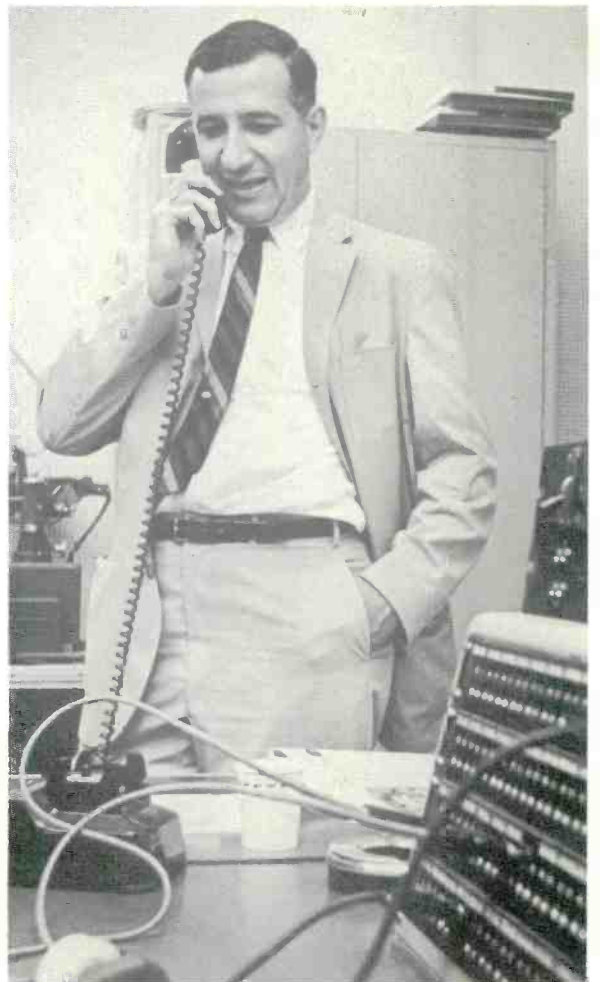


"Honest to Goodness," this is a picture of Randy Merriman and Dick Chapman having both fun and at work on their popular WCCO Radio telephone quiz show.

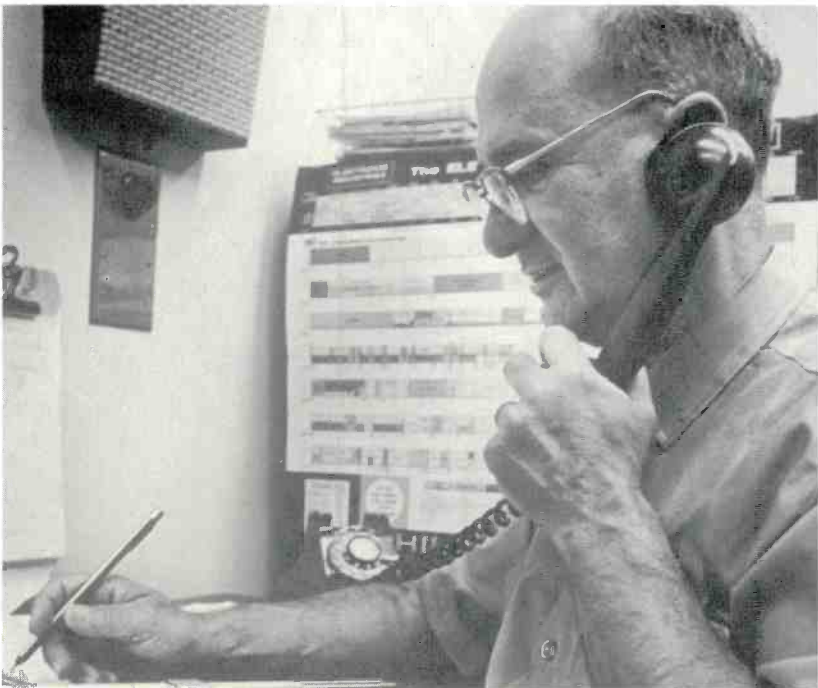


The pleasant voice on the phone when you call WCCO Radio is that of Pat Larson, Receptionist.

Button-cute secretary Cheryl Person helps WCCO salesmen keep their records straight.



Sports broadcaster Sid Hartman is in the recording studio, lining up an interview with a national sports personality.



A WCCO Radio veteran since the 1920's, Fred Herrmann is now studio engineering supervisor. He is working out new circuitry ideas to further improve WCCO's "Open Mike" and "Partyline" apparatus.



Under the pressure of a deadline, Newsman Bob West (foreground) gets a tape recorded statement ready for a newscast. In background (left to right) are Fred Herrmann, Producer Bob Wetherall pleading for "just a few minutes engineering time" with Chuck Kunze, Engineering Supervisor.



"Cueing up" a commercial announcement that will be played on the air is Studio Engineer John Howe.



"Hey, Frank. Phone call!" Frank Kemmerer, Newsman, stops short as he takes copy from teletype machine.



Making sure automatic tape-recording device is working properly, Engineer Wally Herron checks the automatic CBS NetAlert warning apparatus.



Announcer Dick Enroth is doing a special stock market report from Bache & Company offices.



That busy place, the mail desk, is staffed by Irene Doherty — another station veteran from Nicollet Hotel days. With her is office page John Lane.



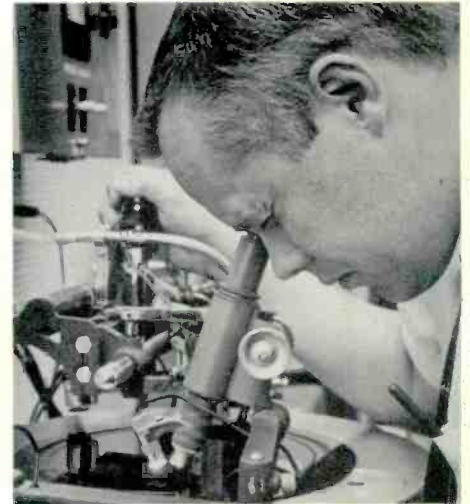
Going over the payroll, Pat Sailer and Jean Hebeisen work together in the Accounting Department.



Making sure a pre-recorded farm feature is ready for air, Darlene Burke, Farm Department Secretary, looks over the tape.



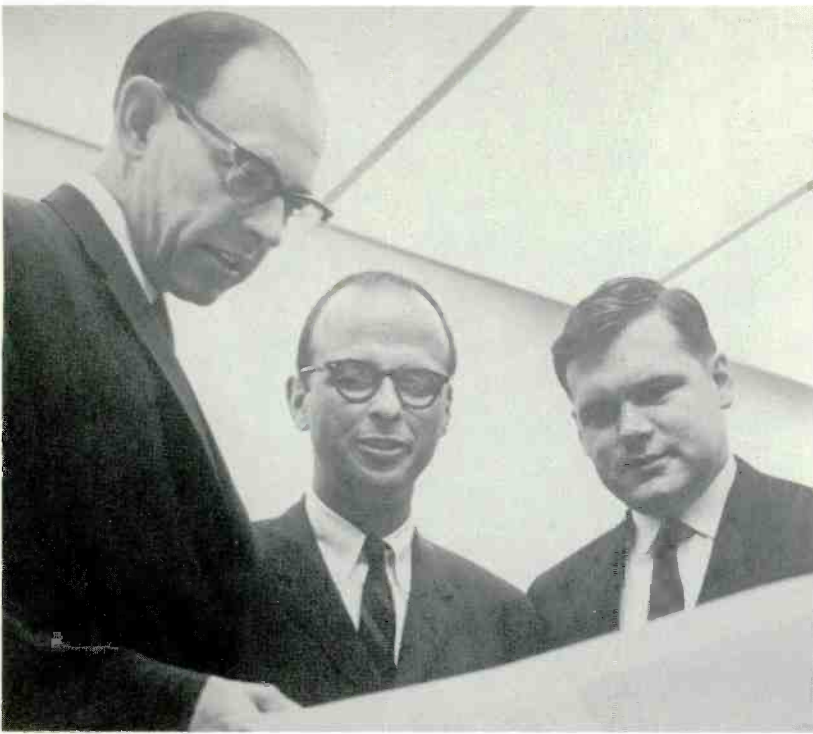
Judy Lebedoff and Judi Hagberg sort mail from listeners in the Sales Promotion and Program Promotion Departments. Tacks in the map mark locations of "clear channel" listeners who have written to WCCO Radio.



At the disc cutting lathe, Engineer Jim Erickson checks the grooves through a microscope for depth and width.



In the boss' office, Bob Woodbury, Commercial Manager; Clayt Kaufman, Director of Sales Promotion and Research; and Salesmen Rollie Williams and Buck Buchanan "get the word" at a Tuesday sales meeting.



Discussing a WCCO Radio public service project are Gordon Mikkelsen, Director of Program Promotion and Public Relations; Clayt Kaufman, and Rob Brown, Assistant Director of Program Promotion.



Bills, bills, bills and she keeps track of them — Kathy Olson, Accounting Clerk.



Cordial greeter Marti Olson is evening Receptionist at WCCO Radio.

Harry Peterson, veteran engineer, is "fussy" about technical details that give WCCO broadcasts their unique quality. He's hunting for possible "bugs" in a tape.



The man nobody ever sees — George Collier, in charge of the two 50,000 watt transmitters and short wave equipment and emergency installations in Coon Rapids, near Anoka, Minnesota.



Announcer Jergen Nash (right) listens happily as his own golden tones are played back. With him are Day Engineering Supervisor Chuck Kunze and Bob Wetherall, Newsmen.



Bill Fuhrmann, research, shows Joyce Mills, program department secretary, latest report on audience response in the immediate five-states.



Responsible for keeping the offices cheerful are Donna Maasch, Matron, and Andrew Tweedt, Janitor. They move lobby plant while Howard Viken smiles benignly on them from his wall photo.



Transmitter Engineer Al Loehlien watches the dials on test panel to make certain WCCO Radio's signal is steady within one part in 830,000.



In WCCO master control, Engineering department secretary Diane Rasmussen goes over assignments with Engineer Wally Herron.



Things go well and everybody is smiling; (left to right) Bob Wallinder, Chief Engineer; Larry Haeg; Phil Lewis, General Sales Manager, and Bob Woodbury.



Technical advances are being made constantly at WCCO Radio and Chuck Kunze, Engineering Supervisor, is modifying a tape recorder to improve quality.



Bob DeHaven and Joyce Lamont work together on "Good Neighbor Time" while an intent Jergen Nash waits his turn to go on the air.



Watching for a late news item, Newsmen Jerry Brennan checks copy on the battery of news service machines in WCCO Radio News Bureau. Frank Kemerer is seated at the typewriter, finishing up 1:55 p.m. newscast.



"'M' is for the million papers she brings in here!" General Manager Larry Haeg goes over an assortment of problems with Secretary Ro Grund.



A whiz at figures, Chief Accountant Mary Doherty also was with WCCO Radio in the Nicollet Hotel days long ago.



Nighttime broadcaster Franklin Hobbs "chats" with WCCO listeners from Hobbs' House.



Fresh flowers make the offices pleasant. Secretary Irma Baldwin arranges one on her desk. She is secretary to Sales Manager Phil Lewis.



It's Tuesday morning sales meeting time again and here are (left to right): Jerry Blank, merchandising director; and salesmen Ken Light, Wally Wilber and Jim Paul.



News Editor Arv Johnson is keeping WCCO Radio listeners up to date on political developments this 1964 campaign year.



"Uncle Foggy," who is Clarence Tolg in real life, steps off the elevator with a big hello and flowers for the girls at WCCO.



Somebody has to arrange the commercial copy the announcers read and Maureen Nelles, Commercial Department secretary, pulls it together.



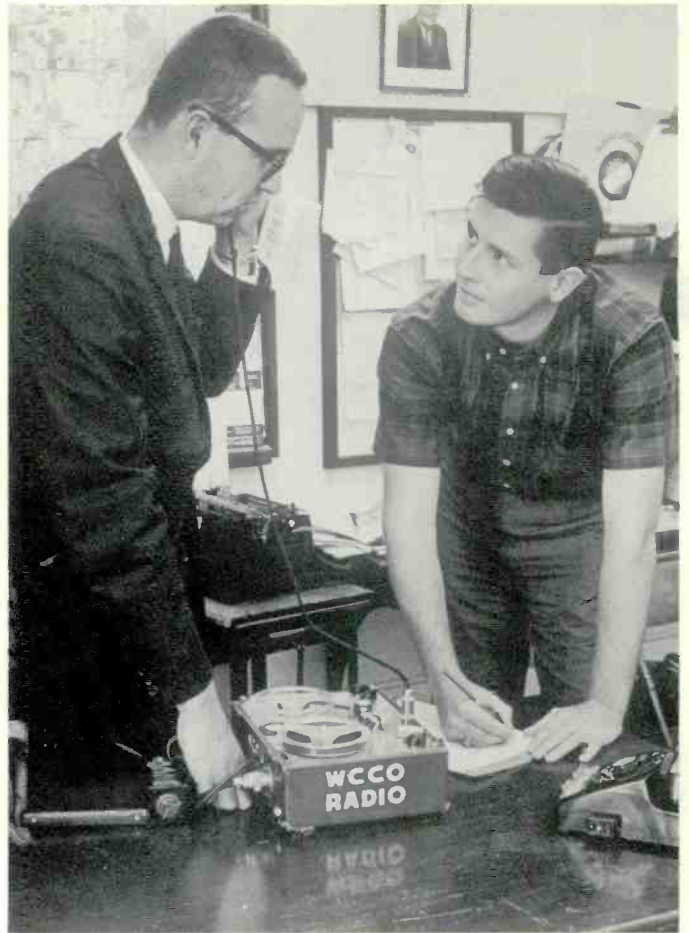
The transmitter property near Anoka looks like a city park and Bill Schockweiler, Grounds Maintenance, keeps it that way.



The busiest hallway in the Northwest is cleaned and rewaxed for another day by Reyes Sanchez and Russell Evans, Night Maintenance.



Engineer Larry Jenson works with Producer Larry Jagoe on a sports interview and music for "Prep Parade."



Newsman John Walker and Gary Bloomquist monitor a news tape that Gary made in a city hall interview.



Barbara Kolesar cheerfully pulls copy for the commercial book she assembles for announcers.



Sandee Segal sends a message on the teletype that connects WCCO with sales offices all over the country as Mary Gulden, veteran in charge of commercial contracts, verifies details on the phone.



TWIN CITY FEDERAL
Savings and Loan

Butter-Nut
The **Coffee**
Delicious[®]

SPONSORS MAKE IT POSSIBLE



During 40 years, products and services of thousands of sponsors have been described on WCCO Radio. Many sponsors have become as familiar in the Northwest as the neighbor next door.

On these pages, WCCO Radio is pleased to present the golden roster of Northwest companies who have been our good friends and yours for many years.

These two pages contain the roll call of sponsors who have been advertising on WCCO Radio continuously for 20 years or more.

As you turn this page to the next, you will recognize still more—the sponsors who have advertised on WCCO Radio continuously for 15 years or more and, finally, those of whom you have heard steadily for 10 years or more.

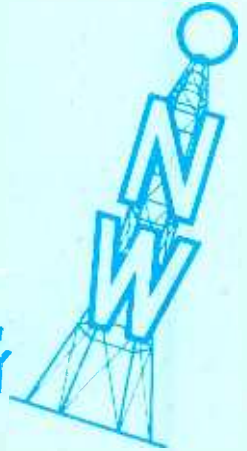
Without the assistance of these sponsors and many others, all the entertainment, the news, the sports, the information you have heard on WCCO Radio these 40 years would not have been possible.

Sales Manager
WCCO Radio





Northwestern National Bank



NORTHWESTERN BELL



milk FOUNDATION
Twin City ☆ Area

Nash's





MINNESOTA / DAIRY INDUSTRY COMMITTEE



Emporium



MINNEAPOLIS FEDERAL Savings and Loan



TITLE INSURANCE COMPANY OF MINNESOTA

Sponsors

Radio broadcasting in this country is unique. It began as privately-owned free enterprise. It remains that after more than 40 years, though stations are licensed and regulated by the Federal Communications Commission in the public interest.

Elsewhere, radio has operated most often as a state monopoly, supported by tax dollars and listener license fees. There is little choice of programs and limited competition for public approval, though some countries now permit commercial sponsorship and some private broadcasting.

The freedom and competition which marks American radio is possible because of sponsors—business firms which pay for time to advertise their products and services. The competition among the many advertisers and the choices that listeners have among many stations puts each station in a unique position to broad-

The Wheaties Success Story

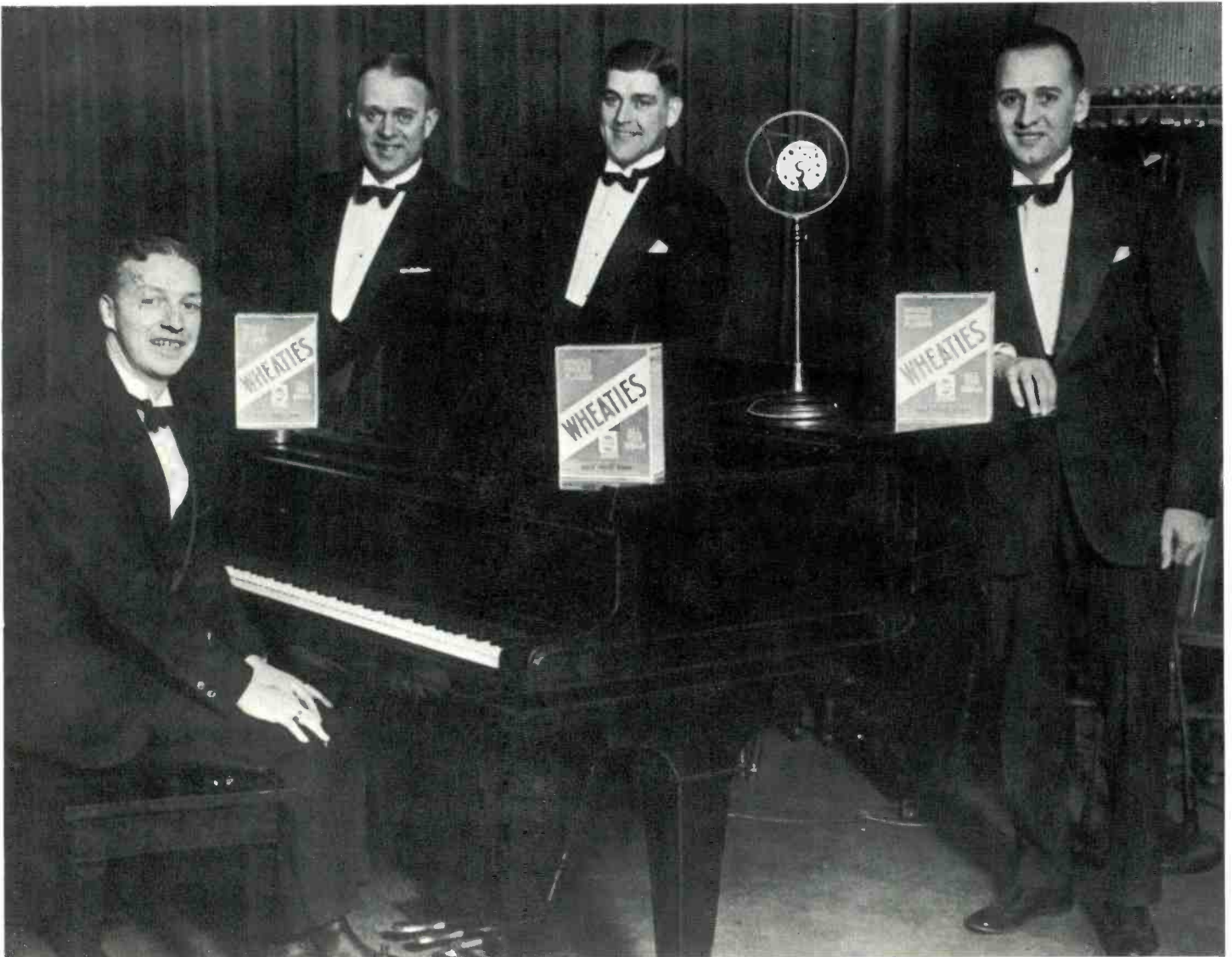
cast programs for the general public interest, free from the pressure of a single source of revenue.

In WCCO's early days, there were no sponsors. Rather, there were subscribers, firms and organizations who underwrote the cost of keeping the station on the air.

The idea of commercial sponsors came westward with the network. It showed up at WCCO in 1926 through the Washburn Crosby Co.

There was conflict within the firm over its new breakfast cereal, Wheaties. Some officers wanted the firm to confine itself to processing grain. Others saw a future in making food products and they battled for Wheaties.

Donald D. Davis, vice president, decided to give Wheaties its chance. He consulted with Henry A. Bel-



This is the original Wheaties Quartette as they appeared on WCCO for the first time on Christmas Eve, 1926. They are (left to right): Bill Elliott, William Oppenrath, Ernest Johnson and Phillip C. Schmidt.

lows, then WCCO manager, and with Earl Gammons, the station's publicity man.

The radio men came up with not only an idea for a sponsored program, but also with possibly the first singing radio commercial in the nation.

Borrowing the melody of "She's a Jazz Baby," they wrote new lyrics. They're familiar to this day:

"Have you tried Wheaties?

They're whole wheat with all of the bran.

Won't you try Wheaties?

For wheat is the best food of man."

The broadcasters lined up a male quartette who sang "just for the fun of it." They were Bill Elliott, William Oppenrath, Ernest Johnson and Philip C. Schmidt, the first Wheaties quartette.

On Christmas Eve, 1926, the Wheaties Quartette went on the air for the first time. They became a reg-

ular half-hour feature each week, singing assorted ballads and, of course, the Wheaties jingle.

By 1929, Washburn Crosby had become General Mills, Inc., and the company was still having trouble with Wheaties. Of 53,000 cases of Wheaties manufactured, 30,000 were sold in the Twin Cities area.

Samuel C. Gale, father of many modern advertising ideas, was in the General Mills advertising department. Gale found only one difference between General Mills sales efforts in St. Paul and Minneapolis and in the other metropolitan areas of the country. In the Twin Cities, the Wheaties Quartette had been selling Wheaties every week for three years—on radio.

Gale concluded that only WCCO Radio had made the difference. He convinced officials of the company that they should use radio nationally to advertise Wheaties.

Gale's suggestion was adopted and within a year sales of Wheaties began moving upward.



Samuel C. Gale, General Mills advertising executive, put Wheaties on national radio after WCCO Radio pioneered the singing commercial in the Twin Cities for three years.

Years later, on the WCCO Radio 30th Anniversary program in 1954, the original Wheaties Quartette returned to sing once more: Schmidt, Johnson, Elliott, Oppenrath.



By the early 1930's, the Wheaties Quartette had become the "Gold Medal Fast Freight" program. They originated their programs from WCCO and broadcast them over the CBS network. Their pictures were on every box of Wheaties. Lined up are: Phillip C. Schmidt, Ernest Johnson, Bill Elliott and William Oppenrath.



WCCO Radio also sold the idea of Wheaties sponsorship of baseball to General Mills.

In the early 1930's Worch Cigar Company dropped sponsorship of Minneapolis Miller baseball broadcasts in mid-season.

Gammons recalls that "I went down and talked to Sam Gale, then advertising director of General Mills. Sam thought it would be a good idea for General Mills to have it. He talked to Donald Davis who was then president of the company. Davis said if Gale could sell it to Walter Barry (head of the packaged products division) and to the sales department, he would go for it."

"We sold them the baseball," Gammons says. "Before the season was over, they had bought Wheaties sponsorship of baseball in three or four other towns."

In the next couple of years, General Mills became the biggest buyers of baseball in the country—for Wheaties—with broadcasts in 67 different cities.

Officials of General Mills had guessed the maximum sales of Wheaties would be about 1,500,000 cases a year. But with radio advertising, sales shot up to many times that figure.

Selling the Farm Audience

From the early days of WCCO, one group came to appreciate radio perhaps more than any other. That was the farm family. Even in areas without electricity (REA was little more than a dream in the 1920's), farm families obtained battery-powered radio sets. They listened at noon for farm markets, news and weather and at night for entertainment.

Radio brightened the enforced, winter isolation on the farm—when cold weather and snow-blocked roads made trips even to the nearest town difficult. The farm family, gathered around the radio set and a dim kerosene lamp, could now take part in the gayety and lively activity that continued year around in the big metropolitan centers.

What is believed to be the first advertising agency use of time on WCCO Radio involved a farm sponsor in 1927.

Phillips Taylor was handling the Maple Dale Hatchery account in Austin, Minn., as account executive for Weston Barnett Advertising Agency in Waterloo, Iowa, now known as Colle & McVoy, Weston Barnett. He recommended that Maple Dale try WCCO Radio to sell its chicks to farmers.

He was told by Gammons it was the first time the station had dealt with an advertising agency. WCCO was selling its commercial time directly to sponsors. After some discussion with Taylor, Gammons agreed

to give the agency a 15 per cent commission plus a two per cent discount for cash.

On New Year's Day, 1928, the "Maple Dale Chicks" program went on the air over WCCO. Two banjo players entertained and an announcer extolled the virtues of Maple Dale chicks, suggesting that farmers write to Maple Dale for more information.

Taylor recalls that the results were astounding. The first program pulled more than 10,000 inquiries from farmers. The incoming mail was so heavy that it had to be sorted in mail cars out in the railroad yards to avoid flooding the Austin postoffice.

Maple Dale had printed catalogs in advance of the advertising campaign. They put in a rush order for more. Sales were far beyond anything they had expected.

It was another early example of WCCO's pulling power and proved that farmers as well as city people were listening and were believing what they heard on WCCO Radio.

Twin City Federal

A WCCO Radio success story in more modern setting involves Twin City Federal Savings and Loan Association.

Twin City Federal's history closely parallels that of WCCO. In 1923, while WCCO was still known as WLAG, Twin City Federal opened a two-room office on the eighth floor of the Plymouth Building in Min-



Mayor Joseph Dillon and CBS comedian Robert Q. Lewis exchange quips at one of the WCCO Radio Winter Carnival shows in the 1950's. Note that Twin City Federal was sponsoring this portion of the two-hour program in St. Paul.

neapolis. The following year, another office was opened in St. Paul.

By 1941, Twin City Federal was able to boast assets of \$13,000,000 which is a tiny figure compared with the association's half-billion dollar status today.

In 1941, Roy W. Larsen, the president, decided he had to move ahead more rapidly. After consultation with the late Vance Pidgeon, advertising agency executive, he agreed to an intensive radio advertising campaign with the bulk of the money to be spent on WCCO.

Pidgeon advised buying Cedric Adams news broadcasts and the Minnesota Gopher football "Preview" and "Review" programs.

Larsen is frank to admit the real "shot in the arm" for his business began with the Cedric Adams association. Week after week, the influential Adams voice suggested to WCCO Radio listeners that they "save by mail" at Twin City Federal.

In 1957, a Minnesota farmer walked into a downtown Minneapolis bank in some agitation. He said he was sorry, but he wanted to withdraw from the bank the \$8,000 he had deposited a few hours before.

When asked the reason, the farmer explained, "I made a mistake. What I wanted to do was open an account at the place Cedric talks about on WCCO."

A listener once sent Cedric a check for \$10,000 and told him to see that it was properly deposited in Twin City Federal.

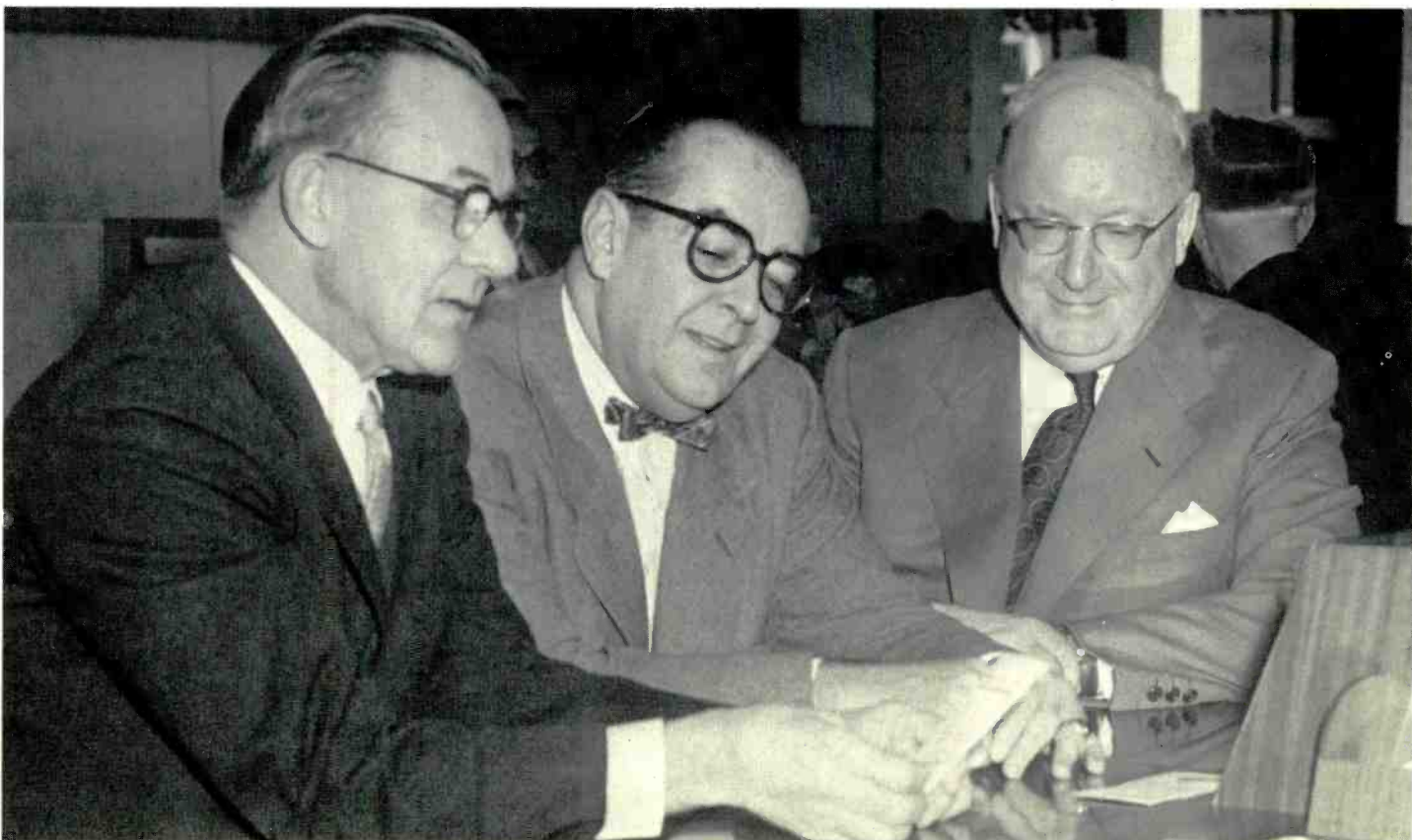
Twin City Federal has showed a steady and remarkable growth. By 1946, assets had climbed to \$50,000,000; \$200,000,000 in 1955; \$400,000,000 in 1960. Twin City Federal assets were \$560,000,000 as of June 30, 1964.

Twin City Federal joined with WCCO in presenting the public service series of 12 hour-long Minnesota historical programs, "Minnesota Milestones," during the state's 1958 Centennial year.

Though both Cedric Adams and Vance Pidgeon are no longer present, advertising on WCCO Radio remains a keystone of Twin City Federal policy. The association continues to sponsor news programs, Minnesota Twins baseball broadcasts and the popular nighttime music program, "Jergen Nash Presents."

Twin City Federal continues to grow and now boasts offices in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Anoka, Robbinsdale, Excelsior, Edina, Roseville and Southdale.

As phrased by Roy Larsen himself, "I believe that good citizenship in terms of broadcast advertising is good business. This is why Twin City Federal chose to become associated with quality programming. And quality programming builds a better community."



The late advertising executive Vance Pidgeon, Cedric Adams and Roy W. Larsen, president of Twin City Federal, as they met in the Minneapolis office of the savings and loan association in 1957. The get-together marked a milestone in Twin City Federal's growth — passing the \$250,000,000 level in assets.



Going over "visuals" for a WCCO sales department presentation are Carl Ward, sales manager in the late 1940's; Gene Wilkey, manager, and an advertising executive.



DeKalb Agricultural Association sponsored Cedric Adams' "Morning Almanac of the Air" for nearly seven years during the 1950's. Cedric is shown at DeKalb plant talking with Thomas Roberts, Sr., chairman of the board.



Discussing an advertising campaign on WCCO in this 1940 picture are (left to right) Al Harding, salesman who later became WCCO sales manager; Art Lund, Campbell-Mithun advertising executive and one-time publicity director of WCCO in the 30's; and Harvey Struthers, sales manager.

Handsome Eddie Gallaher in 1940 interviewing women at a Twin Cities grocery. The program was "Master Meets The Missus," sponsored by Master Bread.



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