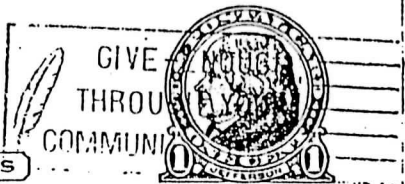


MADISON
OCT 25
5³⁰ PM
1949



THIS SIDE OF CARD IS FOR ADDRESS

Eng. Radio Station W.G.N.
Chicago Ill.
Personal

Mr. N.S.N.
What is the
matter with the
whistle of the
Roll. I see, does
it have a Gald?
It does not sound
like it used to, in
fact it sounds
nothing like any
steamboat whistle
I ever heard and
I was born and
reared in Memphis
on the river. Now
about this to kind
or Jack, H.A. would

Bruce Dennis

October 26, 1949

Will you check on the whistle; maybe it's
getting clogged up. It seems to me it sounds a little foggy.

Frank P. Schreiber

W-G-N, Inc.—Inter-Department Memo

To Bob Baird

From Bruce Dennis

Date 10-26-49

Will you please see if anything could be done to take the fog out of the whistle.

W-G-N, Inc.—Inter-Department Memo

To Bob Baird

From Bruce Dennis

Date 11-1-49

Mr. Schreiber thinks the Robert E. Lee whistle is much improved now that you are piping it thru an echo chamber. He inquires however if it could not be made to sound a little louder.

Wally:

Perky: Using Echo #3 on Mr Lee
Hit the pin with it.!!

Perky

W-G-N, Inc.—Inter-Department Memo

To Bob Baird

From Bruce Dennis

Date. 12-28-49

We have had another complaint from Mr. Schreiber to the effect that the Robert E. Lee whistle sounds thin and ought to be ~~speeded up~~ in volume. Is there anything more that can be done.

↓
HELL, YES!

(brought)

Liane —

The Robert E. Lee whistle was 4 ft high - mounted in Trib. Boiler Room and ran by steam! Blown by remote control from MC at noon and midnight. A five minute warning bell rang by MC to warn Boiler Crew to get out. If MC forgot to warn then no one wanted to pick up the irate call from Boiler Rm!!

FLASHBACK 1948

January 18, 2009 | BY NANCY WATKINS

"What I cannot see is infinitely more important than what I can see."

-- Legendary photographer Duane Michals

The right sound effects make all the difference in a radio show. If you're Tribune publisher Robert McCormick and you're planning to give a radio talk called "Steamboat Years," you need all the help you can get. Having acquired the whistle from the famous steamboat Robert E. Lee, McCormick had it installed in the Tribune Tower basement for the broadcast. But while it was a great publicity gimmick, the whistle was a bit unwieldy for everyday radio use. Indeed, the expert behind WGN's sound effects department in 1935 -- the marvelously named Count Gaetano Mazzaglia Cutelli -- was known for his space-saving, cost-cutting alternatives to the real thing.

* His 11 fundamental sound effects devices: plunger, tom-tom, canvas bag, tin box, red rubber balloon, banjo, train box, pillow, piece of silk, cellophane, rubber bottle.

* Heavyweight champ who was accidentally injured by a sound effects gun during a 1935 radio appearance: Max Baer.

* What "A Prairie Home Companion" sound effects man Tom Keith uses to simulate splintering wood: Hefty foam plates.

Sources: Tribune archives, news reports, Chicago History Museum.