

## 1922 — YEAR RADIO'S POPULATION SOARED continued

trol, low-distortion audio transmission and other major technical developments. The company acquired a second Cincinnati station, WSAI, in 1928 but sold it in 1944 to Marshall Field. Robert E. Dunville, Crosley Broadcasting Corp. president, joined WLW in 1937 under

joint owner with *Chicago Daily News*, had to fight a surrounding group of tall buildings. Within a few months a new 500 w rig was installed, the call letters changed and the 750 kc clear channel frequency was assigned. That solved the problem.



Early-day stars on WMAQ Chicago were "The Three Doctors," Joe Rudolph (at piano), Ransom Sherman (flute) and Russell Pratt (at right of mike) shown here in the early Chicago studios with some members of their company.

James D. Shouse, chairman.

WLW is alma mater for literally hundreds of industry executives and artists. Every network has important executives and talent who started at "The Nation's Station." Many program innovations were developed at the station, which now is flanked in the Crosley system by five television stations.

**Interference** ■ The old WGU Chicago, now WMAQ, had technical problems when it went on the air April 12, 1922. The antenna atop the Fair Store,



Caption to this WMAZ Macon 1920 promotion picture was "Ten Busy Fingers, Miss Frances Hackett with Wilton E. Cobb. Miss Hackett helps to defray her expenses by playing and teaching." Mr. Cobb has been manager of the station for many years.

The *News* bought Fair Store's 51% control in 1923, selling to NBC in 1931. WMAQ's first network broadcast was carried July 31, 1923 over the AT&T network, a speech by President Harding in San Francisco. Niles Trammell, now WCKT (TV) Miami president and part owner, was NBC's manager when it acquired WMAQ. Bill Hedges was first station manager. He later became an NBC vice president until his retirement. Mr. Trammell is an ex-NBC president.

Many entertainment stars made broadcast history at WMAQ. Ed Wynn was guest on a program Oct. 2, 1922 when the WMAQ call letters were adopted. Charles Correll and Freeman Gosden made their debut Jan. 10, 1928 as *Amos 'n' Andy*. Marian and Jim Jordan made their debut three years later as *Fibber McGee & Molly*. Others include Harold Peary (The Great Gildersleeve), Joan Blaine (Valiant Lady), Irene Wicker (The Singing Lady) and Don and Jim Ameche, station files show. Everett Mitchell, who became WMAQ farm broadcaster in 1926, attained national fame as m.c. of the NBC *Blue National Farm & Home Hour*.

Lloyd Yoder currently is NBC vice president of WMAQ and WNBQ (TV).

**Mercer Station** ■ The birth of WMAZ Macon, Ga., took place in the physics laboratory of Mercer U., call letters signifying "Watch Mercer Attain Zen-

ith." Broadcasts were started Aug. 18, 1922. After several years the university presented WMAZ to the Macon Junior Chamber of Commerce, which leased it in 1930 to Southwestern Broadcasting Co. The firm bought the station two years later. It stepped up power to 50 kw daytime, 10 kw night.

George P. Rankin Jr., president and chief engineer, has been with the station since its beginning. Wilton Cobb is general manager and Red Cross is commercial manager.

One of the early builders of wireless telephone stations, Douglas M. (Tex) Perham, started WMT Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in a garage. Soon he had three studios in his home, with antenna and tower on the roof. The original call was WJAM. Starting July 30, 1922, the station was on the air one hour a day with local musical groups. A few days after the debut baseball scores were broadcast and a 10-minute scoop over Chicago stations was claimed in the 1922 World Series results.

Another station, W9CNF (later KWCR) was started by Harry Paar, of Cedar Rapids, though it originally was a ham rig. In 1928 WJAM was sold to the late Harry Shaw, who moved studios to Waterloo and changed the call to WMT (*Waterloo Morning Tribune*). Mr. Shaw operated the newspaper. A prominent NAB member who became its president, he put up the original \$5,200 loan on which BROADCASTING magazine was founded by Sol Taishoff and Martin Codel. The loan was soon repaid.

**Bought by Cowles** ■ In 1931 John and Mike Cowles, of the *Des Moines Register & Tribune*, bought KWCR. They brought in two brothers, Sumner and William B. Quarton, to operate the station. In 1934 the Cowles bought WMT from Mr. Shaw, retiring the call letters KWCR and moving WMT back to Cedar Rapids. William B. Quarton is now executive vice president.

WNAC Boston makes two "first" claims of historical significance—first Boston station (July 31, 1922) and first network broadcast (from WEAJ New York, now WNBC, Jan. 4, 1923). The stations were tied by AT&T line, with the program fed to the Massachusetts Bankers Assn. banquet. Six years later Yankee Network was set up with permanent lines. The regional hookup grew to 33 stations.

In 1934 John Shepard 3d broke away from a press association ruling that news could not be broadcast until it first appeared in newspapers. He started Yankee Network News Service with fulltime reporters and correspondents. The service broke down historic barriers against radio newsmen. Leland Bickford, editor-in-chief, was central figure in the famous Mayflower Case which