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EDITOR: Jim Cranshaw

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Monthly (10 issues yearly)

October 1972

P. O. Box 12

Kleberg, Texas 75145

FORMERLY NAMED:

THE ANTIQUE RADIO AND PHONOGRAPH NEWS

NOW NAMED:

THE HORN SPE

Since 1920

# WRR

Dial 1310 5,000 Watts

Actually, nobody knows when WRR went on the air. It has a Commerce department document RENEWING its license in July 1921. Generally, it is accepted that WRR was on the air regularly sometime in 1920.

Most people are surprised, and rightfully so, to find that the City of Dallas owns and operates Commercial Broadcast Stations WRR and WRR-FM. The natural question then they ask is: "Why is the City of Dallas in the radio business?" The answer is simple. Dallas owned WRR many years before there was any commercial broadcasting in the country. In fact, the City of Dallas established WRR so long ago that it was the first radio broadcast station in Dallas, in Texas, the south, and, in fact, it was one of the first three or four in the United States.

Through the years the City of Dallas has kept WRR and taken advantage of the many services and advantages of owning it. In a day and time when there is a pretty big price tag on city services to the citizens in taxes, WRR uses no taxes and its services are free. This, of course, is the main reason that Dallas continues to own and operate WRR. To dispose of it would bring only a one time income that would discontinue a period of continuous free services that has now extended for a period of 51 years.

Dallas has owned and operated WRR-AM 51 years and WRR-FM 23 years. The Municipal Radio Department operates under a special ordinance, and has a board with five members.

WRR has a staff of 52 people. Its budget for 1971-72 is approximately \$800,000.00.
WRR was established in 1920, primarily for the purpose of supplying communications to the Fire Department, although there were no automobile receivers, and in fact, no

no automobile receivers, and in fact, no home receivers. Experiments were carried on with a transmitter and receiver designed and built by Fire Department employees. WRR can perhaps lay claim to having the first announcer ad-libs, newscasts, weathercasts and D. J.'s.

The firemen first started broadcasting by just simply ad-libbing. This became a wearisome task, so they started reading news from the newspapers and reading weather information also gathered from the newspapers.

This continuous talking also got to be pretty tiring, so again the firemen cast around for some easier means of putting on tests without having to talk continuously, so they acquired a mechanically operated phonograph and placed the microphone in front of the speaker, which rebroadcasts, after a fashion, the music that was coming out of the speaker.

This information leaked to the public and was given prominent play by the newspapers. This fired the imagination of the citizens of Dallas, who in turn joined the ranks of the city experimenters. They built their own receivers, which consisted mainly of a pair of headphones, many feet of wire closely wound on a round oatmeal cardboard box and a sensitive piece of galena with a "cat whisker".

The nostalgic age of radio, at WRR's beginning, is depicted in the attached editorial page cartoon from The Dallas Morning News dated December 10, 1967.

From this meager beginning, the City of Dallas has continued to operate WRR as a broadcast station until today it is one of the leading and prominent stations in the nation. Of all the city owned broadcast stations, WRR has set a record of more prominent than any city owned radio station in the country. WRR not only has been self-sustaining, but has contributed millions of dollars in cash and services to many other departments of the city. In addition, WRR has contributed heavily in the field of Public Service and Public Information. At an early date, WRR pioneered in the field of city communications and established communications systems for just about every department in the city.

WRR Personnel not only started and

WRR Personnel not only started and pioneered in police, fire and other city communications, starting in 1931, but operated and expanded the services of these communications systems through the years until 1969.



First WRR antenna

First WRR transmitter

IN RADIO'S EARLY DAYS
IN THE 1920'S ALL
STATIONS OPENED THEIR
DAILY BROADCASTS WITH
THE FAMILIAR CALL HELL-O-HELL-O! HELL-O. THIS IS WAR CALLING OST -- WER CALLING Q5T..... KDKA PITTSBURGH WATTLL AH TELL OF BULL AN' DUCKY OUR FIRST NUMBER, BY POPULI REQUEST, -- DON'T BOUT THIS BRING ME POSIES WHEN 'S SHOESIES WRR WAS LOCATED ON THE UPPER FLOOR OF CENTRAL FIRE STATION NEAR CITY HALL, and JOHN STONE WAS DALLAS' FIRST DISC JOCKEY ANNOUNCING PROGRAMS. OF RECORDED MUSIC.... AND WE STAYED UP INTO THE WEE, SMALL HOURS TRYING TO SEE HOW MANY DIFFERENT DISTANT STATIONS WE COULD TUNE IN SO WE COULD BRAG ABOUT IT TO OUR FRIENDS.

Drawing: reprint from The Dallas Morning News

## off the Record

The American Phonograph Collecting Society is publishing a Newsletter, which is slanted for collectors of records and and phonographs. Vol. 1, No. 2 contains several interesting articles such as: "The Proudfit Story in Miniature," "Edison Disc Approximate Release Dates," and "Presidents Message," which discribes an auction sale of over 80 phonographs and about 100 radios.

Olin G. Carver publishes a lenghty list of records that he has priced for sale. His address is P. O. Box 3603, Temple, TX. 76501.

John F. Rider was inducted into Electronics Hall of Fame at New Orleans, Aug. 12. 1972.

This hot one was taken from the Radio Section of the Chicago Daily News, issue of May 10, 1924, and is certainly enlightening.
"There are 7,000,000 radiating regenerative sets in the country, 8,000,000 of which ARE BEING IM-

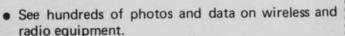


PROPERLY, TUNED EVERY NIGHT

### McMahon's Vintage Radio

Re-live the pioneer days of wireless and radio in this new 240-page

- Discover a new hobby.
- See old-time ads and pictures.
- Read about the roughand-tumble early days of a new industry.



- Own the only available collector's handbook.
- You can't lose; ten-day moneyback guarantee.

Vintage Radio, Box 2045, Palos Verdes Peninsula, California 90274

Enclose check to VINTAGE RADIO for \$3.95 per copy (\$4.15 in California), Postpaid.

Name	
Street	

### on the Air

For former employees or associates of Dr. Lee DeForest a group called the DeForest Pioneers has been formed. Write: Ken Richardson, secretary, 254 Vincent Ave, Lynbrook, N. Y. 11563.

Interest in the early elaborate wireless receivers has really been growing. Many are searching for the type of gear pictured in the old ad on page 3.

The Antique Wireless Association will hold their annual radio conference at the Smithsonian Institute at Washington D. C. on September 22, 23 and 24 this year. The program includes a sound showing called An American Inventor, which is a historical documentary about Edwin Howard Armstrong's 40 years of radio inventions. Also a receiver contest and a swap session is planned for the conference.



THE FIRST PRESIDENTIAL BROADCASTING The late President Harding at the microphone in St. Louis, June 21, 1923

FOR SALE OR TRADE: Send SASE for list of duplicate items in my Antique radio collection for sale or trade. David T. McKenzie. 1200 West Euclid, Indianola. Iowa 50125.

FOR SALE: Radio Schematics 1921-56 \$1.00. N. Batsch, 278 Sutherland Dr., Toronto 352 Ont. Canada.

WANTED: Rider's Technical Manual of Schematics. Vol. 1. also Atwater Kent speakers. F. E. "Pat" Patterson, P. O. Box 2183. Longview, TX. 75601.

WANTED: John Rider Vol. 1 1933 edition. K. Parry 17557 Horace. Granada Hills. Calif. 91344.

NEED Crosley Model 52 Schematic. R. A. Misak 5524 N. Major Ave., Chicago. Illinois 60630.

FOR SALE: Antique radios, parts, books and magazines. R. Matson, 388 Concord Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730.

PHONOGRAPH WANTS: Maroon GEM horn, top carrage & mandrel for an Edison Balmoral, parts for Regina Hexaphone, Duplex Phonograph or parts. Ken Wood, 1731 E. Austin, Nacogodches TX. 75961, Ph. 713-569-8611.

FOR SALE: Grebe CR-5, CR-8, AK Breadboards, Zenith Super, Etc. Send for free list. Paul Giganti, 2429 San Carlos Ave., San Carlos CA. 94070.

WANTED to buy all types of phonographs Edison, Victor, Columbia, etc. Also we are interested in one item or complete collections. Please send photo, description, and price wanted first letter to; G. W. MacKinnon, 453 Stando Avenue, Charlotte, North Carolina 28206.

FOR SALE: 2 & 4 minute Edison Phonograph cylinders, \$5.00 ea. D. E. Cole, P. O. Drawer 520, Channelview, Tx 77530.

WANTED: comic books. big little books. pulps, any radio and cereal giveaways, rings dealing with radio shows. Rogofsky, Box HS1102, Flushing, New York 11354.

PROFESSIONAL CW operators. retired or active, commercial, military, Gov't, police, etc. invited to join Society of Wireless Pioneers, W7GAQ/6, Box 530 Santa Rosa, CA. 95402.

INTERESTED in buying or trading for collections of radios or parts. Ham equipment available for trade. Walt Jackson. W5ZYA. 2929 N. Haskell, Dallas TX. 75204 Day time 214 526-2023, 214 262-7855 evenings or weekends.

WANTED, advertising and technical literature on McMurdo Silver and Scott radios and associated items. J. W. F. Puett, 3008 Abston Dr., Mesquite, Texas 75149.



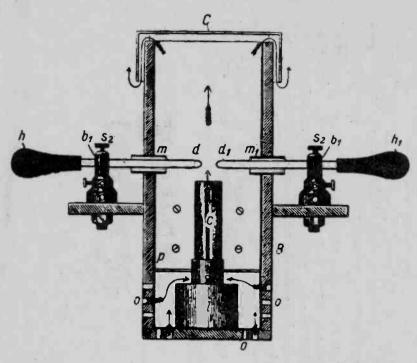
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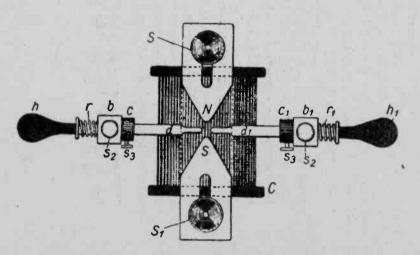


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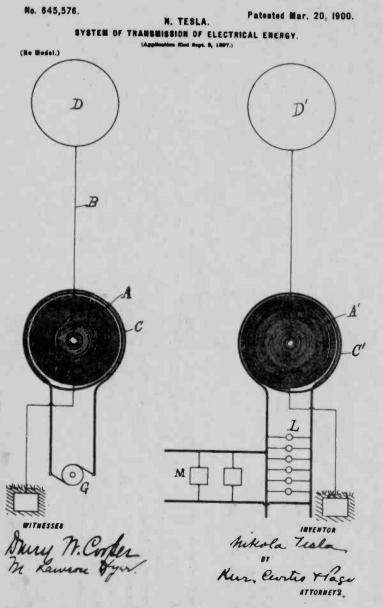
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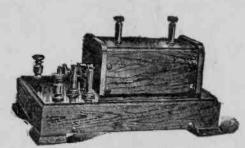
Tesla's spark apparatus in a flame, one of many varieties of spark devices he created. The principle was later applied in experiments by other pioneers.



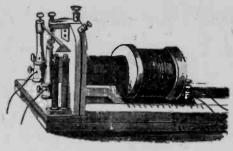
Tesla spark apparatus with magnetic blowout, one of many forms of spark discharge apparatus he created.



Teslas patent #645,576 for the transmission of electrical energy. It included a four-tuned circuit system thus antedating Marconi's circuit upon which science of wireless telegraphy was founded.



RUHMKORFF COIL.



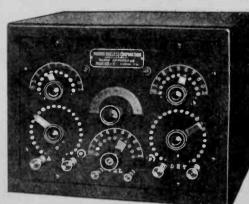
INDUCTION COIL

DECEMBER, 1915

THE WIRELESS AGE

## "MIGNON SYSTEM"

Radio Signal Receiving Apparatus

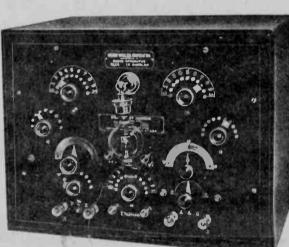


RLC2 Special

For Commercial and Amateur

Wireless Stations

WRITE FOR CATALOG R5



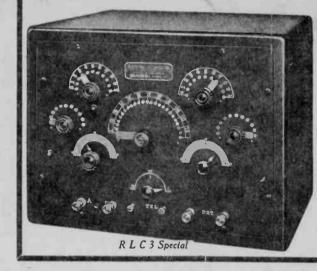
Apparatus of Scientific Construction for the Reduction of Static Interference. High Resonance Unapproached Selectivity Durability

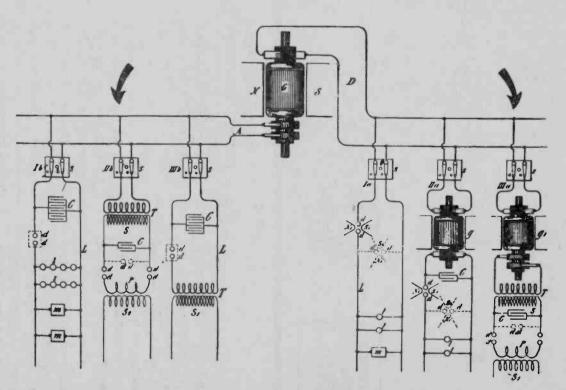
Receiving Cabinets RC2—RLC3
Special and RLC4 are not guaranteed for the reception of continuous wave signals. However, through the persistent efforts of our untiring laboratory staff, they have been decidedly improved upon, with the gratifying result of being able to hear the above signals in our daily tests of apparatus before shipment is made. These signals will greatly improve by the shunting of a fixed or variable condenser of suitable capacity across the 'phone terminals.

We receive many gratifying letters from our satisfied patrons verifying the above statement.

Mignon Wireless Corporation

> Specialists in Radio Receiving Apparatus Elmira, N. Y.





Tesla's methods of high-frequency. The arrows point out the two methods basic to wireless telegraphy later employed by leading pioneers wuch as Marconi.

original experiments, pursued the development of the high-frequency alternator to wireless communications, his conception of employing continuous waves, and his design of apparatus for producing them, would have preceded the radio industry by two decades. As a striking example of the alternator's importance in radio, it was possession of the Alexanderson alternator patents which gave RCA a decided advantage in global communications.

Tesla, again, aroused the attention of the scientific world in 1891 when he presented the first of a series of historic lectures revealing discoveries from experiments with high-frequency alternating currents. (1) Among these was the disclosure of a new kind of transformer. Better known then as a "Tesla" coil, this device later became the heart of all significant communications systems as the all-important oscillation transformer.
Consequently, Tesla, in his early experiments, stumbled upon another important foot portant facet to communications-inductively coupled-tuned circuits. Time has

not dimmed their importance.

One can gain an insight into the inventor's experimental wisdom and prophetic vision in the reading of his 1892 lecture before the Institution of Electrical Engineers of London. Referring to a sensitive brush discharge in one of his vacuum tubes, Tesla describes its sensitivity to magnetic and electrostatic influences and states, "I think that it may find practical application in (wireless) telegraphy. With such a brush, it would be possible to send dispatches across the Atlantic, for instance, with any speed. . . (2) Although the Edison effect phenomenon in incandescent vacuum bulbs, later to become the basis for the radio tube, was well known, I know of no reference prior to Tesla's suggestion that the vacuum tube be utilized as a component in communications. Historians, it seems, have missed the import of Tesla's declaration for I have read no publication which credits Tesla with the conception of using a vacuum tube as a detector.

The present-day state of technology may serve to blind us from sensing the impact of Tesla's predictions. After all, the ease with which we can communicate with the moon astronauts (Tesla was one of the earliest, if not the first, to predict interplanetary communications) tends to portray those early pioneers in communications as a bunch of tinkerers. But at that time, they were crossing a frontier beyond which no one had leaped, and the other side appeared quite hazy. Leading figures in the scientific world publicly conceded the impossibility of traversing the Atlantic's prohibiting span with an electromagnetic wave. To Tesla, the earth's magnitude was of little significance. "I would say a few words on a subject which constantly fills my thoughts and which concerns the welfare of all. I mean the transmission of intelligible signals or perhaps even power to any distance without the use of wires. We need not be frightened by the idea of distance. To the weary wanderer counting the mileposts, the earth may appear very large; but to the happiest of all men, the astronomer, who gazes at the heavens, and by their standards judge the magnitude of our globe, it appears very small. . . And so I think it must seem to the electrician. . . it certainly is possible. . .to produce some electrical disturbance sufficiently powerful to be perceptible by suitable instruments at any point of the earth's surface." (3)

In his final lecture of the "trio-series", Tesla suggested a system of radio communications employing synchronized aerial-ground elements at the transmitting and receiving station.(4) In view of this disclosure, it would seem that he was the first to conceive the idea of using transmitting and receiving antennae tuned to the same frequency. Therefore, by 1893, some four years before contemporaries had made equally significant contributions to the art, it appeared that Tesla possessed both the technology and ambition necessary for bringing radio communications to its

fruition. What, then, barred him from achieveing the honor?

On March 13, 1895, the entire contents of his inventive career, as well as records, documents, and a world's fair exhibit were lost when a fire destroyed his New York City laboratory. Incredible as it may seem, in less than two years following this tragedy, Tesla had carried out investigations in the field of x-ray, studies of the dynamics of mechanical vibrations, the invention of electro-mechanical isosynchronous alternating current generators, as well as experiments with radio-controlled devices. One of his most important contributions of this period was a patent containing the fundamental principle upon which the "four-tuned-circuit" system of radio transmission was to be founded. (5) Professor Adolph Slaby, German's leading authority in early communications, demonstrated an enthusiastic appreciation for Tesla's work. In declaring Tesla as the "Father of Wireless," he wrote, "I have been engaged for some time in investigations in telegraphy without wires,

which you have first announced in your 'Inventions.' It will interest you as the father of this telegraphy. . . . . ''(6) father of this telegraphy. .

Restricted by the limits of his New York laboratory, Tesla left for Colorado Springs in 1899 to initiate experiments on a large scale. Communications was to be but one phase of his project. Another was the transmission of electricity without the use of power lines. He was of the conviction that resonant efforts of large magnitude would enable him to utilize the earth as a conductor. "Not only was it practicable to send telegraphic messages to any distance without wires, stated Tesla, "...but also to impress upon the entire globe the faint modulations of the human voice, far more still, to transmit power, in unlimited amounts to any terrestrial distance and almost without loss." (7)

There, on the plains below Pike's Peak, he constructed a large barn-like laboratory containing an array of apparatus reminiscent of a Jules Verne fantasy. The concrete achievements of the Colorado adventure remain obscure. Except for a lecture, some scattered notes, and a few ambiguous articles, he never fully disclosed the outcome of the experiment. He announced the discovery of standing waves induced in the earth's static charge by nature's lightening and was able to duplicate them by bringing about an immense resonant action. In an experiment which has not since been equaled, Tesla produced an absolute potential of 18 million volts and antenna currents of 1.110 amperes.

Tesla demonstrated the vision of a true prophet when he suggested the employment of standing waves as a means for detecting the position and movement of distant objects. ". . . by their use. . . we may determine the relative position or course of a moving object such as a vessel at sea. . . "(8) Once again, Tesla chose not to pursue a promising vision but left to others the development of

Tesla returned to New York in 1900 and began construction of a transmitting plant on Long Island. Residents of early Shoreham can recall the gigantic tower situated on a tract of land known as Wardenclyffe. The station was to be but one of a series of components making up Tesla's "World System" of broadcasting. In addition to the distribution of news, music, and humanity services by today's communications media, the inventor promised a number of startling benefits. It was to establish a universal system of telephone, teregraph, and stock ticker services; a precision clock system whereby all the world's timepieces would be accurately synchronized from a master station, a safe system of havigation enabling control of direction without the need of compasses and an ability to determine the exact location, hour, and speed at a moment's notice. In addition, it was to provide a world system of private tele-phone communications between parties, regardless of distance, with an incredible device small enough to be carried on one's pocket.

The Long Island plant was never completed. The cost of the project exceeded the inventor's available funds and creditors refused further investments when rumors circulated debasing the scheme as

a fairy tale.

In an objective which no other person had then dreamed possible, Tesla had visualized, and nearly created, broadcasting some twenty years preceding its eventuality. Edwin H. Armstrong, radio pioneer and inventor of FM, paid great tribute to Tesla's prophetic broadcasting when he stated, ". . . the instrumentalities for practicing broadcasting were not then in existence. Tesla was classed as a visionary and his prophecy was forgotten. What harsher terms might, with justice, be applied to many of us who helped produce the instrumentalities with which broadcasting was eventually accomplished. We applied them to point-to-point communications, failing completely to realize the significance of Tesla's words." (9)

In addition to the major goals mentioned herein, Tesla made an infinite variety of contributions to communications that remain generally unheralded. The most striking example is a patent describing an invention for controlling moving objects by radio waves. (10) With this invention, Tesla singularly ushered in the age of radio-guidance systems. "We shall be able. . .to send a projectile at a much greater distance; it will not be limited in any way, weight, or amount of explosive charge; we shall be able to submerge it at command, to arrest it in its flight and call it back, and to send it out again and explode it at will; and more than this, it will never make a miss. . ."(11) A vital part of Tesla's system of radiocontrol was a patent which provided for multi-channel non-interferable radio transmission. (12) This, and his "fourtuned" circuit patent are, perhaps, the two most significant contributions forming the foundation for the radio art.

The science world did not stand idly by while Tesla spewed forth his pro-

phecies and visions. It considered his guided-missle theories incredible and was quick make its viewpoints known, Although spectacular demonstrations of his radiocontrolled devices were presented in a week-long display in New York City, and later, in Chicago, colleagues refused to concede the possibility of Tesla's missle. Said one reporter, "We have recently been informed by the public press in flamboyant rhetoric that Nikola Tesla has devised to result in the destrict of the result in t a boat which is destined to revolutionize warfare. Mr. Tesla's improvement has been introduced to the world with some of the most extravagant rhapsodies that ever threw discreit upon an untried inventor.

"It could strike, we are told, a vessel that lay in Southampton, England, while the operator was snugly ensconced in the forts at Sandy Hook. What possible good can be done either to the inventor himself or to the great cause of science. . . by confusing the minds of the public by such unscientific exaggerations as we have quoted above?" (13)

Others were even less optimistic, "When we are expected to accept in silence such an utterance as quoted above. . . we refuse point blank, and we are willing to face the consequences." (14)

This form of opposition did not deter Tesla from expanding on his vision for, to him, this was but the beginning. In a gesture typical of his unlimited imaginative powers, he proposed radio-controlled robots capable of thinking for themselves. He coined them AUTOMATONS, ". . . it will be able to follow a course laid out or to obey orders given far in advance; it will be capable of distinguishing between what it ought and what it ought not to do. . .''(15) Tesla's utterances raised more than the eyebrow of the scientific world. Resulting protests surpassed the discontent of indignation. The significance of Tesla's words, however, becomes more apparant when we consider today's vast arsenal of guided missles and self-thinking machines. The fact that we can send a missle, manned or unmanned, to the moon, that it will know where it ought to land or ought not to land, that it will return to earth on a pin point landing, all without human interference, is evidence of performance exactly as Tesla predicted.

Among his incidental contributions to radio communications was the Tesla "ticker", a device for making continuous waves audible. This apparatus was a vital part of the Paulsen Arc stations until the heterodyne beat-note system was introduced to radio engineering. Several forms of Tesla's high-frequency spark apparatus were utilized by early transmitting stations for many years. His radio patents advanced the quarter-wave principle as well as antennas in the form of a loop. And it was Tesla who pointed out the importance of oil as an insulating medium in high voltage equipment and who suggested the use of insulated stranded wire, later called Litzendraht, in high-frequency circuits.

Considering all that has been mentioned in the foregoing, why then is the name Nikola Tesla not listed among the ournals of radio engineering history? Several explanations are possible. For one, Tesla was a complex personality. Hampered by a grand gesture personality and driven by an extra-ordinary ingenuity, his talents remained eternally subservient to a passionate and inexorable urge for crossing frontiers while leaving for others the benefits of commercial development. Secondly, Tesla was forever being diverted off on tangents away from the path of his ma or goals, delaying, if not preventing, final achievements of his original

In addition, Tesla's extremes of individuality may have been his greatest failing. Without detracting from their brilliant work, it is known that the many successes of men such as Edison resulted from an ability to attract the assistance of highly capable associates. Tesla, however, was unable by temperament to avail himself of this advantage. Lee De Forest, an inventor whose contributions are well established in the glorious history of radio, pleaded to be taken in as a Tesla assistant. Undoubtedly, other talented personalities would have been more than happy to oin the Tesla camp. Unfortunately, Tesla was a born "loner" who stood aloof and out of reach of those with whom he mingled.

On December 12, 1901, while Tesla was constructing his 300,000-watt Long Island broadcasting station, Guglielmo Marconi, with but a fraction of that power, scooped the scientific world by sending three dots across the Atlantic from England to Newfoundland. The scientific society hailed Marconi. Tesla sent a congratulatory note but it was quite evident that he had been struck a blow by Marconi's feat. A crushing defeat, and perhaps the most important deterrent, to Tesla's bid for radio immortality came about in 1915 when he battled Marconi over the fundamental issues upon which early radio had become established. The courts ruled against Tesla, a judgement which was to provide Marconi the means for instituting unmittigated assertions for the invention of wireless.

Be all that as it may, Tesla's part in the evolution of communications was not to be denied completely. In 1943 (the year of Tesla's death), long after the radio empire had been well established, the U. S. Supreme Court declared the Marconi "four-tuned-circuit" patent (his most important contribution) invalid due to prior disclosure by Tesla. (16)

in summation, we find in Nikola Tesla a personality possessing an experimental acuity and prophetic vision equaled by no more than a handful of colleagues and surpassed by none. In an evaluation of the inventor's contribitions to radio engineering, L. P. Wheeler credits Tesla with the independent discovery of the principle of inductive coupling between the driving and working circuits, the importance of tuning both circuits (oscillation transformer), and the employment of the open secondary circuit. He describes Tesla as ". . . an immensely energetic personality possessing great skill in ac techniques and great ingenuity in their utilization. . . his earlier accomplishments. . .together with the inspiration given to many through his public lectures, would seem to justify a place in the history of radio engineering not so very far below that due to his accomplishment in the field of low-frequency alternating currents. (17)

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