



# Blabber Mouth

Published By

## The Old Old Timers Club

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### FOREWORD

The circumstance and opportunity put to the best advantage, such as that experienced by WIAE, George Sterling is rare indeed. His career and devotion to duty while serving with the government Communications Regulatory Agencies, is most distinguished and is a credit to the agencies he served.

George Sterling has served in every position from Radio Inspector to Radio Inspector in Charge, Assistant Chief of Field Division, Radio Division of the Department of Commerce, Chief Radio Intelligence Division FCC, Assistant Chief Engineer, Chief Engineer and finally Commissioner of FCC. He is the only commercial operator and active ham who ever filled all these positions one after the other.

Another of George Sterling's outstanding achievements is being the author of the "Radio Manual", so well known to oldtimers and often referred to as the "Radio Bible".

So many of our members have shown an interest in George's career that he was prevailed upon to supply BLABBER MOUTH with such material and we are proud to present his fine contribution.

### SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD RADIO INSPECTOR

By George E. Sterling WIAE

On June 30th of this year, the FCC, in a resolution commemorated the 50th anniversary of law enforcement by our government in the radio field. This service which was then the Bureau of Navigation, Department of Commerce, was 12 years old when I was appointed a Radio Inspector in the 3rd Radio District with headquarters in the Custom House, Baltimore, Md.

# Blabber Mouth

GEORGE E. STERLING #51

Served the people and the Government of the United States from 1923 to 1954 in the following capacities:

U.S. Radio Inspector  
Inspector in Charge  
Assistant Chief Inspector  
Field Division Chief  
Chief of Radio Intelligence WW2  
FCC Chief Engineer  
Radio Commissioner (Dept. of Commerce, Federal Radio Commission FCC).  
Represented U.S. in several International Conventions.  
Author of the "Radio Manual", 4 editions, 150,000 copies.  
Located over 200 Nazi spy radio stations while chief of RI.  
Served in AEF WW1, and commissioned 2nd. Lt. Signal Corps by Gen. Pershing.



William D. Terrell

HONORARY MEMBER

Mr. Terrell was the first appointee to the post of Wireless Ship Inspector. Date, June 5, 1911, and retired as Chief, Field Engineering and Monitoring Bureau.

Mr. Terrell was proposed for HONORARY MEMBERSHIP in OOTC by WIAE, George Sterling and W6KAA Tom Stevens, and was unanimously elected to to the honor by the Board of Directors.

Congratulations Mr. Terrell; we are happy to confer this honor on you and are honored to have you one of us. May your retirement continue to be peaceful and happy, as were your active years fruitful.





The nine radio districts were in charge of radio supervisors and Mr. W.D. Terrell, who celebrated his 90th birthday on August 10, this year was the Chief of the service. Bill Downey was then his first assistant chief.

When in 1923, I was sworn in as a radio inspector, little did I realize that I too, in years to come, would be his first assistant. I always remembered many of the words of wisdom voiced to me by Mr. Terrell when I was his assistant but probably none better when he said, "Sterling, it is the policy of this service to try and help a man from getting into trouble rather than jumping on his head when he is in trouble". I tried to instill this policy into young Radio Inspectors who I too, had to swear into the service.

R.Y. Cadimus was my supervisor, and it was a proud and big day in my life when in June of 1923, he swore me in as a Radio Inspector, pinned a beautiful gold badge on me and announced that I was on twenty four hours a day and seven days a week. The announcement was made with emphasis. In later years when out running down illegal stations and chasing interference in all kinds of weather, I had cause to remember his words.

Other supervisors at the time, as you old timers will recollect were as follows; Charles Kolster 1st. District, Arthur Batcheller 2nd District, R.Y. Cadimus 3rd and 4th Districts, (Walter Van Nostrand was made supervisor of the 4th District with office in Atlanta in 1924), Theodore Deiler 5th District, Bernard Linden who retired this year, 6th District, Otto Redfern 7th District, Sam Edwards 8th District and Ed. Bean 9th District.

Our chief task at that time was the inspection of foreign and domestic coming within the purview Ship Act of 1912 and 1910 requiring licenced operators, an emergency power supply, a few spare parts and communication facilities from the radio room to the bridge. Other duties required the inspection of land stations, coastal, experimental, a few broadcasting and amateur stations as well as the examination of applicants for all classes of operator's licenses.

The 3rd. radio district then embraced Maryland, District of Columbia, Delaware, parts of Virginia, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. It was Mr. Cadimus' policy to make two tours of his district each year, inspecting practically every accessible station, including amateur, regardless of whether or not the licensee was at home.

On occasions we were informed by an irate mother or XYL that we could not see the equipment as the licensee was not at home. Mr. Cadimus' stock reply was to the effect that when the licensee made application for license, that he agreed the station would be accessible at all reasonable times. A professor of physics at a small in Pennsylvania tried to deny us entrance to an experimental station, but when the chips were down, we made the inspection.

I have often thought of the varied types of equipment I had to put on the air and measure the power, frequency and decrement in the case of a spark job. There was the ham with the mercury rectifier and tilting gear, the arc and the most bothersome and difficult to tune of all, the ship spark sets. I shall never forget my first introduction to an arc set as many of you did.

The year before I became a government radio inspector, I went ashore as radio inspector for Mr. W.P. Kelland of the Radiomarine Corporation of America converting spark sets to tubes and all the other associated duties. Lou Richineri was the government inspector at the time and I went along with him to inspect and tune out an arc set on the SS 'Blacksnake' (for want of

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the real name which I can't remember.) We made a few adjustments and then BANG came the damndest explosion and I hightailed it through the door for the boat dock. When I stopped running, I turned around Lou stood grinning in the shack entrance. He explained to me how he had created the blast by use of excessive alchol, but also stated that was the way novices had to be introduced to arc sets. I wonder how many of you old timers pulled this on a striker or young squirt.

#### BROADCASTING STATIONS.

In 1923, radio broadcasting was just sprouting its wings. The greatest number in our district were in our city of Philadelphia, with one or two in Baltimore, Richmond and Washington. Our only real coastal station that I can recall was WCY at Cape May. Broadcasting stations along the coast were in fact classified coastal stations and as such, were required to maintain a listening watch on 600 meters and in addition were required to be able to transmit on 300 and 600 meters the International distress wave lengths.

Mr. Cadimus read the rules right down the middle and when ever we made a broadcast station inspection, the program was interrupted while the operator on duty or chief engineer demonstrated that the transmitter could operate on these two wave lengths. I recall that WBAL in Baltimore could not do this easily, so they installed a P-5 spark set. Mr. Cadimus accepted this as complying with the requirements of the rules.

This requirement was enforced at the time since marine receivers were not very selective and cases had been reported where broadcasting stations had interfered with distress and other marine traffic; consequently, whenever a distress call was picked up, and there were many in those days after WWI, each broadcasting station hearing the call directly from the stricken ship or by relay, was forced to suspend broadcasting until the coastal station in charge gave the all clear signal.

On occasions broadcasting was silenced along the whole Atlantic coast for a half to an hour or so and it was not infrequent that some of the calls originated as far east as the North sea and by ship relay reached our coast.

As improvements were made in marine receivers, and because of protests from owners and the public, these requirements were done away with. I have no recollection of a broadcasting station communicating with a ship in distress while acting as a coastal station.

It will be recalled that we were in the Bureau of Navigation, and as such were also required to enforce the navigation laws as the Coast Guard does today. One of the things along this line that Mr. Cadimus "hipped on" was the prohibition on starting an automobile motor on a ferry boat before it was properly docked; so when we rode the ferries to Camden and Delaware, my task was to run about and take the license numbers of all cars that were in violation. Mr. Cadimus duly reported these to the Collector of the port from which the ferry operated, who in turn was empowered to levy the fines.

One of the boats operated by the Bureau in the enforcement of motor boat laws, was the M.V. Kilkenny. Former President Hoover was the Secretary of Commerce, and often on a week end liked to cruise and fish in Chespeak Bay.



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Lou Richineri who I succeeded as Radio Inspector at Baltimore, had constructed a 50 watt radiotelephone transmitter which was installed on the Kilkenny each spring so Mr. Hoover could keep in touch with Washington through NAA at Arlington as well as for safety purposes.

When Lou was sent west to recover from an illness, it became my task to install the set and check it out while on a cruise on the Bay. I broadcast many a recording on 360 meters and asked for signal reports to be sent to Baltimore, but have to report my fan mail could be counted on one hand. In any case I guess I was one of the first maritime mobile disk jockies as were the operators on the SS America who broadcast recordings on her Atlantic trips and at the request of the skipper of the ship I was on at the time the SS Conehatla, KUQQ; This was about '21 or '22, possibly before.

### ILLEGAL OPERATIONS.

Unlicensed radio stations came to the fore during the days of prohibition, when bootleggers employed clandestine stations on the coast to communicate with their boats bound in with their contraband cargo. I have heard reports and remarks that there were some unlicensed ham stations in those days too; I wonder.

I remember one case where a licensed broadcast station was employed to play certain records at an agreed time which was a code message to the skipper of a rum runner as to where to land. It was done so cleverly that even the management of the station was taken in for a while.

Long Island, Maine and the Jersey coast were the scenes of some illegal wireless station operation and Charlie Kolster and Arthur Batcheller and staff were kept busy aiding the Treasury Department in running down the offenders. Some of the stations taken in looked like small arsenals.

The Bureau had no direction finders of its' own and they were made by the inspectors, often at their own expense; I have a picture of Forest Redfern with his outfit taking bearings along the coast.

Once we set up a counter intelligence operation. The land station had been seized and a code book was taken into possession. On schedule, one of our inspectors sent a message to the skipper of a boat while we monitored the exchange of signals. The message changed the point of intended entry of the boat. There was quite a bit of suspense while the skipper decoded the message. It seemed for a while that he was suspicious of his new orders but he finally came around and gave an affirmative answer to the message. The Treasury agents were waiting when he landed.

Another source of illegal operation made possible by vacuum tube transmitters was the race touts who are always trying to beat the bookies. The Modus of operandi in general is to have a small hidden transmitter on the person of some one in the grand stand or other point of good visibility. They can by coded signals report the progress of a race to a confederate outside the track. The latter either has a telephone line or transmitter to communicate to another in a ring in a city where the books are open while the race is being run or even after.

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On one occasion I was ordered to go to the Bowie, Maryland track, travelling by the old Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Line since we had no automobiles for official use at that time.

On arrival, I tried by wandering around to spot an antenna which might be of suspicious nature since it was reported that a radio transmitter was in use around there. I received little or no cooperation from the track police and got suspicious of this attitude. The reasons for my suspicions became obvious the following year after we had received information that the County Police had moved in on a house located on a hill a short distance from the track, and had taken into custody what they thought was a transmitter. It seems some one had observed a flashing light beamed on the track and located in the house.

I went to the Police Chief's office and found that they had seized a very cleverly constructed transmitter. It was concealed in a vest with a small storage battery in one pocket, a vibrator in another and a key with leads to feed down through the coat of the operator. The antenna was a loop which was sewn into and over the shoulders of the vest. The vibrator supplied power to 200-A tube.

Since we had not caught the operator actually using the transmitter we had no Federal case, but I did talk to the ham operator who had been arrested with the others charged with gambling and making a book. I received permission from him to take the transmitter to Baltimore where I measured the frequency (150 meters).

I called in the Signal Officers staff of the Third Corps Area as I thought such a transmitter might have good usefulness for the infantry. I recall quite well that it took three men of an infantry company in France to carry a trench set used to communicate with battalion headquarters. Here was a very compact set utilizing ICW and carried by one man.

A very humorous and interesting episode occurred near lunch time. The police chief asked me if I would like a highball before eating. I agreed. He sent a deputy out to get some ginger ale while he opened his safe and brought out the hooch. We tossed a couple down and at the finish the chief announced that the liquor was evidence taken from a chap reposing behind the bars down the corridor.

It was during this session that that I learned why I hadn't received cooperation from the track police at Bowie the year before. It seems that when they arrested the crew at the house who were operating the signaling system, one of those who showed up to post bail was a former track cop.

An interesting race track case took place at Charlestown, W.Va. My men were having difficulty locating the tout in the grandstand operating the transmitter, so I authorized them to jam him. Each time he went on the air he got a dose of raw ac from a unit my men had hastily put together. The guy outside did what we expected. He told him to move higher in the grandstand. It was a 5 meter job. After several shots, my man seated at the top of the grandstand operating the jammer was not too surprised when the operator took a seat in the same row. We took the whole crew in, including a large transmitter



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outside the track which was being used to communicate with Detroit and other cities in which the ring operated, but not before the air was let out of their car tires while we got the U.S. Marshal. Race track touts never seemed to be successful with their operation since in most cases when arrested, they could not make bail.

Probably one of the funniest cases of illegal operations occurred in Texas where a trusty in a jail put an unlicensed transmitter on the air to negotiate for his release. I wonder if he ever got out.

All of these illegal operations made good target practice for men when just before World War II we learned of the fifth column, and Nazi activities in France and England and the way they landed spies with transmitters by parachutes and submarines.

How we organized to successfully combat this threat to our country is the story of the Radio Intelligence Division of the FCC which I had the honor and privilege of organizing and directing. If at some time later there is sufficient interest I will report on these operations which one or two of our members are familiar, since they were in the division.

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#### OPERATOR EXAMINATIONS

As you all know, one of the main duties of a radio inspector is the examination of applicants for the various classes of operator's license. The instrument in use when I came into the service was the Omnigraph. I imagine every old timer had, on occasions grounds for cussing it because of its erratic speed and often distorted signals.

One of my good friends in Baltimore likes to tell the story when we are remembering, about the time he came to the Custom House to take an exam. for renewal. He had let his license expire. He reports that he cranked up the Omnigraph and after he had listened a bit he looked up at me and remarked, "That's not ten words per minute". He said I replied by saying, "It's ten words to you mister". Probably it was going around 15 WPM. He got his renewal.

Another time, a chap off of one of the west coast boats came into the office and announced he wanted to take the exam for the Commercial Extra Class license. This threw me for a tizzy momentarily since I had never conducted an American Morse code test which was required for this class of license and my knowledge of American Morse was limited to 10 WPM. I believe the exam required 25 WPM. I got the morse dials for the Omnigraph and tried to follow along with the office copy of what was on the dials. I noted that the applicant was making heavy weather with his copy. I stopped the machine, went to the key and pounded it out from my copy. He passed the exam.

I have often wondered what kind of a machine, if any, was used at the Boston Navy Yard by Radio Gunner Blakeslee when he examined me for my first commercial ticket in 1916. Perhaps some of you old timers can fill me in.

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### TEST CARS

Our club members who were in radio broadcasting and possibly others will remember the special test cars we later acquired for the purpose of making field strength surveys, locating sources of interference and running down illegal stations.

The bodies of these Packard cars were of special composition since they were equipped inside with Western Electric 44-A field strength sets and other instruments. They greatly resembled a hearse or paddy wagon.

Cemeteries were fine places to take field strength measurements since there are no overhead wires to distort the field of a station. On one occasion Charlie Ellert, W3LO and I moved into a cemetery to take readings on a broadcast station, which it was alleged was not cutting down it's power at sunset. We had just set up shop when a guy came along and announced that he thought we had made a mistake as there were no burials scheduled there for the day. We told him of our mission and went on with the task.

Lanes leading off of main roads, often free of wires overhead was another good place to duck in and take a reading. We ran up a farm road one day and a chap came running down and reported that his wife had just fainted. She thought we were bringing in a body.

I traveled far and wide in our old test car and the last job I performed was the measurements of WJZ and WBAL when they were synchronized on 660 kilocycles. I well remember the "mush areas" in New Haven where the fields were in phase opposition.

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### EARLY TELEVISION

No story of the old days, so to speak, would be complete without mention of our earliest T V systems in the United States. It was of course the electro-mechanical system of resolving the picture by means of a scanning disc rotated in front of a neon tube. We had only one T V station at the time in the 3rd. district and it was owned and operated by the inventor Francis Jenkins.

The transmitter was located at Wheaton, Maryland and the studios were on Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D.C. The stations that were on the air at that time operated on frequencies between 2100 and 2600 kcs. and all were of an experimental nature with X prefixes.

Night after night from our home in Baltimore, we could watch the little girl bouncing the ball from the Jenkins station and from the station in New Jersey, see the face of the "Father of Radio", Dr. Lee DeForest.

By changing the discs, we could on occasions, if skip was right pick up WGY at Schenactdy which broadcast hour on hour the GE monograph.



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On occasions we would invite friends to our house to see the program. When it faded in we would get excited and exclaim, "See it, see it". On many occasions too when they left our house, they would knowingly look at each other and tap their heads.

Crude as they were, we saw images and my oldest daughter Patricia still talks about the T V shows she saw when she was a little girl. She never knew then that in years to come, she would be making appearances in T V shows as well as writing them when T V became truly all-electronic.

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### DUE PROCESS

Reflecting at times on law enforcement in the early days of radio, and comparing with the procedures employed today by the regulatory agencies in order to protect the rights of individuals and the public interest, I am amazed at what we got away with.

The FCC is today staffed with a number of hearing examiners, a general counsel, his lawyers and a large staff of lawyers in each bureau. Hearings and oral arguments no end; but let's hark back a few years and see just how the supervisors of radio enforced the law, particularly as I remember it in the 3rd radio district.

I have in my possession, one of my work books for 1926, and in it I find this entry dated May 13th, "Amateur station in York, Pennsylvania; operating on excessive wave length and without returning station license for amendment. License suspended". "Suspended license of Mr. X at Gettysburg College for failure to take examination for Amateur 1st. class", and so on.

In those days we had a broadcasting station in Philadelphia that was using a modulated oscillator, one of the few commercial jobs available. It was located on top of a hotel and the constant variation in line voltage due to the load of the elevators, caused it to deviate considerably from its assigned frequency. After a couple of violations, it was ordered off the air until it could stabilize its frequency. No show cause order or hearing. Just, "You're off the air, we are taking up your license".

Yes, a supervisor of radio was a little czar in his own domain. There was one lawyer that I knew of and he was in the office of the Secretary of Commerce. All legal matters were referred to him.

However time and progress changed things radically and with the creation of the Federal Radio Commission in 1927 and later the FCC in 1934, and more particularly with the passage of the Administrative Procedures Act governing all regulatory agencies, due process took on a solid and different meaning; let us see how it affected me, and particularly after I became Commissioner.

On September 15, 1950 I addressed the West Coast Convention of the IRE and the subject of my talk, of all things, was "Due Process and the Public Interest". In this speech I said this, "In licensing radio stations for example an applicant for station license, license renewal, or modification of his

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license, must be offered a hearing if the Commission cannot find without a hearing that a grant of the application will serve the public interest". "Nor may a station license be taken away without a hearing if one is requested. Full and fair notice of these hearings must be given of course, and judicial decisions have spelled out what is required for a fair hearing".

AND, this too, "For the Commission, the Communications Act of 1934, which created it, sets the procedures to be followed. These procedures constitute due process of law when used in a spirit of fairness. They guarantee adequate consideration of all claims of all parties". Truly the mills of justice grind slowly but exceedingly fine.

Despite all the power they yielded I am sure most of the old timers will agree with me that the supervisors and radio inspectors were fair and considerate in the discharge of their duties. As it concerned safety of life at sea, they had to enforce the laws and regulations without fear or favor.

Of the old gang I served with in 1923, the only ones other than Mr. Terrell who still survive, are Kolster, Batcheller, Linden, Chappel, Du Treil, Cochrane Brown, Downey and Bean.

If this little ditty has brought back some memories of old, particularly as it concerns supervisors or radio inspectors you once knew or an examination you once took, or a bit of experimenting without a license, then I have been amply rewarded for my modest effort.

George E. Sterling W1AE  
Peaks Island  
Portland, Maine.

Credit for the photograph so kindly on loan to us should be given to BROADCASTING. The cut of Mr. Terrell was used in their August 21 issue.

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Ye olde copy boy is sure that you will enjoy the above article by our good friend and distinguished member, George. We can use more like it or anything in line with what you would like to see in BLABBER MOUTH.

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## 20 METER SSB NET

Attention is directed to the 20 meter ssb net finally beginning to function. At 1300 EST or 1800 GMT this net is now active on all days except Saturdays and Sundays. At this time the regulars are W1AE, VE3BKL, W4BU, W4FE, W4TY, W5RIH and W6KAA. We have had an occasional call from W2JXH, W2ZM, W2LP and a few others I do not now recall.

W2EG will soon be with us and it is hoped that this net will be enjoyed by as many members as possible. It is a most informal group and is presently MC'd by VE3BKL. See you on 14.295 SSB at above time.



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With further reference to the net situation, don't forget the Thursday evening net at 7.00 EST on 3940. In talking with K2BX the other day he informed me that that the net is well attended and that it is always enjoyed.

It is our hope that regional nets on 75 and 40 may be organized and that they may be made as successful as the Thursday evening net enjoyed by the fellows up in the northeast. How about some of you fellows in the various regions volunteering to organize such nets. Write our Secretary W2EG and I am sure that Earl will be happy to get you started.

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#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

W5AEY A.G. Berg, from 730 McLemore Drive to 2405 English Drive same city, Garland, Texas. Effective December, 1961

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#### AFTER THOUGHTS FROM THE SECRETARY

The old spark coil had other uses too. We had a toilet on the third floor, next to a combination wireless shack, bedroom and general meeting place. This was in a dark corner of the attick. You have no idea of the results obtained from two pieces of tin foil fastened to the toilet seat helped by some voltage of high potential nature.

There are two things that have always bothered me since 1908. (#1) what the person thought who tried to call from the telephone booth and a brick hang- from the hook instead of a receiver was found. (#2) What the fellow thought when he tried to start his motor boat (naptha launch) without a spark coil.

Earl C. Williams W2EG

Wonder who the stinker was. You couldn't have known about this by any chance could you Earl. George, how many other violations on this bird?

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The foregoing reminds ye olde copy boy of a humorous episode that occurred in the earlier days of his experimenting. The writer's shack was a sort of two way deal-part woodshed and part bedroom. At one time the wireless equipment was in the bedroom and most of it was mounted on an old table.

The equipment consisted in part of a Western Electric Spark coil with a zinc spark gap mounted on top of the spark coil. In front of the spark coil the key was mounted.

The household cat was a huge tiger and he liked to come in and lie in the sun on the wireless table. I was in a chair reading one day when Tige stalked in, streched himself and leaped on to the table. FOOLISH CAT. He put his front paws up on the spark gap and put a rear paw on the key. HOT CAT. Tige arched his back, leaped almost to the ceiling and came down screeching, clawing and running. He never came back to my room again.

## AN INTERESTING LETTER FROM PERCE COLLISON

Nov. 5th, 1961

Dear Earl:

First, please excuse this hand-written epistle. I have been hospitalized for several months at the Veterans' Hospital in the Bronx (New York City), because of "complications" as a result of the "aging process", and while I can write fairly good, but slowly, my hands do not always co-ordinate on the typewriter.

The November issue of BLABBER MOUTH is a classic. The memoirs of the very old-old timers particularly interested me because they are all so true and bring back memories of the day I also got my first "Radio Amateur License" at the Brooklyn Navy Yard(2KN). I was proud to find my name on Bill Gould's list of old timers 2KN, proving beyond all doubt that I really am an "Old Old Timer".

Pursuing examinations of old records, you will find that I am one of the very, very few charter members of the Institute of Radio Engineers still alive to brag about it. I designed the I R E emblem. As you probably know, the I R E had as parents, the old Society of Wireless TelegraphEngineers, a Boston club (members mostly from the Wireless Specialty Company) and the Wireless Institute of New York City. I still have a Wireless Institute pin.

I am also a "Fellow" of the Radio Club of America, the oldest club of them all. You will remember that this wonderful group was responsible for W1BC the amateur club that sent the first 200 meter signals across the Atlantic Ocean. The station equipment in Greenwich, Connecticut was designed and erected by such grand old timers as major Armstrong, Harry Sadenwater (recently deceased) and George Burghard and Paul Godley, all very dear friends of mine.

For the receiving station in the British Isles, Major Armstrong designed a special superhetrodyne and Paul Godley was sent over-seas to operate it. An important part of this receiving station in Scotland was a very long wire antenna, designed by Beveradge (Ithink). The far end of this long antenna was a grounded one and the receiver was on the "high voltage" end.

The American commercial wireless telegraph companies were "mortified" to say the least. They thought they had buried the "hams" on 20 meters.

I also remember installing a Marconi 10 inch coil, a magnetic detector and a few storage batteries in a "life boat" which hung under the derigible "America" when she took off to cross the ocean. The wireless gear was put in the life-boat to keep the sparks away from the hydrogen gas bag. They wanted me to go along as operator, but I did not enjoy the gorgeous view from this precarious wireless shack.

You will remember that the America broke loose from the string of gasoline filled cans (used as ballast), and started to go straight up to heaven. They valved off the hydrogen, brought her down to the ocean surface all hands piled into the life-boat and were picked up by a New York to Bermuda steamer. The America went up high in the sky and was never seen again. I am so glad I didn't go on that trip.



When the NC-4 aeroplanes (flying boats) took off for a trip across the Atlantic, Harry Sadenwater was in charge of all wireless equipment. Before leaving New York he had taken care of all interference (noise) from the ignition system of the engines on all of the planes. Their direction finders and all receiving gear worked very well. There was a string of destroyers between the point of final take-off in Canada and the Azores so the planes could home in on them and fly a straight course across the ocean.

When the planes landed in Canada with a "splash", the engines' ignition systems got a good wetting and became inoperative. That night (while Harry Sadenwater was asleep), the engineering officer relocated the ignition wiring to keep it from further wetting. Sadenwater had no opportunity to check out and remedy the "noise". When they had the planes airborne, it was discovered that neither the direction finders or receivers could receive. The weather was bad (cludy), and the planes could not locate the destroyers, so the planes had to fly by "dead reckoning", and all of them had to crash land in the ocean and sank. All but one.

One pilot flew high up above the clouds and fog and got through to the Azores. It was not Harry Sadenwater's plane. This is a bit of true but unrecorded history. Harry never forgot or mentioned the details. He was only a junior officer and was silenced.

While this incident is not really related to the early days of ham radio, it cannot be overlooked because almost all of the pioneer hams had "wireless" as an avocation and they as a vocation were commercial operators, engineers and construction men for the old companies such as DeForest, United Wireless, Marconi, Kilbourne & Clark, etc.

I was Superintendent and Chief Inspector for the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Co. of America and the first years of R C A. If the gang like this sort of cud-chewing, I could send you a great deal more. Good news about the OOTC pin. I sure will be proud to wear it.

Best 73s

Perce B. Collison K2DZ  
9 Lorraine Drive,  
Eastchester, N.Y.

A jackass aint so ill bred either. Who ever heard of one pounding the table to express his idea of good manners? At least he would leave his shoe on.

You know you are getting old when after you have painted the town red you need rest before applying a second coat.

Ignorance is when you don't know something and somebody finds it out.

From  
Howard S. Pyle W7OE

Dear Cline:

The November issue of BLABBER MOUTH duly received and I am awed at the amount of work which has most evidently gone into it. I think I'm in a fair position to judge, for, as a professional writer for the national electronics periodicals and author of six books in the radio communications field, I am naturally familiar with the amount of research, make-up and correspondence which enters into preparation of any publication.

You are heartily commended for the devoted time and effort which you have been putting forth in connection with the publication of BLABBER MOUTH.

Incidentally, my one little gripe is that I am not particularly sold on the title, BLABBER MOUTH; it just doesn't seem to carry the dignity of an old old timers organization; sounds more like Susie-Q exchanging recipes with Minnie-X either by old-time, hand-crank, party-line telephone or more modern medium, AM, FM or SSB. Be that as it may however, it is a mighty fine little paper and I'm sure that all members of OOTC join me in congratulations: maybe one of them can come up with a little more fitting suggestion. . . I'd favor something like "PAGES FROM THE PAST", or similar.

I was particularly interested in Earl Williams (W2EG); our current Secretary-Treasurer) casual remarks that he still had his initial license (#4C hanging on his shack wall. WESTERN RADIO AMATEUR magazine which no doubt, all members subscribe for (or should), has recently started a drive to attempt to locate the amateur who was issued number ONE back in the good old Department of Commerce days. FCC has also expressed an interest in this search.

W2EG tells us in the November BLABBER MOUTH, that Merrett Demarest was issued number 358 as 2CF, Norman Dilg as 2CQ number 369 and John Hallahan, number 401 as 2DW. From that we are beginning to narrow the field; so far, to the extent that my records show, 2CF leads the field of early licensees; can anyone come up with a license number below Merritt's number 358?

I'm finally "out of the woods", at least temporarily, on preparation of book manuscripts. Have finally turned out four for the Howard W. Sams Co., "Photofact" series for the ham field/ The last one is due for release the last of this month; "GENERAL AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE HANDBOOK". Whether I write a fifth, an antenna manual, is a moot question. Right now I'm enjoying a bit of a lull which lets me pick up my old . . ' too old correspondence and to do an article or two a week for the magazines.

Health hasn't been too bad, although like all of us who have done our three score and then some, I have my ups and downs. The diabetes hasn't bothered me and I've had no more of this Coronary monkey-business, but right now the old lumbar muscle in the back has me laced into a girdle . . . tsh, tsh . . . I'll be talking soprano before long . . .hi.

That's about it for this time Earl; hope to offer more in the future; keep up the good work with the paper and very"73"

Continued on next page



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The foregoing letter was signed as follows:

Cordially,

Howard S. Pyle

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Howard also included the following little "FLASH":

I've just been notified that a historical article which I prepared covering a "PIONEER WIRELESS STATION" (that's the title . . . the station is an early (1913) Marconi., "high-power" (25 KW) station at Ketchikan, Alaska which is still existant under U.S. Army control under call letters ALE, has been accepted for publication.

The story is scheduled to appear in the February 1962 issue of ELECTRONICS WORLD, with illustrations. Perhaps some of the OOTC members may be interested in some of this pioneer wireless stuff which involved rotary spark gaps, keying the 60,000 volt secondary (that's right) and other details. The magazine should appear on the news stands towards the end of January.

Incidentally, old timers may also be interested in my story of the Philadelphia School of Wireless Telegraphy founded about 1909 and which will appear soon in WIRE AND RADIO COMMUNICATIONS magazine I think. I don't have definate acceptance as yet, but believe that it will appear in an early 1962 issue . . . can't tell you what now and, as this is not a news stand magazine, it will be necessary to write the Editor, WIRE & RADIO COMMUNICATIONS (they were formerly TELEPHONE & TELEGRAPH AGE and have been published continuously since 1883) for more dope on when this story will appear.

"YB"

Thanks for the above YB. Good to hear from you again. I'd begun to think ye olde copy boy had a dirty face or sumpin'.

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It being the day before Thanksgiving Day, I am reminded of a little episode that occurred a few years back when ye olde copy boy's grand daughter was about 15 and on ocassion of her first formal date. It was a prep school affair and her date cameto take her to the shindig. Although in formal attire he was as all boys of his age overly blessed with an abundance of arms, elboes, wrists, knees, legs and feet.

When he entered the house my little grand son Mike, then about five years old was on hand to greet him as all small boys delight in doing. The youn man refused a seat while waiting for the grand daughter, and as most boys do on such ocassions, shuffled his feet, twisted and turned and gave other signs of discomfort and bashfulness. To little Mike however, there was a different meaning and he just HAD to express it by saying, "Whats the matter Joe, do you have to go to the baff room?"

I have had many chuckles about this.

5262 Newcastle Ave.  
Encino, Calif.  
14 November, 1961

Dear Ye olde copy boy:

Just got my copy of the BLABBER MOUTH today and I think kgns are in order to the fine artists that got up the new mast head for the paper; it's a swell job. Guess I had better get some dope for the next issue.

### SQUEAKS FROM THE SIXTH DISTRICT ROCKIN' CHAIR

If you guys and dolls back in snow shovel alley want to see California you had better hurry up and get out here as they are trying to burn it up here lately. Had a very serious fire in the Belaire-Brentwood area, over in the pooshy-pooshy section that burned down 456 homes ranging in price from \$75,000 to \$150,000 including Ted Henry's place, the manager of Henry Radio, the local emporium where we acquire wireless parts for a price.

The fire location is just over the hills and about 1 mile from this location so we sort of had a ring-side seat. Another fire under control this morning, took out 10 homes to the north of the valley, in Kagel canon. This is in the low rent district but the loss is just as great to the owners as those in the poosh neighborhood.

Enjoyed the dope from Arthur Stockellburg and Roy Armstrong about Boston, as I too worked out of Boston on the ole "RD", the Gov. Dingley and that bow and arrow feller was the one that got me on the payroll down at BH.

Glad to know that ye olde copy boy is going to be on the job as prez for another term, I hope, as he is doing a swell job in every way.

Greetings to our South American friend LU2AO and to our Mexican friend XE1GD and let's have more of them join; it would be a pleasure to have them.

Haven't been able to get in on the Pelican net lately to get anything to write about, as I got myself outa the ole rockin' chair long enuff to earn a few pennies for my piggy bank for Christmas so now I can buy mama a present. That otta keep me outa the doggie shack for a while. 73 and 30

Jack W6WPF

Thanks Jackie me by. Keep up the good worrk. E.E.C.

Typical husband: "Where am I when you serve the meals from which I always get the leftovers?"

Pet gripes of an old fuddyduddy: The inane giggle of a radio or television audience at a broken crutch that thinks he's a scream. The usual television program written by an IQ of 49 for an audience with an IQ of 51. The televis-program advertised so much in advance that one gets nausea to think of it. The ham who's vocabulary is limited to "uh" and "ah" but who uses them all the time. The ham who gives a signal report of 5 by 9 but cannot get your call because of QRM or sumpin'. There are more--many more.



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1913 LICENSEES

By W1NP/2 Wm. B. Gould

The following additions and modifications to the list submitted in the 1 November issue of BLABBER MOUTH should be noted:

Present call	Name	1913 Call
W4TY	Robert S. Fenimore	3JU
W8DJ	Edmund H. Bremer	8DG

Additions and or corrections will be made as information is received.

W1NP/2  
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FROM LU2AO

Buenos Aires, October 6

Dear Cline:

The September 23, I sent you a letter that I think is in your hands. Now I am sending the report No.3 from LU land:

The Argentine Government (Secretary of Communications), gave permission to Argentine hams to send messages to third persons with notices of illness, salutations and to act in any case where his work can be useful to the community. Also can work the radio stations as operator any radio amateur with license of any country with reciprocity. The number of the decree is 1499-SC, Sept. 29/961.

Also last week I was very busy writing the "History of Argentine Amateur Radio" and about 25 November, I will send you a sample. On October 30, I will send you a copy of an article on the OOTC that I wrote for "RADIO CHASSIS TV". I am also sending some anecdotes of amateur radio.

Enclosed find a photo of the Roosevelt monument in Buenos Aires. I had the honor to know him when he came to the first Congress of Peace in 1934.

With best 73's for you and all the fellows in the OOTC, I remain,

Fraternally Yours,

Augusto E. Osorio LU2AO

(The article on the OOTC published in one of the leading South American Electronics Publications, "RADIO CHASSIS TV" was received and it was found to be almost a full page of beautifully executed copy. It was translated by a young Venezuela friend of mine. This was a swell job.)

Thanks very much Augusto. E.E.C.

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DIRECTORY OF BOOKS AND LITERATURE

By Earl C. Williams W2EG

**DIRECTORY OF CERTIFICATES** K6BX Clif Evans P.O. Box 385, Bonita, Calif.

TWO HUNDRED METERS AND DOWN By C.B. Desoto ARRL, W. Hartford, Conn. \$2.00

**A PICTORIAL ALBUM OF WIRELESS & RADIO 1905-28** By Harold S. Greenwood, W6MEA  
2341 Ivyland, Arcadia, Cal. Price \$3.00F.C.C. RULES AND REGULATIONS including automatic mailing of changes. Price \$1.25  
Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office. Washington 25, D.C.G.E. HAM NEWS- write T. Frank Cushing, W1AWW, 1026 Bay St. P.O. Box 2049  
Springfield 1, Mass.

QST MAGAZINE- West Hartford, Conn. U.S.A. \$5.00, Canada, \$5.25- Foreign, \$6.00

CQ MAGAZINE- 300 W. 43rd St. New York 36. U.S.A., Canada, & Mexico, \$5.00  
Foreign \$6.0073 MAGAZINE- 1379 E. 15th St. Brooklyn 30, N.Y. U.S.A. Canada & Mexico \$3.00  
Foreign \$4.00Western Radio Amateur Magazine- 10517 Haverly St. El Monte, Calif.  
U.S.A. Mexico & Canada \$2.00. Foreign \$3.00

THE MONITOR MAGAZINE- 507 W. Davis, Dallas 8, Texas. \$1.00

FLORIDA SKIP MAGAZINE- Miami Spring 66, Fla. \$2.00

THE OLD TIMERS BULLETIN- Issued to members of Antique Wireless Association.  
Dues \$3.00 - Bruce Kelley, W2ICE, Editor, Holcomb, N.Y.Q.C.W.A. BULLETINS- Issued to members- Dues \$2.00 with initiation fee of \$5.00  
Write Ralph Barber, W2ZM, Secretary. 244 Forest Ave. Locust Valley, L.I.-N.Y.If we missed any that should be published, notify "Ye olde copy boy" and he will  
see that it is listed.-----  
How many times have you run across some old time wireless gear with  
manufacturer's lable missing and you couldn't identify? You will probably find  
a picture and description of it in Harold S. Greenwood's "Pictural Album of  
Wireless of Wireless and Radio 1905-1928.The ARRL has a limited re-print made of the book "TWO HUNDRED METERS  
AND DOWN". Price is \$2.00- This is a very fine record of the amateur wireless  
that the members should have.

E.C.W. W2EG



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Your attention is directed to the letter from W7OE, my good friend Howard Pyle in which he voices his objection to the title of this little news letter. As you will see from Howard's letter, he does not believe the title of BLABBER MOUTH lends the degree of dignity appropriate for the OOTC.

Howard probably has a very good point and before proceeding further I wish to confess that the title of BLABBER MOUTH was entirely my own idea and no other member has any guilt in the matter. Without explanation for the choice of the title, I propose that we leave the choice of a title up to our members.

With this issue of BLABBER MOUTH we are including a gripe sheet for our members to express their views on any subject, but in particular the title of BLABBER MOUTH for our bi-monthly news letter. I hope you fellows will cooperate and fill in with gripes, suggestions and just plain belly-aches. (Of course something constructive would be useful, but suit yourselves).

Ye olde copy boy

From W6FB, Col. Fred J. Elser

Dear OOTC:

Thanks for your kind letter. We left San Frisco on the "Gen Mitchell" June 19 via San Diego, Honolulu, Guam to Manila. A 3 weeks trip over 7,000 miles of blue Pacific, and it was both blue and pacific, thank goodness. Last time I made that route, was on the old "Thomas"-WXM and she took 5 weeks-back before WW1.

It was a sort of sentimental trip for me, as I hadn't been out to the Philippines since '33. Gen MacArthur was out in Manila when we got there (Jul) But he soon left and I didn't get a chance to see him. He lived near us there in the 20's but never met. A great man.

Incidentally, I had a 2,000 volt lead storage storage battery in a shack on the roof of the Manila Hotel for KZRM where he later had a pent-house in the 30's before the war.

Anyway, I visited and operated KH6DUW in Honolulu and KG6FAE on Guam.

The hams in Manila were very nice to me. DU1RTI, President of P.A.R.A. was with me often in Manila. The Club gave me a dinner and presented me with a "Barong Tagalog"- dress shirt woven of pineapple fabric with many of my ex calls embroidered on it. I was a co-founder of the association in 1924.

Visited the R E H Co. and Radiowealth Electronic Factories and was much impressed by their up-to-date use of transistors, printed circuits, SSB, etc. Speaking of SSB, etc. I became a co-founder of the new PASS (Philippine Association for SSB), and they presented me with a native hat with my call and "Tech Advisor" printed on it.

Looked up old Sgt. Maningas, "MG", of KALHR in the 20's and 30's and found him fine- retired, in his sixties and looking forward to getting on 20 with the help of the local gang. A memorable trip. Back home on the "Gen. Gaffey".  
73 to all. Fred- W6FB.

"I understand your wife is a finished soprano".  
 "No, not yet: but the neighbors almost got her last night".

In chewing the fat with K2BX on 20 the other day, Merrill informed me that Dock Webber W3CC is layed up with a little stroke. Sorry Doc, but if it aint one thing it's two or more. Hey, you gent and knight of pen, pencil and mill, how about renewing acquaintance with Doc or starting an acquaintance with him. Bet a fistful of RF he'd read your epistles. Address Dr. Chas. W. webber, Abington Hospital, Abington, Pa.

When Khrushchev came to inspect a Moscow Insane Hospital, the inmates were assembled in the hall. According to instructions, they shouted: "Long live our beloved leader, the great Khrushchev" . . .all except one man, who was immediately accosted by an agent of the secret police. "Why did you not greet our beloved Comrade Khrushchev?" was the stern question. "Because", the man answered, "I'm not insane. I'm just the janitor".

The sermon went on and on and on and on. Finally the minister paused and asked: "What more can I say?" From the rear of the church came a hollow voice "AMEN".

For your convenience

Dr. Lawrence J. Dunn Vice President W2LP 20 Barnes Lane, Garden City, L.I. N.Y.	Mr. Earl C. Williams W2EG Sec-Tr. 507 Wayside Road, Neptune, N.J.
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Earl E. Cline Sr. W4PPZ, President and yeolde copy boy  
 408 West View Ave. Chattanooga 11, Tenn.

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SILENT KEYS.

W8GNO Cyril J. Kiser 2921 2nd Street, N/W, Canton 8, Ohio

R, I- P

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On behalf of all the officers of the OLD OLD TIMERS CLUB, I extend Christmas greetings and best wishes and good health throughout the New Year.

Ye olde copy boy

P.S.- Please add W1OE, Harold W. Bean, 82 South Main St. Penacook, N.H. to the list of SILENT KEYS. 3.00 P.M. 10-26-61. R I P





# The Old Old Timers Club

## Office of the President:

1608 Hixson Pike,  
Chattanooga, Tenn. 37405

DEAR OLD OLD TIMERS CLUB MEMBERS:

BY THIS TIME I BELIEVE, ALL MEMBERS HAVE LEARNED OF THE SUDDEN PASSING OF OUR BELOVED PRESIDENT, EARL E. CLINE, SR., W4PPZ. IT TOOK PLACE CHRISTMAS EVE, DECEMBER 24TH AT 2:30 AM. CLINE AND I WERE THE ONLY TWO ON THE 14295 SSB NET, MONDAY AT 1800 Z, DECEMBER 23, 1963. WE CHATTED RATHER GAILY ABOUT VARIOUS THINGS. HE COMPLAINED MILDLY ABOUT SOME PAINS IN HIS CHEST AND SAID HE THOUGHT HE WOULD SEE HIS DOCTOR. MRS. CLINE CALLED ME ABOUT 8:30 PM AND SAID THAT THE DOCTOR THOUGHT IT WISE FOR CLINE TO REST IN THE HOSPITAL FOR A FEW DAYS. A CARDIOGRAM SHOWED NOTHING AND HE WAS RESTING COMFORTABLY. AT 8:30 AM ON THE 24TH EARL, JR. CALLED AND SAID HIS FATHER HAD PASSED AWAY AT 2:30 AM.

WITH HEAVY HEARTS WE BURIED "YE OLDE COPPYE BOYE" THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS. AS THE YEARS ROLL BY WE LOOK OVER OUR SHOULDER FOR THE OLD MAN WITH THE SCYTHE BUT IT IS ALWAYS A SHOCK WHEN HE SHOWS UP SUDDENLY.

CLINE WAS A WONDERFUL FELLOW! MODEST, SELF-EFFACING TO A FAULT, LOYAL, HARD-WORKING, WONDERFULLY WELL MANNERED, POLITE, AND KIND HE WAS, SMART TOO, AND A WONDERFUL ORGANIZER! I DON'T THINK ANYONE COULD HAVE TALKED ME INTO TAKING ON THE EDITING OF THE BLUEBOOK BUT CLINE.

IS THERE ANYONE AMONG THE APPROXIMATELY 500 MEMBERS OF OOTC WHO WOULD LIKE TO TAKE ON THE EDITING AND PRODUCTION OF SPARK-GAP TIMES? CLINE AND I HAVE TRIED FOR TWO YEARS TO FIND SOMEONE TO HELP GET IT OUT, UNSUCCESSFULLY. I PLAN TO GET OUT THE NEXT ISSUE. IT MAYBE A BIT LATE BUT IT WILL COME ALONG EVENTUALLY. PLEASE--IF YOU EVER PLANNED TO DO SOME WRITING FOR S.G.T.--DO IT NOW!

WALLACE LELAND, W2WL HAS ACCEPTED THE JOB OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY, HAS ASSEMBLED OUR NEW 1964 ROSTER, AND ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO HAVE IT TYPED AND THEN PRINTED. HE HAS DONE A FINE JOB ON IT, OUR HAT IS OFF TO HIM.

AND SO ENDS ANOTHER ERA OF OOTC. NO ONE CAN EVER EQUAL THE EXAMPLE OF CLINE IN OOTC AFFAIRS. HE WILL BE MISSED TERRIBLY.

73's

*Bert*

BERT OSBORNE, W4MF

GRIPE SHEET

- 1- Do you favor changing the title from BLABBER MOUTH to some other title for our bi-monthly news letter, and if so what would you suggest?  
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- 2- Would you prefer the present title of BLABBER MOUTH? -----
- 3- What criticisms, suggestions, belly-aches or what not do you have for your officers to consider.

Send this sheet to our Secretary, Mr. Earl C. Williams, W2EG  
507 Wayside Road, Neptune, N.J.