

# WLS



JOE C. SEWELL

# FAMILY ALBUM

# 1939

**WLS**  
**FAMILY**  
**ALBUM**

1939

Published By

**THE PRAIRIE FARMER**

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# DEDICATION

Through the years, working side by side, Prairie Farmer-WLS and you have answered many a call. We have shared much happiness as the result of helping to clothe and feed the needy, give instant and understanding aid to the distressed. Our admiration and love for you has grown almost beyond the power of words to express. Your sympathy, your practical understanding and kindness, your genuine goodness, represent to us the peak of human character.

So now to you, our listeners, we are reporting another year of joyful service and growth. It thrills us to know that in works of kindness we are in partnership with you. And there is our dedication for this book of the year. We want your approbation, because having it, we cannot be wrong. We want you to love us, and we are determined to be worthy of a place at your fireside.

# WE FACE THE FUTURE

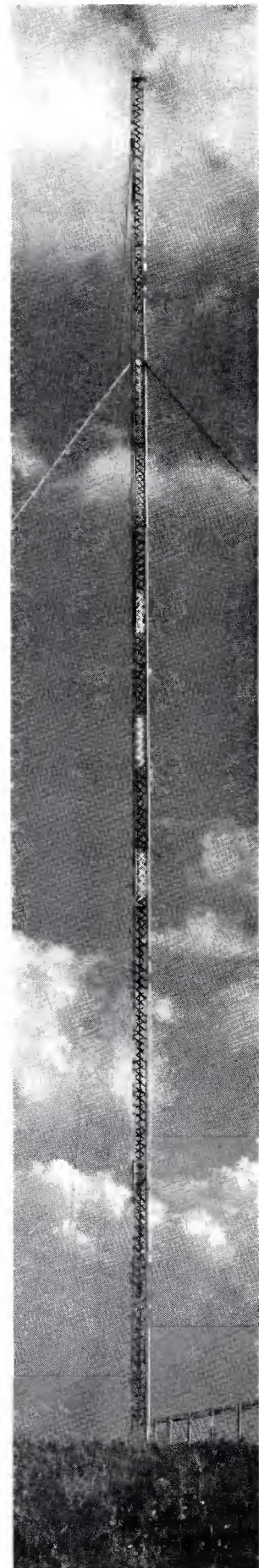
The newest and most efficient of transmitters, dedicated in November, 1938, is a challenge to program builders and every member of the Prairie Farmer-WLS staff. The engineers have done their part—the carrier wave goes humming across the prairies—the microphone waits! What words shall be spoken?

As we look to the year ahead, we turn again to two short paragraphs written several years ago by Mr. Butler, which we have come to call the WLS Creed. They are still good. We placed a copy of this creed in the cornerstone of the new transmitter building.

Here are the words:

"To me radio is far more than a mere medium of entertainment. It is a God-given instrument which makes possible vital economic, educational and inspirational service to the home-loving men, women and children of America. As long as it is our privilege to direct the destinies of WLS, we will hold sacred this trust that has been placed in our hands. No medium developed by mankind is doing more to broaden the lives of rich and poor alike than radio.

"When you step up to the microphone never forget this responsibility and that you are walking as a guest into all those homes beyond the microphone."





## PRAIRIE FARMER SCHOOL TIME

President Butler dedicates a flag to our three-year-old School Time at its first program for this fall. At one o'clock each day, WLS goes to school. American music, current events and travel are all part of School Time. Under the able direction of Harriet Hester, new WLS Educational Director, School Time begins another year.



## OUR CHIEF

We are proud to call Mr. Burrige D. Butler our chief. President of WLS and publisher of *Prairie Farmer*, his vision and splendid ideals are a constant inspiration to all of us. Known as one of the unique figures in radio, combining the dynamic experience of a newspaper publisher with a great love for people and a desire to serve.



### **GLENN SNYDER**

Manager of WLS. Seldom heard on the air, but one of the most important members of the organization. He supervises the commercial department, handles relations with other radio stations, is responsible for all station problems.

### **GEORGE COOK**

Treasurer and Assistant Manager of WLS. He sees that the artists and the WLS people get paid. It's up to him to settle the bills and keep the budget balanced.



## PHIL KALAR

Program Director of WLS. Phil plans and directs all programs. He is well-fitted for his position because of his long association with staff talent on WLS and other stations, and his experience on the stage and in the movies. He has an amazing ability to build programs.

Phil with his wife Marguerite and their son Blaine, eight years old.



## DAN HOSMER

Assistant Program Director. Dan has written and produced many shows. His job is to work with the talent, building personalities. Dan is the "idea" man around the station.





### GEORGE MENARD

George as Farm Program Director has charge of all farm programs on the station. He conducts Dinnerbell and Corn Belt Gossip, and he is the Prairie Singer. His most notable characteristic is his driving sincerity. Besides his regular farm programs he handles all remote broadcast pickups of farm events. George and Martha, his pretty wife, are considered one of the best-looking couples on the staff.



## FRANK BAKER

Continuity Director. Frank has written and produced shows for many years. He is a steady, soft-spoken man with an analytical mind. He is considered a master of tact and diplomacy. As continuity director, he clears all commercial copy and continuity, and has his finger in every script put on the air. Frank has a fine family. His wife's name is Dorothea and his two children are Jerry and Florence Patricia.



## ROD CUPP

Rod is our Production Manager, and he has charge of producing all shows. He is usually seen in the control booth, stop watch in hand, following copy and directing the show. Rod is quiet and level-headed; he's a dapper young man. He and his beautiful wife, Edwina, have a little two-year-old daughter, Carolyn.

Harriet Hester took over Home makers Jan 2-1939

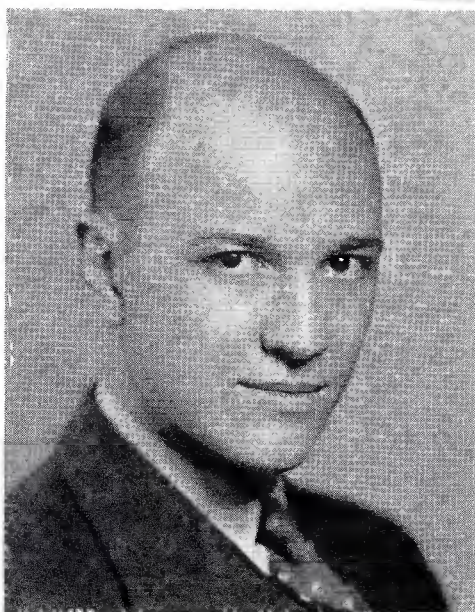
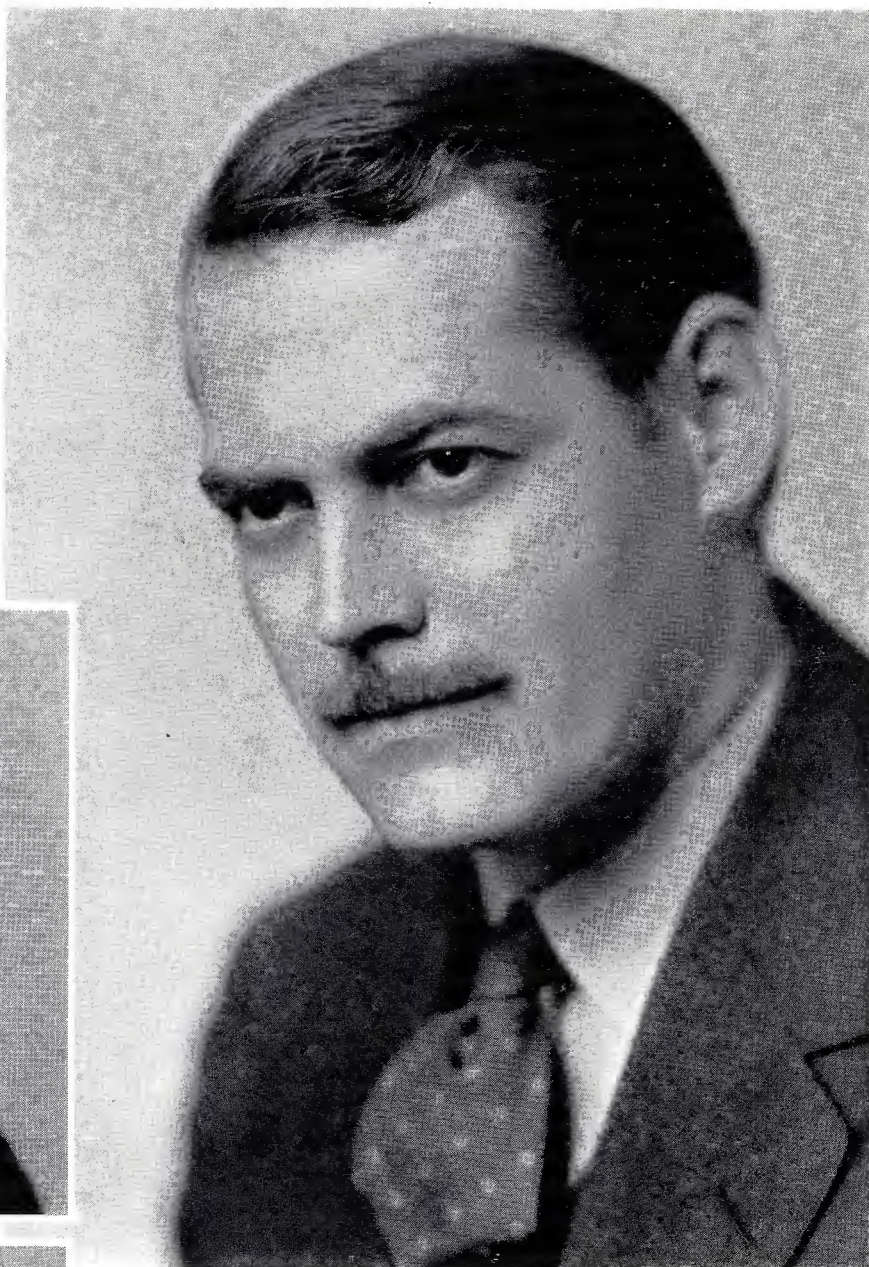


### HARRIET HESTER

Here's our new Educational Director and her family. Mrs. Hester has charge of School Time, WLS unique educational program, and also Know Your Schools and the High School Hour. She has a warmth and naturalness that have won her many friends at WLS. Her husband, Luther Hester, is superintendent of schools in New Milford, Illinois. Marjorie is her pretty little ten-year-old daughter.

## JULIAN BENTLEY

News Editor of WLS and Prairie Farmer, Julian created and built up our news department so that it has become one of our most important service features. He has a huge following. Julian is best described as dynamic. He has a talented and beautiful wife.

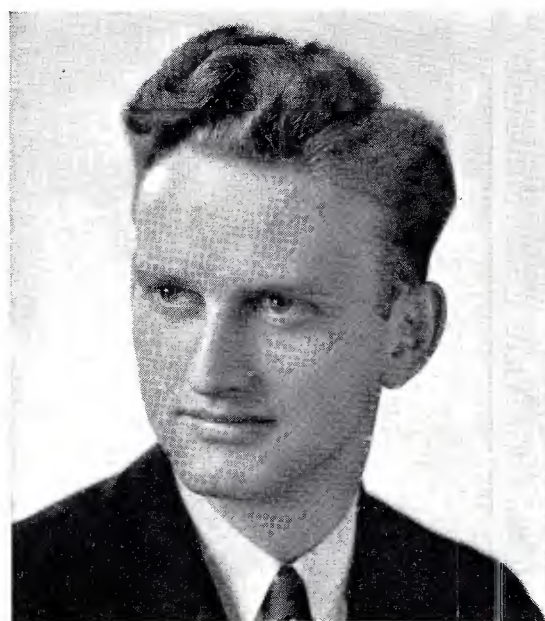


Assistant to the news editor, ERVIN LEWIS is an old friend of Julian's. Phil Kalar heard him one night on a late broadcast from Oklahoma, and he was hired as assistant to Julian before anybody knew the two men were friends. Ervin has a style all his own.

HAROLD AZINE edits the news for the WLS news department and assists Chuck Ostler with sound effects. He has bright red hair and can be seen most of the time rehearsing anybody's scripts over a mike to give himself practice.



At left, Arthur C. Page, keen but kindly associate editor of *Prairie Farmer* and Editor of this Album; famed and well loved for his years as editor and broadcaster. At lower left, Dave Thompson, associate editor of *Prairie Farmer*, who travels 40,000 miles a year on Middle West highways reporting and writing. He is a pioneer in farm organizations. Below, John Strohm, world traveler, reporter and assistant editor of *Prairie Farmer*, is a popular WLS School Time speaker. Lower right, Verlo Butz, assistant editor of *Prairie Farmer*.



## AUNT BUNNY

At right, Gladys (Aunt Bunny) Blair shares greetings of her morning mail with a group of small WLS listeners. Besides her Saturday morning radio program, Aunt Bunny is editor of the *Prairie Farmer Junior* page. In circle, some of Aunt Bunny's listeners with the famous *Prairie Farmer-WLS* braided rug. The rug is much larger now, and has many neckties and handkerchiefs along with keepsake bits of cloth from hundreds of boys and girls.



Above, Orpha Han, *Prairie Farmer-WLS* Tour Manager, who has expertly shepherded hundreds of *Prairie Farmer* trippers on tours to the most interesting parts of our country. At left, E. Ray Inman, Art Editor of *Prairie Farmer*, whose clever pen has drawn Slim and Spud for years.



## THE BOYS FROM VIRGINIA

Blaine and Cal Smith, two good-looking boys whose sweet harmony thrills listeners. They have a large repertoire of old-time songs. Cal is the youngest. Blaine plays the guitar. They sing on many daytime programs and are featured on the Barn Dance.

## HAL CULVER

One of the best-loved announcers. Hal sings, too, on morning programs, and he's as good a singer as he is an announcer. Does a fine announcing job on the Thursday Farmers Forum. All his listeners feel Hal's an old friend. He's quite tall, and nobody ever sees him frown. Happy-go-lucky, charming and always nice to everybody. Here he's with his wife, who probably has something to do with Hal's happy smile.





### LULU BELLE AND SCOTTY

Always popular favorites at the Barn Dance. The station's own sweethearts. Their funny songs are known from coast to coast. Were recently in Hollywood making a movie. Linda Lou is really the boss in the family. Linda may take her mother's place as Radio Queen some day.

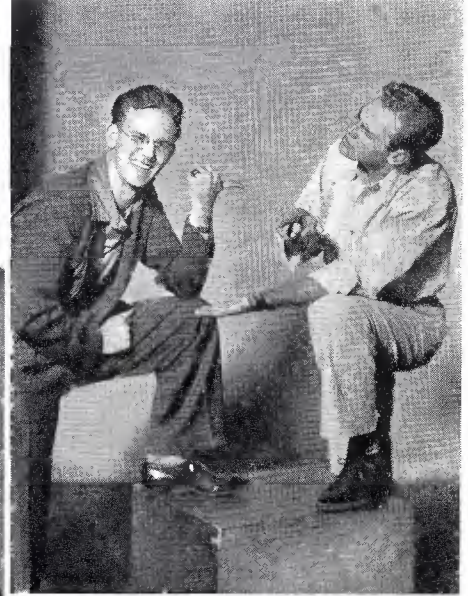




### PAT BUTTRAM

The pride of Alabama and Winston County Flash, noted for his description of his potato-floater. Pat is quite a philosopher as well as a comedian, and he thinks he can sing. He is a very funny master of ceremonies at the Barn Dance and has a program of his own called Buttram's Palatial Palace of Wonders.





### POKEY AND CHUCK

Two very talkative young men, both from Oklahoma. Chuck with his trigger mind is a perfect contrast to Pokey with his drawly, unhurried way of talking. Chuck tells of humorous stories in the news and Pokey follows with a tall tale. Their latest show together is "Open House" on the Barn Dance. Pokey's air personality mirrors his natural self. He's the most handsome man on the station. Chuck's one of the smartest. He conducts Man on the Farm. Above, center, Chuck; lower right, Pokey.

## ARKIE

Presenting for the first time, Arkie The Palmist. Some people have all the talents. Arkie besides can foretell events and forecast the weather, and you all know how he can sing and play the guitar. And can he laugh!





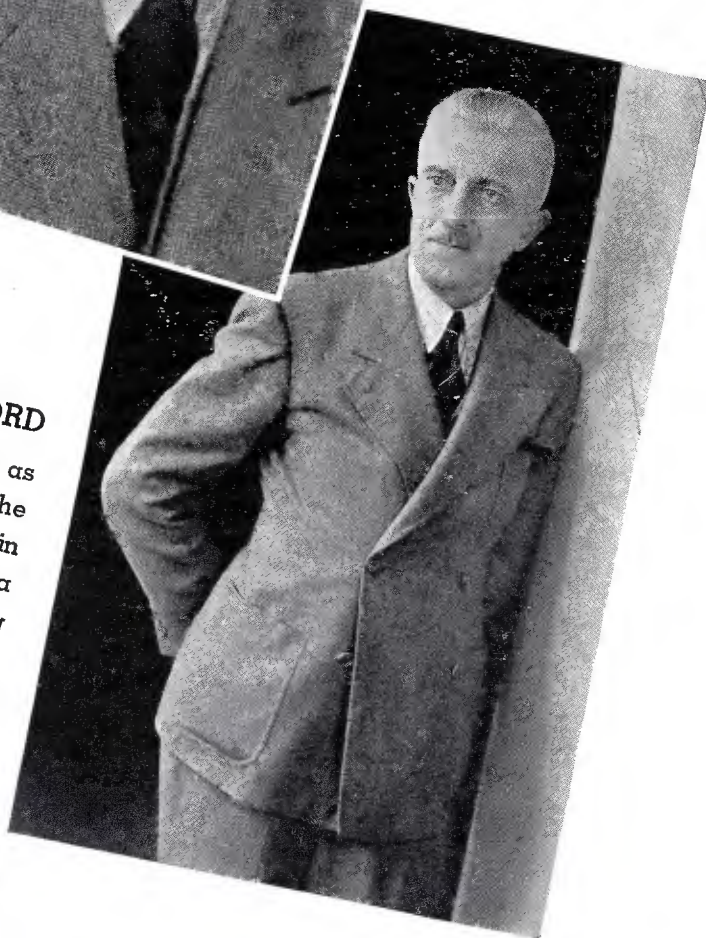
### CHRISTINE

She's our little Swiss Miss with the clear, sweet voice. She's a blonde with blue eyes. Her Alpine yodel has gained a large following for her.

**CY HARRICE**  
Cy is the young man with the big voice. A recent graduate of Northwestern University, he says announcing is a new job every day.



**CHECK STAFFORD**  
Check is best known as official greeter at the studio. His Bulletin Board program has a large following among farm people. His "Latch-string" column in Prairie Farmer shows that Check is quite a philosopher.





## PATSY MONTANA

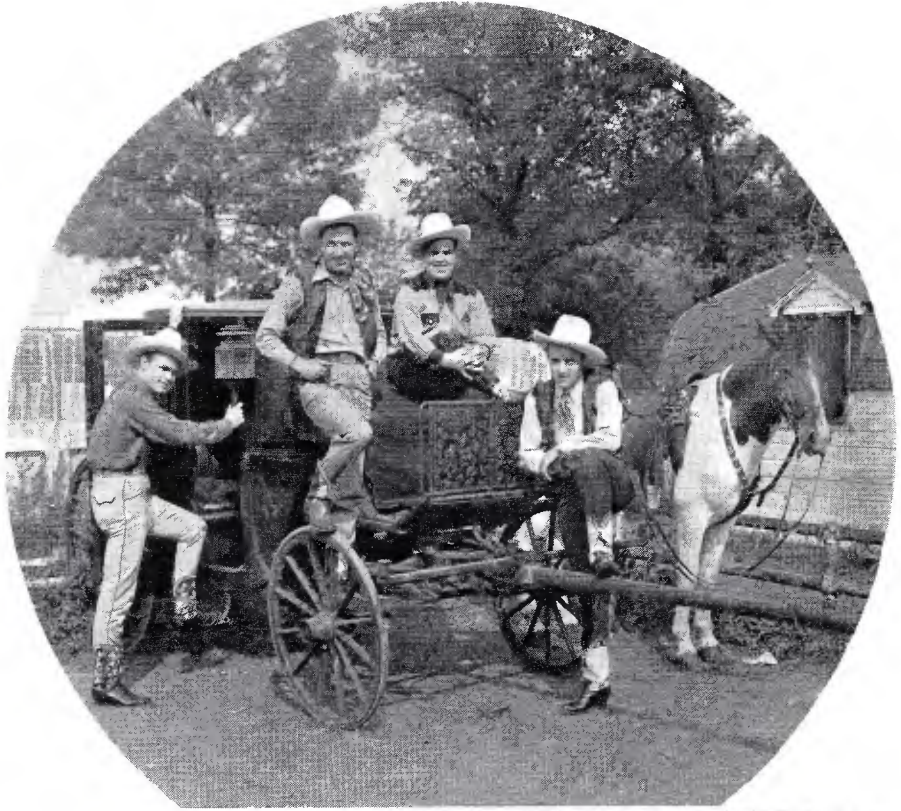
"Cowboy Sweetheart," the name of a very popular song she's written, describes Patsy. Well known from coast to coast for her soft, sweet songs and yodel. In the insert is Paul Rose, Patsy's

husband, who is with the Artists Bureau. Below, with their two children, Beverly, who likes to sing with "Patsy and Her Pard," and Judy, whose talents haven't been discovered yet.

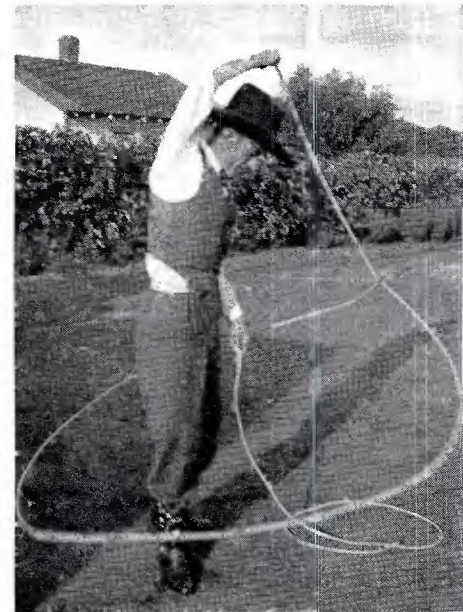


## THE RAMBLERS

These four boys from Kentucky started entertaining when very young. They're one of the best all-round acts ever organized. Noted for their loyalty to each other. They're all tall and nice-looking. Chick Hurt plays the mandola and banjo. Jack strums on the old guitar and bass fiddle. Salty plays any kind of a queer instrument; he's the one with the "trick" voice. Tex is the left-handed fiddler and a popular singer. Below, left to right, Chick, Salty, Tex, Jack.



Tex Atchison  
left W.L.S the  
heart of Nov or  
1st of Dec 1938



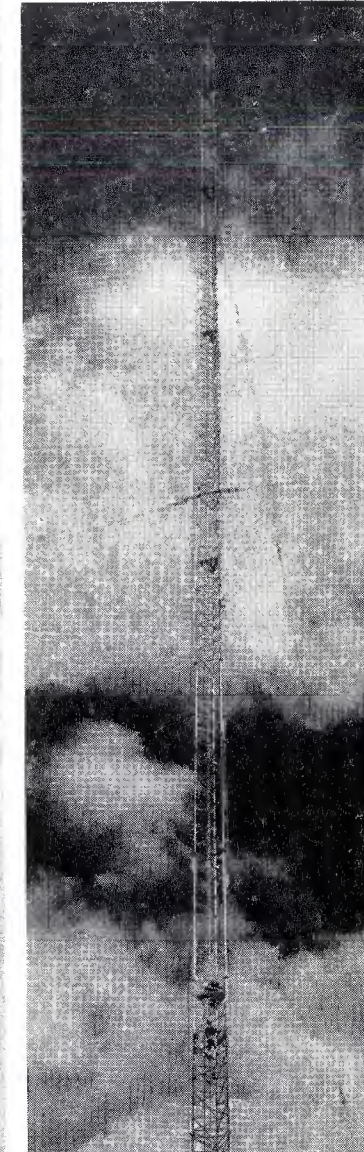
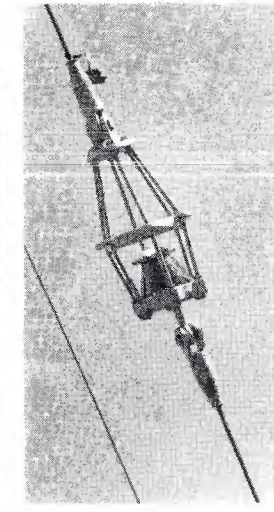
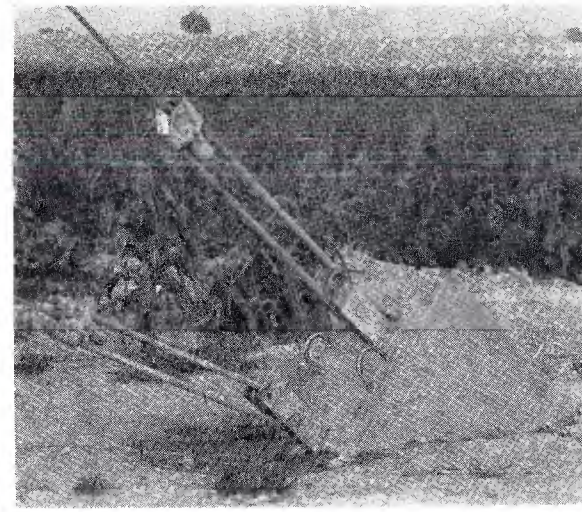
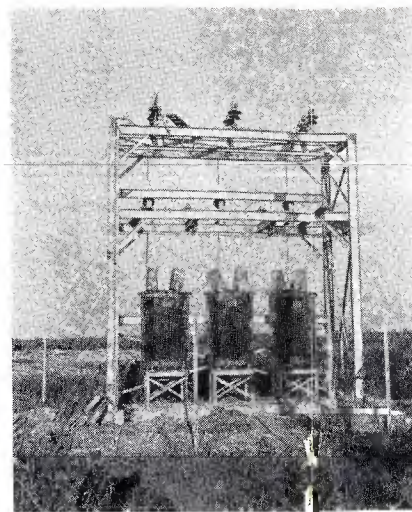
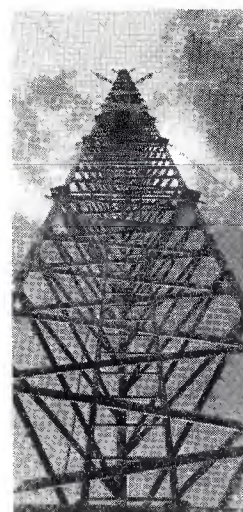
### BILL NEWCOMB

Bill is the real McCoy. He's a bronc-bustin', rope-twirlin' cowboy. He sang at the Rodeo in Chicago in October and that same month rode into the middle of the State Street Seniors dinner at the Palmer House on a big bay horse. Bill's always happy; has a naturally rich, strong voice. He has a slow, drawling speaking voice that's as Western as Bill is.





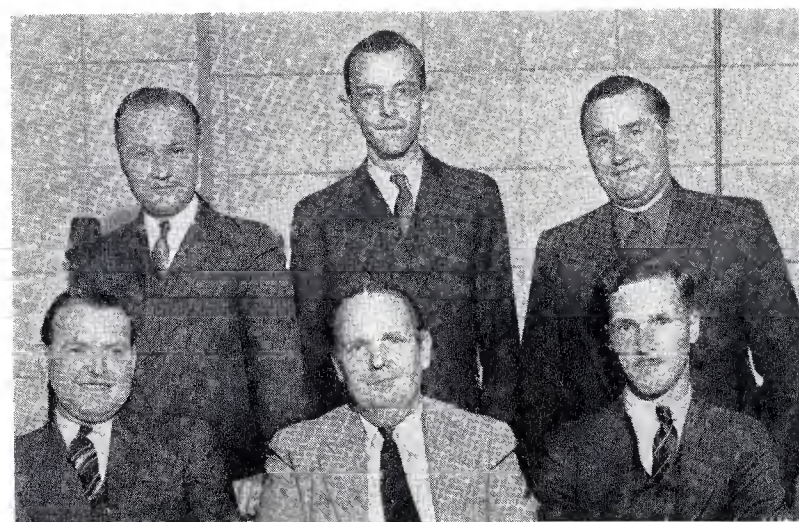




## OUR NEW TRANSMITTER

WLS begins a new era with a bigger and better transmitter. Our most modern transmitter equipment, dedicated November 12, 1938, will bring WLS services to many more homes.

Above are two of our most valuable men, Tommy Rowe, chief engineer of WLS, and Homer Courchene, chief engineer of the new transmitter on Route 45 and 183rd Street. Below are the WLS operators, Maurice Donnelly, Bill Anderson, Charles Nehlsen, Jimmy Daugherty, Burr Whyland and Herbert Wyers. The top pictures are, from left to right, looking up at the tower, the power transformers, one of the guy wire anchors and a guy wire insulator. In the far right corner is another view of the tower. Below, an aerial view of the transmitter and tower.



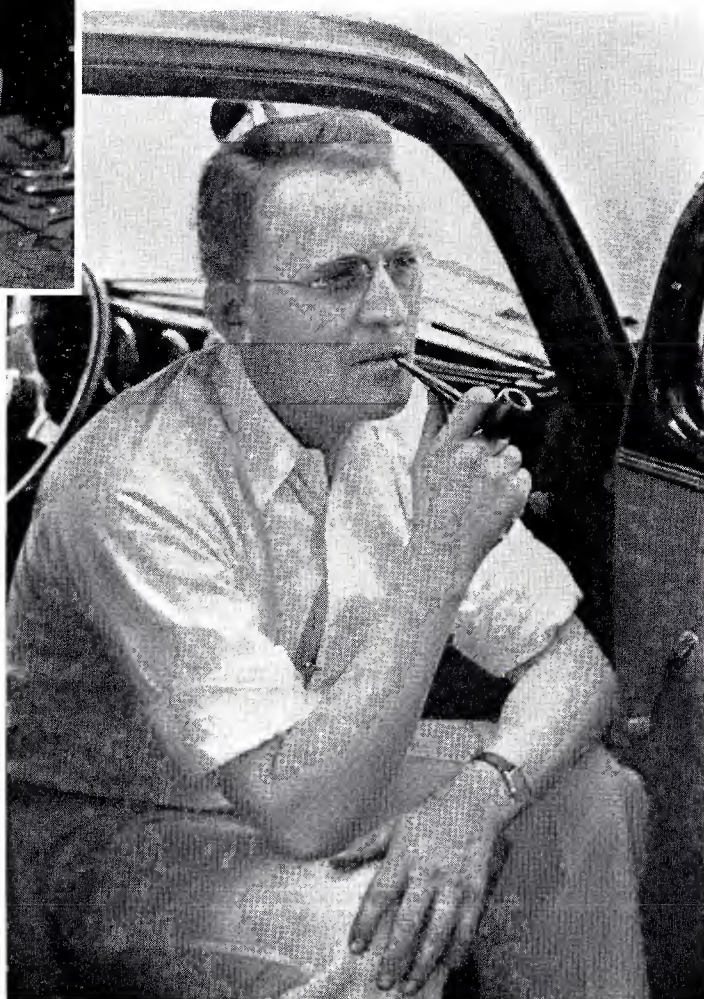


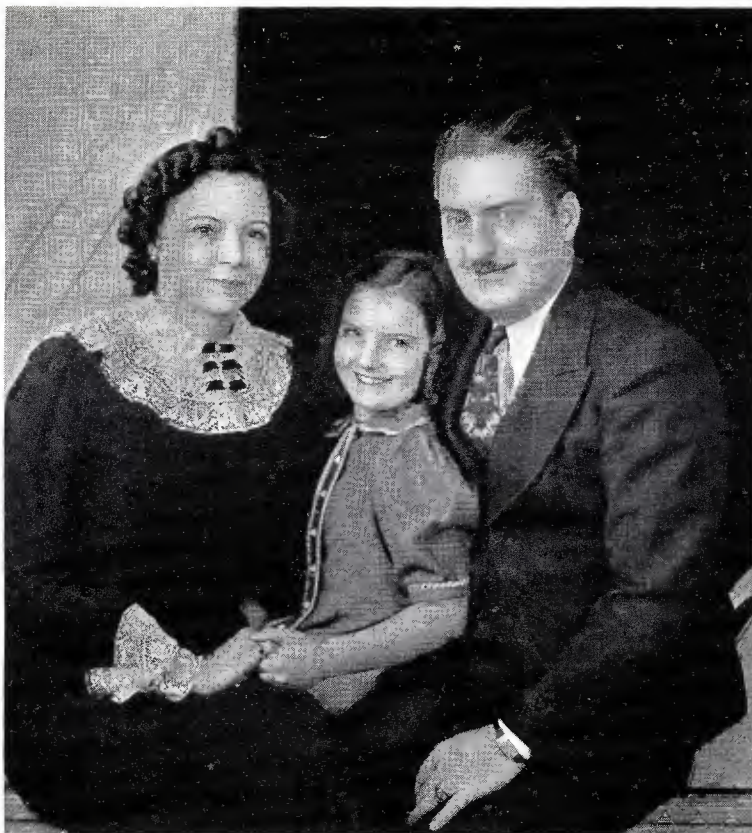
### JOHN BROWN

WLS staff pianist, John is called upon to play for many soloists and seems able to adapt himself to any style of accompaniment. His wife is Juanita, former member of the harmony team May and June. Their little daughter Joan is 3 years old. Everybody wants to know if she'll sing or play the piano when she's older.

### BILL CLINE

Bill is Station Promotion Manager, which includes publicity and special events. He thinks up all publicity stunts and is vitally interested in School Time. Can sell programs, announce or think up program ideas. Often seen amongst bulbs, reflectors and cameras taking pictures at the Barn Dance and during other programs.





### MERLE HOUSH

Alias Henry Hornsbuckle. Loves to announce and never gets mike fright. His Henry's Exchange is becoming a household word. Merle has been heard on the early morning programs, Smile-A-While and Top o' the Morning, for many years. Upper left, Mrs. Housh and their daughter, Donna Jeane.

### DON KELLEY

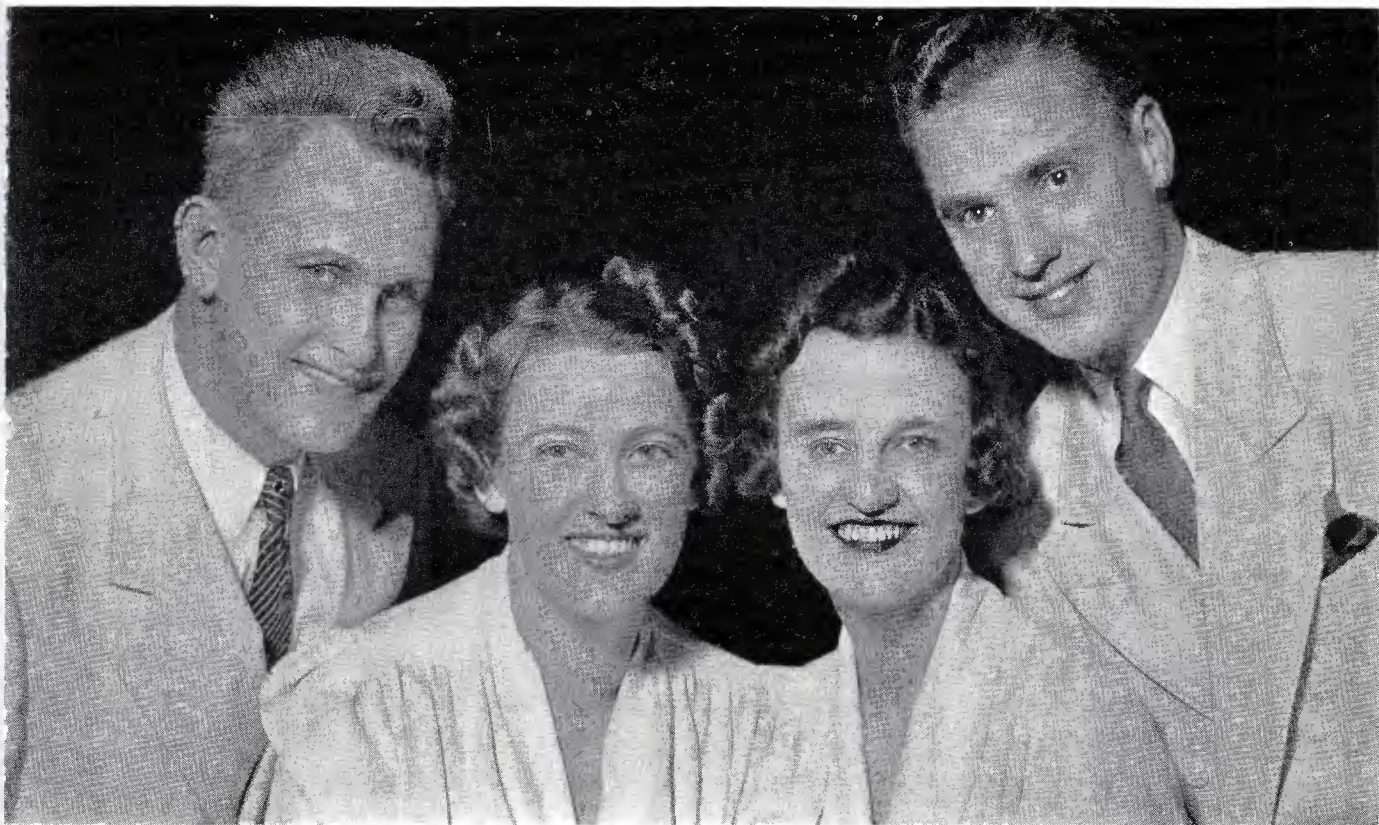
A cocky Irishman, the first sports announcer at WLS, has a fine reputation as a sports authority. Has made more right guesses in scores than almost anyone in town. His wife Evodia and he are the proud possessors of a brand new baby girl, Margaret Michael.





### DR. JOHN W. HOLLAND

Our pastor, who has the largest "flock" of any minister in the country. His inspirational talks bring him letters from all over, from old and young. His following is not limited to any sect or creed. Dr. Holland is jolly, kind-hearted, real. He has many speaking engagements in the Middle West, and never fails to fill the church.



**LITTLE BROWN CHURCH QUARTET**

This beloved quartet has been on the air since 1935.

It is composed of Lois and Reuben Bergstrom, Ruth Slater and Vernon Gerhardt. The Bergstroms, lower right, appear with their little daughter, who gets all the attention nowadays.

**BILL O'CONNOR**

**ADELE BRANDT**

Two popular singers at WLS; Bill O'Connor, Irish tenor who has been on WLS for a long time. He's heard on Morning Devotions and other programs. Adele Brandt sings the daily hymn on Dinnerbell.





### DE ZURIK SISTERS

One of the cutest teams on the air. Caroline and Mary Jane are favorites on the Barn Dance and other programs. Mary Jane is the one with the guitar. They have a complete set of trick yodels referred to by Pokey Martin as "machine gun" yodels.



### EVELYN

The lovely little singer of Dreamers Bay is shown for the first time on her Good Ship Melody. Evelyn has cloudy, dark hair, a lovely smile and big, dark eyes.

### PURV PULLEN

Otherwise known as Trailer Tim. It has just come to light that Purv puts on a one-man show. He does the whistling, is Trailer Tim and also plays the parts of Johnnie, Simple Simon, Polly Parrot and Scotty, the dog.



### GRACE WILSON

Grace is an old trouper at WLS. Her red hair, bright blue, round eyes, and her throaty contralto voice are all essential parts of the Barn Dance.

### AUNT EM

The oldest active radio personality, her inspirational talks help hundreds of people. At 82 she's enjoying life and is looking forward to a bright future.

### TOM CORWINE

Better known as Uncle Tom. He just celebrated his 52nd year in the entertainment world. The sweetest old man you'd ever want to meet; wears a captain's uniform with five stripes on the sleeve.

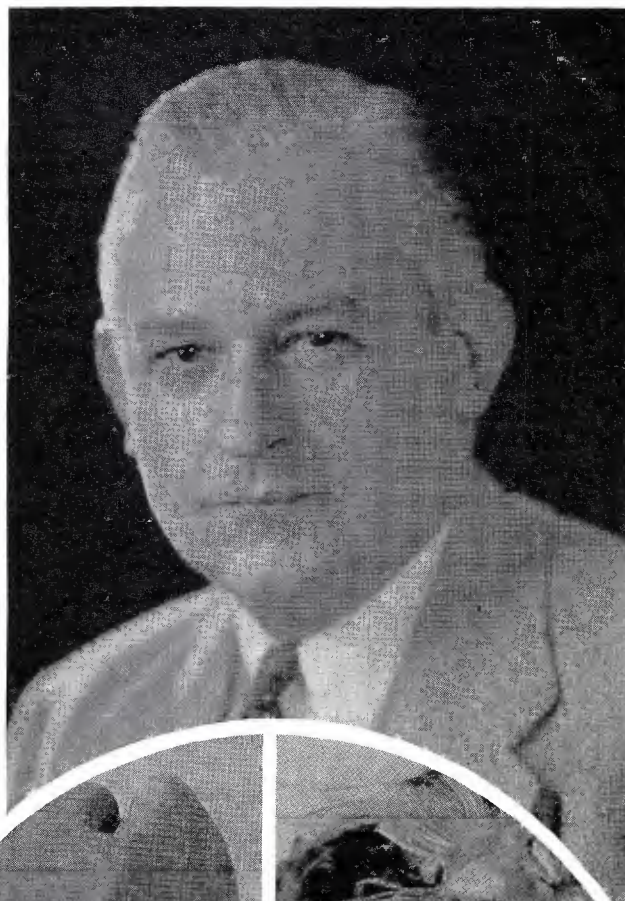




## GENE AND GLENN

Gene Carroll and Glenn Rowell. One of the most popular singing duos in radio. Their "Hello, Hello, Hello!" is one of the best-known theme songs. Used to be on WLS for many years, wandered around and are now back on our station. Used to be Ford and Glenn, Jack and Gene, and Glenn also used to be musical director here. They sing old favorites, hymns and popular songs, and do uproarious comedy.

We're glad to have them back on the Barn Dance. They have their own morning program.



## JAKE AND LENA

They're both Gene Carroll, created by a change in voice and hats. Their accent is their own, their arguments and humor are familiar to every listener.



## HOWARD PETERSON

Staff organist whose music is loved by all. Howard's lovely wife, Avis, sometimes sings on the Barn Dance. Howard is heard on Feature Foods and Morning Devotions. He and Hal Culver have Morning Reveries. Every Sunday Howard gives a half-hour organ concert.

## WLS ORCHESTRA

Directed by Herman Felber, this group is one of the best studio orchestras. They're kept busy rehearsing and playing for the Dinnerbell program and Homemakers' Hour. All men of the orchestra are fine musicians.



*Ann Hart gave her Last Home  
makers hour In Dec 31-1938.*

### HOMEMAKERS'

One of our most important programs. Homemakers' is directed by Ann Hart. Recipes, ideas for the housewife, featured guests. Marjorie Gibson's Fanfare and Chuck Acree's Something to Talk About are regular features.

### ANN HART

Our Home Advisor. Ann is pretty and peppy and she has first-hand information on homemaking. She runs a home, a husband and two children herself.



### MARTHA CRANE & HELEN JOYCE

Two of the smartest women in the field. Their program is Feature Foods, which is more than just a program. They are considered authorities in homemaking.



**GEORGE LOSEY**, new production man. Former program director at WDZ. Quiet and knows his business.

**MARJORIE GIBSON** is best known for Fanfare, gossip program on Homemakers about WLS stars.



**JOHN GILLIS**, advertising promotion, prepares advertising, statistics and sales literature for use in selling sponsors for programs.

**RITA ASCOT** is Bonnie Bradley in the "Bradleys of Prairie Farm."  
**DAVID MCCRARY**, newest announcer. Formerly a professor.



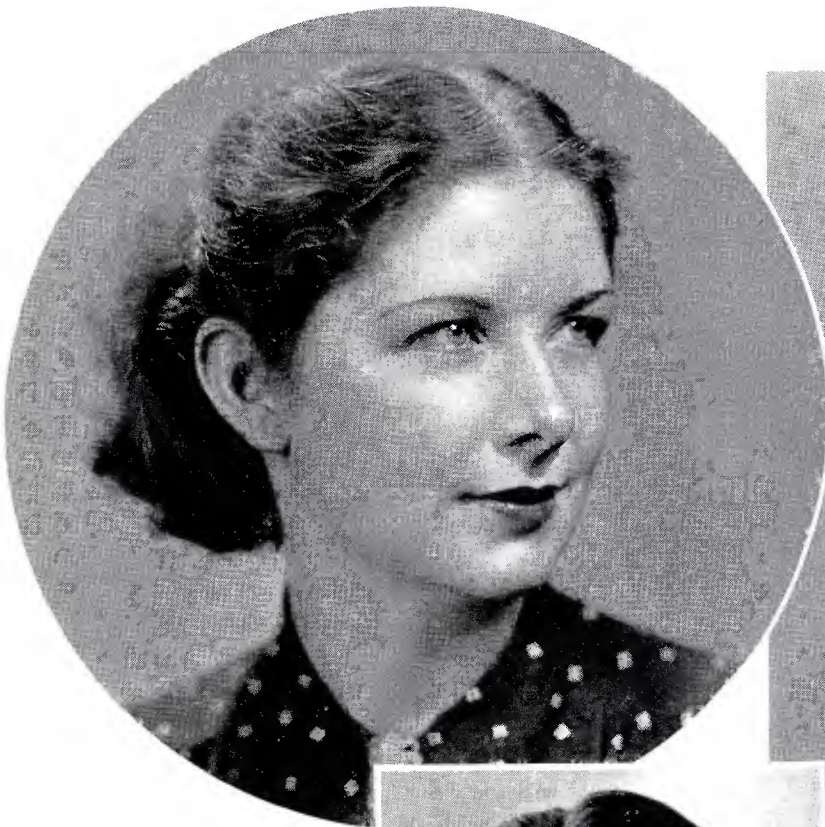
### RAY FERRIS

A man who really knows his harmony! At one time a singing partner of Gene Arnold. Ray is invaluable at the studio. He supervises the many details of the music department. Ray listens to a great many musical auditions. With him here is his wife, Lyla. Lyla's from the North woods and Ray says she loves square dances.



### LEO BOULETTE

Leo is a continuity writer and he also does a great deal of production work. He writes some clever scripts. Leo is quiet, always pleasant and easy to get along with. He is producing Prairie Farmer's new show, "The Bradleys of Prairie Farm." Shown here with his wife Caryol.



**EDITH LA CROSSE**

Edith helped to build the music library, the most complete of any radio station in the country. Edith is married and combines housekeeping with her music work.



**JEFF WADE**

Jeff is a continuity writer. He managed the Ranch Boys this summer on their horseback ride from California and wrote stories about their famous trip.



**EDDIE ALLAN**

Eddie is the Dixie Harmonica King and a popular host at the studio. He's always courteous and friendly.



**CHUCK OSTLER**

Chuck is a very popular and busy member of the production department and is chief of sound effects. He's written some clever scripts, too.



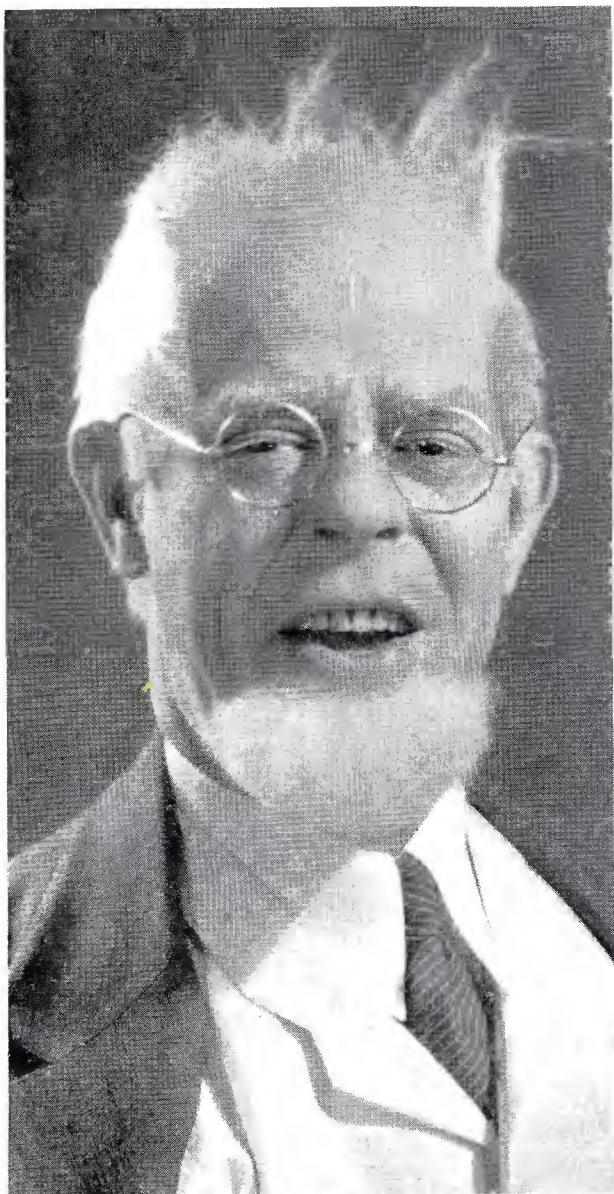
### WLS QUARTET

One of the most versatile singing units in radio. Dean Reed, Paul Nettinga, Robert Speaker, John Neher. They sing anything from barber shop harmony to opera.

### MAPLE CITY FOUR

We welcome back to Smile-A-While, this quartet, old favorites at the station. They sing and play the sweet potato and musical bottles. They are Pat Peterson, Fritz Meissner, Al Rice and Art James.





## UNCLE EZRA

The Jumpin' Jenny Wren, alias Pat Barrett, is one of the old troupers of the Barn Dance. Ezzy is a real farmer. At the right, Pat as he really looks. At the bottom, Uncle Ezra is doing a little jitterbugging with the Hoosier Hot Shots, well-known Barn Dance act.





### LUCILLE LONG

Lucille is the tall, lovely contralto heard on the Alka-Seltzer hour. Her old-time songs are favorites with the Barn Dance audiences.

### JOE PARSONS

Radio's favorite basso. His best-known song is "The Big Bass Viol." Joe (lower left) is heard on the National Barn Dance every Saturday night.

### HENRY BURR

He had been singing for years and years before radio ever began. He has made more recordings than any other singer. Always a Barn Dance favorite.





## THE SALES FORCE

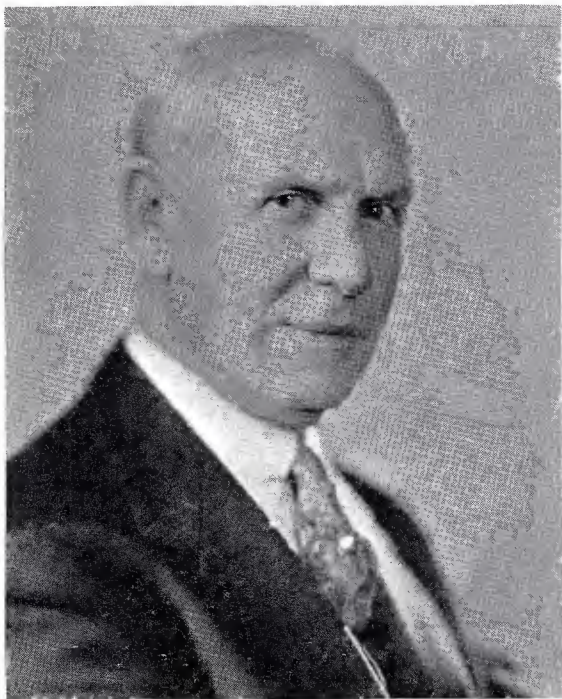
A lively bunch headed by HAROLD SAFFORD, who has just recently been made a member of the Chippewa Indian tribe. PETE COOKE has been here about as long as anybody. AL BOYD used to be on production and is now a top-notch salesman. JOE KASPAR is newer, but he's right on the job. GEORGE CLARK is the youngster on the force, peppy and always smiling.





### THE VASS FAMILY

Four pretty girls and their brother; Emily, Sally, Virginia, Frank and Louisa, a professor's children. They can sing anything that's music.



## COMMUNITY SERVICE

This department of Prairie Farmer-WLS serves hundreds of towns in the Middle West with the popular HOME TALENT Shows. Many radio stars have come from these Home Talent Programs.

### ARTHUR MAC MURRAY

Director of the Prairie Farmer-WLS Community Service. Known in every town in the Mid-West for his Home Talent shows. He has given thousands of young folks an opportunity to demonstrate their ability and start them on the possible road to radio fame.



Here is a typical group of Home Talent folks brought to the Home Talent Program at WLS each Saturday. This particular group was selected from the Beloit, Wis., Home Talent Show, where the V. F. W. Auxiliary has sponsored this show for five successive years.

### "PAT" GRIFFITH

Formerly one of the very successful Home Talent Show directors, and now Office Secretary of the department.





## HOOSIER SODBUSTERS

The Sodbusters have added two to their original two members. These boys can make a few harmonicas sound like a 15-piece orchestra. Rusty Gill, Reggie Cross, Howard Black and Jack McCoy.

## JOHN ALBERT

The new tenor soloist on Home-makers' Hour. John came to us from WROK, Rockford. He has an even disposition and a mellow voice that matches his handsome features.



## GIRLS' TRIO

Anita, Carol and Eleanore. Three little girls from Des Plaines. Each one is as pretty as the other. Two blondes and a brunette. They have perfect harmony, are always friendly and smiling. Open House is their latest show. Looks like they have a future in melodious music.

### JIM POOLE

Jim knows what's going on at the stockyards. He gives daily livestock reports which are invaluable to listening farmers.



### F. C. BISSON

Another WLS service man. F. C. broadcasts from the Chicago Board of Trade. He gives the daily grain market reports over the air which Mid-West farmers look forward to daily.



### MARY ESTHER MOULTON

When you read the radio section in Prairie Farmer you know Mary Esther had a hand in it. Her job is publicity, writing stories of what is going to happen and what does happen at WLS.



### GRACE CASSIDY

As traffic manager, Miss Cassidy keeps the program schedule in order and is a clearing house for all office detail. Grace is efficient and has a true Irish wit.



### THE NOVELODEONS

The seven-piece orchestra that sounds like more. A most versatile group of men. Play knee deep in instruments which they keep changing. Each man

can play at least two instruments. Otto is their leader. He is really a fine musician even though listeners remember him for comedy; "Little Genevieve," his funny antics and his German songs.



### HELEN JENSEN

Helen plays the organ for many WLS programs. She arranges most of the vocal music and sings in the girls' sextette for the Keystone Murphy show. Helen was one of the original members of the trio Winnie, Lou and Sally.





This group of girls are just part of those who handle the mail, continuity and office detail of WLS.

### GOOD-BYE NOW, UNTIL TOMORROW MORNING AT FIVE-THIRTY

We hope you have enjoyed meeting this grand crowd of Prairie Farmer-WLS boys and girls face to face. Every program is built for you. If we please you, entertain you, give you service and news, help to make your life more worthwhile, that's just what we started out to do. And when you write us a suggestion, a comment, or just a greeting, we'll read it as eagerly as a letter from home. We'll meet at your radio.

**WLS**

THE PRAIRIE FARMER  
STATION



