

The Technique of *Radio Writing*

by *Luther Weaver*

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World Radio History

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To all the men and women of my classes at
the University of Minnesota, who in their
turn and in their time, followed these path-
ways in their pursuit of knowledge.

Sept
Raymond Crawford
June 29, 1952

Foreword

This book was written to help you understand the problems of writing the spoken word, for in radio that is the only way your words are used: They must be spoken to get on the air.

The book is not a collection of prize scripts, not an anthology, although many scripts, in whole or as excerpts, are a part of its contents. Some of the examples are defective; some are worthy; some may even be called excellent. There is a reason for the inclusion of each and that reason is: To illustrate for practical work-a-day use specific technical radio writing problems and the varying success achieved in their solution.

It is not always easy to be constructive. It is much easier to use a belying pin and knock something to pieces than it is to attempt to point out a way in which it may be done better.

But the job of getting inside the problem of radio writing and making an effort to find out what is better for the air lanes needed doing, or at least an attempt at doing. Ten years of experience in University of Minnesota classrooms and twice that number of years spent in the operation of an advertising agency taught me that. Whether this attempt is successful is another thing; at least the beast has ceased gnawing at my soul.

Radio script is not merely words, however grammatical they may be, written on paper and tossed about at a conference for the casual reader's easy appraisal. You must get inside it; well-wishers and reformers and salesmen sometimes stumble on this threshold.

So this book was written from the inside, in the hot, sweaty cubicle of practical experience, for those who sincerely want to write for radio—particularly for those who want to begin *now*, and are open-minded in their questing. It is for use in the writing sanctuary at home, in the advertising, public relations, or publicity office, at the radio station, and in the classroom.

Script, the output of the radio writer, is the heart of any program; only in a small percentage of radio presentations is script eschewed. If that script sparkles, the program likewise will. So, no matter how glamorous the front office and its attendants may be, what radio puts on the air will spell its continuing¹ success, or bring about its decay. And the creator of that script may be in a back room overlooking an alley in Gopher Prairie, or aloft on the Manhattan skyline, or within range of the scent of an orange juice extractor at Hollywood and Vine. What counts is not where the typewriter is, but what comes out of it. The output may be clitter-clatter, or it may be worthy, or it may show, of all things! genius. The need for well-trained writers is obvious; the recompense, therefore, should be increasingly rewarding.

The approach to radio writing herein, I am told, is new, in that you start with the shortest radio forms, the tiny word-clusters or short paragraphs, and develop a subject, preferably of your own selection, through all the *announcement* forms into *programs* of varying lengths and different kinds.

The various steps in sequence are: ten-word, thirty-word (fifteen-second), fifty-word, and 100 to 125-word (one-minute) announcements, all in one voice; then you progress to 100 to 125-word (one-minute) dialogue announcements; then into five-minute programs and thence to fifteen-minute, thirty-minute, and longer programs.

As you work, practical information derived by experience from work-a-day radio, both commercial and, for want of a better term, in the public service, is constantly being added to your equipment.

¹ *Continuing* is the present participle of the verb *continue*, long hidden in our dictionaries, and unveiled, whether we care to applaud or not, by the Lucky Strike commercial in which it unfailingly appears.

By the time you reach fifteen-minute programs, you are likely to have some tools to work with: importantly, awareness of the limitations as well as the opportunities of the medium: sound, and sound alone. Illustrative material, examples of every form, are a part of each chapter.

This approach is different from plunging, say, into fifteen-minute dramatic programs, with little or no experience or quickening of appreciation of how the words that you write *sound*.

Every effort has been made to maintain the *listener's viewpoint*. It is from that viewpoint that good radio script today and tomorrow must be written; commercially, that is the best way to serve the advertiser. After all, the listener has rights, and, in recognition of those rights, radio should meet ever more convincingly its manifold opportunities by good programming, both in its sponsored and unsponsored brackets.

We have learned, too, that the local station, independent of or affiliated with a network, can be its community's source not only of entertainment but of enlightenment and culture, contributing thereby to a richer citizenship among the listeners whose air lanes it is permitted to use.

No other medium has in such potential measure the opportunities for service that are radio's own. Good programs come out of good script. Good script is the work of writers equipped to do that kind of a job.

This book was written, not in retirement, but under the daily grind of advertising agency operation and University class schedules. Just how, I am uncertain, but here it is; and a statistical angel, hovering near, chants with professional ardor that it contains one hundred and thirty-one separate scripts, short and long and as excerpts, sufficient to provide you with worriment, and exasperation, and—who knows?—perhaps, delight.

LUTHER WEAVER

White Bear Lake

Acknowledgments

One incurs a mountain of debts in putting together a book like this. I believe I am under obligation to almost every person I know. And to all I express my gratitude.

First to the University, where I hope I may always be a student, this grateful recognition of its influence and of the largesse of opportunity for the pursuit of knowledge that it provides.

Next, to radio listeners, who gave me their frank reactions to programs and strengthened me in a conviction that any book on radio writing should be written from the listeners' viewpoint.

Likewise in sincere good measure, to the men and women, fellow workers in radio on stations throughout the country, who frequently turned offices upside down to find answers to one or another of my questions. Likewise to the networks and their spokesmen, for CBS, NBC, ABC, and MBS never failed to come back with helpful information.

And to colleagues in advertising agencies! how could I have assembled the sequence of scripts without your help! Whether you always agree with my handling of your stuff is beside the point. What is important is that we have been able to get some of these problems out from under the pressure of the studios, turn them over on their backs, and examine them for possible betterment.

And likewise to sponsors using radio nationally, sectionally,

and locally, for offering their programs on the altar of this book. Their co-operation, indeed, has been whole-hearted. And to the sponsors whose programs I, as a radio writer and producer, have put on the air: they gave me headroom in which to work and, at times, even permitted me to bump my head. It has been a privilege to work with them.

This book would not be a book if it did not have a "Without Whom" paragraph or two. First in it, the name of Bess Lyman. A degree from the University of Minnesota College of Education led her into the teaching of English, which she gave up to enter radio—despite the handicap of instruction in my own classes. Miss Lyman headed the script departments of four different radio stations before she went to Hollywood. Rigorously, she endeavored to make the suggestions in this book mesh with the requirements of the well-managed station.

To Winifred Nelson, whose English training at College of Saint Catherine plus graduate training in typography under Tom Barnhart at the University of Minnesota had a commendably pacifying influence on an especially untractable MS; and to the painstaking research specialists at the Saint Paul Public Library and the Hill Reference Library for many time-saving contributions.

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The Technique of Radio Writing

CHAPTER

1

Radio: The Spoken Word

*"You don't know what it means to hear language that
clinks sweetly in our ears to hear commercials on
the radio it means America." **

—GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

There was writing for the ear long before there was radio. Long before printing hardened limpid folk speech into formalities, into words you and I do not use in normal free-flowing conversation, there was the spoken word. Through the centuries, the storytellers, going up and down the byways of the world, have known the art of the spoken word, even though, in an earlier day, they could not write. In our own time, Alexander Woollcott, great among raconteurs, used that ancient art, the art of the spoken word, on the radio.

Yes, writing for the ear prevailed long before there was such a contraption as the radio, but, strangely, new writers have frequently failed to understand the need of conversational English, the familiar style, while old and established writers—many of them, at least—have declined to change their style to adapt it to the newer medium of radio.

* *Time* (July 2, 1945, Page 44) had the following prefatory statement, headed *Cultural Pursuits*: "General Dwight Eisenhower, who had hardly a moment to himself last week, took time to bless a typical U. S. product which many a citizen regards as a very mixed blessing." (Then followed the above quotation.)

Writers who have written *for the ear*

Great poets always have written for the ear. Their poetry could not have been great had it been otherwise. Walt Whitman in the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, which came out before the Civil War, speaks of

"When the psalm sings instead of the singer,
When the script preaches instead of the preacher."¹

In our own time, Logan Pearsall Smith wrote books of paragraphs, individual pieces, page after page of them, having no relation one to the other, except a common and polished authorship. He entitled them *Trivia*, *More Trivia*, and *All Trivia*. And in 1939, in what amounts to an autobiography, *Unforgotten Years*, he analyzed his own progress in writing for the ear.

However far it may fall short of Pearsall Smith's glorification of the paragraph, the radio announcement that comes hurtling at you out of your loud-speaker in your living room is potentially an opportunity for good writing, for it is an opportunity to write for the ear. And what is written for the ear must be good or people will not listen.

No second chance in radio

In radio, your word, your clause, your sentence, your paragraph must be clear at once, or it is lost. There is no second time: no opportunity, as in the printed word, to read it over again. Ways to achieve this clarity and thus hold listener interest are among the objectives of this book.

It is obvious that radio has developed rapidly in the twenty-five years of its life; in that comparatively short span it has become an increasingly potent influence in our lives, but development in writing for it, that is, in writing the spoken word for the listening ear, continues to be slow. In the judgment of this writer, there still is far too much material on the air,

¹ From "A Song for Occupations," first published in the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* (1855) under the title, "Poem of the Daily Work of the Workmen and Workwomen of These States."

both programs and announcements, that has not been written for radio.

The spoken word is long remembered in the mind; preparing those words, and the programs of which they are a part, can be a great art. There is no need to let mediocrity usurp time on the air and in our lives. Let's see if we cannot do something about it.

Let's see if we, as radio writers, cannot get away from this tension of remote formality in writing for radio. Let's consider first where this loud-speaker is that we're going to use, for it will be relaying our words with exasperating exactitude. Isn't the radio in the home? Well, how do you speak in a home? Do you *orate*? Do you preach? Do you exhort? Not ordinarily. You speak familiarly, oftentimes colloquially. You use words easy to say, easy to listen to, easy to understand, for you are talking with people, not at them. That *with* and that *at* are worlds apart. But did you ever try writing the way you speak? That is what we are going to do.

Anglo-Saxon monosyllables

And what are the familiar words? Chaucer's bright mind and the stories he retold are filled with them. We go back to him because with him began this English you and I now speak with its preponderance of Anglo-Saxon monosyllables, easy to say, easy to listen to, easy to understand. Think of his pilgrims in the long ago, talking with one another as together they journeyed toward Canterbury. Here is an echo of their conversation on that pilgrimage as Chaucer passed it along to us: it gives us an image we, in our turn, may carry through the years, for this brook and bridge and mill are all very old and ever new:

At Trumpington, nat fer fro Cantebrigge,
Ther goth a brook and over that a brigge,
Up-on the whiche brook ther stant a melle;²

In the Nicolson translation, the lines become:

² Skeat, Walter W., first 3 lines of "The Reves Tale" in *The Student's Chaucer*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1891.

At Trumpington not far from Cambridge town
There is a bridge wherethrough a brook runs down,
Upon the side of which brook stands a mill.³

Simple, isn't it? Simple because of the white clarity that plays over it, the depth of wisdom that shines through it and that brought it into being. No mill by a brookside could stand forth more clearly, and there have been mills and bridges and brooks in the lives of all peoples since man took up community living. Note the monosyllables. There are 17 monosyllabic words in the 23 words making up the three lines of Chaucerian English. (This, of course, does not include those words with final *e*.) In the Nicolson translation there are 21 monosyllables in the 25 words. You properly may ask: Must I write in monosyllables to write radio script? No, but if you do in so far as your creative instinct dictates, you will do a better job, for you will be using a finer, a more delicate chisel in molding the English language to your thought.

And what, in addition, do you get out of those three lines? A rememberable image, of course. And images are an objective and a part of the art of radio, whether you are speaking of a blue-fox coat for milady, or a wood road running west for vagabonds.

So we are going to write paragraphs or announcements that may, under masterful handling, turn into images, if not complete, then completed in the mind of the listener. He will be in his home, more than likely in his living room; he will be listening to the radio; into that radio at the studio end a human voice will transmit your written words, your script, into the microphone. Your script in its mechanical form will be merely 10 words, or 25 words, or 50 or 100. There are longer forms as well, that require 15 or 30 minutes or even an hour before the microphone on one side, and before the radio in the living room on the other. It all seems so very simple, just to write something and have the radio relay that writing, but there are hazards, hidden as well as known, so let us work with the shorter forms first.

³ Nicolson, J. U., first 3 lines of "The Reeve's Tale" in *Geoffrey Chaucer, Canterbury Tales*. Garden City Publishing Co., New York, 1934.

While this text was getting itself together, 10-word announcements (called *shorties* in the studios), relatively infrequent in earlier radio, began to appear on the air in greater numbers. Particularly was this true on those stations that held *station-break* or *chain-break* announcements down to 25 or 30 words. They found, in crowded announcement schedules, that there was time to put in a public service announcement after the regular commercial announcement. The exact sequence is this: (1) the network sign-off: "This is NBC, the National Broadcasting Co.;" (2) by local announcer: "This is WWWW, your Golden Bell station;" ⁴ (3) commercial announcement, 25 to 30 words; (4) temperature or short weather forecast; (5) the *shorty* or 10-word announcement.

Examples of poor script

Common errors the beginning writer commits may be found in the following paragraphs. The list is by no means complete, but the errors shown occur frequently. They include: viewpoint as in (A); slang (B and D); irony (B); wrong impression or image (C); naïveté, innocence, or ignorance (E); sibilants

⁴ Identification of station by *call letters*: A radio station is required by Federal Communications Commission regulations to identify itself on the air so that the listener may know the source of what he is hearing. It does this by giving its *call letters*; for example, "This is Station WWWW, Utopia." These call letters are given on the hour, and either on the half-hour or at the quarter-hour following the hour and the quarter-hour preceding the next hour. These are the over-all regulations.

This identification must be given within 2 minutes of the hour. In actual practice, it is given within the 30 seconds that customarily intervene between the ending of one program and the beginning of another. Also, it is usually given at the end of any program, and that program may be 5, 10, or 15 minutes or more in length; therefore the phrase "station break" or "chain (meaning *network*) break" takes on easily understood meaning. It is the end of a given period of station time. It is quite like shutting the door of the theater after the last of the audience has filed out.

A leeway of 5 minutes is permitted on sports broadcasts to prevent the call letters intruding on a halfback's dash to a touchdown, or a home run smash that cleared the bases.

There are special provisions allowing speeches, plays, religious services, symphony concerts, and operas to proceed without interruption. This prevents a station's call letters from coming in the middle of a prayer or a symphony movement, or other mood-destroying intrusion.

(F); writer's knowledge neither communicated nor mutually shared (G); absence of originality (H and J); overcondensation (I); cliché (J). The figures in parentheses indicate the number of words each paragraph contains.

- A. (10) Come over soon. Go over big. Bring me Bunny Candies.

Comment: Viewpoint gets jostled around here because of use of slang phrase "Go over big." *Stay put* in writing an announcement. If you are *here* and your boy friend is *there*, stay *here* so he can find you.

- B. (12) His mind was quick and alert like a plate of wet spaghetti.

Comment: To *commit* irony, some preparation of the listener is necessary. This use of it is too sudden. The paragraph first arouses wonderment, then disagreement. By the time the listener has caught up with the author's intention, he (the listener) may have forgotten the paragraph. So, make your meaning clear immediately to the listener.

- C. (12) The professor was like a dill pickle good-looking but sour.

Comment: The listener is likely to start building an image of a professor who looked like a dill pickle only to have the image wrecked by the adjective "good-looking." And dill pickles are *dill* pickles, not *sour* pickles.

- D. (12) She had an OPA figure, not much meat but still some chicken.

Comment: Only with care, which means in its proper setting, should slang be used. Here the phrase "some chicken" admittedly gives the paragraph a lively turn, but it would also bring adverse comment from some listeners. Radio, of necessity, must be *purer* than perhaps any other medium because it goes into the homes of all the people.

- E. (11) What would the hunter do if the birds could shoot back!

Comment: If by any chance his paragraph got on the air, the

writer, apparently unmindful of the natural functioning of birds, would learn that his radio audience guffawed over his naïveté.

- F. (11) Hemmed in, the tree's branches stretched upwards, struggling for the sun.

Comment: There is no mistaking the leanness of this tree, provided the sequence of sibilants does not make the image unintelligible. There are six s's in this presentation. Avoid them whenever possible; it is even advisable to change a plural word ending in s to the singular form, if you can maintain the meaning. Further, use of the form *upward* would have eliminated one sibilant.

- G. (14) The moon stood out as a symbol of the best advertising in the world.

Comment: Here, it is a question what the author means. There may be a legend about the moon that would clarify the paragraph, but do not expect the listener to know everything you do.

- H. (14) She awoke with her head feeling as if an explosion was taking place inside.

Comment: The subjunctive *were* is preferable. But "bust-heads" are not infrequent: this one should have had a particular fiendish quirk to make it worth writing about.

- I. (15) Dependable (Name of Product) Delivers Double!
Raises fine calves and boosts your milk checks. Buy it NOW!

Comment: Too much is attempted in too little. The strained alliteration results in a confused picture. The word *raises* is incorrectly used. Rewritten, the paragraph might be:

Dependable (Name of Product) promotes the growth of calves It boosts your milk checks too Try it in your dairy.

- J. (10) She looked as though she could stop an eight-day clock.

Comment: Homely souls have been so characterized by thoughtless people until the timeworn expression has become stereo-

typed: a cliché. The good writer, knowing all the clichés, avoids them.

Examples of better script

Here are examples of image paragraphs, or image-provoking paragraphs, and straight, action-impelling paragraph-announcements, showing better preparation than the preceding examples.

The figures indicate the number of words each paragraph contains. In commercial announcements, these figures always should be shown, preferably at the beginning of each announcement. You thereby advise the announcer reading your script of the exact number of words he must handle in the given time period for which the announcement was written. To put the word count at the end of the announcement does not so efficiently serve the man reading it.

By the same token you advise the station whether you have exceeded the word limit of that time period. If you have exceeded that limit, and do not care to admit it by indicating the word count, it is nonetheless the station's privilege to cut down or ask revision of the copy.

Occasional hyphenated words may be counted as one word, but do not manufacture them to reduce the word count.

- A. (3) Better buy Buick. (*Buick Division, General Motors, through Kudner Agency, Inc.*)

Comment: When a better announcement is written, the author hopes he may be the first to commend it. This is not a case of holding the prospect's head under the exhaust pipe until he goes limp in your hands; instead, it is an example of advising a prospect what to do by effective use of the word "better." This word has taken to itself all the meaning of the original and more labored written form:

"You will do better if you buy Buick."

- B. (13) United States Savings Bonds, the best buy in America! Get another bond today!

Comment: The government learned the effectiveness of public

service announcements such as this in World War II. They called them *War Bonds* then. The meaning of the phrase "the best buy in America" is subject to at least two interpretations; in this case, fortunately, either is acceptable. One obvious meaning is: "the best thing to buy for anyone in America." The second meaning is: "the best buy in behalf of America." The use of such double-meaning phrases is generally dangerous, however.

- C. (11) Register by Saturday for University Extension classes.
Avoid late registration fee.

Comment: A reason is given for "registration." The eternal question "Why should I buy?" is here answered without knocking the prospect down and pummeling him. Use of the word *avoid* enabled the writer to meet word-count limitations but verbs with a weak prefix such as *a*, give the announcer or character no opportunity for emphasis. Try it out yourself.

- D. (10) What's that? Jaywalking is the shortest cut to the coroner? (*KSTP, February 17, 1946*)

Comment: A compact provocative little piece in the interest of public safety. Also it is an excellent example of the interrogative exclamation for which we have no accurate punctuation mark. The interrogation mark is used, but the announcer's voice does a better job of reflecting the meaning.

- E. (13) Let that pool of golden sunlight reveal the beauty of a new rug. (*Lillian E. Benson*)

Comment: If you display your merchandise in use, you will sell more of it. Here the writer is spreading her rug in all its beauty on the sunlit floor, where rugs should be, and where, obviously, the housewife longs to have them, especially new ones.

- F. (8) His prosperity glistened, knuckle-deep, on his wife's fingers. (*Viena P. Johnson*)

Comment: An image successfully created by indirection, for the key word *rings* is not used. Rich, too, in connotation; in addition to the wife's bejeweled hands, you get a pretty good idea

of the man. Another hazard successfully overcome was overcondensation; it frequently will give you trouble. A satisfying totality of effect.

G. (8) What if little kangaroos ate crackers in bed!

Comment: Too compact, yet on this conciseness depends its humor. The humor, of course, is lost if the listener is not familiar with the kind of bed that little kangaroos enjoy.

H. (12) Helen was a vanilla pudding girl sweet and harmless and completely unexciting. (*James O. Hanley*)

Comment: Metaphorical statements can be pointedly effective if the listener knows your references. Here, nearly any listener knows how bland and unconvincing vanilla pudding is; therefore, the figure of speech is likely to *come off* successfully.

I. (12) Lora is standing by the desk arranging a bowl of flowers when—(CHARACTER ENTERS AND DIALOGUE BEGINS). *This image was used to open a scene in Lora Lawton, NBC, 9 A.M. Thursday, October 12, 1944.*

Comment: Here the stage is set in 12 words. Note its simplicity, its clarity: both objectives to be striven for in radio writing.

J. (13) A little teal paddling straight into the sunrise, followed by an ever-widening "V."

Comment: Here is progression but of a different kind (this is actual motion) than in example G. In a "V"-conscious nation, the symbolism of the "V," here a wake created by the little teal, would be quickly understood, providing the listener knows that a teal is a duck (sportsmen do not hold it in such high esteem as a mallard).

K. (13) It was a mournful trumpet screaming out its troubles, in shrill ascending sobs. (*James O. Hanley*)

Comment: Here is action in the present, the *now*, through good use of the present participial ending "ing" in "screaming" and in "ascending." You will find such endings give your line movement and life.

- L. (12) October winds gaily lifting fallen leaves
slyly tugging at too short skirts. (*James O. Hanley*)

Comment: Again effective because of the participial "ing," but with an error it is well to become aware of at the beginning of our writing. "Too" on the air is no different from "two," or, for that matter, "to." Rigorous condensation led to that error. Though a trifle labored, the better way to write the final phrase is: "slyly tugging at skirts much too short."

The first example, A, obviously is pure commercial. The second, B, is a public-service announcement. The third, C, is likewise in the interest of the general public or that part of it interested in learning. The fourth, D, is public service. Beginning with E, all the paragraphs are images that are complete as far as they go. They may be turned by additions into commercial announcements or into literature. This entire exercise, remember, is to get the door open on the creation of images.

Working with words

Now, go ahead. Try to write, say, ten 10-word paragraphs. Hereafter they will usually be called announcements, their proper radio name, but they actually are paragraphs. They may be on different subjects. Try to say something in 10 words—something complete in itself *that will stand alone*. The Buick copywriter did it in three words, as you undoubtedly noted in the examples.

Radio writing is working with words, not with clauses or sentences or paragraphs, but individual words, each one selected with infinite care and keen regard for its value.

Words, loosely sloshed around in the mind and just as loosely strung together on the typewriter, do not constitute radio script, even though dumped into the unprotesting microphone and thence into the listener's ears. Advertising copy is not the only so-called radio script that reveals either unfamiliarity with the medium of radio or indifference to its requirements. Most dramatic writing could show more skillful craftsmanship. As for politicians and preachers, both (with certain notable ex-

ceptions) defeat their own purposes very frequently when they express themselves before the microphone.

You must know a great deal about a subject to write even 10 convincing words about it, and, in radio, those 10 words must be image-building and thought-provoking in themselves, for you cannot supplement those words with gestures, grimaces, or other visual aids. Meager knowledge of your subject will cause you to write thinly, and the radio will make that ignorance painfully evident.

Read your script out loud

So, *chatter like an ape* over your typewriter.⁵ Read your image, your paragraph out loud always. Learn *how it sounds*. Do this until it becomes automatic, until you can determine the suitability of a word or phrase or sentence with little trouble by hearing it in your mind. In case of doubt, however, go back to this first test: say it out loud. Be careful you haven't perpetrated a double entendre. They always are eager to leap into the microphone, leaving distress and laughter, and even shock, in their wake.

It is a fact, though frequently overlooked, that none of the mechanical devices of the written or printed word goes on the air. This means that capital letters, commas, colons, semicolons, all the punctuation marks are filtered out by the microphone. So also are all paragraphs, indentations, variations in type size, all writing or printing aids. What you do have, however, are voice variations and pauses, including respiratory pauses. Therefore, in writing your script, preserve the customary punctuation marks, but indicate by five dots (use the period key) the respiratory pauses in which the announcer (or the character, if you are writing drama) can get his breath. Where do those pauses go? The best way to determine this is

⁵ "Eight hours a day, five days a week. Elaine Carrington, author of three radio serials, sprawls or sits on a seven-foot square bed and addresses a dictaphone. 'It seems as though I must love the sound of my own voice,' she says. 'I pour myself into it. I give everything. I change voices. I laugh. I cry. I can't stop writing. You know, I think I'm a frustrated actress.'" Radio comment, *Time*, August 26, 1916, Vol. 48, No. 9, page 56.

to read your script OUT LOUD. Put them in where they will give the person who is bringing your words to life on the air a chance to breathe. A respiratory pause approaching on a page is a welcome sight to announcer or character. He sees when next he can take a good breath. The mechanical style of radio script will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

Now, may genius be yours in creating your first script for radio use.

Assignment

Ten 10-word paragraphs. Do not exceed 12 words in each. They may be on different subjects. If you really want to work, try holding all ten paragraphs to *one* subject.

CHAPTER

2

Radio's Future: More About Announcements

"Brass ash trays:" say it out loud.

In radio, there is a great deal of room for writers like you and me, despite television, facsimile, and whatever else man by infinite grace and finite persistence may develop. For, let me say here, that if anything is left of radio, as we have learned to know it in its first twenty-five years, if anything is to survive through the development of visual appeal in electronics, it will be the refinement that you and I add to radio in the art of using words. Being aware of radio's possibilities, in great measure unused to date, we can make the use of sound so important that it will survive.

Now, what is writing for radio? Primarily it is writing the spoken word. That is what radio script is: the spoken word. Admittedly, it pauses on a page, but that is merely a temporary landing before it takes off again on electrically transmitted waves of sound to reappear invitingly lovely or hideously objectionable in thousands or millions of living rooms.

Radio is more than words

Radio is more than words. It can use anything that makes an auditory impression. This means music, and it means door slams, by doors of varying temperaments. Actually it means much more than these, for a few bars from a familiar tune can

set a mood, just as the clack-clack of a teletype machine can establish the atmosphere of a newspaper office. But every ingredient is sound, sound alone. This sound should not be dumped into the microphone in layers, for good radio is more than a layer of music, followed by a layer of sound effects, and that followed by a layer of words. Blending is required; careful, skillful blending that delights or thrills or lulls the listening ear. But strange or sharp juxtapositions of these ingredients may produce intentional horror, or unintentional shock, so think in terms of sound. Hear the voice giving your words utterance. Hear the music and the sound effects that can accompany your words, your dialogue, your descriptions; feel the mood, sense the atmosphere as you punch out the stuff on your typewriter. You are using sound creatively and all these ingredients may heighten its beauty, or intensify its horror, or, if used improperly, make your piece *fall on its face*.

Writing radio script is putting down one word after another to say something clearly, to paint a clear image, to leave a rememberable impression in the listener's mind. Masters of the spoken word, the familiar style—poets like Whitman, prose writers such as Logan Pearsall Smith—write for the ear, but they give their audiences the printed page to fall back on and confirm what they say.

Then, in case the reader muffs a word, a phrase, or a line, he has the book to refer to. But in radio there is no opportunity for repetition. Your script fed into the microphone by the human voice must register with positive clarity. Any possibility of misunderstanding, any double entendre, any foggiess whatever must be eliminated, whether your piece is a 10-word commercial announcement or a 15-minute educational drama. If you as the author do not do it, then the program producer, or some other ear-minded vigilante of the studios must do it, and your ignorance or carelessness or negligence makes you an amateur or worse.

Hazardous word combinations

Learn to avoid certain word combinations that even in face-to-face conversations are hazardous. If you chatter like an ape over your typewriter as you begin to write for radio, you will

discover them easily; but, if you merely write them, you will continue to think they are trim, or pretty, or harmless. The list is endless, but here are some examples:

It's not. The "s" has a way of annexing itself to the "not." The objectionable result is obvious.

Are our. Say it out loud yourself. Extreme care in enunciation is needed to say it clearly. Don't ask an announcer or character to use it.

It is generally comes off much better if you contract it to *it's*, except in such instances as the first example. However, do not make the mistake of arbitrarily doing so for there often are perfect opportunities to emphasize the "is"; in such cases, to contract it would be poor radio.

Glass crash may shatter the listener's equanimity, and *brass ash tray* is certain to do so.

Chic is a French word, very neat and trim to look at. In fact, so greatly is it admired that it gets into radio script now and then. What happens? Unless mispronounced, it is *sheek*. How does "sheek" sound to you?

So, in taking up the next set of announcements and images, let's keep word selection uppermost. Let us use the right word, that and no other. Try the word, the phrase, the line, the entire announcement out on your tongue as you're writing it. That will reveal what you are asking your announcer or your characters to say. They speak the same language you do. Can you speak it well?

The cure for typewriter clitter-clatter

Practical radio writing is a good cure for *typewriter clitter-clatter*. For want of a better explanation, typewriter clitter-clatter is the work of a gremlin who takes over and fills a line or a space with the required number of words, no matter what, just so they fit. The result may make you very happy, but no one else can understand the reason for your ecstasy.

Fifteen-second (station-break) announcements

Fifteen-second announcements require 25 to 30 words: the exact number permitted varies according to arbitrary limits fixed by the station or the network. These 15-second announcements are *station breaks*, or *chain breaks*; that is, they can be given in the fleeting seconds between the ending of one program and the beginning of another, a period in network operation totaling 30 seconds or less. That period, as every listener knows, is used for station identification, too, with the announcer saying, "This is station WURP," and following it with the time or the temperature or other bit of information in the public service.

In writing any announcement, either an out-and-out commercial such as one for Spivvins Red Cherry Preserves, or in the public service, say, in behalf of Boy Scout Week, the tendency will be to make it too long, and this surplusage, even if the station accepts it, means hurried handling, no matter how well written is the copy. You cannot stretch a second in radio, any more than you can stretch a newspaper column's width to make the headline fit. If you make your word total fit the 25- or 30-word limit set by the station, you will contribute to efficient handling. Further, if you are able to say what you wish in less than 25 or 30 words, do not use more words than are necessary.

Examples

- A. (17) Home is a precious thing What if yours were destroyed? Give to the War Relief Fund now.

Comment: Reference to home, your home, makes it personal and, therefore, more effective.

- B. (19) The new 1939 Jalopy is here Values are up, prices are down See the new 1939 Jalopy this week.

Comment: Rhythmic rise and fall of the phrases, both in word meaning and in inflection, give this announcement the desir-

able quality of lingering in the mind. Do not let the prosaic copy chief blue-pencil rhythmic phrases on the argument that they are "poetic." Conversation is rhythmical until we become conscious of it, then we are likely to make it stilted.

- C. (25) She hated the piercing insistence of an unanswered phone, demanding in the name of the telephone company that it be allowed to perform its duty. (*James O. Hanley*)

Comment: An image—not a commercial or public-service announcement—one you can see clearly because of the *action* in its verbal forms. Can you hear that *piercing* insistence? I do.

- D. (32) If you can't go over, come across Give to the War Chest of Minneapolis and Hennepin County One gift to the Chest helps support sixty-three agencies vital in peace and war.

Comment: Two words over 30. Where would you cut it? You might make the final sentence read: "One gift to the Chest helps support sixty-three vital welfare agencies." The phrase "—go over, come across" was easily understandable in the fall of 1943 when this announcement was written. It is not so readily understandable now.

- E. (35) The time is 20 seconds before 9 P.M., B-U-L-O-V-A Bulova Watch Time On your wrist as on the air, faithful forever Courtesy, Bulova Watch Company, Fifth Avenue, New York.

Comment: The above requires skillful handling by the announcer for he must *hit* the phrase "20 seconds before 9 P.M." as the studio second hand is making its fleeting pause over the 8:59:40 mark on the clock. The phrase "on your wrist etc." has a rhythm that does not require bedlam to remember it by. Some stations might require reduction in number of words. When you spell out a word, each letter becomes a word—as in B-U-L-O-V-A.

- F. (30) Here's a wartime request from the telephone company Long-distance lines to many distant points are overloaded Except to near-by communities, avoid

calling by long-distance telephone unless urgent
Thank you. (*Northwestern Bell Telephone Co.*)

Comment: Courtesy and graciousness are essential elements in any public-utility announcement. This has those qualities: the use of the words "Thank you" is uncommonly good in the above context. Verbs with the prefix *a*—as "a-void"—suffer when used on the air. See comment on use of words with prefix *a* in Example C, Page 9.

G. (30) Can you wait on tables? Full time or short hours, in Dayton's Tea Room, for waitresses or bus boys Apply at the employment office on the eighth floor, The Dayton Company. (7:15 A.M., September 10, 1943)

Comment: Here is a help-wanted advertisement phrased for and used on the air Note that it was so written that the word "The," required in the firm name, was included in the 30-word limit.

In these exercises in the shorter forms of radio script, always write a number of paragraphs (or announcements) as purely creative images. They may not appear on the air in that brief form, but such experience in radio script problems will help you in writing an introduction for a program, and its closing, or to set the stage for a drama, or change the scene in that drama, for in radio all of these things must be done, and done with the right words, and not too many of them.

Further, any commercial or public service announcement may be a complete and inviting image, creating desire, an urge to buy or to participate, or it may be a lump of words with no appeal. If your script is an inspiration to the announcer or your character, it is very likely to communicate that inspiration to the listener.

Are these doors opening?

Appreciation of words for themselves alone. They may contribute beauty as well as vigor.

Time element. A second is a long time in radio.

Clarity. You must say it clearly the first time. There is no opportunity for repetition.

Assignment

Write ten 25- to 30-word announcements. Keep them on *ONE* subject. (You must know a great deal about the subject.) Write five creative images of similar length. They may be on different subjects. Put number of words at *beginning* of each announcement or paragraph. Double-space all script.

CHAPTER

3

Your Audience: Who, Where, When?

The people yes—

* * * * *

*Mixed from a bowl of sky blue dreams and sea slime
facts—*

*A seething of saints and sinners, toilers, loafers, oxen,
apes*

*In a womb of superstition, faith, genius, crime, sacri-
fice—*

The one and only source of armies, navies, work-gangs,

The living flowing breath of the history of nations,

*Of the little Family of Man hugging the little ball of
Earth*

*And a long hall of mirrors, straight, convex, and con-
cave,*

Moving and endless with scrolls of the living,

Shimmering with phantoms flung from the past,

Shot over with lights of babies to come, not yet here.

—CARL SANDBURG ¹

If we keep Carl Sandburg's definition of "the people" in mind in writing for the ear—for the ears of the people—we shall write better radio script. Have the quotation that opens the chapter read out loud to you. Analyze it. Who is your audience? It's the people, yes, the people. Where are they?

¹ From *The People, Yes* by Carl Sandburg. Copyright, 1936, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

They're everywhere and anywhere; in fact, there are more radios than there are bathtubs or telephones in American homes. When are these people listening? They're listening, some of them at least, any time of the day or night.

Yes, nowadays the radio reaches the people, all the people; it is in every home except those of the very poor and the eccentric. Take this fact to heart in trying to understand it.

Growth of radio listening

To illustrate the growth of the radio audience, let us examine the figures on the number of listeners on successive election nights. The first prescheduled broadcast on any station in America was the broadcasting of the Harding-Cox election returns by Station KDKA, Pittsburgh, the night of November 2, 1920. A "select group," an estimated 500 listeners, were "entertained by this new marvel of science, the radio." The figure of 500 listeners is reasonably accurate, for a Pittsburgh store sold them the "hand-made radio sets."² But two years after that, in 1922, America had 400,000 radio sets. And at the time of the Roosevelt-Willkie election contest in 1940, there were 44,000,000 sets in use, or, to put it another way, 85 per cent of the homes in the United States had radio sets. On election night four years later, the Roosevelt-Dewey balloting on November 7, 1944, the Hooper survey³ shows that 50.3 per cent of American radio sets were in use. This is for the period from 7 to 10:30 P.M., a "higher average sustaining listening" than had ever before been recorded by the Hooper office in the ten years of its coincidental measurements. *The Atlantic Monthly* estimated there were 65,000,000 American men and women of voting age at the receiving end of radio during that period. The 50.3 per cent reported by Hooper is greater than the 48.9

² Hettinger, Herman S., *A Decade of Radio Advertising*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1933. Also NBC-KDKA records.

³ Among surveys to determine listener-interest in given radio programs is one conducted in many markets by C. E. Hooper and Company; it is known as the *Hooper Survey*. The *Hooperatings* are computed from total station mentions secured from the coincidental questions "To what program are you listening, please?" and "Over what station is that program coming?" asked of persons found to be listening to the radio.

per cent for a similar period following the attack on Pearl Harbor, and greater than the 37.5-per cent average for the period 8 to 10 P.M. on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

Your audience is in the living room

Your audience, your listeners, are in every room that has a radio—actually not only the living room, as such, but living quarters including, son's or daughter's study or bedroom, and mother's kitchen—in the American home in little town and big town; on the Pacific seaboard and on the Atlantic, and everywhere in between, in farmhouse on the prairie, ranch in the foothills, and adobe dwelling in the Southwest; yes, and south and north of the border, for both Mexico and Canada listen to American stations.

And the listeners include the dowager, Mrs. Throckmorton, troubled with the lack of servants and the idiosyncrasies of chauffeurs; Mrs. Housewife, striving to get along, raise a family, and find some peace amid the hurly-burly; Farmer Brown, who continues to till the soil, despite the efforts of pressure groups and politicians to tug him this way and that; Alice, the career girl; John, the businessman who has his pet chair near his pet radio and fends off interference with his pet programs; Henry Aldrich's prototype; and the bobby-sox swooner who pursues the reigning crooner across the dials daily; all these persons, at one time or another are listening to the radio.

When do listeners listen?

When do they listen? Regularly or irregularly, radio listeners, of course, sleep. However, the diversity of their slumber hours is surprising. Let an announcer or character commit some blunder on the air on one of those all-night programs, and see how quickly "word comes back." Someone is certain to be listening. No, the 6 A.M. to midnight section of the 24-hour day does not embrace the entire audience. Habits vary, work hours, too, and time itself is different in different parts of the country, so we have what amounts to a 24-hour radio audience.

The individual before the radio is your objective. Keep him or her—it may be man or woman, boy or girl—constantly in mind. It is true that the individual may be a member of a family circle, but it is unlikely that all the members of that circle will be interested in the same program.

Certain programs, for example, those bearing on a pronouncement in a national emergency, attract a universal audience, anyone who can get to a radio.

Others attract a special audience only, a relatively small percentage of listeners; *Invitation to Learning* (CBS) is an example.

Talk with *one* person

Your words will be more potent if you address one particular person in the living room, after selecting a time when he or she is likely to be home. To get the attention of that person, you establish immediate contact if you say something he knows, or something about something he knows. Let's repeat here the three lines of Chaucer given in the first chapter:

At Trumpington not far from Cambridge town
There is a bridge wherethrough a brook runs down,
Upon the side of which brook stands a mill.

A great many listeners may never have heard of Dan Chaucer, but almost everyone knows what a brook is, and what a mill is. When you mention brook, they recall a creek they knew; and, when you mention mill, they recall a mill or its ruins that they knew in some city, town, or countryside. From this clear, direct monosyllabic setting they cannot fail to understand that you are talking about a stream that has a mill on its bank. The job is to keep that stream and that mill clearly before them as you speak with them, and, if you are engaged in advertising, then the products of that mill.

In the tradition of the Gettysburg Address

Short, concise Anglo-Saxon monosyllables will help you. The direct and common and beautiful English that Lincoln used in the Gettysburg Address will help you. Read it over,

and note the words, how each one must have been selected with infinite care.

Likewise helpful, and in the same "Honest Abe" tradition, is the address of Judge Learned Hand before 150,000 newly naturalized citizens in New York City's Central Park on "I Am an American Day" (May 21, 1944). From that talk with those 150,000 people, here is an excerpt to remember. The printed word reveals very clearly that it was written for the listening ear. Note the repetitive device which will help you make a phrase or thought stick in your listener's mind as you write for radio. Read this out loud:

We have gathered here to affirm a faith, a faith in a common purpose, a common conviction, a common devotion What was the object that nerved us . . . ? We sought liberty—freedom from oppression, freedom from want, freedom to be ourselves

What then is the spirit of liberty? . . . I cannot define it. I can only tell you my own faith. The spirit of liberty is the spirit which is not too sure that it is right; . . . the spirit of liberty remembers that not even a sparrow falls to earth unheeded; the spirit of liberty is the spirit of Him who . . . taught . . . that there may be a kingdom where the least shall be heard and considered side by side with the greatest.

And now in that spirit, that spirit of an America which has never been, and which may never be; nay, which never will be, except as the conscience and the courage of Americans create it; yet in the spirit of that America which lies hidden in some form in the aspirations of all of us; in the spirit of that America for which our young men are at this moment fighting and dying; in that spirit of liberty and of America I ask you to rise and with me to pledge our faith to the glorious destiny of our beloved country—with liberty and justice for all.

Note how that word "common" recurs in successive phrases. Note how "liberty" recurs, and builds to a climax, by the help of one monosyllable after another, the whole thing easy to listen to, easy to understand. Mind you, so far as the writer knows, this talk was not written for radio; it was written for the listening ear, for the ears of a group of new Americans in Central Park, New York; and for that very reason, would make good radio script.

Common interests promote common understanding

Now in common interests there is common understanding, for there is communion of interests and an association of ideas in activities which all of us have shared. What makes Fibber McGee and Molly popular in both city and country living rooms? For one thing, they evoke a comparison with a closet filled to overflowing that all of us are familiar with, for stuffed closets are as common in city apartments as in the farmhouse on the lower "eighty," and they contain strikingly similar quantities of junk that falls out when the door is opened.

That association of ideas, that warmth of common interest showing in and through your lines, heightens the listener's understanding and appreciation. Simple clarity in radio script will bring it about. The need to write simply and clearly does not mean that the average radio listener is a nitwit. The author never has agreed with those who hold that radio writing must be to the nitwit level, but one-dimensional radio (sound) does require greater clarity than any other form of writing, and that requires good writing and that is exactly where some of us falter. You cannot obfuscate and write for radio.

How Edith Wharton happened to write *Ethan Frome* is a case in point. Mrs. Wharton was learning French. To build up her very limited French vocabulary, she wrote the story first in French, with all of the supposed limitations of the French vocabulary she was just acquiring. Then she translated it into English. The result: an American classic, another great tale simply told. Is everyone who reads it a nitwit? Are the millions who have read the Gettysburg Address and the millions who will read it and thrill to it, are they nitwits? The 150,000 new Americans who heard Judge Hand in Central Park, were they nitwits?

So by writing about the old swimming hole, or the scissors grinder, or the collegian in his current edition of the jalopy, or a child waiting for a school bus, and, thus establishing that tie that binds, we get in communion with our audience. Our radio commercials can make the bathing suits we are advertising more attractive if we refer to that swimming hole, and our

Hosanna spring water more sparkling and delightful if we refer to the old pump at home. Similarly we can pick up a lesson in thrift by pointing out the wastrel on a park bench, and we can use the cry of a heat-tortured child to sell talcum powder.

Point of view

Radio's point of view, *i.e.*, the relative position from which a subject is considered, is different from the point of view of printed matter. In printed matter, the Community Chest or similar social welfare agency may understandably say "we" in appealing for funds, or, commercially, Smith & Jones may just as understandably say "we" in urging the reader to buy their catsup. In either case, the printed advertisement carries the name of the firm, organization, or person who authorized it; this identifies the "we" in it.

But in a radio announcement, you do not have that name or signature constantly before your eyes to refer to. To ask an announcer to use "we" is requesting too much of this ever-willing spokesman despite his versatility with "shoes and ships and sealing wax, and cabbages and kings" during the course of a day. He cannot be all things to all men and carry conviction.

Many radio appeals become absurd because of this error. The script reads "We have nice fresh peanuts today," and the announcer blithely follows the script. While he is saying "We have etc.," the listener recalls that a few moments ago he was selling prunes and within the next quarter-hour may be extolling Hephzibah's spaghetti.

Therefore, never ask regular station announcers to use the first person "we" or "I," either in public service or commercial announcements. Use either the proper name, for example, Smith & Jones, or, on occasion, the third person Smith & Jones may be referred to as "they." However, be sure the listener knows the identity of "they"; in case of doubt, repeat the firm name.

For the same reason, your announcement should say, "Take this coupon to Smith & Jones"; it should not say, "Bring this coupon to Smith & Jones," unless, of course, the broadcast is originating at the store or other sponsoring location. Likewise,

you do not say, "Come to Smith & Jones"; instead, you say, "Go to Smith & Jones."

There is one possible exception to the preceding rule. If you are writing for a special announcer who has become so closely identified with a particular product in the listener's mind that that product and that announcer, as its spokesman, are inseparable, the use of "we" is not only acceptable, but advantageous.

Perhaps the height of absurdity is reached when the point of view is juggled between two station announcers, the first speaking properly in the third person and, a few minutes later, the second improperly using the first person on the same program. One wonders if the second one hastened to "buy into" the firm after hearing the first announcer's sales talk.

Do's and don'ts for radio writers

At this point, a summary of suggestions of what to do and what not to do in writing radio script can properly fit in. Some of these you already have encountered; others you will be certain to meet. They include:

Don't use "which" if you can avoid it. Say it aloud. What does it mean? Furthermore, if possible avoid the use of relative clauses beginning with "who," and "which." "That" is more euphonious.

Don't use the passive tense, if you can avoid it. It slows up your sentence. Note the difference in:

(Passive) The house was blown down by the blast.

(Active) The wind blew the house down.

(Passive) He was slowed down by heavy traffic.

(Active) Heavy traffic slowed him down.

Avoid "s" endings when possible. They sizz. This means elimination of unnecessary plurals.

For action "in the now," or going on in the past, the participial "ing" endings are especially helpful. Example:

VOICE OF THE ANNOUNCER:

They are *milling* around us like cattle that smell death.
 The whole square is *whirling* and *turning* and *shouting*.
 One of the ministers raises his arms on the platform.
 No one is *listening*: now they are *sounding* drums:
 Trying to quiet them likely: No! No!
 Something is *happening*: There in the far corner:
 A runner: a messenger: *staggering*: People are *helping* him:
 People are *calling*: he comes through the crowd: they are
 quieter.
 Only those on the far edge are still *shouting*:
 Listen! He's here by the ministers now! He is *speaking*

—ARCHIBALD MACLEISH⁴

The adverbial endings in “ly” have a tendency to be lost. Avoid them when you can and in so doing remember that not all adverbs need to end in “ly”; for example, “quick” is both an adjective and an adverb. “Slow,” likewise. The signs reading “drive slow” are correct. Eliminating the “ly’s” makes your sentence sturdier.

Don’t use *big* words merely because they are uncommon when simple, unaffected speech will say it much better.

Give pronunciation of all uncommon or difficult words, including proper names and surnames, and firm names. Especially show where the accent goes.

Use of long complex sentences immediately reveals that you are not writing for radio. Announcer or talent will bog down in the mire of words; the listener will cease to listen.

In preparation of script:

Do not start a sentence at bottom of one page and run it over to the next page. Finish it on the page on which it begins.

⁴ From *The Fall of the City*, copyright 1937 by Archibald MacLeish, and reprinted by permission of Rinehart & Company, Incorporated, publishers. First verse play especially written for radio. First presented by Columbia Broadcasting System on April 11, 1937. The italics are not in the original, but are used to point out the effectiveness of “ing” endings.

Do not permit a word to repeat itself immediately below a similar word in the preceding typewritten line. It may mean dropping an entire line in hurried handling.

Commercial script do's and don'ts:

Avoid superlatives. The listener learned to discount them long since.

Don't qualify prices with "just" and "only." They were overworked long before you and I began using them.

Spell out tricky names of merchandise and, if necessary, give the pronunciation.

Ask the advertiser how he wants the name of his firm presented: should it be "Sutcliffe's" or "The Sutcliffe Company"? Then keep the name always the same throughout the script.

Do not use the negative approach: "why not thus and so?" Use the positive imperative: "see this" or "take this"

If you use the phrase "see it *today*," be sure the announcement is made early enough in that particular day for the prospect to do so.

Until you can devise a better pattern for a commercial announcement, use this one: attention, interest, desire, action.

Do not talk about more than one item in one commercial announcement. If the advertiser wishes to do so, discourage him for it means confusion in the listener's mind.

In an announcement requesting replies by mail, it is common practice to put the address into the script at least *three* times; one of these should close the announcement.

See Chapter 4 for "legal don'ts."

Fifty-word announcements

Our next job is to write 50-word announcements (paragraphs) on public service or commercial subjects, and 50-word images. About those images: remember it is unlikely that they will be used in this form, but you will have occasion time after time to build such an image into the fabric of a longer script, an image that can be conveyed well in 50 words, more or less. So keep on building them for facility in creating good programs later.

A *station break* does not contain a universally established number of words. On some stations it is 25 words, on others 30, 40, 50, or even 60. Sixty words are just about all that can be crowded into those fleeting 30 seconds in addition to the station identification, or between the ending of one network program and the beginning of another. The Columbia Broadcasting System, for example, permits 50 words in its daytime station breaks on its company-owned stations, but requires that nighttime station breaks be held to 25 words to avoid any possibility of *bumping* the network show immediately following.

Between 6:00 (or 7:00) and 10:00 P.M. is usually Class A time, or the most expensive commercial time, and also the time when shows using the most expensive talent are on the air.

Examples of 50-word paragraphs

(48) The world was slipping away sounds came to him faintly, muted by great distance The lights softened glowed benevolently Faces vaguely familiar, names remembered from another life, stirred his consciousness gently, then faded away Tolerant amusement lighted his glazed eyes as he slid slowly, limply under the table. (*James O. Hanley*)

Comment: A "drunk" described entertainingly.

(50) You might call her Chaos personified: a trim little hat fitted demurely to a well-turned head belies the confusion that walks always beside her When she comes into a room, papers on the table, books in their cases, pictures on the wall, everything goes askew That is Mary Lou.

Comment: Fortunately Mary Lou's disturbing traits did not ruin the author's portrayal.

(45) Our government asks every person in America to search his home, indoors and out, immediately, for scrap rubber anything and everything you can possibly spare no amount is too small, every ounce is precious Turn in scrap rubber at once to your nearest filling station. (*From Office of Facts and Figures for use June 15 through June 30, 1942*)

Comment: Surely this urgent plea moved people to turn in their rubber.

(56) It's more than a local need this year It's a need from the four corners of the earth The Community Chest has a tremendous job to do Give it every possible help, every possible penny you can spare Give now to your local branch of the Community Chest It's a vital part of the war effort. (*Shirley Pitts*)

Comment: The need of the Community Chest is well emphasized. The need "from the four corners of the earth" is not clear. Commendable for the overtone of urgency that dominates the announcement.

(56) Brighten your living room with small changes Maybe the cigarette boxes would cheer up the table if they were Duco Red Flame or maybe just your initials in Duco silver would do the trick Paint stripes or waves of curlicues on your lamp shades Find out what you can do with a paint brush and Duco! (*M. C. Fossum*)

Comment: "Small changes" is not good. "Inexpensively" could be substituted advantageously for the three words "with small changes." "Duco" is mentioned three different times, yet it does not seem overdone. Skillful handling is the reason. In the first two instances, use of the word as an adjective gets away from blatancy. Someone may ask, "Where can you get Duco?" It is not always necessary to put the retail outlet in. In this case, the listener would think of her favorite paint or department store for a well-known product.

(47) Your House of Dreams is worth your most careful planning Every room should reflect contented living and

pride in your home The Home Decorating Shop can help you secure the right results If you are planning a House of Dreams, drop in and let us help you. (*Lillian E. Benson*)

Comment: The right approach to making a house a home, but marred by absence of concrete detail. How does the Home Decorating Shop help you? The name of the advertiser should appear at least twice in a 50-word announcement.

(50) Here is the season's outstanding travel bargain, the Northern Pacific's coast-to-coast tour of America See two world's fairs, San Francisco and New York; visit Los Angeles, Washington, D. C., and Niagara Falls; all in two weeks Round-trip rail fare only ninety dollars Call your nearest Northern Pacific office today Go Northern Pacific

Comment: The low cost here supplants alluring description; description, however, could be used in a longer announcement along with low-cost appeal.

(50) Here's grape jam that's really swell! Fairway Concord Grape Jam Made from mellow, sun-ripened Concord grapes, it's delicious on hotbreads, waffles, and toast, and for lunch-box sandwiches, too Fairway Concord Grape Jam, one of the many top quality, more-for-your-money fine foods obtainable at Fairway Stores everywhere.

Comment: Any advertisement of food should make that food delicious. This is the first objective in the above. How to use that food is a close second.

(40) Tonight, sports authorities Larry MacPhail, Ted Husing, and John R. Tunis clash over the question: "Should Organized Sports Be Abolished for the Duration?" Get both sides on America's Town Meeting, sponsored by *The Reader's Digest* 7:30 tonight on this station. (*BBD&O, Radio Station WINN, March 22, 1945*)

Comment: Here is a radio commercial announcement in behalf of a radio program to be presented later on the same station. The name of the program is mentioned only once. For emphasis and clarity the name, along with time of program and station, well could be brought in twice in an announcement of 50 words.

Assignment

Write two 50-word images. Maximum 50 words.

Write two 50-word public service announcements. Maximum 50 words.

Write two 50-word commercial announcements. Maximum 50 words.

Remember to think of each of above as *paragraphs*. Each must be self-contained: it must stand alone.

CHAPTER

4

Radio Script: Its Mechanics- More About the Familiar Style

A phrase can only live when it corresponds to the necessities of respiration I know it to be good when it can be read aloud.

—GUSTAVE FLAUBERT, 1821–1880

There is no established style for writing radio script. Each writer may have his own, each station its own, and each network. However, you may have noted that in examples in this book a definite style is followed, the distinguishing mark of which is the respiratory pause. It is based upon the remark of Flaubert to his disciple, de Maupassant, noted above. Good radio script is the spoken word, gliding easily, comfortably off the tongue. If mechanical means will help convey the meaning of your script to the person handling it before the microphone, and through that voice to the listener, it is well to use them.

Five-dot indication for respiratory pauses

The author prefers the dot-dot method, using at least five dots to indicate a pause (on the typewriter, they are periods in this wise), for a pause is actually all that goes on the air, no matter what the punctuation mark may be. These five dots best fit the typewritten line of elite, or smaller, standard

typewriter type. If you are using a typewriter that has pica or larger (modern roman is the type size insisted upon by many script department heads and used by many agencies), then you may like the appearance of only three dots, set off at either end by a space: for example "The man! . . . Look at his face!"

Keep script as free from mechanical debris and as easy to read as possible. Script sometimes is so filled with underscorings, capitalizations, and other claptrap that the announcer or character justifiably gives up trying to determine what the writer meant. Think for yourself what would happen if the accent marks were put over all the words, and, for good measure, the shadings added over the vowels in a script!

A practical mechanical style

In some detail, here is a style found practical in writing radio script. Follow it unless and until you have something better:

Use capital letters where you ordinarily would use them.

Use punctuation marks, except as noted below.

Use commas, perhaps more liberally than you would in the written word, especially to clarify clauses that might be confusing unless clearly set apart.

Use hyphens, especially in border-line cases of debatable compound words, more liberally than in the written word.

But, for periods, and oftentimes for semicolons and colons, use the respiratory pause, that is, at least five dots

Eschew religiously the use of dashes in radio script. They are easy to make, either by pen or typewriter; in fact, careless writers turn them into a protean hieroglyphic, largely supplanting other punctuation marks; and, in the hands of a writer whose knowledge of accurate punctuation is weak, they can result in endless confusion, particularly if what is intended are respiratory pauses.

Sound effect lines and music lines within the body of the script should be capitalized throughout and preferably also underscored throughout. The underscoring may be done after the script is completed and additional working copies are needed.

Double space all script.

Some directors will insist that you triple-space between speeches in dialogue, that is, between the lines of different characters. For example, all of Character A's lines would be double-spaced, but when Character B comes into the conversation, then you would triple-space between the last line of A's speech and the first line of B's double-spaced speech.

Sound effects and music always should be indicated by the words SOUND and MUSIC in the character column, the margin at the left of your script page. This is explained in detail in Chapter 9 on sound effects.

Whatever you set up as your style in writing radio script, stick to it unvaryingly. Then the person to whom you submit script or your announcer or character will know what you mean and do a better job of interpreting your lines.

Radio script paper

Radio script paper is the customary letter-size sheet, $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 inches, but it usually has a longitudinal rule down the left-hand side, 2 inches from the left-hand edge; in other words, there's a 2-inch margin at the left. In this margin go the names of the voices (characters) handling your script, including the announcer. Each line of the script may be numbered. These numbers are imprinted on the script page, just to the left of the marginal rule. They make reference, correction, or revision easier.

radio script



created and prepared by
LUTHER WEAVER and ASSOCIATES

program Radio: How to Abuse It no. once in
station Anywhere time Anytime enough
day Any Day
client Ass'n to Prevent Early Deaths among Radio Directors

THEME:-----1 THESE FOOLISH THINGS REMIND ME OF YOU, 20 SECONDS UP, THEN
FADE UNDER AND OUT
2
ANNOUNCER:-----3 (SETS THE STAGE)
3
SOUND:-----4 (ON CUE FROM ANNOUNCER) DOOR OPENING, HUB-BUB OF PUFFY WOMAN
4 ENTERING AN OFFICE
5
DIRECTOR:-----6 How-do-you-do, Mrs. Throckmorton....
7
THROCKMORTON:-----8 (ALWAYS DIFFICULT TO INTERRUPT--SHE JUST KEEPS RIGHT ON TALKING)
9 How-do-you-do, Mr.....Mr. Director. I'm Mrs. Winninara
10 Throckmorton, the president of the Perennial Plant Club....
11 It's for the maintenance of gardens, outdoors and indoors,
12 the year round.....You see, we want a radio program.....We
13 think we have a cause worthy to be on the air....
14
DIRECTOR:-----15 (HE HAS BEEN TRYING TO GET A WORD IN ALL THROUGH THIS) Won't
16 you sit down, Mrs. Throckmorton?
17
THROCKMORTON:-----18 Oh, yes.....now the red geranium is the emblem of our club....
19 a lovely plant, don't you think?....You see, we want to let
20 people know what our emblem is, so I thought we could do
21 something like that Forward March program does, you know....
22 The Red Geranium Lives On!....
23
DIRECTOR:-----24 (SLOWLY AND COMMISERATINGLY) Mrs. Throckmorton, I wonder if
25 you mean the March of Time?
26
THROCKMORTON:-----27 Oh, yes, how stupid of me....
28
DIRECTOR:-----29 Yes, of course.....now you'll want to identify your program
30 with theme music, or hadn't you thought....
31
THROCKMORTON:-----32 With what?
33
DIRECTOR:-----34 Theme music.....a song, perhaps.....it is played or sung
35 at the beginning and the end of a program....(MORE)

NOTE--This script, all rights to which are reserved, is for broadcasting by station designated in accordance with our instructions and order. Any other use is prohibited.
Luther Weaver and Associates, 200 Globe Bldg, Saint Paul, Minn.

Form 100-Printed in U. S. A. 1911

Figure 1. This first or top page of script of a radio program carries identification and information lines at top. The succeeding pages of the program are given over entirely, except for identification lines in small type, to the script.

Note the character column at the left, a two-inch margin in which are written the names of the characters, and the words *Theme* and *Sound*, as properly prepared script requires. The title of the music and the kind of sound are set forth in capital letters in the body of the script.

Also note the numbered lines, which make reference easier to a specific line for correction before, during, or after rehearsal.

The page is standard copy paper size, 8½ by 11 inches. (For discussion of mechanics of script preparation, see pages 35 et seq.)

More about the familiar style

If your sentences are difficult to read, they are not good radio script. Compare, for example, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address with a paragraph or page from Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. If you read them out loud, the difference will be even more pronounced. If the thought is not clearly expressed, if the understandable English idiom is not used, if there is no chance to breathe properly because of sentence structure and word toughness, there is no comfort in the utterance, and no ease for the listener. Therefore, write sentences that are easy to say and easy to listen to. You can make them easier to say and easier to listen to by putting in those respiratory intervals or pauses. And you yourself, as you read your script out loud, are the sole arbiter of where those pauses should go.

You will write better and better script if you realize more and more that there is a way of speaking for the listening ear that may be sharply different from writing for the reading eye. Generally, in writing for the radio, use *the familiar style*, the phrases of informal speech. You are not remote from your audience; you are not shouting at them across a valley, or from a pulpit or rostrum; you are in the living room talking *with* them, not *at* them. And your sentences need not always be complete. You do not complete each one in actual conversation; therefore, you will not in a radio script for it, too, is the spoken word.

Anglo-Saxon words: short, crisp, direct

Again let's remember the value of Anglo-Saxon words, staunch and sturdy: they can be depended upon to make your meaning clear in the way a Grant Wood painting makes a corn shock stand out on a rolling Iowa farm. Words of Anglo-Saxon origin are usually short, crisp, direct, easy to say, easy to listen to, easy to understand. You'll find them valuable in your work. Of course, you should not confine yourself wholly to monosyllables or pore over the dictionary seeking out words marked "AS," but the dictionary makes very good reading, and the short words in it have been a help to many successful writers.

Legal don'ts

Trying to make one's way through the maze of laws and regulations, both federal and state, affecting advertising copy and therefore commercial radio script, is bewildering, particularly to the beginner in radio writing.

There is the Federal Communications Act under which the broadcasting industry operates; and Federal food, drug, and cosmetics laws upon which the Federal Trade Commission bases its rulings; and postal laws. Further, there are the varying laws of the several states affecting advertising itself and the merchandise you advertise.

Get the help of radio station commercial managers. They can tell you the major things to avoid, for they frequently meet up with the very problems confronting the beginner.

You should at the outset, however, familiarize yourself with the code of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), and the code of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, and also because of their application to your immediate territory, the code of the Better Business Bureau, and the statutes affecting financial advertising, *e.g.*, sales of securities and money-lending agencies.

Then, in writing a given series of announcements or programs, constantly ask yourself these questions: Does it misrepresent? Is it fair practice? Is it good taste? Then remember these broad general prohibitions:

You cannot advertise "cures." Nothing cures, but perhaps your product can "relieve."

You cannot advertise "games of chance," no matter how worthy the sponsor.

Avoid broad sweeping claims. To say Blank and Company's auto is "the best" is most difficult to prove to combative disputants lined up outside your office door. But you can say Blank and Company's auto is "the best automobile Blank and Company ever made."

If you say something is "free," be very sure it is free, absolutely free. If you are offering a can opener with the purchase of a can of salmon, you cannot say the can opener is free. But, if you haven't boosted the price on the salmon, you can say the can opener is included at no extra charge.

One-minute announcements

Our next series of paragraphs or announcements embraces four 100- to 125-word paragraphs. Make one of them an image. Make the remaining three public-service or commercial announcements. These 100- to 125-word announcements are known as 1-minute announcements in radio parlance. Some stations permit only 100 words to the minute, others 125 words. Actually, 125 words fit easily into 60 seconds. An announcement or paragraph of that length will not require hurried handling. Keep in mind that the average number of words the average ear can hear in a minute is 160, and that 140 words a minute is a reasonable pace for the speech of your characters in a dramatic program. The number the average eye can read is 100. Keep the three public-service or commercial announcements all on *one* subject, preferably a subject that can be carried forward with each assignment as we progress.

Three announcements on one subject should be comparatively easy. What if you had to write ten, or twenty, or more, for distribution among many stations over a wide area and a prolonged period of time? You would have to know all about the service, the product, the cause, or the activity, and you would have to add imagination to the facts, and pray for more. If your knowledge is thoroughgoing, then richness will show through the lines, and even may play above and below them like lightning along a pasture fence. That kind of writing never will be called "thin." If knowledge of your subject flows exuberantly from your finger tips into your typewriter keys, it will add meaning to even the simplest sentences. Now, go ahead, and as you create your paragraphs, read each sentence and each paragraph out loud. This will help you avoid words that blur, and the resultant blurred meanings.

Examples

(76) A chunk of a kid in blue pajamas, uttering an infant's philippic from his crib. It seemed to make sense; he seemed satisfied with it for he clutched the crib bars in intense approval. Would that we who persistently think we are wise, could fathom the range of his unimpeded thought, or catch a wisp of his wisdom. As always, this new bearer of learning from the Center of all learning, finds his hearers unbelievably ignorant.

Comment: If the author had been Logan Pearsall Smith, he undoubtedly could have created a better image. But it is an attempt to draw a bit of pertinent philosophy from a concrete incident. The piece loses clarity as it becomes abstract. In radio the abstract discussion is usually deadly.

ANNOUNCER: (103) Let me tell you an incident in the life of Farmer Brown Farmer Brown decided that there wasn't enough money in milk and eggs, so he began sitting up nights to figure out something else for his hens and cows to do He didn't have much luck but he did have a friend The friend told him about Cargill Feeds. . . . Now, Farmer Brown is again sitting up nights, figuring out the best way to use the extra money his hens and cows are making for him You, too, will be money ahead if you follow Farmer Brown's example Switch to Cargill Feeds today. (*Cargill, Inc.*)

Comment: An announcement in a lighter vein. Radio needs more of them. Advertisers generally do not take kindly to them. They (the advertisers) need to peel off a little of their conservatism and permit some of the pioneering that radio gives them so good an opportunity to do. Think of the Johnson Wax commercials on Fibber McGee's show. A product, any product, may be sacred to the advertiser; it never is to the listener. The listener will applaud your having constructive goodwill-building fun with it.

ANNOUNCER: (112) Look ahead! Get warm, all-wool snow suits for your family NOW during the big lay-away snow-suit sale at Montgomery Ward in Midway Snow suits for women and children in a big selection of all-wool fabrics sale-

priced just fourteen dollars and ninety-eight cents Every one has a zip-out sheepskin lining zipper front closing some have matched hoods Only because Wards purchased these suits months ago is it possible to offer them at this amazing low sale-price And as little as a dollar down with small monthly payments will hold the snow suit you select until November 15th Montgomery Ward in Midway closes at two today. (*This ran at 8:00 A.M.*)

Comment: Emphasis on the above is on the *sale* of snow suits, not so much on the garments themselves. Naming of colors would have helped build the image in the listener's mind. Color always does that. Note that especial advantages of these garments are described in inviting detail.

ANNOUNCER: (107) You can hire a hall if you like, but your own living room will do just as well for a rollicking Hallowe'en party for servicemen. The National Hallowe'en Committee composed of a group of patriotic citizens urges you to bring good cheer to the servicemen and women in your community by holding a gala Hallowe'en party. A simple, informal, old-fashioned party is the kind the soldiers and sailors like best. Bobbing for apples, reaching for doughnuts, drinking cider and grinning back at toothless jack o'lanterns will remind your uniformed guests of home and childhood. Help make this Hallowe'en a happy one for millions of our gallant fighters. (*Supplied by National Hallowe'en Committee, Newsweek Building, 152 West 42nd Street, New York City, for use in 1944 observance.*)

Comment: Even Hallowe'en frequently comes in for propaganda. The above is an example of material supplied by national agencies to any organization or to any individual who can make use of it in radio programs. Your local Hallowe'en committee would turn this announcement to their own use, and probably substitute their committee or organization name for that of the national group. The announcement contains suggestions for entertainment that might stir a local booster group or particular families into action.

SOUND: RECORD #11833, GROOVE 3: (TRAIN WHISTLES AND PASSES):
ANNOUNCER IS TO CUT IN WHEN SOUND MODULATES AFTER ABOUT 15 SECONDS:

ANNOUNCER: (125) War traffic moving troops, munitions and supplies must necessarily come first with The Milwaukee Road We are confident that you are in sympathy with our desire to serve the nation first, and that you will cooperate with us in handling civilian travel with the utmost efficiency You can help in several ways First, by making reservations early, and by cancelling them promptly if your trip must be postponed Second, by traveling in mid-week when possible Third, by accepting such accommodations as are available if we are unable to provide your usual space For travel information, call your Milwaukee Road ticket agent Milwaukee Road employees are buying War Savings Bonds and Stamps They urge you to make the same investment in the American way of life (*Summer, 1943—Courtesy of The Milwaukee Road, through agency Roche, Williams & Cleary, Inc.*)

Comment: Here is an announcement that opens with a sound effect and carries instructions for tie-in of that sound effect into the spoken word by the local announcer. It is long, for the sound effect takes 15 seconds in itself, and is followed by 125 words as written. Some stations would suggest it be cut, or would arbitrarily cut it to fit their 1-minute requirements. The war bond message at the close contains 24 words; this might have to be sacrificed in this particular announcement. Mention of the Milwaukee Road only twice in the text, exclusive of the war message, could be strengthened by tucking the name into the phrase: "First, by making Milwaukee reservations early." However, the over-all effect of this announcement is one of commendable sincerity with the three suggestions for civilian cooperation set well apart and understandable. Note how the railroad talks *with* the listener.

ANNOUNCER: (131) Are you worried about how you're going to pay big Federal Income Taxes? Then listen. To make it easy for you to meet this big bill—our government urges you to buy TAX SAVINGS NOTES. These notes are for sale in denominations of \$25.00 to \$5,000.00—AND THEY PAY A GOOD RATE OF INTEREST. If you begin now, buying TAX SAVINGS NOTES regularly, you'll have money on hand, beforehand—and the interest these notes earn helps considerably to reduce your tax bill. Get TAX SAVINGS NOTES NOW—so they'll begin to earn interest for you

RIGHT AWAY! The sooner you buy—the **MORE YOU CUT YOUR FEDERAL TAX!** **TODAY**—see your bank—or see any member of your local Victory Fund committee—and arrange for regular purchases of **TAX SAVINGS NOTES!** (*Official publicity material used in closing months of 1943*)

Comment: Above shows confusing use of dashes for respiratory pauses, and indiscriminate use of capitalized words and underscoring to indicate emphasis. Don't clutter your script with directional devices. The more you use in a given paragraph, the less impressive they are to the announcer and, consequently, to the listener. In the above, the first use of "tax savings notes" might have been underscored instead of capitalized. The word "good" might have been underscored in addition. Near the close, the script could read: "See your bank today." Excessive use of imperatives should be avoided. There are five in the above, too many to inspire the listener to do anything but turn off the radio, or throw a mental blackout on the appeal. Always put yourself in the home, where the listener, particularly the housewife, is urged endlessly during the course of the day and evening to "buy, buy, buy," or "get, get, get," or "do, do, do" this or that.

If you urge the listener to buy *tonight*, when there is no special reason except your desire to sell, then you add further aggravation to the situation. Of course, if you have a sale, or your item of merchandise or of service is offered tonight and not tomorrow night, then you have good reason for emphasizing the time element with an imperative or two.

Assignment

One 100- to 125-word image.

Three 100- to 125-word public-service or commercial announcements. Keep on one subject.

CHAPTER

5

Radio: of the Many Voices

One voice (talk): apt to be boring. Least listener appeal.

Two or more voices: interview or dialogue between two persons, or conversation (round table) among several persons. More listener appeal.

Drama: with several voices in character or impersonated. Best.

Talk on the air is usually boring. Not only 1-minute commercials, those 100- to 125-word paragraphs that we have been attempting to write, but talks that fill longer periods: 15 minutes, for example, and sometimes half an hour or more.

There are exceptions, notable ones—first to use the radio in statecraft, Franklin D. Roosevelt comes first to mind—voices that stop us and cause us to stay tuned in: the plain fact, however, is that one voice working before the microphone and perforce in the living room is under a handicap that can be relieved only by bringing in additional voices.

Analyze your own reaction to a radio talk. Do you listen? The event or the subject must be momentous, or the speaker one of unusual ability to hold attention.

Talk *with* people, not *at* them

Oratory was called the lowest of the sublime arts even before radio came into our lives. Now, the radio listener does not

have the speaker's presence to attract or hypnotize him; insincerities are more quickly caught; platitudes pile up, topple over, and bury the orator in aversion or even ridicule.

There is only one Winston Churchill, a master of the ennobling phrase; there are thousands of politicians. Slowly, perhaps too slowly, the average politician is learning to cut out his harangues and talk *with* people, not *at* them. Preachers, I think, could convince us their kind of heaven was a better one if they used less time and said their say better. Protagonists for this and that, including clubwomen, may be sincere at heart but repellent on the air. Well-prepared material, that is, good script, will help; in fact, any speaker who is permitted to go before the microphone should have his or her material prepared by a competent radio writer. A maximum limit for a talk on the air has never been fixed; however, if you took a secret ballot among station and network managers, you might find that 5 minutes was considered too long. The average listener would undoubtedly agree.

To improve this situation and to quicken listener interest by bringing in at least two voices, interviews were introduced.

If more than two voices are used, then you have the makings of a round table or forum in which three or more voices may participate in discussion and express varying or sharply opposing views on a given subject. *The University of Chicago Round Table* is an example of this type of program; *The People's Platform* is another; likewise, *The American Forum of the Air* and *America's Town Meeting of the Air*.

The next step in getting a thought or idea *over* to the listener is to *act it out*; in other words, dramatize it. Now, let us consider in more detail the use of voices. Two voices playing back and forth break the monotony of a single speaker's voice which radio, true to itself, is always certain to amplify. A well-built interview, using the question and answer technique, will sharpen points of interest that one voice, left to itself, might make most unappealing. Further, and important, an interview is not difficult to present, from the standpoint either of time required or necessary talent; it requires only an announcer

or program conductor, who is the interviewer, and the man or woman with the message, the interviewee.

Use of script in interviews

With all the *ingredients* at hand, the question to be decided is the method of handling. Radio men and women are not in agreement over use or non-use of script in interviews. If you pin an interviewee down to exact words, he may handle it as a reading exercise, and he may prove to be a very poor reader, let alone conversationalist. In such case, there will be no spontaneity. But that spontaneity which not only radio workers but the listener constantly is looking for in *talk* programs is elusive.

Participants in interviews (and round-table discussions) usually are not regular performers before the microphone. The ready wit that makes for enlivening repartee is not a universal endowment. At rehearsal before the program—and there always should be a rehearsal—the interviewee may be in fine fettle, with well-phrased answers ready for the right questions; but station interviewers know how many apparently good “visiting celebrities” turn dumb before the mike, and lose all sparkle because they cannot think of what to say. The listener rightly wonders how such a dumb person gets on the air.

Interviews, therefore, should be well planned beforehand, and well rehearsed. To eliminate the vocal garbage, use script; if not a complete script, then at least a well-built outline. This will hold the conversation *on the beam*.

Putting an interview on the air

Three principal methods are used in pulling an interview together for air presentation: the one selected is largely dependent on the conditions governing the particular case.

1. Write the questions only. Leave the answers to be ad libbed by the interviewee. (Example: Interview with Dupont representative on *Lady Lookout* program, Chapter 7.)

2. Write the questions, and briefly, in parentheses, outline the answers for the interviewee to follow. (Example: Interview in the program *Calling All Women*, Chapter 16.)

3. Write the complete script, questions and answers in their entirety. (Example: Interview with Bernard H. Ridder, on *For the Ladies* program Chapter 11). (Also note the drama, in pattern of an interview: *Radio: How to Abuse It*, Chapter 7.)

Method 1 is frequently used when time presses or you have an unusually gifted interviewee; Method 2 when you feel the interviewee needs *brain ticklers* to keep him talking; Method 3, when you want to do an informatively authentic job. In controversial issues, the latter is the preferred form. Then both the interviewer (the station) and the interviewee have an accurate record of what was said and all misstatements are avoided. But this form requires the most time and work to prepare.

Careful preparation likewise calls for rehearsals of the round-table type of discussion, and the setting up of an outline of the different phases of the question so that orderly sequence may be followed in the discussion. The alert chairman or master of ceremonies, keeping his objective clearly in mind, may have verbally to yank his participants back on the beam for the benefit of listeners.

When such discussions are published from verbatim reports taken during the progress of the broadcast, unintentional errors or misstatements are, of course, corrected before printing.

So, step by step, from one voice, to the interview (two voices), to the round-table discussion (three or more voices), we finally reach drama, the best medium, either for pure entertainment or for the informative but entertaining presentation of ideas. Drama will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Dialogue announcements: four major types

Now, carrying forward our work in radio's shorter forms, we next meet dialogue announcements. Dialogue means conversation between two or more persons. Not all dialogue is

drama, but a dialogue may be dramatic as examples that follow will show. Dialogue announcements may be divided into four different major types:

1. Descriptive or narrative.
2. Question and answer.
3. Presentation in layers (potentially a *montage* or *bridge*).
4. Dramatic dialogue.

Each of the different types can be used in effective presentation occupying the proverbial 1 minute of radio time. But note that each type may be used in longer periods: 5 minutes, or 10, or 15 minutes. In each of the 1-minute types you usually employ an announcer and one or more voices.

To save talent cost and to obtain uniform standard of presentation, no matter what the facilities of the respective stations may be, such dialogues can be "transcribed," *i.e.*, recorded much as music is recorded. *Putting it on a platter* is the way the studios express it. Duplicate copies from the master record are ordered in any number desired. They are called "pressings" and those discs are sent to any required number of stations. Formerly, they were *identified on the air as transcriptions*, the introductory phrase being "Next, a transcription," or similar phraseology. But by FCC regulations effective December 6, 1946, it is no longer necessary to identify transcriptions of *1 minute or less*. Therefore, the above introductory phrase has been eliminated; the listener no longer is informed that he is hearing sound from a disc. (See Chapter 13 for transcription identification in detail.)

Do not, however, let these mechanical operations cloud the fact that script must be written for a transcription in the identical way you would write it for a live talent announcement, for a transcription is the record of an announcement enacted before the mike by live talent.

Similarly, an interview, a narration, a drama, or other type of program in which speaking voices are used, is script *first*, those spoken words being transcribed, that is, put on a platter, and called a transcription to be used according to instructions on one or more stations. (Also see *Co-op programs*, page 76, Chapter 5 and *Live commercials for disc shows*, page 77, Chapter 5.)

1. Descriptive or narrative dialogue

Description or narration may take, for example, the form of a letter, a letter that educators, parents, and youth itself are likely to applaud.

ANNOUNCER: (135) Young man, you're going back to school this fall, aren't you? Here's a letter a teacher, Miss Bryan, received from one of her boys.

VOICE: Dear Miss Bryan For you a new school year has started: for me, a soldier's life . . . and is it rugged? Classes ten hours a day If I'd worked harder in school, I wouldn't be having such a tough time now. Here we covered geometry in four weeks and are now passing through calculus. By leaving history class for a drink of water, I missed the Civil War! Tell my brother to forget his duck hunting and his dates and study hard. I wish I had! Best wishes Joe Reilly.

ANNOUNCER: You've just heard a good reason for continuing school good advice these days when a new school year is about to open. (*Leith Shackel*)

Comment: In writing descriptive or narrative announcements or paragraphs, guard carefully against weak aimlessness. Though they are of slower pace than any other type, they also have an objective and must get to it. In the example, the objective—go back to school—is clear.

Travel tours are among the appeals that lend themselves admirably to descriptive or narrative pieces.

Next, a commercial form of the descriptive type.

ANNOUNCER: (130) Does this sound like a scene in your family?

SOUND: DOOR BANGS:

BOY: Say, Mom, what've you got to eat?

MOTHER: How many times do I have to tell you, young man, that I don't like to have you eat between meals?

BOY: But, Mom, I'm hungry and the gang's going to play football before dinner. Gee whiz, I couldn't run five yards feeling the way I do!

P. E. O. Memorial Library

Iowa Wesleyan College

Mt. Pleasant, Iowa

MOTHER: Tell you what, son. There's a box of Wheaties in the cupboard and bananas and milk in the icebox. Help yourself. Wheaties are different! I'm going to expect at least two touchdowns after all that.

Boy: You bet, Mom. Thanks.

ANNOUNCER: Yes, Wheaties are different. They provide not only energy but important vitamins and minerals, as well. Give that young champion at your house all the Wheaties he can eat. (*Margaret Kemp*)

Comment: The kid talks like a kid; that's important. This kid is hungry, which makes him typical of his years. The setting, with the boy plunging into the house heralded by an appropriate door slam, is natural. So is the conversation. All these factors lessen the resistance to the commercial message about the cereal. The action here relieves the comparatively slow pace of any descriptive piece.

2. Question and answer

Next, a question-and-answer type of dialogue. As the example shows, this becomes an interview.

ANNOUNCER: (145) Before you leave, Miss Smith [she may have appeared on the program as a guest star], may we have a word with you

SMITH: Certainly, Mr. Jones.

ANNOUNCER: Suppose you answer a question or two for your radio audience. First, what's your favorite color?

SMITH: Green it looks so cool and refreshing It flatters me, too.

ANNOUNCER: And what's your favorite sport?

SMITH: Tennis I play tennis every chance I get, Mr. Jones.

ANNOUNCER: And have you a favorite poem?

SMITH: Indeed, yes! It's Browning's "Oh, to be in England, now that April's there"

ANNOUNCER: What's your idea of a perfect vacation?

SMITH: Traveling by water. That's one of the reasons I shall be glad to visit England again

ANNOUNCER: One more question, Miss Smith What's your favorite toilet water?

SMITH: Chumley's Toilet Water I never tire of its clean, refreshing fragrance.

ANNOUNCER: Chumley's Toilet Water Thank you, Miss Smith. You gave us a grand performance and a most enjoyable interview.

SMITH: And my thanks, too, Mr. Jones. Good night! (*Viola Hawlish*)

Comment: This shows how easily a question-and-answer dialogue may be transformed into an interview; in this case, it becomes a testimonial in behalf of a toilet water. The sequence of questions is worth noting for its appreciation of artistic values. The form here was one in which the guest star, after appearing in a dramatic offering, came back to endorse the product that the program advertised.

Next, a get-out-the-vote appeal. Note, too, that this has dramatic value.

ANNOUNCER: (138) Remember your duty as a citizen vote in the elections tomorrow.

MUSIC: "AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL": TEN SECONDS: FADE TO BACKGROUND (BG):

BOY: Say, Dad, are you going to vote?

FATHER: Oh-h-h maybe.

BOY: Well, Dad, can I go with you when you do vote?

FATHER: M-m-m-m-m maybe.

BOY: Say, Dad, when am I old enough to vote?

FATHER: Not for some time, Sonny.

BOY: Gee, Dad, what if they aren't voting then?

FATHER: Huh! What makes you think they won't be voting when you're a man?

BOY: Well, if nobody wants to vote any more, maybe they'll stop

doing it maybe they'll think up some other way to run the government.

FATHER: (SERIOUSLY) Son, I beg your pardon. Listen! You're going with me when I vote tomorrow you're going to see how it's done and you're going to keep it up in your time as I've tried to do in mine Yes, sir!

MUSIC: "AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL": FIVE SECONDS: FADE TO BG:

ANNOUNCER: Vote in the elections tomorrow Your vote counts!
(*Mary Katherine Lynch*)

Comment: Note the social impact of the above example and how, because of its universal appeal, it can be used in any election year. It contains a definite climax showing appreciation of dramatic values.

3. Presentation in layers

This is a basic term: presentation, or argument, in layers. In it, one fact is piled on another, one argument on another in behalf of your subject, whether that subject is tomato juice, or the Community Chest, or Save-a-Life Safety Campaign, or the greater use of the library in your community.

This fact on fact easily may become the relating of step after step in a developing tragedy, such as "Hitler invaded Austria, Poland was next, then France fell," etc. Then it becomes a montage, a fading out of one picture and a fading in and up to full focus of another. A not-too-exact parallel may be found in photographic murals, a series of pictures, say, on transportation, in which the covered wagon gives way to the stagecoach, the stagecoach to the train, the train to the airplane, each picture fading into its successor as the sequence progresses. Such a montage can be a *bridge* connecting scenes and—this is important—frequently thrusting the action forward in time-saving, condensed form.

MUSIC: "FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW": TEN SECONDS:

FIRST VOICE: (83) How many times have you sung "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow?"

SECOND VOICE: Did you know that it was sung in the twelfth century by the crusaders?

THIRD VOICE: It was the lullaby of an heir to the throne of France.

FIRST VOICE: It was sung by Marie Antoinette

SECOND VOICE: Beethoven used it in part of an opera

THIRD: But that's only part of the story.

FIRST: Wouldn't you like to hear it all? Then listen Tuesday, at 8:00 P.M., this station

SECOND: To "Adventures in Music"

THIRD: Brought to you by (SPONSOR).

MUSIC: "FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW": FORTE TO FINISH: (*Mildred Bruning Loeffler*)

Comment: You will note, of course, that this method permits the massing of facts, one after another, with the three voices contributing to easier listening.

Another example of presentation in layers:

GERMAN: (135) By der order of der Fuehrer der reading of foreign books ist verboten Heil Hitler Heil Hitler (FADING)

JAP: (FADING IN) Most supleme Highness, Hirohito, say no child shall waste plecious time in play All sons of Nippon shall work in factlies All sons of Nippon (FADING)

AMERICAN: (FADING IN) Tomorrow young America goes back to school. Give more thought to his physical, mental, and moral development Educate him for tomorrow's responsibilities in this freedom-loving nation (FADING)

GERMAN: (FADING IN) All Nazi children must be taught dat der state ist supreme Heil Hitler! Heil Hitler (FADING)

JAP: (FADING IN) All sons of Nippon must be taught that the Emperor is supleme To die for Japan is most honorable death (FADING)

AMERICAN: (FADING IN) That's what tyrants used to say, so educate your child for democracy that this government of the

people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth. (*Leith Shackle*)

Comment: Never expect a montage to impart much information; its changes may be too rapid to leave any impression other than *change*. An overextended use of it in longer programs leads to confusion. The above example needs a line or two of introduction to prepare the listener for what is to come. It might be: "By transcription, this message from the Council on Education."

Another example of presentation in layers:

ANNOUNCER: (117) When you're buying dishes

FIRST: If it's economy you want

SECOND: Buy moderately priced ————— pottery

THIRD: It comes by the piece, so it will be easy to make replacements or additions to your set.

FIRST: If it's quality you want

SECOND: Buy durable ————— pottery

THIRD: Close-textured and hard, with a smooth, dense glaze that will not nick or crack.

FIRST: If it's color you want

SECOND: Buy bright ————— pottery

THIRD: In five harmonious colors, so you can work out your own color schemes.

FIRST: Cool green

SECOND: Gay Apache red

THIRD: The sunny gleam of yellow

FIRST: Deep Pacific blue

SECOND: The warmth of old ivory

THIRD: A carnival of color!

FIRST: Thoroughly modern, thoroughly smart!

SECOND: And gaily informal!

ANNOUNCER: ————— pottery for sale at all leading gift and china shops. (*Estate of Esther Hoyer*)

Comment: Here is a wealth of information with three voices piling it into your ears. Carelessly produced, the resulting staccato might blur much of the impression of beauty arising from the description of this pottery. There is, however, admirable use of color in the final half of the script with appropriate adjectives to heighten each color mentioned. Ask three friends to take the respective voices and listen to it yourself; in that way you will discover how much care was taken to select the right words, and to make each of these words contribute to the over-all value of the script.

4. Dramatic dialogue

This is the point, dramatic dialogue, where so many amateur script writers start. You who have come thus far perhaps have profited by learning the fundamentals of radio writing that will assist materially in building good drama. Word selection, words easy to say, easy to understand, easy to listen to are important in any kind of drama, stage or radio, but particularly so in radio where you are working in only one medium: sound. Though drama will be more fully discussed in Chapter 6, let us consider in this chapter some examples of 1-minute dramatic action for you to keep in mind as you begin study of the subject.

THEME: MELODY: "COMING IN ON A WING AND A PRAYER": FIVE SECONDS
FULL: THEN FADE UNDER AND OUT:

MR. MOTH: (141) Come, my dear, through this open closet door.

MRS. MOTH: Gracious, what wonderful woolens!

MR. MOTH: Here is a fine tweed overcoat! You can lay your eggs right at the bottom of this nice dark pocket.

MRS. MOTH: I do love the smell of good tweeds.

MR. MOTH: And this is fine prewar stuff.

MRS. MOTH: It's a long time since we've had a chance at woolens like this. Do you want the first bite?

MR. MOTH: That's very thoughtful. Where shall I begin?

MRS. MOTH: Here's a small spot, chocolate, I think They forgot to send it to the cleaners. It smells good. Hurry, I can hardly wait.

SOUND: EATING AND SMACKING: FIVE SECONDS:

MR. MOTH: M-m-m-m, smells good, but tastes q-u-e-r!

MRS. MOTH: Heavens, what's wrong? You're pale! You're trembling! Speak to me, husband, why are you so still? (HORROR IN VOICE) You're dead!

ANNOUNCER: Don't be silly! Why should you be surprised, Mrs. Moth? That overcoat was sprayed with (NAME YOUR MOTH DESTROYER), the perfect moth-killer. (*Ruth D. Capps*)

Comment: It is comparatively easy in radio to impersonate insects that cannot talk, or stones that cannot preach, or animals that ordinarily merely bark. In this case, voice distortion (but not to excess) by means of experiments with a *filter mike* or other device would produce the required effect. The example is commendable for its ingenuity and especially because its high humor does not strain one's credulity. The sponsor might want the name of his product mentioned more than the one time.

Another dramatic dialogue:

SOUND: YOUNG BOY TRYING TO BE AN AIRPLANE MOTOR:

BILLY: (141) B-r-r-r, watch out, Mom! B-r-r-r-r, I'm a dive bomber. Watch out, I'm a big B-29 like Jim has over Tokyo!

MOTHER: (CALM, RESTRAINING VOICE) Come on, now, Billy. It's time to go to bed Thanksgiving is over, and you must say your prayers and jump in.

BILLY: (QUITE CONFIDENTIALLY) You know, Mom, I've been thinking all day kids here in the United States sure have a lot to be thankful for, haven't we?

MOTHER: Why, yes, Billy, you *do* come now and kneel down here beside me, and say your prayers

BILLY: All right and I'm gonna leave out "Now I lay me," too

..... Dear God Today I want to thank you for the swell pumpkin pie and my new stamp book but most of all

MUSIC: (FADE IN SOFTLY) "ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS": HOLD IN BG UNTIL CUED TO FORTE:

BILLY: Thanks for Jim and his B-29 over Tokyo, and the Marines. Navy and Army, too and say, God, just keep 'em fightin', will ya?

MUSIC: UP FORTE TO FINISH: (*Mary Katherine Lynch*)

Comment: It is hardly necessary to say anything about this forceful little scene. There have been longer resumés of Thanksgiving Day but they did not have the power and the recurring implications that are packed into this 1-minute drama. Perhaps that is its weakness: the listener is unlikely to catch up with its full meaning until it's all over. Note effective use of appropriate music faded in under the closing lines.

A commercial form of dramatic dialogue:

SOUND: SNORING: SUFFICIENT TO ESTABLISH:

WOMAN: (127) Jim wake up!

MAN: Whassa matter?

WOMAN: Will you please get up?

MAN: Holy cats! What now?

WOMAN: There's someone prowling around downstairs. My best silver is right on top of the table. Hurry!

MAN: Aw, I'm tired. I've gotta go to work in the morning. I chased a burglar last night for you and it was only the storm window rattling.

WOMAN: I'm not going to lose my good silver just because you don't feel like getting up.

SOUND: MAN BUMPING INTO CHAIR:

MAN: Ow! Doggonit, anyhow. I'm going to get some burglar insurance so I can get some sleep.

ANNOUNCER: Jim's right. Don't worry about your valuables. The _____ State Fire Insurance Company can give you

just the coverage you want on your choicest possessions. Write them for information. The address is _____.
(Helen B. Connelly)

Comment: Men, or so they affirm, have been chasing the burglars of their wives' imaginations since Noah landed on Ararat. Therefore, the action is one in which listeners, both men and women, will find a common interest. Fortunately, the writer saw the humor of the scene and put it into the dialogue. The service offered, set forth in the commercial paragraph at the end, is a kind that contributes to the unity of the piece. If one could always have such harmony in his commercials, he would be fortunate indeed.

Assignment

Write at least two dialogue announcements of each of the four types, holding each to a 140-word maximum (1 minute). Allow 5 seconds for music and 5 seconds for sound effects, wherever called for, but remember that in actual practice there can be no arbitrary limitation established on music or sound. It must be in sufficient amount to get the effect you desire even in a 1-minute script.

Singing commercials

Singing commercials! How did they come to be? A common question. The answer is simple: a singing commercial is an effort to make more acceptable the 1-minute, one-voice announcement we have been discussing and attempting to write. They got a start before World War II, continued through the war, and remain sources of dissension among listeners, as well as among radio executives. Some stations ban them; many more put up with them; additional thoroughgoing surveys of listener preferences will help sponsors evaluate this form of radio advertising.

Singing commercials are designed to carry phrases and slogans set patly to music, thus making them easy to remember, easy to say; this effect is achieved in the best creations, and the phrases bob up in conversation with one's friends and even on the tongues of critics. Little children enjoy them. This indicates impressions are made, and impressions of the *right sort* are good for continuing sales.

The formula is simple: if possible, get a hummable tune, no matter how old, that packs a wealth of associations appealing to the memory; fit the name or action of a commercial product or service into the tune in place of the original words; crowd the rebuilt tune plus selling talk into 1 minute or a fraction thereof; have the piece transcribed, and send the platters to as many stations as the sponsor can pay for. Embittered critics contend that sponsors never hear the announcements themselves for fear of madness.

Light verse an art

The hard fact is that the writing of ditties and jingles is more difficult than you think—try it if you wish to encounter trouble—for good light verse is an art and our singing commercials too frequently creak from strained rhyming that is neither appealing nor clever. The fetching turn of phrase is lacking. It is an opportunity for genius, genius of the kind that went into the Virginia Dare commercial reproduced in this chapter; of the kind that also went into the calypso-like tune that *Chiquita Banana* began singing throughout the country in 1944. The song that tells you how to select bananas at the fruit stand and how to keep them properly after you get them is the work of two New York advertising agency men, Garth Montgomery and Len MacKenzie (Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn) and William Wirges. All but 29 words of this 1-minute announcement are sung; the 29-word admonition to “buy bananas when they are yellow or tinged with green, etc.” is spoken.¹

Examples of “Singing Commercials”

Several examples of “singing commercials” follow. However, without the music that accompanies them, the high level of showmanship suffers:

¹ The following year (1945) it had been turned into a popular song and recorded for general sale. The announcement was awarded a certificate of merit by the College of The City of New York “for the most effective sponsored radio announcements developed by an advertising agency.”

The song, *Chiquita Banana*,² discussed previously, has the following lyrics:

CHIQUITA: (SINGING) I'm Chiquita Banana and I've come to say,
"Bananas have to ripen in a certain way,
When they're flecked with brown and have a golden hue,
Bananas taste the best and are the best for you.
You can put them in the salad,
You can put them in a pie;
Anyway you want to eat them,
It's impossible to beat them.
Bananas like the climate of the very, very tropical equator
So you should never put bananas in the refrigerator."

ANNOUNCER: Buy bananas when they are yellow or even tinged with green. Let them ripen at home at room temperature. You'll find they taste best when the peel is flecked with brown and, remember

CHIQUITA: (SINGING) Bananas like the climate of the very, very tropical equator
So you should never, never put bananas in the refrigerator.
No, no, no, no!

Virginia Dare:³ In 1942 listeners began hearing about Virginia Dare Wine; they still hear about it from their radios through the same smooth-flowing presentations that are pleasantly remembered wherever "singing commercials" come in for discussion. Here are the words for both the 1-minute and the 20-second patterns:

WOMAN: Virginia Dare

MAN: Say it again

WOMAN: Virginia Dare

VOCAL: Say it again, Virginia Dare, it's a delicious wine.

MAN: Smooth, delicious Virginia Dare Wine, for over 107 years a wine of choice among those who know. You'll enjoy Virginia Dare Wine.

² By Len Mackenzie, Garth Montgomery and William Wirges. Copyright 1915 by Maxwell-Wirges Publications, Inc., 1650 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y. Radio Production for United Fruit Co., by Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn, Inc. Transcribed by Muzak.

³ Copyright 1942 by Garrett & Co., 882 Third Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y. Author of lyrics and music, Andy Love. Produced by Ruthrauff & Ryan, Inc. Recorded and pressed by Columbia Recording Corp.

2ND MALE VOICE: So the next time you order wine, say:

MAN: I want

WOMAN: Virginia Dare

MAN: Say it again

WOMAN: Virginia Dare.

VOCAL CHORUS: Say it again, Virginia Dare It's a delicious wine. Say it again, Virginia Dare That tempting bouquet is fine Such mellow perfection makes every glass a treat Make it your selection 'cause the taste just can't be beat So, say it again, Virginia Dare, Virginia Dare.

MAN: Would you repeat that, please

CHORUS: Virginia Dare.

(The 20-second announcement:)

WOMAN: Virginia Dare

MAN: Say it again

WOMAN: Virginia Dare

VOCAL: Say it again, Virginia Dare, it's a delicious wine.

ANNOUNCER: Produced by Garrett & Co., Brooklyn, N. Y., Virginia Dare Wine is smooth, delicious, so the next time you order wine, say: I want

WOMAN: Virginia Dare.

Lipton Tea,⁴ through its agency, Young & Rubicam, set new yet fitting words to the nursery rhyme, *Sing a Song of Sixpence*, in bringing the tea's good qualities to the attention of radio listeners. It is another "singing commercial" that we're well; the listener may recall it with gratification because of the satisfaction derived in recognizing the ancient and happy little tune. Moreover, the student of semantics may be interested in the definition of the word "brisk" that is woven into the lyrics. The lyrics follow:

⁴ Lyrics by William C. Whitman. Produced by Young & Rubicam for Thomas J. Lipton, Inc. Transcribed by WOR.

VOCAL DUET: Sing a song of Lipton,
Lipton T—E—A,
Lipton Tea is always,
B—R—I—S—K,
Brisk means richer flavor,
Lively as can be,
Blended to perfection,
Brisk Lipton Tea.

*Cook Paint Polka.*⁵ Paint, the protective coating for houses, barns, and other buildings, also comes in for singing showmanship; an example in four effective and widely broadcast lines is the Cook Paint Polka. The words follow:

MALE QUARTET: (SINGING) It's best for wear and weather;
With Cook's there's no complaint.
It makes good sense to buy with confidence,
So always buy Cook's Paint!

*Marlin Shaving Song.*⁶ In this commercial, good use is made of the presentation in layers technique explained earlier in this chapter. A man's singing voice and a woman's singing voice alternate in the lines, with a chorus effect coming in twice, the second time being to finish the 1-minute presentation. The announcer also has a "piece to speak" in this announcement.

ANNOUNCER: The Marlin Shaving Song:

MAN: Many brave hearts are aflop at romance,

GIRL: Unsightly beards don't give them a chance.

MAN: A hairdo is fine, but not on the face,
Marlins remove it and don't leave a trace.

GIRL: Men who use Marlins I think are quite keen,

MAN: They give you the edge if you know what I mean.

CHORUS: Keep up appearance but keep down the price,

MAN: Buy Marlin Razor Blades,

⁵ Copyright 1944 by Jack Wilcher, author, commercial lyrics. Produced by Badger and Browning & Hersey, Inc., for the Cook Paint & Varnish Co.

⁶ Copyright 1940 by Orange Music Publishers. Sung by Lanny and Ginger Grey, authors of lyrics and music. Produced by Craven & Hedrick, Inc., World Broadcasting Co. transcription.

GIRL: That's good advice.

ANNOUNCER: Men, here's smooth shaving guaranteed. The Marlin Firearms Company asks you to try Marlin Blades. If you don't agree they're equal to the best you've ever used regardless of price, Marlin will cheerfully refund your money. Single or double-edge, 12 weeks smooth shaving for 25¢. Shave and Save with Marlin Blades.

CHORUS: They're keen and they're sharp, and there's none finer made.

M—A—R—L—I—N, Marlin's the Blade!

Assignment (Optional)

If you are a song writer, here is opportunity to write lyrics and music. Or perhaps you would like to write the jingle only. Take any product or service you wish and work out your idea, using a tune of your selection. (Authority for its use on the air would have to be obtained from the publishers unless it is in the field of public domain.) You will come out of this experience with quickened appreciation of the work and the talent required to produce a singing commercial; also you will hear them with greater understanding as they come into your living room.

Network commercials⁷

Into the living room, yours and mine, in the course of a day, come all manner of appeals, commercial and public service,

⁷ For reference purposes, a brief summation of the four major networks is given here. Data as of August 1, 1946 (circa):

National Broadcasting Co. (NBC): Organized November 16, 1926. Total number of stations, affiliated or company-owned, 157, including one in Manila, one in Honolulu, and three in Canada.

Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS): Went on the air as a network September 18, 1927. Total number of stations, including company-owned, 158.

Mutual Broadcasting System (MBS): Incorporated October 1, 1934, but was operating as network for some months preceding that date. Total number of stations, 323.

American Broadcasting Company (ABC): Developed out of the NBC *Blue Network* in 1927: NBC's other network was known as the *Red Network*. The *Blue Network* was transferred to the Blue Network Company, and thus became independent on January 1, 1912. The corporate title of American Broadcasting Company was adopted in October, 1944. However, the ABC identification was not used in broadcasting until June 15, 1945. Total number of stations, affiliated and company-owned, 209.

whatever your ears are minded to hear. These appeals ask us to do this or that, try this or that, buy this or that; some are carried in locally produced programs, presented on one station only; others in network programs that may have been created in advertising agency offices far, far away from where they are heard, and that are aimed at homes across the continent.

The point to keep in mind is that the listener is not concerned with the source. If the network program's commercial or other appeal is more convincing, then the listener may do, or try, or buy what it suggests. Or the local program's advertisement may be more appealing to the listener's ears and he or she may do or try or buy what it suggests.

The commercial writer, wherever he or she is, must *hear* his script through the ears of the listener *in the living room*, ONE living room, not a million. That living room may be in Walla Walla, or El Paso, or Hoffman's Corners; or it may be in a farmhouse that is a long way from any store. The commercial writer of radio advertising copy to be used nationally knows only one thing for sure: it is in the U.S.A. (unless it also is to be used on Canadian stations). There is your point of contact! To write and make a sale to that composite American in that composite American living room is one of the toughest and at the same time one of the most inviting problems you ever worried over.

The writer of a one-station program is likely to know much about the listeners in that particular station's area; if he does not, he can, with comparative ease, make a first-hand investigation before he begins turning out his stuff. But how well can anyone, no matter how versatile, size up the listeners of a network broadcast that he must write the commercials for?

The author of a radio script may live half a continent away from the spot where his show actually goes on the air. The advertising agency office where the commercial copy is created likewise may not be in the city where the show is broadcast. But of necessity constant close contact is maintained to keep all factors working in harmony toward smooth production and maximum listener interest.

For a study in the ways of America, its language, its customs, its intelligence or lack of it, sit down, dear critic, wherever you

may be, and try to write a network commercial for an audience of kids across the nation, or a similar commercial for an audience of housewives listening to a radio serial. Examples of each follow.

For younger children

The commercial content in one program of the *Let's Pretend* series, the high-ranking CBS show for children that comes out of New York each Saturday morning is given below. Note how the audience participates; also how the descriptive dialogue sets the stage for the play "The Castle of Hatred," even as it leads into the first commercial, the 50-word piece embracing the Cream of Wheat chef's comment on the cereal. After the play is finished, in comes the final commercial of 80 words, making the tasty suggestion of sprinkling brown sugar on the cereal:

THEME SONG: Cream of Wheat

Is so good to eat.
Yes, we have it every day,
And sing this song
"It will make us strong,
And it makes us shout HURRAY!"
It's good for growing babies
And grownups, too, to eat.
For all the family's breakfast
You can't beat Cream of Wheat!

ADAMS (ANNOUNCER): Cream of Wheat the Great American
Family Cereal presents "Let's Pretend."

SOUND: APPLAUSE:

ADAMS: Thanks a lot for that welcome, audience.

AUDIENCE: Okay, Uncle Bill.

ADAMS: Ready for a story?

AUDIENCE: Let's go!

ADAMS: Let's go is right. Well, Gwen, what's before the meeting today?

GWEN: You mean business or pleasure?

ADAMS: What's the difference?

GWEN: Why, the name of the story is business.

ADAMS: What's the pleasure?

GWEN: Cream of Wheat, of course!

ADAMS: (LAUGH) And, of course, you're right. Suppose we tend to the business first.

SYBIL: The story for today is an original one written just for us
"The Castle of Hatred."

ADAMS: Always springing new ones on me!

GWEN: And John here says how we travel.

VOICE: Let's hit the target with a Mitchell bomber.

GWEN: We can't miss! All set, everybody? One two
three

SOUND: WHIZ BANG: MOTORS IDLING:

GWEN: All right, gang. Straight over "Let's Pretend" first
point of attack, "The Castle of Hatred." Let's go.

SOUND: MOTORS ROAR UP: FADE SOUND UNDER GRADUALLY DURING FIRST
TWO LINES:

GWEN: Whe-e-e-e! Look at us skim the treetops, Uncle Bill!
Doesn't take long to get places when you start off like this!

ADAMS: All of which reminds me, Gwen

GWEN: (ARCHLY) Yes, Uncle Bill said she, encouragingly.

ADAMS: (LAUGHS) Well, Gwen, this Mitchell bomber reminds me
how you can get off to a fast start every single morning!
As our famous Cream of Wheat chef says, (SOUTHERN ACCENT)
"Mistah Adams, if it's food energy yo' want an' that
get-up-and-go feelin' jes' dig into a big, steamin' bowl
of Cream of Wheat every mornin'!" (NORMAL ACCENT)
Yessir, "Eat a better breakfast feel better all day."
Start your breakfast the Cream of Wheat way! After the
first act of today's story, we've got a special game for you to
play, so be sure to get in on the fun. Now for the first act
of "The Castle of Hatred." The first scene begins in the un-
tidy home of a father and his three motherless children.

MUSIC: UP

THEN INTO FIRST ACT, "CASTLE OF HATRED:" AT CLOSE OF FIRST ACT, THE FOLLOWING COMMERCIAL:

SOUND: APPLAUSE: MUSICAL TAG:

MUSIC: FLOURISH:

ADAMS: Say, out there how many of you like football?

AUDIENCE: I do!

ADAMS: Then we've got just the game for you today. Here's how it goes. I have the makings of a swell Cream of Wheat poem here, but I need some help from our audience in finishing it. All I need are some football terms. So when I pause and give the signal, audience, give me a word you use in football like "down" or "goal" or "tackle" or "time out." Got that, audience?

AUDIENCE: You bet!

ADAMS: Okay. Here's the kick off.

SOUND: REFEREE'S WHISTLE: GOOD LONG BLAST LIKE THAT SIGNALING KICK OFF:

ADAMS: For a cereal all the family loves
And a tasty breakfast trick
With Enriched Five-Minute Cream of Wheat
You'll never get a

AUDIENCE: Kick!

ADAMS: With vitamins, food energy,
And minerals by the bowl
You ought to have some every day
If good health is your

AUDIENCE: Goal!

ADAMS: There's iron that helps make rich red blood
And phosphorus, what's more,
And calcium for strong bones and teeth
That's where you always

AUDIENCE: Score!

ADAMS: It cooks in just five minutes, too
A lot in its behalf
Because when Mother's time is short
It cuts her job in

AUDIENCE: Hail!

ADAMS: And Cream of Wheat's food energy
Helps keep you feeling fine.
Each bowlful costs less than a cent
So hold that budget

AUDIENCE: Line!

ADAMS: Yes, now that football weather's here,
Make breakfast quite complete,
Eat steaming bowls of satin smo-o-o-th,
Nutritious

AUDIENCE: Cream of Wheat!

ADAMS: Thank you, audience. And now back to our story "The
Castle of Hatred."

MUSIC: SNEAK IN:

ADAMS: Margaret, who hates the thought of a stepmother, has just
learned of the giant Prejudice from her friend, Celia. And
despite Celia's warning, Margaret, weeping and terrified,
finds herself a prisoner in the rat-ridden dungeon ruled over
by the wicked giant

MUSIC: UP:

THEN INTO SECOND ACT. AT CONCLUSION
OF SECOND ACT WHICH IS THE END OF THE
PLAY, THE FOLLOWING COMMERCIAL IS
GIVEN:

MUSIC: FLOURISH:

SOUND: APPLAUSE:

ADAMS: Say, you mothers listening in. What's better than hearing
your youngsters say, "Hey, Mom how about a second
helping?" Well, that's just about guaranteed when you
serve this treat for breakfast every morning. A big, steaming
bowl of satin-smooth Cream of Wheat topped by a heaping
tablespoonful of brown sugar. Boy, oh, boy you can't
beat it for mouth-watering goodness. Put Cream of Wheat
on your shopping list today either "Enriched Five-
Minute" or "Regular." Forty generous servings in each
large-size package. (*Joyce Lamont*)

MUSIC: THEME:

ADAMS: (ANNOUNCEMENT OF CAST)

SOUND: APPLAUSE:

(STANDARD CLOSING—See *Let's Pretend* script in Chapter 17)

Comment: Here is commendable appreciation of the fact that *palatability* is essential not alone in the product but in the commercials that further its sale. There is sharp departure from radio's routine one-voice commercial.

Here also is an audience that really *participates* as anyone who has heard this program knows; but to me the audience does not get in the way of the listener in his own living room (important in the enjoyment of any radio program); the kids are kept under tight rein during the dramatic action, but come in lustily on the participation lines of the script.

The rhyming game, in this instance, makes use of football words all kids know; it gives them a chance not only to participate but to let off steam—and they enjoy it. Kids like to yell; it's fun—for them. The fact remains, however, that jingles are difficult to do. (Try to write one that has the *punch* of one of the traditional nursery rhymes.) Strained or trite or awkward lines crowd in, especially when one is required to use names of products. A good jingle comes pleasantly off the tongue and says something that is easy to remember. My sympathy goes out to any copy writer who tries to write a new set of jingles for each new program. He would need to be a composite of Ogden Nash, Arthur Guiterman, and Guy Wetmore Carryl, and liberally endowed with the genius of Sir W. S. Gilbert.

The kids, of course, did not come to evaluate jingles; they came to enjoy the show, incidentally adding buoyancy to the commercials as they come into the living room. (Additional comment on light verse is found in the section on *singing commercials* earlier in this chapter.)

For older children

For an example of a radio show for older children, see the script, both commercial and drama, of a *Jack Armstrong* pro-

gram reproduced in Chapter 17, beginning on page 470. The complete script is presented that you may see how the commercial segments of the program mesh with the entertainment section, though created by different writers in offices miles apart.

For housewives

Descriptive dialogue again is the pattern in the following example, the opening and closing commercial announcement for *The Guiding Light*, a 15-minute radio serial presented by General Mills, Inc. five days a week over the NBC network. (Also see *Guiding Light* script in Chapter 12.)

MUSIC: CHORDS:

ANNOUNCER: "The Guiding Light"

MUSIC: CHORDS:

ANNOUNCER: Brought to you by Betty Crocker Soup.

OPENING COMMERCIAL

DONOVAN: (DONOVAN CLEARS THROAT: OBVIOUSLY ABOUT TO DO SOMETHING FANCY; DEFINITELY HAMMY) What's in a name? That which we call a rose

PRENTISS: (INTERRUPTING) Poke an announcer and you get a suppressed Shakespearean actor, ham variety. Really, Gregg!

DONOVAN: But, Prentiss I I need that quotation. I want to say, "What's in a name and so on" and then point out that Shakespeare was all wrong. There's a lot in a name at least where packaged soup is concerned.

PRENTISS: Oh so that's your little project!

DONOVAN: Exactly, Ed. You have, say, two packages of vegetable noodle soups one labeled whoozis and the other labeled "Betty Crocker." Which do you take?

PRENTISS: Why, the one with the Betty Crocker name.

DONOVAN: Sure! The Betty Crocker name on that package means plenty. It means vegetables that are well, in the social register. Rich egg noodles. Seasonings that are just right.

PRENTISS: In short Betty Crocker quality

DONOVAN: And what a difference that makes!

PRENTISS: After all, Betty Crocker and her General Mills staff are cooking experts and you just naturally expect a package soup they put out to be well, superior in quality.

DONOVAN: You're right, Ed. That's why it's wise to choose the red-and-yellow package that carries the Betty Crocker name Betty Crocker Vegetable Noodle Soup Ingredients!

CLOSING COMMERCIAL

DONOVAN: I'll bet anything that you pride yourself on getting the most for your food dollar! So, when buying package soup, remember you get so much for so little with the Betty Crocker Vegetable Noodle Soup Ingredients. So much soup and such good soup, too for so little money! Now, each red-and-yellow package of the Betty Crocker Vegetable Noodle Soup Ingredients makes six big bowls of soup six generous bowlsful more than twice as much soup as you get from the average-size can. And there's so little work making vegetable noodle soup at home the Betty Crocker way. Just dump the Betty Crocker Soup Ingredients into boiling water add fat or meat drippings then let simmer. Yes, you get so much for so little, with the Betty Crocker Vegetable Noodle Soup ingredients. So much soup and such good soup for so little money and work. Today, tell your grocer, "Make it three for me. Three packages of the Betty Crocker Vegetable Noodle Soup." (*Agency: Knox Reeves Advertising, Inc. Author: Don Gardner.*)

Comment: "What's in a name?" asked Juliet, and Romeo in the garden below overheard her. Conversation about this oft-quoted Shakespearean line serves in the opening commercial as the lead-in for the name of a soup: Betty Crocker Soup. The sales argument holds tight to the objectives: identification of product, economy of purchase, merit of product, stated and restated for the listener. The theme is "so much soup for so little money," as two voices in dialogue explain the advantages of buying Betty Crocker Vegetable Noodle Soup.

The closing commercial, though going back to one voice, holds to the same theme, developing it into "sc much soup and such good soup for so little money and work."

Note that appeal is written into the dialogue lines by making them *conversation*, not pronouncements. In the one-voice clos-

ing, the same *familiar* style is maintained, with appetizing product-in-use images added. Note also that pressure to buy the product is not applied to such a degree that the listener rebels.

In the script you have just read, there is a total of 363 words: 195 in the opening dialogue and 168 in the closing. Note that more words are given the voices in the dialogue. This total commercial requires, in the tempo of this program, approximately 2 minutes 15 seconds to deliver.

This is within the maximum limit of 2 minutes 30 seconds recommended by the NAB under its revision of commercial copy limitations dated August 7, 1945. (See *Limitations on commercial content of programs* later in this chapter.)

Skillful handling vs. irritation

While spokesmen for the public, the stations and networks, and the sponsors debate the length and manner of administration of commercials (no general agreement had been reached as we went to press), the copy writer must continue to grind out advertising script. My suggestion is: make them entertaining. Cleverness in bringing in the name of a product or service—not with a brass band but with surprise—is frequently applauded by the listener. He smiles to hear how well you do it. He will not object to advertising if you interest him by handling it skillfully. The cram-it-into-the-eardrums technique makes him bristle.

Further, where would radio be if every advertiser believed the listener should be *irritated* into buying his product by aggravating repetitiousness⁸ in the commercial copy?

Suppose that every advertisement in a newspaper or magazine were printed in red? It very likely would make you mad. But it is a comparison that can be made. On the other hand, it is reasonable to think that advertising need not be objectionable to sell. It can appeal, particularly in radio, by being entertaining.

⁸ Repetitious commercials also are discussed in an article, "Your Dial and You," by the author in *The Journal of the Association for Education by Radio*, March, 1946, page 91, Vol. 5, No. 7.

Did you ever hear anyone objecting to the commercials on the *Fibber McGee and Molly* show? They are the antithesis of irritation; they warm your heart toward the sponsor and his product. And, being built into the script as a part of the action, they *identify the program with the product*. If you can name the product, the argument is valid.

It must be conceded that early and persistent users of the *irritation technique* can point to their sales sheets and say, "It pays," for by aggravating repetitiousness the unforgettable impression has been made. But how far will the listener—and he's not only the goat but the final arbiter—permit this technique to spread? Already building up in his mind is a resistance to radio advertising. Analysis of the survey entitled *The People Look at Radio*⁹ shows there is more toleration than there is cheering for radio commercials. The report can well cause the alert radio writer to wonder how much time will elapse before this resistance to radio commercials reveals itself in eagerness to use any new medium, such as television, that becomes available.

Offending not good selling

We cannot offend people persistently and expect them to like us, any more than a clerk in any store can continually aggravate the customer across the counter and hold that customer.

The phrase "gradual comparative decay"¹⁰ already has been

⁹ Field, Harry, and Lazarsfeld, Paul F., *The People Look at Radio*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1946, a survey financed by the NAB and conducted by the National Opinion Research Center, Denver. It shows that the people give radio more credit for doing a good job in its field than churches, newspapers, schools or local government in their respective fields. To the basic question "Do you ever feel like criticizing when you listen to the radio" 65 percent answered "yes." Sixty-two percent, the survey reveals, think radio should carry advertising. Only 7 percent said, "All advertising should be taken off the radio." Twenty-three percent, without qualification, favored advertising. Forty-one percent said, "I don't particularly mind advertising . . . it doesn't interfere too much." An additional 26 percent said: "I don't like advertising . . . but I'll put up with it."

¹⁰ ". . . But still the averages [on radio listening] lag behind last year's. A few more weeks should show pretty clearly whether new programming and changes in time and technique (or the lack of new programming and the same

used in reference to radio's listenership, and aggravating commercials are certainly not creating new friends.

William S. Paley, Chairman of the Board of CBS, told the National Association of Broadcasters, ". . . . It is true that competition for economic survival has been very fierce in certain instances. But that does not excuse too high a percentage of commercial copy or material which is irritating, offensive, or in bad taste when projected into the homes of America."¹¹

This troublesome problem seems to head itself up this way: the fact that a listener listens to the radio makes it worth while for advertisers to use that medium. When he ceases to listen because of aggravation, the medium begins to lose value for the advertiser. It may not be an advertiser's job to build up an audience for a particular medium (though this happens time and again in radio); on the other hand, if he wishes to benefit by that medium, isn't he unwise in the long pull to offend its patrons?

Co-op programs

Co-op programs are network produced but locally sponsored and, what is more important, carry the local sponsor's commercial message. They get their name from the fact that a number of sponsors, by using the program in their respective communities over the nation, make possible a presentation whose cost would be out of the question were it to be presented on a single station by a single sponsor.

Co-op programs are sold by networks to as many sponsors as possible; Raymond Swing, for example, has appeared on 170 stations with more than 100 sponsors tying in on that many different stations.

old stuff in techniques) will help radio to improve its listenership performance, or whether the *gradual comparative decay in listening will continue*"—*Tide*, October 18, 1946, page 75, Vol. 20, No. 44. (Author's italics).

¹¹ *Radio and Its Critics*, an address delivered before the Twenty-Fourth Annual Convention of the NAB at Chicago, October 22, 1946. (Paley suggested "to improve our standards and to counteract our collective failure in answering our critics, . . . a strengthened, extended and better enforced Code of Program Standards.")

These programs have blank spaces or holes for the local sponsor's announcements. These holes are designed to conform to the accepted limitations on commercials (comment thereon follows in this chapter); many co-op programs, therefore, give a total of 3 minutes 15 seconds (daytime schedule) for conversation by the local announcer. This is divided as follows: opening, 45 seconds; middle and closing periods, 1 minute 15 seconds each.

Script for such holes needs to be well-timed to avoid dead spots on the air, for though musical fill-ins frequently may be provided by the network, they are not appropriate for every type of co-op program.

Live commercials for disc shows

Script writers are often required to write the commercial announcements for a *transcribed show*, that is, the entire program except for the commercials is on a disc or "platter." Such shows are put together by transcription producers or recording units of the networks themselves. They are offered, of course, *in series*, or for some special occasion, such as Christmas. Each platter, as in the co-op live-talent shows, has blank spaces, usually at the beginning and at the close (in certain patterns there may be *inside holes*) for the sponsor's message. These blank spaces in the disc are filled in with live messages given by the local announcer. (See Transcription Producers, Chapter 19.)

Cowcatchers and hitchhikers

You will encounter the words *cowcatcher* and *hitchhiker* in descriptions of certain forms of network commercial announcements. A cowcatcher is a commercial announcement "coming on first," that is, preceding the opening of the program itself. Note that it is on a different product or service from the product or service that appears in the commercials inside the program itself, but it is made or offered by the *same* sponsor. Frequently it is known as an "allied" product. Similarly, a

hitchhiker is a closing announcement, one that comes in *after* the regular program is finished. Both—and also mark this well—are within the program time of the sponsor. They vary in length, but common practice usually holds them to less than 1 minute.

Objection to both cowcatchers and hitchhikers is based on the contention that the listener is given too heavy a block of solid commercial as a price to pay for hearing his favorite programs. This block of commercial can easily run to 3 minutes or more, when you consider the commercial announcements that thus come in direct sequence: closing commercial, hitchhiker, station-break announcement, cowcatcher, opening commercial of the next program.

To make this dosage “easier to take,” the tendency, especially in nighttime shows, is to knit the hitchhiker into the show itself by recurring theme music. Some stations bar both cowcatchers and hitchhikers on shows under their control.

Contests and prizes and offers

Prizes or offers of various kinds are frequently a part of the merchandising and advertising of a given product or service. They are used in radio as they are in other advertising media. When used on the air, such an offer may take up the entire commercial period not only of one program, but of a sequence of programs, or, the offer may be presented in a series of spot announcements alone. In either case, rarely is the offer a one-time appeal.

The pattern: it may be a one-voice commercial, or you may have the Question and Answer or the Presentation in Layers type of dialogue, but whichever pattern, your announcements of offers have a heavy selling job to do.

In one week's offering on a single station, the prizes ranged from a home garden booklet to a “new house plus \$4,000 cash.” For example, the WCCO News Parade, a weekly bulletin, in one issue listed prizes—along with their stipulated requirements—as follows: (and note that not all offerings are made by means of programs; some are made in spot announcements):

Lan-O-Sheen Announcements: Card or letter for free package of Lan-O-Sheen and free 48-page booklet on household cleaning.

Dick Haymes Show: Picture of Dick Haymes and story of his life. Remittance 10¢. Electric Auto-Lite Co.

Vox Pop: Three gold star pin. Empty envelope from Lipton's Noodle Soup and 25¢. Thomas J. Lipton Co.

Garden Gate: Gardening booklet. No requirement. Ferry Morse Seed Co.

Farm Service Review: Six packets flower seeds. Quaker Oats trademark and 10¢. Quaker Oats Co. On alternate days, the same program offered: Booklet, entitled *A Farmer Needs a Radio That Never Lets Him Down*. National Radio Co.

Ma Perkins: Seven packets flower seeds. Remittance 10¢. Procter & Gamble.

Perfex Announcements: Twelve gladioli bulbs. One Perfex box top and 25¢. Perfex Company.

David Harum: Booklet, *Lycons Recipes for Soap-Making*. No requirement. B. T. Babbitt Co.

Grand Slam: Miscellaneous merchandise prizes and chance of winning Grand Slam bonus of \$100 Savings Bond, for letters in reference to five questions about music. No requirement. Continental Baking Co.

Adventurers Club: Five-in-one mystery compass. Box top from Sheaffer's Skrip and 25¢. W. A. Sheaffer Pen Co.

Kate Smith Speaks: Gold-plated sword heart pin. Post Bran box top and 25¢. General Foods Corporation.

Information Please: Parker 51 pen and pencil set for 3-part question to be used on program. If part of question is missed, Parker 51 Magic Wand desk set, and in addition a set of Encyclopaedia Britannica. If all three parts are missed, \$500 Savings Bond in addition to desk set and a set of the encyclopaedia. No requirement. Parker Pen Co.

Say It with Music: Album of records each day to best letter telling about "My Favorite Song." Letters one page long. No requirement. Say It with Music, WCCO, Minneapolis.

New York Philharmonic: Printed copy of intermission talk on science. Also letters solicited giving name of local store

where Koylon Foam may be purchased. No requirement in either offer. U. S. Rubber Co.

Western Grocer-Jack Spratt Stores Announcements: Five packets flower seeds. Sales slip of Chocolate Cream Coffee and 10¢. Western Grocer Co.

Eric Sevareid—News: Health booklet. No requirement. Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.

Grand Central Station: Seven gladioli bulbs and 100 bulblets. Sno Sheen Flour box top and 25¢. Pillsbury Mills, Inc.

Aunt Jenny: Recipe for chiffon pie. No requirement. Lever Bros.

Perry Mason: First prize, new house plus \$4,000 cash. Second prize, Chevrolet; and 110 other prizes for completing sentence (25 words or less): "I use Spic and Span, no rinse, no wipe, cleaner because" Box top from Spic and Span. Entry blanks from dealer. Perry Mason.

Limitations on commercial content of programs

Some listeners might be surprised to learn that there are recommendations affecting the amount of commercial copy in radio programs.

These recommendations have been made by the networks and by the National Association of Broadcasters,¹² representing most (but not all) of the stations in the United States.

Under constant pressure from the listener either individually or through listener groups, increasingly active and numerous in metropolitan areas, the tendency has been to reduce the amount of commercial copy. It is becoming apparent that *good taste* is the best yardstick; in the long pull, it may be more effective than any hard and fast figures fixing maximum limits. The reason for it is simple.

¹² The total membership of the NAB as shown in *NAB Reports* October 28, 1946, Vol. 14, No. 43, was 1,079. This embraced 833 standard broadcast stations, 35 FM stations (5 under construction), 2 television stations, 3 networks, and 206 associate members. Its by-laws, as amended, June 11, 1945, say:

"The object of this association shall be to foster and promote the development of the art of radio broadcasting; to protect its members in a very lawful and proper manner from injustices and unjust action; to foster, encourage and promote laws, rules, regulations, customs, and practices which will be for the best interest of the public and the radio industry."

If commercial copy is irritating to the listener, then 15 seconds of it is too much. On the other hand, 60 seconds or longer may be readily accepted if the subject is interestingly or appealingly presented through well-prepared script. (This is as true for a separate announcement as it is for the commercial copy that is a part of a program time period.) The crux of this much-debated question is: the obnoxious commercial copy always *seems* longer than it really is. An example of well-produced commercials is the *musical-clock* programs that alternate in an hour-long presentation commercial announcements of approximately 60 seconds with recordings of music that average 2 minutes 15 seconds in length; they have become established contributions to the life of the community served. The very opposite effect can be produced in 15 irritating minutes (or less) by dropping four or five unrelated commercials between or on top of four or five unrelated recordings or transcriptions. The FCC took extended cognizance of the situation in a public report that analyzed the duty of the station management to the people of the area their station serves; the report, issued March 7, 1946, was entitled *Public Service Responsibility of Broadcast Licensees*. As a remedy for abuses cited in the report, it proposed among other requirements that each applicant for a new station license, or for renewal of one about to expire, set up his own standards of content of advertising commercials.

However, the following tabulation will give you something authoritative to go by in writing commercial copy for the given program time periods.

The NAB recommendations, as revised under date of August 7, 1945, are:

<i>Program Period</i>	<i>Limitation on Commercial Copy</i>
5 minutes.....	1 minute 45 seconds ¹³
10 minutes.....	2 minutes
15 minutes.....	2 minutes 30 seconds
25 minutes.....	2 minutes 45 seconds
30 minutes.....	3 minutes
60 minutes.....	6 minutes

¹³ In a 5-minute news program: 1 minute 30 seconds.

These recommendations do not differentiate between day and night programs. They show a cutting down of commercial when compared with the limitations adopted July 11, 1939. The nighttime recommendations for 15-, 30-, and 60-minute programs correspond with those listed, but for daytime programs the former maximum amount of commercial was: 15-minute programs, 3 minutes 15 seconds; 30-minute programs, 4 minutes 30 seconds; 60-minute programs, 9 minutes.

It is expressly stated both in the older schedule and the new that the limitations "do not apply to participation programs, announcement programs, musical clock programs, shoppers' guides, and local programs falling within these general classifications."

CBS puts *length of copy regulations* on the rate card of its company-owned stations. The figures are:

	PROGRAMS		NEWS ¹⁴	
	After 6:00 P.M.	Before 6:00 P.M.	After 6:00 P.M.	Before 6:00 P.M.
1 hour	6 minutes	9 minutes
1/2 hour	3 minutes	4:30 minutes	2:24 minutes	3:36 minutes
1/4 hour	2:30 minutes	3:15 minutes	2 minutes	2:36 minutes
10 minutes	1:50 minutes	2:20 minutes	1:28 minutes	1:52 minutes
5 minutes ¹⁵	1:10 minutes	1:25 minutes	56 seconds	1:08 minutes

¹⁴ Maximum opening commercial: 25 seconds for 5-minute news programs; 40 seconds for 10-minute or longer programs.

¹⁵ No middle commercial permitted on 5-minute news programs.

CHAPTER

6

Drama for the Air Lanes

Drama is life's conflict before your eyes, your ears

There are thousands of so-called dramatic shows on the air. Turn on the radio almost any hour, except earliest morning and after midnight, and you are likely to hear one. But have they been written for radio? There are notable exceptions—may they increase!—but too frequently the radio dramatic program may be something *adapted to fit*, the adaptation being a mere transplanting of a stage show to the air; or it is narration—a frequent criticism of radio serials—and instead of being dramatic, with action *in the now*, it offers a post-mortem on what already has happened.

What is needed on the part of the writer is awareness, keen awareness of the medium of radio, and the artistry to use its special advantages and to overcome its inherent limitations on conveying the dramatic spoken word.

This then is the opportunity awaiting dramatic writers—to write for radio first and particularly, not for some other medium, with a make-over version for broadcasting. If this motivation were general, the level of radio drama would show a decided lift.

To point up this opportunity and to emphasize the special requirements of radio drama is the essence of this chapter, far too short to be considered ground-laying for dramatic writing.

Drama not confined to the stage

In this effort to write drama for the radio mold, let's look at things dramatic in several mediums.

Drama is found not only in the theater, but in literature and the other arts. For an example, take a lifeless, but full of life, Grecian urn that, according to tradition, was in the garden of a noted mansion in London. On it is depicted a mad pursuit of maidens. The poet, John Keats, made an ode to it: He entitled his poem: *Ode on a Grecian Urn*. Here is the first stanza:

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time:
Sylvan historian who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about this shape
Of deities or mortals or of both?
In Tempe or the dales of Arcade,
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit, what struggle to escape!
What pipes and timbrels, what wild ecstasy!

Out of that ode, Oscar Firkins, dramatist and critic, late of the University of Minnesota, made a play, a drama, *The Bride of Quietness*. It has been adapted and used on the air.

Drama in a piece of stone

But let's go back to an earlier day, a much earlier day; let's go back to that famous piece of sculpture, the *Laocoön* in the Vatican at Rome. An illustration of the piece probably is in your dictionary: Laocoön and his sons in the coils of huge serpents. Pliny ascribed the work to three Rhodian sculptors. What does it represent or portray? This: Laocoön, a priest of Apollo at Troy, incurred the enmity of Athena by hurling a spear at the wooden horse the Trojans were about to take into the city. With his two sons, Laocoön was destroyed, crushed to death by serpents Athena caused to come up out of the sea. That is drama in a piece of stone.

Come forward now to our own time, to a painting *Susanna and the Elders* by Thomas Hart Benton. The subject: two yokels sneaking over a hill to spy on a maid about to go bathing in a woodland pool. What will she do? Drop into the water, of course. The painting gets its title from the Biblical story of the elders spying on Susanna and her lover in the garden. It, too, is drama; it is dramatic action, caught midway of its climax, before the girl hides, or attempts to hide herself in the water.

From these examples, you can see that drama is inherent in certain situations. In the theater, its vehicles become plays. You pay to see them. You expect the theater to present drama, but the theater, or the screen, or the radio is not the point of origin of drama. That originating point is life itself; the stage or the screen or the radio merely portrays life or a phase of life for the entertainment or possible edification of the audience. Edification, however, may be more difficult, particularly if you wish to have something entertaining or radio-worthy at the same time.

That portrayal may be concentrated or crystallized to a much greater degree than in life; the sequence is more compact, so may be the time. The objective of your radio or, for that matter, any other dramatic piece must be clear, the characters sharply defined; the words must be fitly chosen, and fitly spoken. At least, that is the goal: in our attempts to reach it, we set up rules and laws and "thou-shalts," and "thou-shalt-nots;" technique, in other words, to bring the medium more easily (it is hoped) within our grasp.

Be sure to study carefully the numerous examples of radio drama and the comment thereon as they occur throughout this book. You will find dramatic values appearing early; in some of the dialogues in Chapter 5. More complete expositions are found in the 5-minute programs (Chapter 7) and in the longer program forms (Chapter 11).

Pierre Corneille and Oscar Firkins

But how is drama written, good radio drama? If this book could answer that in one sparkling sentence, or one short chap-

ter, it would supersede a great many books, and cause a tremendous sale of this one. In the words of Pierre Corneille, the French dramatic poet (1606–1684), "It is certain that there are laws of the drama, since it is an art; but it is not certain what those laws are." And in the present century, Oscar Firkins, expert in dramaturgy, told his students (many of them still preserve in old notebooks his famous *Outline of the Drama*), "A drama is a story in dialogue that must meet not only all the requirements of a story, but must have a special end, a climax, or a denouement."

It is obvious, though frequently overlooked, that the radio listener did not pay to hear your play. He did not pay anything for his seat. From his chair in his living room, he can dial you out instantly.

Radio can be depended on to reveal with startling clarity, and to amplify with distressing vigor an author's mistakes: the ill-fitting word, the gummy phrase, any welter of aimless words or talk, *double entendre*, poor craftsmanship in the structure of your drama, all these and more radio will reveal and amplify.

Make your central character likeable

Also, be sure your central character is likeable. Do you like to see or hear a play in which the central character is repellent? Of course not; you want to admire the hero or the heroine, but, naturally, you want to hate the villain. Yes, emotion must be aroused for your central character. If he or she cannot be loved, then at least your central character must be worthy of deep pity or compassion (*not* drooling sentimentality). Only a Nobel prize winner such as Sinclair Lewis can write a novel that (by his own statement) does not have a single likeable character. This novel was *Gideon Planish*; it came out in 1943.

Now, what are the basic requirements of radio drama? You must, of course, have some reason for writing a drama, some thesis, or theme—it may be war on mosquitoes, which might be serious drama, or it might be comedy, or a burlesque of a meeting of clubwomen, which might be tragic for its pitifulness. Your plot will pick up that theme and carry it through to a climax. It will do this only under skillful maneuvering

in which the main character battles with his or her troubles. He may come out from the conflict you create victorious or he may succumb; but the battling should be interest-arousing and entertaining therefor.

The climax may have all the emotional tension that is involved, to cite a simple example, in the scoring of the winning touchdown in the final 30 seconds of a football game, the game ending then and there, in the last remaining seconds of allotted time.

Upon this climax, your play should end, end quickly, with the listeners, the spectators, delighted or thrilled, or saddened, but in any case entertained.

Basic requirements of radio drama

First of the basic requirements of radio drama is:

Conflict. If you do not have conflict, you do not have drama in any sense. Remember the remark of Thomas H. Uzzell: "Creative literature is the history of personal troubles."¹ The hero must thwart the villain in their pursuit of the fair maid. The gangster must run kerplunk into an FBI trap, or the private citizen would have his own pursuit of happiness more sadly interrupted than it is. There must be opposing forces; their clash must be resolved or tend toward resolution in climax or denouement, or you have merely a blandly flowing narrative, or a story, or, mayhap, an essay. That climax is the special end so necessary in any drama.

Unity. Next you must have unity. If your piece could be presented in one living room in one hour, the whole of it portrayed in one direct sequence, it would be ideal. But dramatic material is not always so amenable. Sometimes you have to pummel it, unify it, its time, its place and its action. The discerning listener or the expert in the studio might call it *staying on the beam*.

Coherence. The glue that holds your piece together is coherence. Each scene must lead into the following scene.

¹ Uzzell, Thomas H., *Narrative Technique*, page 161. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1923.

This does not mean you cannot go back to pick up or portray something that happened in the lives of your characters before your action began—provided this something propels your drama toward its climax. Such scenes, called *flash backs* in the studios, require skilled handling, however. Extraneous material, perhaps lines dear to the author but foreign to the character, must be cut out if they slipped through the fine-screen sieve of your judgment in your original draft.

Progression. Drama must progress undeviatingly toward its climax. It must not loiter. You must keep the objective constantly in mind. Do not pause to glance up inviting little side alleys, no matter how alluring the words and phrases you are eager to use on such a detour. The piece that has the characters talking endlessly and getting nowhere is static; it is not entertaining and is poor radio. You will also sacrifice buoyancy (which see).

Clarity. In radio you are working ONLY IN SOUND. The words of your dialogue must be chosen with infinite care. They must ring true the first time. They must be comfortable to say. Your character should feel at ease in working with them. If you have written a phrase that is a potential "fluff" ("error" to the amateur), rewrite it. You'll get better support from your talent, and your characters will be portrayed with greater fidelity to your own conception of them, if your lines are easy on the tongue. Likewise, each sound effect, each use of music must heighten the understanding of your play, not bring questions or confusion or bedlam into the mind of the listener. Perfect coordination in these several ingredients of radio, *i.e.*, words, sound, and music, intensify the impact of your piece.

Imagery. Good radio always presents images, or the substance (suggestions) the listener can build them out of. Always give the listener something he can set his imagination to work upon; his ability to build his own character out of what you limn in for him is surprising.

Buoyancy. A funeral march can ludicrously lag; so can a death scene. There must be vitality in any drama; your piece must be buoyant in a degree fitting the mood; otherwise, your audience will dial you out.

Proportion. The hero must not sound like the butler. Mrs. Thropperstance, president of the Kennebunkport Culture Club, or its equivalent in your locality, must not sound like Millie, the typist busy with her Beech-Nut.

Naturalness. A character, except in out-of-this-world dramas, must talk like someone the listener knows, or like someone the listener would like to be, or not like to be. If your character does not, then he is unconvincing; he is not readily accepted, or he may be rejected flatly.

The above basic essentials of radio drama stem directly from a good source: Mr. Firkins' *Outline of the Drama* (for the stage), a sound body of material for the dramatist working in any medium.

Discussion of conflict

Now in more detail, let's consider conflict by means of illustration.

To rise to its name, your drama must have conflict. Take a common situation of boy-loves-girl. If the boy wants the girl, and the girl wants the boy, with the preacher appearing at the right time, and no one left waiting at the church, there is no drama, none whatever for there is no conflict, no hazard to be reckoned with, no road block—trouble—on the way to happiness.

The number of obstacles that get in the way, that heighten interest, that add to excitement, will increase the power of your drama, but the clash, the conflict, must be there to start with. It may be the girl's mother, or the girl's maiden aunt, or the girl within herself, or separating seas.

Rising conflict ² is the good dramatist's aim. In our trivial boy-girl incident, keep the opposing suitor (surely there is competition for the hand of this maid), right on the job, baiting not only the girl, but the audience. Keep the girl's mother firm in opposition, busy devising new ways to thwart your hero. Keep the maiden aunt a comic thorn in his path, or a

² Egri, Lajos, *How to Write a Play*, page 147. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1942.

comic aide. But, at last, the boy, as you plotted it long before, takes the final hurdle in the conflict you got him into, wins the girl's consent to marriage, tells the maiden aunt to buy a tin of rouge or she will never find even an imperfect man, and—Mendelssohn's Wedding March. Rising conflict! If you do not have it, your play drags and listeners fall away like mosquitoes before a DDT spray.

But suppose you opened one of the scenes of your radio play with the girl in a hospital, and you didn't explain why she was there. Then you would have what Lajos Egri, the Hungarian teacher of drama, calls "jumping conflict."³ You did not inform the listener that your boy and girl had been in an auto accident. You did not keep him fully advised of the progression of your plot. Do not expect to retain his interest if you fail to tell him what's going on. Do not ask the listener to forgive structural defects such as this.

Description of characters

But did you describe this boy, this hero? What was the cut of his jib? Was he a leader in school, or in the office where he worked? What did he do in his spare time? Did he go for rambles in the wood, or did he hang around poolrooms?

Describe him adroitly and briefly. You will, of course, put this description into the stage setting or feed it into the earlier lines of the dialogue. The listener (see *Imagery*) will quickly build his own image if you give him something to build on. You can help your listener by having your characters describe other characters or themselves.

A single, well-chosen adjective or adverb can contribute much. I recall with delight the imagery provoked by the magazine *Time's* use of the adjective "far-darting" in the phrase "far-darting Eleanor Roosevelt." That adjective, you students of Greek need not be told, came direct to us across the centuries from Homer!

Another approach, and a common one, is to have the an-

³ Egri, Lajos, *How to Write a Play*, page 164. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1912.

nouncer or narrator set the stage and describe your characters before the dramatic action begins. However, keep such descriptions short.

Who is speaking?

Keep your listener constantly advised of the speaker's identity by adroit use of names in your lines. The name of the character in the character column at the left-hand side of your script sheet does NOT go on the air. The amateur apparently thinks it does, for he frequently will open a scene with an unidentified character talking. Set this identification up in your dialogue, before the "unknown" starts talking, or as he joins in the conversation. Identification or re-identification of characters by name in the lines is much more frequent in radio than on the stage. The need is greater for the listener cannot see the person who is talking.

Time limits

Time, or the lack of it, is a great nuisance to new writers in radio. One might just as logically protest against the sonnet's requirement of 14 lines. The radio pattern has a time limit, and both time limit and dramatic value force you to pick up your character at that point in his life crucial to your drama, instead of portraying everything about the man from his milk-bottle days on to senility. To do this believably requires familiarity with your medium as well as high skill. The National Broadcasting Company presented Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* in a sequence of six 30-minute programs in its series entitled *Great Novels*, a once-a-week presentation over the network. In that series, Carl Van Doren explained that the effort in *Les Miserables* was to show the clash of characters; they could not, nor did they attempt to, portray the social implications that likewise are important in Hugo's masterpiece.

To describe, to narrate is not dramatization. If your action is at the soda fountain in the corner drugstore, enact it there. Do not describe it *after* it happens. If your heroine falls from a boat, have her actually fall from the boat, splash and all

(splashes are easy in radio); do not describe it after the rescue, if she is rescued.

Propaganda pieces that have been good radio

To be acceptable to any appreciable group or class, propaganda must be made entertaining. One-voice talk is rarely so (see Chapter 5). An interview gives alternation of voices; therefore, it is less of a bore to the listener. But the drama is the best form. When you dramatize propaganda, you make it much more acceptable to the listener; and for that reason, it is much more acceptable to the station. Some of the best radio programs yet written were propaganda pieces, having to do with World War II. The first (until someone finds an earlier program) was *The Fall of the City* by Archibald MacLeish, first presented over the Columbia network April 11, 1937. It was the first outright attack on fascism; also the first verse play ever written for radio.

A few years later, with the war coming nearer, a group of writers volunteered their services to dramatize the meaning of America. They called themselves *The Free Company*; its purpose—as the script itself explains⁴—was “to illustrate by a series of plays the meaning of freedom and particularly those basic civil rights which make that freedom possible.” Their work—ten plays in all—was broadcast (CBS) weekly from February to May in 1941. It is worth careful study for in it propaganda was sublimated into *the high cause*. Important in your consideration of these dramas is the fact that though MacLeish and Stephen Vincent Benét and Orson Welles had had radio experience, to others among the contributing volunteers it was a decidedly unfamiliar medium.

Then the war came, and the *Treasury Star Parade* radio plays became standard fare on stations throughout the country. They were used to quicken or maintain participation in the many phases of the war effort: in fact, they are still running

⁴ Saroyan, William, “The People with Light Coming out of Them,” *The Free Company Presents*, page 1. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1941. [This was the first play in the series.—Author]

and contributing to peacetime readjustment. They constitute a block of propaganda drama of merit. Distribution to stations was and is by transcription.

In this field one, perforce, thinks also of Norman Corwin and his contributions, notably, *On A Note of Triumph*, his commemoration of V-E Day, presented by CBS on May 8, 1945. It was propaganda in behalf of G.I. Joe, a soldier who posed the broad question: "Did I fight in vain?" (For further comment on this work, see Chapter 18.)

To go back now to narration: narration is good in its place; and, in radio, in using it, you use the *narrator*, the gift of the ancient Greek dramatists to the radio writer—although they and their gods undoubtedly had no idea he would be so valuable. But you can bring out the narrator right in the middle of anywhere—just as the Greeks manipulated their choruses—and no listener will question his presence, for from its very beginnings he has been a part of radio in the guise of the announcer. He is the handiest sort of fellow to have on hand: for example, to condense your action to fit the allotted time, and for various other manipulations.

Special requirements of radio drama

Now, let us point up *special requirements* peculiar to radio drama.

A. Make use of sound in *all* its forms: words, music, sound effects. Radio is more than a relaying medium; it is a creating medium that has its own peculiar virtues. Your music and sound effects and words should be blended, not dumped in separately to fill the allotted time.

B. Fit your drama to the established pattern if you write for a program already on the air. (The director will not change his pattern to fit your whim.) Otherwise, set up your own pattern, with all the originality you possess, but keep it *good radio*.

C. Meet allotted time requirements. This is not so purely mechanical as the novice may think. Some writers do not like to have their brain children mauled by muscular blue-penciling into something that will fit a 15-minute period (which in radio

is not 15 minutes, but, at the maximum, 14 minutes 30 seconds). But that blue-penciling will happen if you do not write to fit, for minutes are not elastic; they are 60 seconds long, no more. You learn what a second is in radio. Nor can your piece be too short, for *holes* in the air are not good radio by American broadcasting standards. Your program should fit and fit exactly.

D. Have motion or movement always (of course, this also applies to dramas for the stage).

1. Move your characters about. It's easy to do in radio. Avoid talk, for talk in excess makes your piece static. The audience cannot see this motion. You must indicate it by:
 - a. Sound effects: *e.g.*, footfalls, conservatively used. (The amateur frequently produces bedlam in his early attempts to use sound.)
 - b. Speech modulations.
 - c. Varying placements before microphone:
Fading in and out.
Control board fade.
(Both of the above also apply to music and sound effects.)
 - d. References in dialogue: *e.g.*, "Put the book *on* the table." Not "Put the book *down*." But do not put in a sound effect indicating that the book has arrived at its destination unless you have a particularly petulant school boy or a particularly poor book.
2. Switch frequently from one character to another. Make your dialogue brisk. Shortening the lines will speed up the movement: good to remember as you approach any climax.
3. Differentiate characters much more sharply than in theater.
 - a. Contrasts in voices: The butler should not sound like the hero.
 - b. Speech mannerisms: National, sectional, or local idioms. Define them if necessary for clarity, but be sure your audience understands. Brooklynese from a cowboy would not be natural, although Owen Wister cre-

ated a cowboy, *The Virginian*, who had a Southern drawl.

c. Word individualities: *tomato*: how do you pronounce it?

4. Infer or reflect movement off-stage, or impending, in dialogue.

E. Bring curtain down quickly. When you have told your story, end your show forthwith. Do not dawdle among words. Bring in the ending music, radio's final curtain. The slow curtain of the theater is lost on the air, except in so far as sustaining ending music or theme is suitable.

Familiarize yourself with and profit from the experiences of others by:

1. Listening to your radio: morning, noon, and night.
2. Listening to (when on the air) and reading the radio works of Corwin, Stephen Vincent Benét, MacLeish, Welles, Oboler, and others.
3. Reading Alexander Woollcott, particularly *While Rome Burns*. Many of these stories were told on the air by this skilled raconteur. They are rich in characters easily and clearly defined. They are not merely stories. They are dramatic stories told by a man who knew what drama, worthy drama is.
4. Listening to or reading the monologues of Cornelia Otis Skinner, e.g., *A Day in the Country* or *Nurse's Afternoon Off*.

The advantages that are radio drama's own

Next let us summarize the *advantages that are radio drama's own*, advantages that give it opportunity for permanent place among the arts:

A. Spur to imagination: Out of his own imagination, the listener builds his own hero or villain. He likes that hero or hates that villain because it is his own: he created it. You can doubtless recall how disappointing have been illustrations of characters in printed stories. Perhaps such illustrations, dear to the book-maker, could have been eliminated to your great

delight. The moral is clear: suggest your character, or your scene, but let the listener fill in. You will be surprised how well the listener can do it.

B. The announcer, a twentieth-century Greek chorus:

1. He is always available. You do not have to account for him. His presence is taken for granted.
2. He can give your piece cohesion, and he can maintain its progression.
3. As narrator, he can condense the action to meet time requirements, yet provide needed information.

C. Easy and believable presentations of:

1. The stream of consciousness.
2. World of make-believe and fantasy.
3. Ghosts.
4. Animals: Man-made sounds in imitation of animals are frequently better than the real sounds recorded.

D. Low production costs: You do not need to buy a single costume or stage prop, no matter how many times your show is presented. The audience is not interested in elaborate descriptions of what your beautiful blonde is wearing, or what your chorus is not wearing (the spectator, of course, will be when television gets itself together).

Over-all comment

There is no answer to the question "what makes a hit?" Compare Anne Nichols' *Abie's Irish Rose* and Erskine Caldwell's *Tobacco Road* with Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. Thousands have been entertained by *Abie's Irish Rose* and by *Tobacco Road*, yet in dramatic worth they cannot compare with the Ibsen play.

The trade journals of the time reported that the material from the stage presentation of *Abie's Irish Rose* was sufficient for 52 consecutive half-hour programs—once a week—on the air!

It is apparent, therefore, that the listener will forgive a great deal of structural weakness or deviation from plausibility if you entertain him; and, if you entertain him well, he will think your piece is "great."

Shakespeare's plays are noteworthy for the universality of their appeal. Time does not outmode them. Men, meaning you and I, continue to find them majestic because they are for all time, for any age. Other writers, other dramatists have in lesser degree that quality of universal appeal. It is for each of us to put this quality—as much of it as we have—into our dramas.

This virtue might be called heart interest, for deep human longing for life and liberty, and our continuing pursuit of happiness are eternal quests. They go into character-building; they are not dependent on the cut of an actor's jib, the gurgle in a blonde's throat.

Radio serials

The highly stylized form known as the radio serial is discussed in detail in Chapter 12. The basic essentials of drama should be kept in mind in considering the air lanes' serial story.

Repeat presentations

Perhaps nothing will give radio drama and its creators greater incentive than presentation of worthy work more than once. Admittedly, a great deal of what is presented on the air could not stand repetition, but think of the stage plays that are flops! If a radio drama is worthy, it should enjoy repeated presentation on the networks. If the piece is locally produced, then it should have repeat performance on the regional or local station—and on the affiliated network. For example, Norman Corwin's *The Odyssey of Runyon Jones* has been presented repeatedly by the Columbia Broadcasting System. Such instances are much too rare.

If the nation wants good radio drama, then the listener must be given opportunity to hear it a sufficient number of times.

Radio and purity

Radio has standards of purity it must maintain because it goes into the homes of all people and what may not be objectionable to one household, may bring irate protests from another.

Though south of the border the word "Jesus!" is a mild exclamation, equivalent roughly to our own "My gosh!", it would not be so accepted coming out of a radio in a living room in Des Moines, Iowa. Lines from a Eugene O'Neill play carried by a network's outlet have been known to put a station's license in jeopardy. On the stage you may dip liberally into the sewers of life, but restraint is necessary when you write for the air lanes.

This chapter should not be cluttered with one word more, but here is the final admonition: Pick up the near-at-hand thing, the incident or the developing scene you are stumbling over every day. Seek out its drama, note the situation, the conflict, the climax or denouement (if it is without either, then give it one). Out of these elements, build your radio play. There is no need to seek strange horizons, to work in strange fields. Your drama is right here at home, on your own threshold, or in the house next door, or down the road a piece, waiting for you. And you will be working with material you know something about.

CHAPTER

7

The Radio Program: Shorter Forms

In radio writing you do not slosh words around in a given time period (announcement or program) as you do water in a bucket. You select each word with infinite care, that it may contribute to clarity (sense) and beauty (appeal) of the pattern you are weaving.

A radio program must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. The beginning, obviously, is the introduction; the middle is the content, the program proper; the end, or closing, is just that, the end of the program, the tidying up after the curtain falls, whether on drama, round table, interview, or talk.

Writing the introduction and the closing—in other words, the frame—may appear easy, but amateurs frequently stub their wits over it.

Program identification

What must an introduction contain? In launching a program on the air it must be so identified that the listener will understand:

1. Who you are.
2. What you are doing. (This may embrace 4.)
3. For whom you are doing it.

4. The name of the piece you are putting on (title).
5. The action to follow, by setting the stage properly.

All these are essential, whether your program is commercial or noncommercial, whatever its pattern.

Then you must do something in the program to hold the listener's attention. This is the program content, the place where genius may come in; unfortunately, it does not always respond to the cue. This is the middle block, and largest period of time; some sponsors, both commercial and noncommercial, try to pre-empt it. This drives the listener away.

Use of graphs in preparing a program

To draw a graph of a radio program is an effective method of establishing in the new writer's mind just what it is he is attempting to do, just what space he must fill, just where the stuff he writes fits in. And it has been found helpful, too, in plotting deviation, deviation from the painful norm of routine programs. Further and also important, such a diagram, presented before an *audition* begins, will reveal graphically to a sponsor or sponsoring group just what it is they are about to hear. (An audition is a presentation as it would sound if put on the air, but held to the confines of a studio.) The commercial sponsor can see just where his commercials come in, or the propagandist just where his direct *plugs* are driven home, or the preacher where he will preach. See the basic graphs on opposite page.

Explanation of Graph 1—the *cold start*

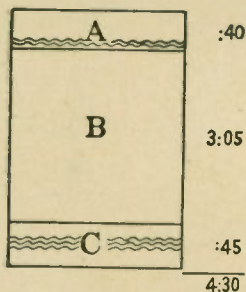
Graph 1: A *cold start* uses only words. The announcer comes in *A*, giving the name of the program, who is presenting it, what it is for, and sets the stage for *B*, the main content. *A* will include the opening commercial if it is a commercial program. *C* will include the closing commercial. And *B* may be broken by a *middle* commercial. *B* may be a one-voice talk (but never if it can be avoided); it may be an interview; it may be drama. At the close of *B*, the announcer comes

in again C, telling the listener what he has been listening to, who presented it, and when it will be heard again.

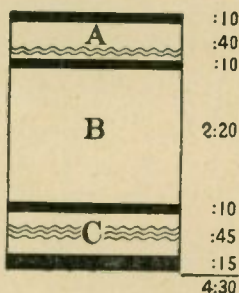
Explanation of Graph 2—theme music

Graph 2: This type of program uses theme music. Theme music will be discussed more fully in Chapter 8. At this point, accept it as the music that opens and closes the program. In Graph 2, it opens the show, *fading down* after 15 or 20 seconds to let the announcer come in and do exactly what he did in Graph 1. When he has set the stage, the theme *fades up* momentarily, then fades down and the program begins. At the close of the program proper, the theme comes up and, frequently, is not cut out but is held as background (BG) while the announcer tidies up the piece C, telling the listener as in

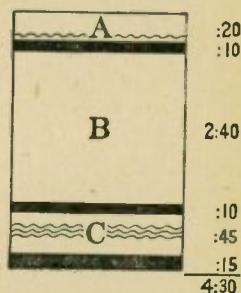
GRAPH No. 1



GRAPH No. 2



GRAPH No. 3



KEY: ■ Music.

▨ INTRO/CLOSING (MAY INCLUDE COM'L).

□ ENTERTAINMENT.

SCALE: 1 MINUTE
10 SECONDS

Figure 2. Graphs are drawn to scale. The basis in each is a 5-minute program: actually 4 minutes and 30 seconds (4:30). The time allowed for commercial content is the CBS limitation of 1:25 for programs before 6:00 P.M. However, if there is no commercial content, both A and B might be less.

Also see Figure 3, page 186, Chapter 11, for graph of a 15-minute music program. Graphs can be plotted for any required time period by following the above basic patterns. For workable clarity, draw or have your graph drawn to a convenient scale, such as the following: let 1 inch represent 60 seconds, therefore 1/6 inch would represent 10 seconds. One-sixth inch equals 1 pica (printer's unit).

Graph 1 what he has been listening to, who presented it, when it will be presented again. The theme comes up again to continue full volume to the end of the period, a matter of seconds only. The theme, of course, is a blessing to script writer and producer for it takes up the slack that may have crept in while the piece was in progress; on the other hand, a crowded piece might force omission of the closing theme altogether, and that is not good radio. Usually theme music is a part of the pattern of dramatic shows; rarely is it used in one-voice talks, interviews, or round tables. However, a series of, say, 5-minute interview programs can be knit together by appropriate theme music.

Explanation of Graph 3—more showmanship

Graph 3: This graph shows one of the many variations in putting a program on the air. The announcer may come in in a *cold start* as in Graph I; or participants, as in an interview, may start talking; or characters, if the piece is drama, may do a bit of the action, but not too much. In the two latter openings the announcer then comes in with his explanation and identification for the listener's benefit. Theme music is indicated; of course, it would not always be advisable. If used, it could be faded in and up as the announcer is speaking; would come out full volume when he finished; then would be faded down and out as the piece began.

Pattern a better designation than *format*

Keep in mind that the program patterns indicated in the graphs are applicable to shows of any length: 5-minute, 15-minute, or longer. (The word "pattern" is preferable to the more commonly used "format;" format refers to the printed word, something one certainly does not work with in radio.)

Five-minute programs

Now let's get back to the subject of this chapter, the 5-minute program. Actually it is 4:30 in length, *i.e.*, 4 minutes 30 sec-

onds, though some stations permit 4 minutes 45 seconds. That is not very long. Do not attempt too much; whatever you do, do it quickly, clearly. The 5-minute program is a good *Hoboken*, or tryout period for an idea that properly could be developed into a longer program. The beginner will find its confining walls provide good discipline in holding only to that which moves the plot forward; there is no room whatever for any deviation from the objective; you must keep cutting through to that objective and cutting through fast.

Actually, there are relatively few 5-minute programs on the air, networks' 5-minute news periods excepted. Review any network schedule. Schedules of local stations will show 5-minute programs more frequently but still much fewer than the standard 15-minute show.

Computing the number of words

A workable unit of measurement in writing to fill a 5-minute program is 140 words to the minute. For the $4\frac{1}{2}$ minutes you have to fill, you would, therefore, have 630 words to write. But remember, if you have a theme, that takes time; if you have even one door slam, that, too, takes time. Give your opening theme at least 15 seconds, for it must be played long enough to be identifiable itself; when you fade it up within a program, give it 15 seconds at least, and when you fade it out at the close, at least 15 seconds, though here *forte to finish* is better than designating the actual number of seconds.

For sound effects (they will be fully discussed in Chapter 9), estimate 5 seconds for each; but this, remember, is only an approximation. Sound effects cannot be arbitrarily time-limited.

Some of you writers have had a definite goal in mind from the beginning; others have been racking their brains ever since we started. It is necessary, now that we are working in programs, to determine definitely:

1. What you are going to write about.
2. Whom you are going to write for.

The foregoing was written with those fortunates in mind who are at liberty to determine what they wish to do. A staff writer on a station cannot choose his subject; he must turn out

a program or an announcement to meet a specific requirement. It may be on a subject in which he has no interest, or one that he dislikes. But he (or she) cannot choose; he must go ahead and do the job. The necessity is the same in any agency or advertising office: to write what is required.

Know your subject thoroughly

But if you are at liberty to choose a subject, then select one you are thoroughly interested in, thoroughly familiar with, and burning to write about. Choose one, if possible, that fits into your workaday job, or your workaday dreams, and that is pertinent to what you are doing or what you would like to do, and stay with it throughout these assignments. The subject may be a breakfast cereal; in these earlier chapters, you may have written announcements about that cereal; but you cannot fill a 5-minute period, or a 15-minute period by lauding a breakfast food. Entertainment must be provided. What will that entertainment be? See your program in its entirety, the commercial sections, as well as the entertainment.

Not all of you, however, will write commercial programs. Some of you, perhaps, started out writing creative noncommercial paragraphs, so let us take the Red Cross as an example of a noncommercial or public service program. Again, it is a subject about which you could write announcements, but it also is a subject—and you hear Red Cross programs on the air every year, especially during their annual campaign for public subscriptions—for which you must build programs of varying lengths. Again see your program in its entirety: both its appeal for Red Cross contributions and the entertainment you must put into it to heighten listener interest. A listener who enjoys your program is more likely to donate generously to your cause.

Or perhaps you plan to write radio drama and in preparation therefor have been writing creative paragraphs to polish your imagery. Apart from noncommercial station activities, there are comparatively few unsponsored dramatic shows. But, whatever your program may be, sponsored or unsponsored, commercial or noncommercial, make a complete size-up of it.

See it clearly as you write it, whatever its length, and write it completely: the introduction, the commercial (where required), the entertainment, and the closing, every word of it.

This kind of thorough job means that when you hand in to a station a Red Cross program, for example, your script will be complete and ready for production; and the station will applaud your competency. Always be mindful that the good script writer *hears* his show in his script. As far as possible he himself tightens up all loose ends; he does not pass his poor craftsmanship along to the production chief to rectify. In other words, the script writer does what David Belasco used to do. Belasco believed "in stage-managing a script as much as possible *before rehearsal*."¹

There will be cases, of course, where, in actual practice, one person writes only the commercial or only the dramatic part of a given program, but in our encounters with script problems in this book, let us view and write each program in its entirety. Most of the 5-minute programs that follow have shortcomings, but each has its good points, too.

Script: *King Neptune's Court* (Descriptive or narrative)

Instruction in how to get in and get out of a rowboat could be very dull listening. What is your reaction to the following?

KING NEPTUNE'S COURT

Script by Steve Briggs

FOUR VOICES: Announcer
King Neptune
Husband
Wife

MUSIC: Nautical tune

ANNOUNCER: The _____ Chapter of the American Red Cross
presents "King Neptune's Court."

MUSIC: NAUTICAL TUNE: UP BRIEFLY: FADE UNDER AS BG FOR:

¹ From *Playwriting for Profit* (frontispiece legend under picture of Belasco) by Arthur Edwin Krows. Copyright 1928 by Longmans, Green & Co.

ANNOUNCER: Come with us on a journey to the land of the mermaids the subterranean kingdom of Old Neptune, that genial ruler of the waters. We climb into our all-glass submersible duckmobile and off we go down down to where the ray fish traffic cop signals us to stop. We detour around Davy Jones' locker just outside the palace entrance, brush aside the seaweed curtains covering the castle door, and glide into the king's courtroom. There is the old king himself, perched on his sea-shell throne, holding court for violators of his watery kingdom. The first offenders have just been summoned as we enter (FADE OFF MIKE AND FADE OUT MUSIC)

WIFE: Your honor, my husband here deliberately tried to drown me twice in the same day.

HUSBAND: I did not, your Honor. It was all her fault. I was

WIFE: All my fault. You know perfectly well and good that you deliberately dumped me into the water when I was getting into the boat.

HUSBAND: When you were getting into the boat? Your Honor, she jumped into the boat.

WIFE: I certainly did not, I

KING: Order! Order! Pipe down, or I'll fine both of you for contempt of court. Now, one at a time. You first, lady.

WIFE: Well, it was like this, your Honor. When I stepped into the boat, it started rocking and the more I tried to balance myself, the more it rocked, until I finally pitched over into the water. And he did it. I saw him.

HUSBAND: I did not, your Honor. When she started to get in, she stepped on the gunwale instead of directly over the keel. She didn't even grasp the pier with her hand while she was getting in.

KING: Well, lady, it looks like you deserved a ducking. Let me give you a piece of advice. The next time you get into a boat, step into it directly over the keel. While one foot is being placed in the craft, the other should be on the pier. And the pier should be grasped with one hand. As soon as one foot is in place, the other is brought in and the weight lowered by leaning over and steadying one's self by holding on to the gunwales preparatory to moving to the desired position.

WIFE: Yes, your Honor. But that isn't all that happened. After we got back in the boat, we rowed out into the middle of

the lake and a sudden wind came up. I kept telling him that we had better start rowing for shore, but he waited until it was too late. The waves turned our boat over, and if we hadn't been good swimmers, we both would have been drowned.

HUSBAND: Your Honor, if she hadn't become excited and started jumping around in the boat, it wouldn't have been upset. I was rowing as fast as I could, and was making it to shore until a big wave hit the side of the boat and turned it over.

KING: Well, both of you were to blame for that. In the first place, you should never be very far out from shore in a rowboat; in the second place, a good boatman should be able to read the signs and get to shore before the wind takes him across the lake. But your biggest mistake was in trying to row to shore against the wind. When you saw it was too late to beat the wind to shore, you should have headed into the wind and held the boat pointed into the waves. Many times wind will blow itself out in a few minutes. If you keep calm and remember to keep the weight low, little harm will come.

WIFE: But what if the boat does overturn?

KING: In that case, remember the slogan: Don't leave the ship. Get back to the boat, turn it upright, and get in. Seat yourself on the bottom and paddle with your hands. At any rate, don't leave the ship. In case the boat cannot be turned over, grasp the wrists of the other person across the bottom of the boat and hang on or tie yourselves together with a necktie or shirt. The boat will float and you are much better off there than you would be to try and swim in. That was another mistake you made. If you hadn't both been good swimmers, you would never have made it.

WIFE: Maybe my husband wasn't entirely to blame, your Honor.

KING: No, and he wasn't entirely blameless, either. I'm going to make your sentence fairly light. I won't make you row out into the lake and get caught in a wind to see if you follow my suggestions, but I am going to sentence you to an hour's practice in getting in and out of a boat. And woe betide you if you get wet once! Next case (FADE OUT)

ANNOUNCER: It's time for us landlubbers to adjourn, so we reverse our submersible duckmobile, glide between the seaweed curtains covering the castle door,

MUSIC: SNEAK IN AS BACKGROUND:

ANNOUNCER: taking care to skirt around Davy Jones' locker just outside. The ray fish traffic cop gives us the "go" signal and we leave the underwater kingdom to the old king of the sea and his dampened but wiser charges.

MUSIC: UP AND OUT:

ANNOUNCER: The preceding program "King Neptune's Court" was presented by the _____ Chapter of the American Red Cross, and the public affairs department of Station _____. Those appearing in today's play were _____ as King Neptune; _____ as the wife, and _____ as the husband. Your announcer has been _____.

Comment: Think how boring this public safety program would have been had one voice been used, one voice uttering advice on: (1) how to get into a rowboat, (2) how to handle a rowboat when the wind comes up, (3) how to save your life if the boat overturns, for these were the principal points emphasized in the script.

Instead, the writer, using imagination, haled the violators of the public safety code before old King Neptune's court, and through him administered the propaganda in easy-to-take doses.

The *conflict* is clear: (1) between husband and wife, who argue over embarkation procedure, and (2) the struggle to save life.

The propaganda, moreover, is well disguised in the bickering of husband and wife over the way to step into a boat, and in the clear-cut advice of King Neptune in handling a boat in a wind and in case the craft is overturned; the atmosphere of a courtroom contributes to holding the listener's attention.

What also is important: the entertainment provided in this drama did not befog the message. It enhanced its reception.

The too-earnest soul, seeking truth and nothing but the truth (his kind), may quibble so avidly over the implausibility of a King Neptune's Court that he misses the means of saving his own life. That is a hazard in any dramatic presentation: to some listeners the dramatic entertainment will be accepted merely as entertainment, and the "lesson" overlooked or disregarded.

Script: *Lady Lookout* (Question and answer: an interview)

The following 5-minute interview was *sunk* into a participation program occupying a 15-minute period. The interviewer was Bess Lyman, *Lady Lookout* on Radio Station WINN.

LADY LOOKOUT

Script by Bess Lyman

Two VOICES: Lady Lookout, the interviewer
Gertrude Dieken, visitor

LYMAN: Our surprise is Miss Gertrude Dieken, home economics consultant for the Dupont Company. Miss Dieken is an encyclopedia of information about new developments in plastics, paints, and textiles features of our everyday life in the bright postwar world we're all looking forward to.² Miss Dieken is on a visiting tour through Kentucky. She comes from Wilmington, Delaware, home office of the Dupont Company, and has been making this expedition at the request of the University of Kentucky. She has been speaking before groups of the Kentucky Federation of Homemakers. Yesterday, she was in Stanford today she addressed a group here in Louisville and tomorrow she winds up her speaking engagements at Winchester. We're ever so glad to be able to quiz her a bit on topics we're all curious about. First, Miss Dieken, I wonder what we can look forward to in the way of clothing materials new synthetics after the war?

DIEKEN: (ANSWER)

LYMAN: Plastics is such a glamour word to all of us. Some of us have the idea everything we touch from paring-knife handles to walls will eventually be plastic. Is that too far-fetched an idea to be realized?

² **Prepositional Endings.** Have no hesitancy in using a so-called prepositional ending. It is good English idiom, especially comfortable in radio use, for it frequently will enable you to avoid a thick, confusing relative clause. Compare the phrase in the script with the relative clause that might have been used, *i.e.*, "in the bright postwar world to which we're all looking forward." Remember too the advice of H. W. Fowler: "If the abnormal or at least unorthodox final preposition that has naturally presented itself sounds comfortable, keep it; if it does not sound comfortable still keep it if it has compensating vigor, or when among awkward possibilities it is the least awkward." See *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, page 459. Oxford, Clarendon Press, London, 1926.

DIEKEN: (ANSWER)

LYMAN: I notice you've been looking around at our fancy new, Wedgwood blue walls here in this studio. No doubt, you recognize this as one of the new finishes.

DIEKEN: (ANSWER)

LYMAN: How soon may we expect to enjoy these grand-sounding textiles, plastics, and paints you've been telling us about, Miss Dieken?

DIEKEN: (ANSWER)

LYMAN: Thank you so much, Miss Dieken, for stopping in to see us. It has been a genuine pleasure to meet you and to hear about the thrilling new developments for our postwar wardrobes and homes. Miss Dieken is home economics consultant for the Dupont Company of Wilmington, Delaware. She is concluding a tour of Kentucky, speaking before women's groups under the auspices of the Kentucky Federation of Homemakers and we're very glad she included Louisville in her itinerary. Thank you again, Miss Dieken, and come back to see us soon.

Comment: Here is an example of an interview in which only the questions were written out. The interviewer, knowing her guest, depended upon her to speak intelligently, informatively, and entertainingly to an established audience. Her confidence was not misplaced, the interview going off smoothly with favorable comment afterward. Such good fortune, as program conductors know, does not always attend the visiting celebrity before the microphone. (See Chapter 5 for full discussion of interviews.)

Script: Home Service for Johnny (Presentation in layers—montage/bridge)

The writer's job here was to present the various phases of a given problem, in this case, helping the returned G.I. find answers to the questions arising from his return to civilian life. This can be done by *voices*, a different voice presenting each question. Therefore, note how the *voices* are used immediately following the setting of the stage or introduction by the announcer.

HOME SERVICE FOR JOHNNY

SIX VOICES: Announcer
Program Conductor
Four used in Montage

MUSIC: "WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME"
FOR TRANSITIONS: TO BE SELECTED

MUSIC: THEME: "WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME": UP FAST:
FADE UNDER AND HOLD FOR BACKGROUND:

ANNOUNCER: "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" but this war was different this was so much bigger than anything we'd tackled before this was two wars rolled into one that's why the occupation forces are still needed in the Pacific and in Europe but millions of veterans already have been discharged from the armed forces, so Johnny will be coming home when his services no longer are needed. For these millions of men back in their home communities, the task of becoming civilians again is reality today just as reality yesterday was the whistle of enemy bombs, or the thunder of enemy artillery and some of them are thinking that the war was easier, maybe

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER:

VOICE 1: So I walked into the bank and said I wanted a loan like it says you can get, in the G.I. Bill of Rights (FADE) but

VOICE 2: What's the best thing to do about my government insurance? Should I convert it now?

VOICE 3: Sure, I want to finish college but how about supporting my wife? And the baby who's on the way?

VOICE 4: Who'd hire me? It might be different if I had an education but I never had a job that didn't take two good arms and legs

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: Home Service for Johnny, discharged from the Army, the Navy, or the Marines, is helping him find the answer to questions like that. It's a job for every individual in Johnny's home town, a big job, so first let's introduce the

community's Home Service Adviser, John Smith, who will talk with different veterans Mr. Smith.

(HERE MR. SMITH DISCUSSES WITH ONE VETERAN AFTER ANOTHER, THE PARTICULAR PROBLEM THE RETURNED SERVICE MAN IS CONFRONTED WITH. THE 5-MINUTE PERIOD IS TOO SHORT FOR MORE THAN ONE OR TWO INTERVIEWS. MORE VETERANS COULD BE HANDLED IN A 15-MINUTE PERIOD.)

Comment: The "plot," based on the civilian problems of the G.I., is revealed quickly and painlessly by the presentation-in-layers method. With these problems laid before the listener, the program moved by means of dialogue straight into reality: Home Service to the veteran began operating. The montage effect is much less apparent in *reading*; it should be *heard* for better understanding of its usefulness.

Script: Larry Gray and the Gremlins (Dramatic dialogue: children's program)

A radio writer must always have his wits about him; he must be aware of what's going on in the world. At the time the following script was written, "gremlins," those little folk who cause mishaps in planes, had just been "discovered." The author wrote several 5-minute programs around the activities of these additions to fairyfolk that came in with World War II.

LARRY GRAY AND THE GREMLINS

Script by T. M. Raynolds

FOUR CHARACTERS: Announcer
Larry
Conductor
Bolo

THEME: "ENTRANCE OF THE LITTLE FAUNS"

SOUND: Rumble of streetcar
Larry skipping

ANNOUNCER: Hello, boys and girls. Today we want to give you the first program in a new story called "Larry Gray and the Gremlins." It's presented by the makers of ———

Wheat, that good-tasting new breakfast food you're sure to like as soon as you've tried it. Now, here's your new friend, Larry Gray. As we first meet Larry, he's riding on a streetcar and talking to the conductor

SOUND: RUMBLE OF STREETCAR FROM INSIDE: FADE:

CONDUCTOR: All right, Larry. Planning to buy an airplane, are you?

LARRY: Oh, no, sir. I'm on my way to visit my cousins, Molly and Tucker, but I want to get off at the Avion Company and maybe I can see through the windows. Then I'll walk the rest of the way.

CONDUCTOR: When I was your age, Larry, most of the boys I knew wanted to grow up and be streetcar men. Guess I did, too, come to think of it. Well, here's your corner, Mr. Pilot

LARRY: Thanks, Mr. Conductor G'bye.

SOUND: STREETCAR STOPS, STARTS UP AND FADES:

LARRY: My, that's a high wall around this place. Down there's a building with windows right on the sidewalk. Maybe I can see some planes through them.

SOUND: LARRY SKIPPING DOWN THE BLOCK:

LARRY: Gee, those windows look a lot higher up close Maybe if I stand on this little ledge and reach up (BREATHING HARD) There I see a lot of lights and there's a wing! Oh, my fingers they're beginning to hurt. I'll have to let go. And gee, I haven't seen anything yet, really.

SOUND: SOUND OF BOY LANDING:

LARRY: Gosh, I'm going to try again at this next window. Sa-a-a-ay here's a little pair of goggles like fliers wear, kind of. Wonder whose they are? Hm-m-m-m, this must go over my head and then they buckle on back here. Whee-ooooooooo, why, I can see everything! Right through the walls just like they weren't even there. Look at all those airplanes! There must be a thousand of them, anyway. Some almost finished. Oh, my, what a pair of goggles! Who do you suppose

BOLO: Goggles? They aren't goggles, they're see-alls And they're mine, if you please.

LARRY: But who are you? Why, you don't even look like a person you look like a a cartoon!

BOLO: Cartoon, indeed. I'm a master gremlin, I'd like you to know, and one of the handsomest, too. Bolo's my name. Now I must have my see-alls. My plane leaves in just a moment.

LARRY: Your plane? Are you a flier?

BOLO: Of course not. I'm a gremlin. Quickly now, my see-alls!

LARRY: I can't seem to get them off I believe they've grown smaller.

BOLO: Of course, they've grown smaller. They have to keep getting smaller all the time or else they'd slip off our streamlined heads. Come now. Give them to me. I haven't a moment to spare.

LARRY: Really, I can't budge them. They were too tight to begin with and now they're beginning to hurt.

BOLO: Well, I can't wait all day. You'll just have to come with me, I guess, and after we get going, then I'll figure some way to get you out of them.

LARRY: I'm sorry

BOLO: Such a nuisance! Here, take my hand or you won't be able to follow me through the wall. There now, run!

LARRY: Why, we've come right through the wall of the building. Oh, look at that ship she's a beauty! Can't you wait a minute?

BOLO: Wait? To look at an airplane? Don't be silly You're going to be riding on one in half a minute. If you hurry faster faster!

MUSIC: THEME: UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: Who is this strange little fellow that's taking Larry up, not in but on a plane? Maybe you already know about gremlins. I'll bet you'll learn a lot more about them if you'll tune in tomorrow, same time, to hear "Larry Gray and the Gremlins." Now, before we leave you, here's a health tip for fast-growing boys and girls. Play in the fresh air every day, go to bed early every night and for breakfast, eat

CHANT: ————— Wheat!

THEME: UP AND OUT:

Comment: The incident is just a starter. It is insufficient to stand alone, though the equipping of the master gremlin with a pair of spectacles he calls "see-alls" and with other contrivances lifts the piece well out of the commonplace. However, hardly enough happened dramatically to make it a definite 5-minute unit. But see what the author did with the same characters, plus additions, in a 15-minute script that is included in Chapter 17 on children's programs. He used, as you will note, the 5-minute program as an exercise in the creating of characters and development of plot. He worked with his characters and built them up in his own mind until he could put them through their paces in a longer piece. That is one way to "take the hurdle" in stepping from 5-minute programs to those for longer periods. The sponsor would ask that the opening and closing commercials be lengthened. (See *Limitations on commercial content*, Chapter 5.)

Script: *Letters from Home* (Dramatic dialogue)

Propaganda was one of the important weapons of the recent war, and radio was an ever-present and effective ally in furthering the war effort. See if the propaganda "sticks out like a sore thumb" or is well handled in the following script.

LETTERS FROM HOME

Script by M. C. Fossum

FIVE VOICES: Announcer

Lieutenant, in command of detail

George, a private

Hank, another private

Walt, a lonesome private

MUSIC: THEME: "AULD LANG SYNE"

MUSIC: THEME: "AULD LANG SYNE": FIFTEEN SECONDS:

ANNOUNCER: In behalf of the Home Defense Council, Station _____ presents another in the series of 5-minute radio dramas showing what you can do to help win the war. Today's episode, entitled "Letters from Home," was written by M. C. Fossum.

MUSIC: THEME: UP AND OUT:

SOUND: COMING IN AS THEME GOES OUT: DISTANT RUMBLE OF CANNON AND NEARER FIRE OF MACHINE GUNS, CONTINUING INTERMITTENTLY THROUGH ENTIRE SKETCH:

CRY: (COMING CLOSER, LOUDER) Fall out, fall out, fall out!

LIEUTENANT: All right, men, fall out This is the first attack for all of us. If you feel a little shaky, the other fellow feels the same way I think we will get the order to go over the ridge in about five minutes. See that bayonets are fixed Now, lie on your backs and relax as much as possible.

GEORGE: (CONVERSATION FROM HERE ON IS QUIET) You know, up above the trees, it's a nice day, a breeze and sunshine.

HANK: A lovely day in Michigan, George.

GEORGE: Yeah, Hank.

HANK: What you got there, George?

GEORGE: Some letters.

HANK: I got some, too, under my shirt.

GEORGE: I keep thinking of the white house under the big elm tree and the leaves on it now and my dog sleeping under it.

HANK: Got all your letters, George?

GEORGE: I've kept all of 'em. But I can read only the two I got the last month The others are going back to pulp. What with sweat and rain and river water on 'em, it's

WALT: Hello, George.

GEORGE: Oh, hello, Walt Say, Hank, this is Walt Walt is from my home county He's now in the other outfit.

HANK: Hi, Walt

WALT: Hello. (AFTER SILENCE) Are those letters from home?

GEORGE: Yeah.

WALT: Would you er ah are you going to keep those?

GEORGE: These pulpy ones? Sure.

WALT: Well, if you hadn't planned to keep 'em or were going to throw 'em away

GEORGE: Sure, you can have some.

WALT: Thanks, but don't give me any of your new ones just some of the old ones.

GEORGE: O.K.

WALT: Thanks, George, I'll be going back to my outfit. Goodbye.

GEORGE: So long.

HANK: Good luck! (TO GEORGE) Say, what's the matter. Doesn't he get letters of his own?

GEORGE: No, poor devil! He never got any letters that I saw I don't know why. He never said anything about it. He has kept pretty much to himself though you could see it on him. He used to come around in camp for mail call But after a while, he never came. When fellows were reading letters, he'd wander off by himself.

HANK: It's funny he wants to have some of your letters under his shirt.

GEORGE: He's from my county, Hank.

LIEUTENANT: (SHOUTING) Come on, men, fall in! Follow the man ahead of you and keep moving. And, when we charge, men, when we charge, give 'em hell! Give 'em the bayonets!

SOUND: MACHINE GUN RAT-A-TAT-TAT UP: MERGE INTO MUSIC:

MUSIC: STACCATO DIMINISHING, AND QUIETING INTO CALM AFTER STORM:

ANNOUNCER: Listeners, will you write a letter today to someone you know in the armed services of your country? Join us again tomorrow at this same time for another presentation by the Home Defense Council.

MUSIC: THEME: UP AND OUT:

Comment: Here is propaganda dramatized into something listenable. It was created to stir up citizens to write more frequently to their men and women in service. The loneliness of Walt, the man who never got a letter, is tragic. Note how the dramatization sharpens the pain so that the listener feels it

acutely. The result: more letters to the men in service. The piece is not as smoothly done as it could have been. However, here is grief, a 5-minute *shot* of it, that will hold the listener. Note that this was a public service program, a program to further the war effort. It may lose potency with time but not its value historically.

Script: *Strange Traditions* (Dramatic dialogue)

This could be one of a series of "strange traditions," each a complete episode in itself. This is the opposite of *serial* treatment in which the same characters appear in successive programs of a developing story.

STRANGE TRADITIONS

Script by Jean Hamre

FOUR CHARACTERS: Announcer

Lanny: a bellboy at three ages:

First, a child

Second, a young man

Third, a middle-aged man

Mr. O'Brien, newspaper reporter, middle-aged

Mr. Hawthorne, an elderly man

CHIMES: UP TWENTY SECONDS: THEN OUT:

ANNOUNCER: Good evening, friends. Blank Company, makers of fine chewing gum, present "Strange Traditions," little dramas of the streets and byways of our land. First a short message from Blank Company. (COMMERCIAL, 30 WORDS) Now, tonight's "Strange Tradition."

CHIMES: UP FIFTEEN SECONDS: THEN FADE FOR FOLLOWING:

ANNOUNCER: The scene is the lobby of the Hawthorne Hotel, large, busy, noisy, with many people, some hurrying, some waiting, and above all the din, the familiar call of a bellboy

SOUND: NOISE OF CROWD, BUZZERS, CLATTER:

LANNY: (FADE IN) Call for Mr. Hawthorne Calling Mr. Steven Hawthorne Call for Mr. Hawthorne. Oh, hello, Mr. O'Brien. How's newspapering these days?

MR. O'BRIEN: Good morning, Lanny. Or, rather, "good noon."
You're always right on the dot, aren't you?

LANNY: Yes, sir, I always call Mr. Hawthorne at this time.

MR. O'BRIEN: Strange. How long has the old gentleman been dead, Lanny?

LANNY: Fifteen years today.

MR. O'BRIEN: That long? Lanny, I've always wondered
Would you mind telling me just why, each day, precisely at noon, you walk the entire length of the hotel lobby, calling Mr. Hawthorne, a man who has been dead for fifteen years.

MUSIC: ONE LOW CHORD: FOR FOUR SECONDS:

LANNY: Well, forty years ago, I was a young boy, an orphan, applying for my first job here. The Hawthorne Hotel was smaller then, but bright and gay, with red plush drapes, thick red carpets, and huge chandeliers, glowing with candles. I looked wide-eyed as I watched a tiny, smiling man, with a shock of white hair, climbing to light (FADE) the largest chandelier of all

MR. HAWTHORNE: Hello, sonny, looking for somebody?

LANNY: Yes, sir, I'd like to talk to Mr. Hawthorne about a job. The bellboy captain says I'm too young.

MR. HAWTHORNE: How old are you, son?

LANNY: Ten, sir. But I'm old for my age, and I have no folks

MR. HAWTHORNE: (THOUGHTFULLY) No folks, eh? Well, I worked when I was your age. By Jove, we need some young blood around here. You tell the bellboy captain that Mr. Hawthorne said to give you a uniform.

LANNY: (SURPRISED) Mr. Hawthorne?

MR. HAWTHORNE: That's right. I own this hotel, so I guess I'm entitled to light the chandeliers if I like to! What's your name, son?

LANNY: Lanny, sir.

MR. HAWTHORNE: Lanny, eh? Well, Lanny, here's your first duty. Every noon I want you to page me all through the lobby, mind you.

LANNY: Yes, sir every noon.

MR. HAWTHORNE: There are three reasons for this: first, I like to be paged, but nobody ever does page me, because I'm always right here. Second, it makes me feel important; and, third, it'll remind me that it's time to have lunch with you.

LANNY: With me, sir?

MR. HAWTHORNE: If you don't mind eating with an old man.

MUSIC: TWO STRONG CHORDS:

LANNY: So, for twenty-five years, I called Mr. Hawthorne and had lunch with him. We had such good times together. Later on, he gave me a share in the hotel but asked me to be satisfied with a promotion to bellboy captain. He said I'd never be happy with a quiet desk job and he was right Then, one day, I (FADING) was calling him, as usual

LANNY: (FADE IN) Calling Mr. Hawthorne Calling Mr. Steven Hawthorne Calling Mr. (EXCITED) Mr. Hawthorne, sir! What's wrong? Let me help you. Is it a pain, sir? Here, take my arm.

MR. HAWTHORNE: (WITH EFFORT) Just gettin' too old, that's all, son. There, I'm all right. Let's have our lunch, eh? (LAUGHING) You know, after I'm gone, I'll have to make arrangements so I can come down or up and, by thunder, we'll still eat lunch together!

LANNY: I'll still call you every noon. It'll be sort of a a tradition

MR. HAWTHORNE: And I'll hear you, lad I'll hear you

MUSIC: THREE STRONG, HIGH CHORDS:

LANNY: Well, two days later, the old gentleman passed away. And that's why I've paged him every noon, never missing a day, for fifteen years.

MR. O'BRIEN: That's some story, Lanny!

LANNY: Well, I must finish my paging Call for Mr. Hawthorne (FADING) Calling Mr. Steven Hawthorne Call for Mr. Hawthorne

CHIMES: UP FIFTEEN SECONDS: THEN OUT:

ANNOUNCER: Tune in again tomorrow at eight P.M., when Blank Company, makers of fine chewing gum, brings you another "Strange Tradition." (COMMERCIAL, 40 WORDS) Thank you and good night from Blank Company.

CHIMES: UP TWENTY SECONDS: THEN OUT:

Comment: A man with a whim lives and dies in a hotel, leaving a request that he be paged at a given time each day thereafter. If not adroitly handled, it would be too big a subject for 5 minutes. In studying the script, do you get a clear picture of the man, Mr. Hawthorne, the frankness of his ego and the working out of his instructions into a strange tradition? Do you feel that it is satisfyingly handled? Could you build it into a 15-minute program and still hold the listener? Would it be better as a 15-minute program?

These questions always come up to nag the creator of a 5-minute program. But there is a place for 5-minute programs and the sponsor or the agency or the station turns to the script writer to supply them. The writer does not feel like crowding a plot suitable for, say, 15 minutes into 5 minutes. On the other hand, he must not make his 5-minute plot so *thin* it becomes absurd to the listener. In this case, the plot is strong enough to fortify richly a 5-minute program. Do you not see the characters clearly?

Script: *The Perfect Crime* (Dramatic dialogue)

In the next script, note how the author handles the principal character, Benny, the tough guy, the killer. He is first heard soliloquizing in his apartment. Then, by the flash-back technique, the scene shifts back to the killing of the night before; the crime itself is dramatized, NOT narrated. Then we return to the apartment of the criminal and shortly after that the soliloquy turns into dramatic action. Read it and find out what happened.

THE PERFECT CRIME

Script by Joyce Lamont

FOUR CHARACTERS: Benny
Simmons
Joe
Announcer

MUSIC: THEME

MUSIC: THEME: UP TWENTY SECONDS: FADE UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: _____ presents the short short story of the week! Tonight an original five-minute drama entitled "The Perfect Crime"!

MUSIC: THEME: UP FIVE SECONDS: FADE FOR:

ANNOUNCER: Friends, this summer, plan to have (COMMERCIAL, 50 WORDS). And now our short short story

THEME: UP: FADE FOR:

BENNY: (CHUCKLES) Too bad old Simmons had to die last night. Yeah too bad. "You won't get it!" he says. "You or anybody." But I did get it. (GLOATINGLY) Twenty-three thousand dollars! Benny, you're a smart one! Look at that

SOUND: CRACKLING OF BILLS:

BENNY: Twenty-three thousand dollars and it's all yours! Man, what a lucky day it was you walked into that hamburger joint to get outta the rain

SOUND: DISHES RATTLING: GRIDDLE SIZZLING: VOICES:

JOE: What'll it be, Bud?

BENNY: Cuppa coffee couple doughnuts.

JOE: Okay comin' up!

SOUND: COFFEE BEING POURED INTO CUP: PLATES FLUNG ON COUNTER:

JOE: It's all yours. Ten cents, please.

BENNY: Okay.

SOUND: MONEY THROWN ON COUNTER:

BENNY: Hope it's worth it.

JOE: Whatcha beefin' about, buddy? You're outta the rain, ainchaz?

SIMMONS: (SENILE LAUGH) That's tellin' 'im, Joe. That's tellin' 'im.
(LAUGHS AGAIN)

BENNY: (HEATEDLY) You keep outta this, Pop. Nobody asked you. Besides, he got his money, didn't he?

SIMMONS: (GOOD HUMOREDLY) Okay, okay I ain't complainin'. Hey, Joe whadda I owe you?

JOE: Coffee apple pie that'll be fifteen cents.

SOUND: BACKGROUND SOUND EFFECTS CEASE:

BENNY: Well, this old guy reached in his pocket and took out his wallet, see? He held it sorta under the counter so I wouldn't see it, but I ain't been lookout on a dozen safe-crackin' jobs for nothin'. I got eyes practically in the back of my head, as the boys used to say. And I saw that wallet was stuffed with lettuce not fives and tens, either those were thousand dollar bills! I almost dropped my teeth. 'Cause this old fellow looked just like a bum, see? Ragged overcoat dirty gray shirt hat fulla holes. But you read about guys like that in the paper every day guys worth a mint of money living in flophouses and beggin' for dimes on street corners. Well, when the old guy had left, I asked Joe about him.

SOUND EFFECTS: RESTAURANT BACKGROUND AGAIN:

BENNY: Who's that old queer? Looks sorta familiar.

JOE: Oh, him? Name's Simmons. Lives around here somewhere. Comes in couple times a day.

BENNY: What's he do?

JOE: Do? A guy like that? Nothing I know of. Said something once about prospecting up in Alaska but you know how fellows like him talk. Mostly a lotta hot air.

BENNY: Yeah, you can't take 'em serious. Probably ain't got a dime to his name.

JOE: Well, just so's he can pay me, that's all I care. Want another cuppa coffee?

BENNY: Huh? Oh, no no. I'll be on my way. But I'll be back!

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES:

BENNY: Well, you can bet right then little Benny started makin' plans. Next night I came back and sure enough, this old guy was just finishing his coffee. When he left, I followed him out. It was raining, just like the night before. He started headin' for the bridge and I followed him. The rain was comin' down hard, so's it safe to follow him pretty close

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS: SOUND OF RAIN FALLING:

BENNY: When he reached the edge of the bridge, I started running

SOUND: RUNNING FOOTSTEPS:

SIMMONS: Huh? Oh it's you. Back in the hamburger joint, weren't you? Whadda you want? (ALARMED) Hey, what's the big idea? What do you think you're doing? My money! No no you won't get it you or anybody! (SOUND OF STRUGGLE) No stop it you can't have it! It's mine it's mine it's mine, I tell you! (VOICE RISES TO FRENZIED SCREAM) Oh-h-h-h! (VOICE DIES AWAY)

BENNY: (WITH SATISFACTION) Clean over the bridge I threw him. Pretty good tossing didn't know I had it in me. And I had the wallet right there in my own pocket. I looked over the bridge and watched the current taking him down the river. So (LIGHTLY) I turned and walked home a good night's work, Benny! A mighty good night's work! (CHUCKLING) And, man, oh, man, the fun I had today! Twenty-three thousand dollars can buy a lotta stuff good whiskey ten-dollar shirts three new suits a second-hand car two thousand smackers but it was worth it a lease on this apartment pretty ritzy with a fireplace in it. Think I'll give that fireplace a workout right now burn these clothes I got on. Not good enough for a man of quality, shall we say? (CHUCKLES AGAIN) Coat shirt pants that's right into the fireplace. Now a match.

SOUND: MATCH STRUCK:

BENNY: H-m-m, burn pretty well. Lookit 'em go up in smoke! Goodbye, Benny Ryan (WITH AFFECTION) how dee do, Benjamin Ryan, Esquire! Let's see now what'll it be today the blue pinstripe the tan gabardine or the gray? The blue that's the ticket. Yep, quite a little lady-killer, Benjamin all you needed was a good tailor and a well-filled wallet! Here's just the pocket for that wallet nice and deep so I won't lose it. Now where'd I put it? On the bed? No. Dresser? No, not there either. (THOUGHTFULLY) Wallet wallet had it just a minute ago. What did I do with it? In my pocket. I put it in my pocket. What pocket? What pocket? My God! (HOARSE WHISPER) My God! The pocket of the suit I burned!

MUSIC: ABRUPT MUSICAL CHORDS:

ANNOUNCER: You have been listening to "The Perfect Crime," the short short story of the week brought to you by (COMMERCIAL, 25 WORDS). Listen again next Wednesday night at this time when _____ will again bring you the short short story of the week!

MUSIC: THEME: UP TO CLOSE:

Comment: It requires understanding of radio technique to do a script like the above. Every word must count, for there is much to be done in a scant 5 minutes. The amateur might have narrated, that is, described the actual crime, losing much in so doing. The author makes good use of *Benny*. Note that he not only is the principal character, who indulges in soliloquies but he also *acts*: he becomes a slayer. Further, he even turns himself into a narrator in the lines that set the stage for following the old man. The writer must get *inside* a character to make him so amenable and adaptable; handling him objectively will not produce the effect of *knowing your man*, so pronounced in the script at hand.

Script: Mob Scene (Dramatic dialogue)

Study the following for unity, constant progression, and suspense maintained to the climax.

MOB SCENE

Script by Alice Fylstra

SIX CHARACTERS:	Announcer	Alice
	Child	Jane
	Mother	Man

MUSIC: THEME: UP TWENTY SECONDS: FADE DOWN TO B.G.:

ANNOUNCER: Tonight the Radio Workshop presents a short radio drama "Mob Scene" written by Alice Fylstra

MUSIC: THEME: UP FOR TWENTY SECONDS: FADE DOWN AND KEEP UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: A shuffle of feet, faces tense, eyes expectant, and a low murmur rippling up and down the pressing crowd, yes, a crowd waiting, waiting, always waiting A voice breaks through the low murmur, vibrant, yet soft, then, silence! Silence, throbbing silence The crowd again murmurs

and a child's small shrill voice breaks the murmur
(FADE) The small, yet shrill, voice of a child breaks the
murmur

MUSIC: "PRELUDE IN C SHARP MINOR": CARRY THROUGH: FAR OFF
MIKE: KEEP UNDER UNLESS DESIGNATED TO BRING UP: NEVER BRING
OR FADE UP FULL: INCREASE VOLUME ONLY AS DESIGNATED:

CHILD: (OFF MIKE: INSISTENTLY) Mother? Mother

MOTHER: (OFF MIKE) Shhhhh, child, shush

JANE: (FULL MIKE: WHISPERING) That someone should bring a child,
a small child here

ALICE: (WHISPERING) What a shame! What a pity for the poor
thing. This is not the place for a child

CHILD: (INSISTENTLY) Mother? Mother

MOTHER: (QUIETLY) Hush, hush You must be quiet

MUSIC: UP AND THEN FADE AGAIN:

JANE: How the crowd pushes there's hardly enough air to
breathe.

ALICE: The crowd is moving look. Oh, oh, no, just a little,
just a step

JANE: Oh, please don't push so please, oh, how long have we
waited?

ALICE: Not so long, not long at all. It just seems so much longer.
It's the crowd, the crowd

JANE: Look, there are some more coming through that door. Watch
their faces. Look how tense they are

ALICE: Some are blinking, this light hurts their eyes. How many?
I can't see. How many?

JANE: (TENSELY) Wait, wait, I can't see. Oh, just a few, not more
than three.

ALICE: The crowd is moving again, impatient because those others
came out. Someone should have asked them how it was.

JANE: They were so strained looking, it must be bad

ALICE: Yes, I'm afraid so. Look, look at that soldier there

JANE: He's watching that door as though his life depended on it

ALICE: Oh, if there would only be a little air. It's so terrible, so much humanity and no air. Oh, if the crowd wouldn't press so

MUSIC: UP FOR A FEW SECONDS: THEN DOWN:

CHILD: (INSISTENTLY) Mother? Mother

MOTHER: Shhh you must be quiet.

JANE: Bringing a child here, what a shame

ALICE: Look at that soldier, he never moves a muscle of his face. He's like a statue.

JANE: Oh, don't, don't push so hard. I can't stand it. I can't

ALICE: It won't be long now, look, look, the crowd is moving

JANE: Yes, perhaps this time

ALICE: Yes, look, even the soldier is moving forward. And that young couple over there, look, for a little while they seem to realize where they are.

JANE: Is it any wonder? Oh, please, don't push so

ALICE: Look, look! That door over there is opening

JANE: Yes, this time it really must mean

ALICE: Ohhh, what a fine looking man he is So manly, so poised, so sure of himself

JANE: Shhhhhh, he's going to say something

MUSIC: UP: THEN SHARP STOP:

MAN: (VERY DIGNIFIED) Three seats in the very front row. Don't push only three seats in the very front row

JANE: (IN RELIEF) At last at last!

MUSIC: FADE IN AND KEEP UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: And there you have "Mob Scene" a radio drama written by Alice Fylstra.

THEME: FORTE TO FINISH:

Comment: Here an old literary device, the surprise ending, is well employed. It is a device that O. Henry polished into something akin to perfection. You might also like to add that it is an example of *reversal of the situation*.

A sure hand is required to maintain just the right balance as the piece progresses; you cannot tell too much, yet you must reveal sufficient information to maintain a heightening interest. The one phrase that seems to me to be too revealing is the line: "Some are blinking; this light hurts their eyes."

Music is brilliantly used to build the scene and to heighten the effect of the spoken word. Good radio can be words intensified by music, the two, words and music, so well blended they become one.

The introduction is too short to get the program properly identified. It should be lengthened by another fifteen words or so. It could be one of a series of short dramas presented at the same time each day or each week. If so, the closing should bind this particular piece into the series.

Script: *Vitamin Trail* (Dramatic dialogue)

The radio day and the radio waves frequently become jammed with advice, commercial and paid for, noncommercial and not paid for. They need a carminative now and then to clear the air. Burlesques of radio commercials always evoke laughter, but they usually are given to comedians to enact. A comedian's services are not necessary in the following.

VITAMIN TRAIL

Script by Mary Arnquist

FIVE CHARACTERS: Announcer
Dolores Daffodil
Melrose Frothingham
Sally Jeep
Horace Jones

MUSIC: THEME: 15 SECONDS: LIVELY AND LIGHT:

ANNOUNCER: (IN JOVIAL TONE) Everyone knows So-and-so tablets, the marvelous new vitamin tonic that supplies all needed

vitamins for life and health, from childhood to senility So-and-so tablets contain vitamins A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H (FADING OUT AND BACK FULL ON) plus minerals, phosphorus, T.N.T., and sometimes W and Y. Four delightful orange-colored So-and-so tablets contain minimum daily requirements for those who feel they just must take vitamins. They're like a doctor's prescription, without the two dollars. Let's hear what some satisfied users of So-and-so tablets write, in unsolicited letters, taken at random from a day's mail. Here's a note from Miss Dolores Daffodil, lovely debutante, who writes:

DOLORES: I was always thin, nervous, run-down Weighed only ninety-five pounds and couldn't gain. Then I started taking your tablets and now weigh two hundred and ten pounds and am full of energy. By the way, can you tell me what's good for fallen arches?

ANNOUNCER: That is a problem, Miss Daffodil. Here's a letter from Melrose J. Frothingham. Melrose writes:

MELROSE: I live a considerable distance from my work, around six and nine-tenths miles. I used to ride to work in a car pool with four others. One morning, I started taking So-and-so tablets and became so argumentative and quarrelsome the others in the car pool refused to let me ride with them. Now I have to walk the six and nine-tenths miles every morning and evening and have lost fifteen pounds. I owe it all to your marvelous tablets.

ANNOUNCER: Thank you, Melrose Frothingham. Are you, dear listener, tired, run-down, headachy, nervous? Of course, you are. Here is what Miss Sally Jeep has to say about the famous So-and-so tablets. They can do the same for you.

SALLY: I'm tellin' yuh, I was all in after a day in the factory. I was ready to collapse. All I wanted to do was to go home and lie down, go to bed, see. I hoid about So-and-so, so I takes some. Every day now I takes them and when I get out of the factory at night, am I tired? Do I want to go home? No, I want to lie right down on the sidewalk and die.

ANNOUNCER: Thank you for your inspiring message, Miss Jeep. Each little orange So-and-so tablet contains pep and energy, gives new strength and vigor. Is your child dull and listless? Is he losing out at school? So-and-so may be just what he needs to build body tissues, make him strong, alert, and

put him ahead in his class. We have a letter from little Horace Jones. Horace writes:

HORACE: I always wanted to lick Butch, the biggest, toughest, meanest commando in school. I took your tablets at breakfast for a week and felt as strong as Joe Louis. One day at school, I saw Butch. I walked up to him and said, "I'm tired of being pushed around, you big baboon. I'm going to knock you off your ankles." Then I let him have it. He knocked me flat. That's all I remember. It's hard to write in this plaster of Paris cast they put me in. I am ten years old and will be eleven next week, if I live that long.

ANNOUNCER: Horace's letter is just a sample of hundreds of letters received every day. Folks, do you want new energy and ambition? Have you always wanted to kick a policeman? Have you planning and executive ability? Imagination? Do you want to do something really big like riding an elephant? Just take those obnoxious little pills with the nauseating name of So-and-so. You'll never want to do anything again.

THEME: FIFTEEN SECONDS:

Comment: If you feel yourself going mad over the restrictions of radio writing, write, or try to write, such a piece as this. Vent your spleen on a given product. Plato, many centuries ago, implied that we shouldn't take life too seriously. The admonition stands. Note that this is a multi-interview. The actual persons interviewed come to life through the lines of their own letters, which they speak. They do *not* read them. Remember, however, that turning into travesty something already created is easy compared with creating the original out of which the travesty was made. A visual audience of WAVES applauded this piece in wartime Washington, D. C.

Script: *Radio: How to Abuse It* (Dramatized interview)

This dramatized interview is made a part of this chapter to sharpen appreciation of the difference in appeal between an ordinary run-of-the-microphone interview of two voices and an interview in which two people talk *with* one another in a setting lifted out of dry routine into something akin to drama.

RADIO: HOW TO ABUSE IT

Script by Luther Weaver

TWO CHARACTERS: Director
Mrs. Throckmorton

THEME: "THESE FOOLISH THINGS REMIND ME OF YOU"

SOUND: Door opening

THEME: "THESE FOOLISH THINGS REMIND ME OF YOU": 20 SECONDS UP:
THEN FADE UNDER AND OUT:

ANNOUNCER: (SETS THE STAGE):

SOUND: (ON CUE FROM ANNOUNCER) DOOR OPENING: HUB-BUB OF PUFFY
WOMAN ENTERING AN OFFICE:

DIRECTOR: How-do-you-do, Mrs.

THROCKMORTON: (ALWAYS DIFFICULT TO INTERRUPT—SHE JUST KEEPS
RIGHT ON TALKING) How-do-you-do, Mr. Mr. Director.
I'm Mrs. Winnimara Throckmorton, the president of the
Perennial Plant Club. It's for the maintenance of gardens,
outdoors and indoors, the year round You see, we want
a radio program we think we have a cause worthy to
be on the air

DIRECTOR: (HE HAS BEEN TRYING TO GET A WORD IN ALL THROUGH
THIS) Won't you sit down, Mrs. Throckmorton?

THROCKMORTON: Oh, yes now the red geranium is the emblem
of our club a lovely plant, don't you think? You
see, we want to let people know what our emblem is, so I
thought we could do something like that "Forward March"
program does, you know The Red Geranium Lives
On!

DIRECTOR: (SLOWLY AND COMMISERATINGLY) Mrs. Throckmorton,
I wonder if you mean the "March of Time"?

THROCKMORTON: Oh, yes, how stupid of me

DIRECTOR: Yes, of course now you'll want to identify your
program with theme music, or hadn't you thought

THROCKMORTON: With what?

DIRECTOR: Theme music a song perhaps it is played or sung at the beginning and the end of a program

THROCKMORTON: But why should there be the same music at the end as at the beginning? You see, Miss Catz, she's our secretary, Miss Catz wants Rachmaninoff's "Prelude," that's her favorite and Mrs. Wintergreen says that if we played "The Stars and Stripes Forever" it would show people that our organization is patriotic and

DIRECTOR: But, Mrs. Throckmorton, neither one of those selections has anything to do with geraniums or the maintenance of house plants or

THROCKMORTON: Oh, I never thought of that

DIRECTOR: You see, there must be unity in a radio program, whether it is on the air for one hour or only for 5 minutes

THROCKMORTON: (AS THOUGH SHE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND THE TRUTH OF ANYTHING) Yes, I suppose you're right And we'll want some other music, too Now Mrs. Smith-Jones' son has a group of boys who have a band of their own and we thought that we'd let them do the music part

DIRECTOR: (HELPLESSLY—ONLY JOB HAD GREATER AFFLICTION) But Mrs. Throckmorton

THROCKMORTON: Now, I insist on that because if Morton Smith-Jones didn't play, his mother would drop out of the club and

DIRECTOR: How long a program did you plan to have?

THROCKMORTON: Oh, we hadn't thought about that, but an hour ought to be about right, don't you think?

DIRECTOR: An hour is a long time on the air but well, are you going to have someone talk too?

THROCKMORTON: Oh, I shall do the talking, of course the girls insist on it I shall speak in behalf of perennial plants Plants to beautify the home, to make the home a cheerier place to live in spread cheer, that's what they do and, of course, my talk will be educational educational the kind of a talk that parents can let their children listen to You know, uplifting, inspiring, and helpful That's what radio needs Someone who will bring sunshine into every home, to help make the burden of living lighter

DIRECTOR: Hmmm Mrs. Throckmorton This doesn't sound to me like the "March of Time" for how long will you talk?

THROCKMORTON: Oh, not more than half an hour

DIRECTOR: I see, you will talk for half of the program By the way, have you anything written out, any script of what you planned to say?

THROCKMORTON: Any what?

DIRECTOR: Any script, that's what we've come to call it, your speech

THROCKMORTON: Do you have to write it out? I thought I'd just talk, a nice, homey, chatty run of conversation, wouldn't it be lovely?

DIRECTOR: But suppose you ran out of words, but you wouldn't, would you?

THROCKMORTON: (LAUGHS) Of course not, Mr. I didn't get your name, did I? Well, it doesn't matter.

DIRECTOR: No, it doesn't matter. But you know, sometimes you get before the mike, and you just can't think of a single word to say. If you have script in front of you, you know just what you are to say (and the time it takes, but that's another story), and it of course prevents any possibility of saying the wrong thing. The other day, perhaps I had better tell you this, it will make my meaning a bit clearer, the other day a woman was on the air in behalf of a society that befriends unfortunate girls Said she could talk over the radio without notes, and she got along pretty well until she tried to recall the words of a popular love ballad of several seasons ago. Her quotation was rather inaccurate. She was trying to say "When did you leave heaven?" What she did say was "When did you leave hell?" By the way, Mrs. Throckmorton, have you ever had an audition?

THROCKMORTON: Huh? I beg your pardon, yes, no, an audition for what?

DIRECTOR: Well, an audition is given to determine whether you can hold an audience, whether your voice is pleasantly agreeable, or scratches

THROCKMORTON: I didn't know that was important, but I used to sing in the choir, I was the highest soprano they had

DIRECTOR: The highest?

THROCKMORTON: Yes, the very highest, and the girls in the club say that I have a very pleasing voice so many people have told me that

DIRECTOR: Had you anything else in mind for the remainder of the time?

THROCKMORTON: Yes, I shall read some poetry that's always so restful, don't you think? Something quiet I read one just the other day let me see it was so sad something about death

DIRECTOR: Do you suggest having all the poems "sadly beautiful," Mrs. Throckmorton?

THROCKMORTON: No, I like variety Variety is the spice of life, you know there's one by, by well, I've forgotten his name but I'm very fond of it, it's about peonies oh, it's so cute

DIRECTOR: (EXPLODES) I don't happen to appreciate rhymes like that, immensely popular though they may be (CALMING DOWN) Now, in the Minnesota Anthology there is a poem by Martha Haskell Clarke that might be appropriate "When red geraniums bloomed against my window glass"

THROCKMORTON: I never heard of her Then of course we shall want some music in the middle too maybe you could suggest something appropriate

DIRECTOR: How about "These Foolish Things Remind Me of You"?

THROCKMORTON: Never heard of it, but it may be all right. Let me see, the girls in the club had so many suggestions for songs you see, they all have their favorites and of course they'll want them on the program.

DIRECTOR: Let's start over, Mrs. Throckmorton let's get back to the beginning. Now, geraniums are scarcely perennial. The first frost kills them.

THROCKMORTON: My goodness! Is that so? Why

DIRECTOR: Yes, Mrs. Throckmorton You see, a radio program must not convey misinformation a program must be planned, studied, fitted together into unified presentation There's the matter of music it's highly important every selection must be chosen carefully and made to contribute to the mood you're trying to create The program must have unity

THROCKMORTON: Oh dear I'm sure I never heard of unity it must be very difficult, isn't it?

DIRECTOR: (WARMLY CORDIAL, NOT UNCTUOUS) Well, yes and no, but Mrs. Throckmorton, I suggest you have a competent person put together a radio program for you, preferably have it all written out, we call it script; then you bring it in, and we'll go over it, and see how soon we can make a place for it on the air I shall have your cooperation, shan't I, Mrs. Throckmorton?

THROCKMORTON: Oh my, yes we'll talk it over at our very next meeting and (FADING) I do think we should change the name of our club, don't you, Mr. Mr. I just can't remember your name. . . . (FADE OUT ON SEQUENCE OF CLUB-WOMANISH COOS)

THEME: UP 15 SECONDS, AND SLOW FADE ALONG WITH THE COOS:

Comment: This is the only part that survives of a three-way written demonstration which embraced:

- (1) one voice telling how to get a program on the air,
- (2) two voices discussing the same subject,
- (3) dramatization with created characters talking over the requirements in concrete, but entertaining, detail.

It is an effort to substantiate what every program director will tell you: dramatize your stuff for effective presentation—and that includes listener appeal.

Into the script have gone only a few of the essentials that make up a good radio program, but they are sharpened by drama so that they leave a clear impression. These points include:

- (1) *Theme music and inside music,*
- (2) *Program content, other than music, and,*
- (3) *Length,*

each, of course, contributing to unified presentation, or unity.

The climax, though minor, was a definite end. The program did get somewhere: the woman who wanted to get a program on the air agreed to get a competent person to write it.

And what is the moral of this little drama? (It isn't mentioned in the script.) Do not misuse a station's time, and that applies just as definitely to a noncommercial as to a commercial station.

Use of this script in the classroom has saved a great deal of conversation in explaining this very point.

You may wonder whether it is suitable for the air. It has been so presented, its premiere being on the Darragh Aldrich show, once entitled *Calling All Women*, on Station WCCO. (Further reference is made to her program in Chapter 16.)

It has had frequent presentations before visual audiences, including NAB, Radio Council, and educators' meetings, and also before women's clubs. The women, God bless 'em! have been as kind to it as the station managers!

Evaluating a radio program

There is a great deal of talk about radio programs, but neither the applauding listener nor the dissatisfied one may have the words on his tongue's end to make clear what he (or she) likes or does not like.

The sequence of questions that follows is an effort to set up something in the way of evaluating equipment that will assist every script writer in taking a program apart and learning wherein it fails and wherein it succeeds.

In the classroom where radio programs are constantly under analysis, the author has used this yardstick for many semesters. It never remains quite the same, changes being made from time to time to meet new factors in programs, such as the *irritation technique*, or repetitive content of a given commercial.

As you listen to a program, begin analyzing it, by applying to it the several questions grouped under general headings below.

The more programs listened to, the easier will be the application of the yardstick. It may look as complex as a slide rule, but apply the questions, one group at a time, until you have the sequence thoroughly in mind. They will help you to know what it is you are looking for in a radio program; what it is you like; what it is you do not like.

And pause particularly over the final question: "If you were writing the script, what would you do to make it better?" It is comparatively easy to deride a program; it requires creative power to point out ways to make it better.

The evaluation yardstick follows:

HOW TO EVALUATE A RADIO PROGRAM¹

- I. A good radio program reveals:
 - A. Good taste. (Or poor? Do you think, for example, that the *irritation technique* is in good taste?)
 - B. Thorough understanding of subject, necessary in the studio as a requisite for understanding in the living room. (Lack of understanding?)
 - C. Positive production. (Adequate? Masterly?)
 - D. Skillful use of its medium: Sound. (By using the spoken word, the music, the sound effects, alone or in combination, for the most clearly satisfying result in the living room.)
- II. Does program have unity?
 - A. Singleness of purpose?
 - B. Totality of effect?
 - C. Does it get somewhere?
 - D. Does it lag along the way?
- III. Does it have showmanship or beauty?
 - A. In the spoken word?
 - B. In music?
 - C. In voice?
 - D. In mood?
 - E. In commercial (if it is commercial)?
 - F. In setting for commercial?
- IV. Is it buoyant? (It must be buoyant or it will repel, no matter how serious the content.)
 - A. In script content?

¹ Weaver, Luther, *How to Listen to the Radio*. Copyright, 1943. Published by National Association of Broadcasters, 1760 N Street N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

- B. In characters?
- C. In music?
- V. A program, to be good, must be right in:
 - A. Time.
 - B. Tempo.
 - C. Mood.
- VI. Finally: Does it entertain, or inform invitingly?
 - A. Wherein does it fail?
- VII. What, in program, can you commend or applaud heartily?
Why?
- VIII. What, in program, seems out of harmony, grates, or is poor? Explain.
- IX. If you were writing the script, or building the program, or directing it, what would you do to make it better?

Assignment

Build four 5-minute programs: one description or narration; one interview; and two dramatic dialogues, in one or both, making use of the montage. Your description or narration should be packed with interest. Your interview should be lively, and reach a definite objective. In dramatic dialogues, do not bite off more than you can handle; do not choose too big a subject. Choose an incident, one incident in a day. Do not attempt to cram a life into 5 minutes.

It is well to recall here the four basic patterns for dialogue set forth in Chapter 5. Those patterns were:

1. Description or narration.
2. Question and answer (interview).
3. Presentation in layers (montage/bridge).
4. Dramatic dialogue (drama).

In Chapter 5, these forms were revealed in 1-minute dialogues. As you have just seen, the same forms may be extended or enlarged into 5-minute programs. In Chapter 11, you will find them reappearing in longer programs.

CHAPTER

8

Theme Music

Melodiously rememberable identification.

Theme music is identifying music that opens and closes a program. It is unvarying, unchanging, always the same.

It may answer at least one of your worries to discuss theme music here while you are working on your first 5-minute program. Perhaps that program should have a *theme*, as they say in the studios.

When used—and you do NOT put theme music into every program—it is not only the introduction to a program but the closing signature as well; it is not only a frame for your piece but a part of it, for it blends into the program; it can set the mood for the entire piece; less frequently, it may even be used as unifying transition music within the program, that is, music played while you are shifting scenes, or, if it is a musical program, from one selection to another.

Establish melody at once

Standard practice is for 15 to 20 seconds of theme music at the opening, but, what is more important, it must be played a sufficient length of time to get itself established, that is, identified in the listener's mind. Select, or have selected for you, a sequence of measures that are quickly identifiable. A good theme gets into its melody—its rememberable, hummable mel-

ody—as quickly as possible; in fact, it should be that melody to start with.

And it's handy to have at the end of your program, for it can take up the slack when timing is off. The standard designation, therefore, is *full up* or *forte to finish* rather than a fixed number of seconds at the close.

Usually theme music is not identified. To do so would be boresomely repetitious. In case of inquiry—and you are likely to have inquiries, for listeners, just like you and me, are curious people—you could make it a point in a convenient program to tell them the title of the theme, even re-identifying it at later times if requests accumulate (evidence in itself of a good theme).

One may wonder—as Mrs. Winnimara Throckmorton does in the script entitled *Radio: How to Abuse It* in Chapter 7—why the same music is required at the end as at the beginning of a program. Perhaps, like her, you have two tunes you would like to put into the program, one at the opening, the other at the close.

Do not do this unless you have a tune-tested sense of the *fitness* of the music.¹ Ordinarily you lose identification. What if, in a printed advertisement of the Jintown Department Store, you gave that store one name at the top of the ad and another at the bottom. To repeat: theme music is both an introduction to a program and its closing signature; it is important for identification purposes in a series, no matter what the classification: public service, sustaining, or commercial.

As to mood, theme music should set the mood for your program, be appropriate to the program's content. Think of a

¹ Examples at variance with arbitrary *do's* and *don'ts* constantly occur in radio. The one given in some detail here has to do with the music program: *Mary Downey Plays* (see script in Chapter 13). In it you will find "Finlandia," by Sibelius, used as the opening theme, and "Zigeuner," by Noel Coward, used as the closing theme. On first thought this handling may seem rather pointless, for the two compositions have no relation one to another. To the program builder (in this case, the author), a sturdy piece that set the mood of home was desired. The Sibelius hymn seemed particularly *right* for music to *introduce* the program, but it did not have the hauntingly rememberable finality that the program seemed to require for its close: it was too stalwart. So "Zigeuner" and its vagabondish gypsy charm was put in. The result! listeners frequently asked for identification of the closing theme. Perhaps they already knew the opening music.

Musical Clock show (time, temperature, weather, and commercial) opening to the strains of "Kol Nidrei," or Don McNeill's *Breakfast Club* starting the morning at your house with MacDowell's "To a Water Lily." Sousa's famous march "The Stars and Stripes Forever" would hardly do as theme music for a mortician, but Franz Liszt's "Liebestraum" has been so used and very appropriately in my own listening experience.

Vocals that intrude

There are exceptions—and very beautiful ones—in which vocal music (singing) is used, but a theme usually is instrumental music. If you are using a live orchestra, then it will play your theme, but in the great mass of programs, transcribed or recorded music is used. Frequently, a re-transcription, called a "dubbing," is used as the theme music platter. Such a re-transcription is advantageous for in making it, you have re-recorded only that part of the entire selection which constitutes your theme.

A word of caution: Never use a transcription containing a *vocal*, even though there may be a sizeable part of the selection that is purely instrumental. The vocal, you may count on it, has a way of pushing itself on the air at most ludicrous times, particularly when you play your theme for an extended period to take up the remaining seconds of program time.

Theme selection

As creator of the program, you know it better than anyone else. Very likely, therefore, you know the *kind of music* you want for it, even though you do not know the name of the piece and cannot hum a note. If you cannot name the tune, then indicate in your script the *kind of music* you want, that is, describe it as nearly as possible; the musical director very likely will be able to figure one out for you. Give him your reactions as you listen to his selections. He probably will play several transcriptions or records for you. He may have a very good reason from a musician's standpoint for rejecting one or other of the pieces you favor.

Sometimes the title of a *pop* (popular) tune will fit perfectly into your program idea. If the music itself is what you want, then you are lucky indeed. Sometimes the tune may be rememberable and good, yet the title will kill the piece for your use: for example, "These Foolish Things Remind Me of You" hardly would be appropriate for, say, a variety store.

Not always does such good fortune attend the choice of a theme as was the author's lot once upon a time. In a program of transcribed music called *The Meadowlarks*, the music librarian (Corinne Jordan) found a tune named "Take a Message from the Lark." It was very acceptable music and we used it. It had that element which makes a theme cherishable indeed: the listener wanted to hear more of it, and, further, little children used to dance to its melody in living rooms on Sunday afternoons.

The cold commercial fact was that two of the principal electrical appliances sold on this program were Meadows Washers and Ironers. The simple sequence was: A program named *The Meadowlarks* advertised Meadows Washers and Ironers, and had for its theme "Take a Message from the Lark." No one ever asked me if it was a *meadowlark*. Further reference to this program is made in Chapter 12.

Starting *cold*, you would hardly select "The Perfect Song" as theme music for a pair of blackface comedians. Yet that tune, given infinite variations as the radio years have gone by, is the theme song of *Amos 'n Andy*. You cannot think of them without it coming into your mind.

Good tunes hidden in old records

Close listening to the theme music of programs now on the air will give anyone something of the *feel* for the right tune. Fortunate, too, will be the writer who has a case of old records handy, old recordings he can try out on the phonograph. The style in which they were executed may be out of date, but the melody, unchanged by re-arrangers, will be there. Play them; see if there are not certain phrases that will stand up admirably as a long-lived refrain. Perhaps you will find another perfect song.

Another point and important: a tune currently popular rarely is used for a theme at the time of its first rise to popularity. Why? Because too many people are singing it, or trying to sing it, or humming it, or whistling it. It therefore has no value as an identifying theme. The show *Glamour Manor* running on the ABC Network has "There's a Small Hotel" for its theme. That song came out in 1936. And George Burns and Gracie Allen use "Love Nest"—"just a love nest cozy and warm"—as their theme; it came out in 1920; it, too, was popular in its day. So with many other theme songs now in use. A particular tune, once popular, passes its peak of greatest favor, slumps, and often is forgotten. Then some discerning person, searching for a "good theme," stumbles on the melody, and salvages it from oblivion by making it the theme of his program. In so doing, he revives a host of memories among his listeners and benefits by that association of ideas which comes from knowledge mutually shared.

Theme music sometimes is especially composed for a particular program; then it has to be good enough to attract and wear well on its own merits.

To repeat, theme music is identifying music that opens and closes your piece. A hillbilly tune would not do as the theme for a program of Viennese waltzes.

CHAPTER

9

Sound Effects

Doors have individuality.

In no medium can sound create mood or atmosphere, or set a stage as quickly as in radio. The reason: if the audience—one person or millions—is to get anything whatever from the radio it must listen; that is all it can do: listen. It is not seeing at the same time it is listening. It is listening only.

The wind howling can set a mood of impending doom in a South Dakota blizzard. Crickets chirping—and crickets now chirp fairly well on the air—can fix the mood of a summer night with its endless rhythms. A telephone bell cutting sharply across a dialogue in *One Man's Family* can change, because of the news it brings, the mood of peace around the fire-side in the Barbour home to one of grief and death.

Handling script

Sound effects, now called "sound" in the studios, are indicated in a script by writing SOUND (or, sometimes, EFFECTS) in capital letters in the column at the left on the script page, then indicating the kind of sound you want in the body of the script, also in capital letters. For example:

SOUND: DOOR OPENING:

The sound effects lines never should be written into the body of the script; this is a common error. If committed, the sound

effects man has to run a fine-tooth comb through your script to find out what you want. For example:

MARY: I don't think there is a chance in the world that he will arrive tonight for he was (SOUND: DOOR OPENING) Why, Bill, of all things!

Put the word SOUND at the left and break it into Mary's dialogue in this way:

MARY: I don't think there is a chance in the world that he will arrive tonight for he was

SOUND: DOOR OPENING:

MARY: Why, Bill! Of all things! I thought, etc.

Mary, being competent before the microphone, will wait for the door to open, for Bill, though he may be glad to see her, does not come through the wall.

Beginners have much fun putting sound into their scripts. In fact, they overdo it not only in multiplicities but in absurdities. The hiccough of a character need not be presented on the air, the love note of a dinosaur would not be recognized even if true, and a south wind's kiss on a rose leaf in September is just impossible.

Yet by the tiny tinkle of twelve little Chinese wind bells at once, Nila Mack, director of the *Let's Pretend* program, simulated the shimmer of moonbeams, or the dance of sunbeams! Therefore, what is not done today in radio sound may be expected tomorrow.

Discussion of particular sounds

Despite constant effort at perfection, there still are ordinary sounds that do not take kindly to electrical transmission. The footfalls of a man walking in ordinary stride, for example, on his way home from work, though they may be the actual footsteps of a man walking, frequently do not "sound natural." Probably the best footfalls yet heard are those in Norman Corwin's *The Odyssey of Runyon Jones*. There, sufficient time is

taken for the steps to create the desired impression. The next time this radio classic is offered, listen to it for effective use of sound: footsteps down a long, long corridor connecting the planets of this universe.

Amateurs are prone to have a character sit down on the edge of a bed and indicate in their scripts "SOUND: OF A BEDSPRING SQUEAKING." Well, a bedspring squeaking is very apt to sound like the collapse of an overwrought steel mill. It is better to explain the action by having Mary say to Jane, "Sit there, on the edge of the bed" The squeak of a rocking chair is another difficult sound to put on the air. A sound effects wizard on *Author's Playhouse* did it on *The Revolt of Mother* one memorable evening in February, 1945. Among other difficult sounds is that of twigs snapping under foot as one rambles through the woods in autumn. The twigs frequently get out of hand, the resultant sound being more like that of a four-by-four splintering in a barn-raising.

Study the sound effects in the programs you listen to. Note which sounds come through well, which sounds are easily and quickly recognizable. Those are the ones to work with first. Later, when you have committed the required number of blunders and recovered, then you can go into huddles with the experts in the studios and turn canary warblings into blood-curdling groans and screeches. But that's getting over into the distortion chamber. As beginners, let's stay where it's more sane, among normal sounds.

The telephone bell, always sharp, insistent, interruptive, is a perfect sound to use to destroy a mood, or to end a scene and start a new one. But it should sound like a telephone bell, not like an electric doorbell.

There can be variations, many variations, in door closings, for doors have individuality. Not all doors slam. A larger station may have a library of real doors available, each with its special character. Sometimes actually what sounds like the creak of a rusty-hinged door may be the protest of a rusty coil spring that an alert sound technician found on a city dump. It may be his prized possession because it comes nearest to reproducing a sound particularly desired.

Trumpet blasts are good to announce a circus parade coming

down Main Street, but not all pageants are circuses, or all marches excessively noisy.

Another sound effect that requires expert handling is *applause*. Three or four pairs of hands hollowly beating palms together are not enough. A large crowd is required for good applause.

Recorded sound effects

You may be wondering at this point how the studio, particularly on the smaller station, can supply the variety of sound effects required in a normal day or week of programming. Many sounds that are frequently used already have been recorded; they are on platters for selection from the transcription library in the studio. Applause records are among them, but hear your applause record to determine whether it is suitable. It might be cheering at a football game, which is decidedly different from the comparatively genteel, kid-glove approval of an audience at a symphony concert. Make it a rule to hear beforehand any sound effect recording to be used in your script. See that it is what you want. You may be asking for an effect that is not on a platter; you may be asking for something that would have to be made on the spot in the studio during the program; or perhaps you are asking the impossible.

There are certain sounds that continue to be created in the studio because they are better live than recorded. Door slams, telephone bells, and typewriter clatter-clatter are among them.

There are many variations of the sound a train makes. If, for example, you wish to use a "Train whistle, long drawn out and far away, and receding," you probably could find it among the recorded sound effects.

An auto starting or stopping, or humming along a highway is another standard item. Undoubtedly, a studio could answer your request for "SOUND: WOMAN DRIVER SHIFTING GEARS." Many shades of gear-grinding already have been recorded for easy, action-propelling use.

Airplanes, too. The sound technicians have recorded a wide variety of their highly individual roars. There will be

new ones constantly in production to keep up with the development of aviation.

The clackety-clack of the teletype, automatically typing out the news report, frequently is the sound effect on a newscast. The thump-thump of a typewriter, or of many typewriters, remains good atmosphere for a drama opening in a newspaper office. The jingle of sleigh bells begins to appear on the air as certainly as December rolls around; it instantly creates the mood of Christmas and at the same time, because of constant repetition, drives the studio staff quietly mad.

The *right* sound

A turkey gobble can set a good Thanksgiving mood, especially if you get a gobble that sounds like a gobble. A case history from the author's experiences: A great many recordings of the gobblings of authentic turkeys on turkey farms had been tested out but none of them sounded *right*. The idea of using a turkey to set the sound stage for Thanksgiving was almost discarded when along came an announcer (Jimmy Valentine) who was especially competent at turkey gobbling. He sounded like a turkey, one turkey gobbling, not a barnyard full of them, and that single bird's gobble was what we wanted. This man-made gobble was used on stations in the heart of the North Dakota turkey-raising country. No turkey raiser wrote in to tell the sponsor that his turkey didn't gobble right.

The above incident is not uncommon. Ethel Barrymore opened a series of Sunday evening shows on the ABC (then the Blue) Network in the fall of 1944. The dog barks in those shows were man-made. Why? Not only because they sounded more like a dog, but that kind of dog, like that kind of turkey, can be controlled. He will bark, or gobble, when you want him to do so. He does not depend on dog food or turkey mash, good as it may be, to keep him in trim.

Now, do not be disheartened. Use sound effects conservatively, but use them: to set your scene, fix the mood, or push your action forward. If necessary, describe in your script exactly what you want but do not ask the impossible of a sound effects technician. Remember, your characters can express

shadings in words, too. Perhaps your description of a sound effect you want could more effectively be used as lines in a character's mouth. The clink of a fine porcelain cup on a fine porcelain saucer and the clunk of a restaurant coffee cup as it is banged down on its saucer sound quite the same in radio. But Fibber McGee's closet is unmistakable: a welter of junk pouring out of a doorway, dying away finally (when the studio applause does not get in the way) on the rattle of a lone tin cup belatedly joining the chaotic mess in the hallway—"Not that door, McGee! Not that door!"

Expert handling makes sound or music or both heighten the effect of the words: they supplement the spoken word; they do not drown it out. The totality of effect can be more perfect thereby than in any other medium.

Examples of use of simple sounds

Here are excerpts showing the use of simple sound. Laughter, for one. It should be a recording, particularly because there are only two women in the script and two women are not sufficient to create the volume needed. The following opened a 1-minute announcement.

SOUND: WOMEN LAUGHING (FADING):

JANE: (FADING IN) Girls! Girls! Why all the laughter?

SOUND: LAUGHTER OUT:

MARY: (LAUGH IN HER VOICE) Oh, Jane, did you hear how the preacher pinned Deacon Blurt's ears back?

Another; this time it's water running in a kitchen sink.

GIRL: Bill, what are you doing with that box of soap flakes?

BILL: Mary, you're just in time. Here hold the box while I run some water into the pan.

SOUND: WATER RUNNING:

BILL: Now give me the box See those suds, see how quickly they're forming.

The following shows the telephone both friendly and angry.

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL RINGING:

BUD: (ANSWERING) Hello?

ANN: (FILTERED) Hello, Bud?

BUD: In person.

ANN: Aren't you coming over?

BUD: I'm sorry, Ann, but I gotta study.

ANN: Study! Well, of all the feeble excuses!

SOUND: BANG OF RECEIVER:

Here is the turkey gobble—it was transcribed—that I referred to earlier.

VALENTINE: (TURKEY GOBBLE: THEN TURKEY TALKING) Go back for more, to your Fairway Store.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Yes, friends, for wonderful meals this Thanksgiving season, your Fairway Grocer has assembled the choicest yields of field and orchard and garden In rich abundance, they're ready-to-serve, or to prepare.

VALENTINE: (STRAIGHT) Go back for more, to your Fairway Store.

Opening a door dramatically

The following excerpts are from 5-minute programs in which sound is used. If you are writing script as you read this book, then you are now engaged in writing four 5-minute programs. Be alert, therefore, to the use of sound, to keep your script ever more alive. The following shows how family peace can be disrupted by the opening of a door.

DR. HANDEL: (FADING IN) That was a fine dinner, Martha. There's nothing like a good meal after a long day's work.

MRS. HANDEL: Thank you, Henry. You have been working hard, but that's the life of a doctor

SOUND: DOOR OPENS HURRIEDLY:

GEORGE: (RUSHING IN) Oh, father, a letter came from Albert today!
(Mildred Bruning Loeffler)

Now, the business of war, a minor scene, but sharply attention-focusing (see Chapter 7 for complete script of *Letters from Home*):

LIEUTENANT: Come on, men, fall in! Follow the man ahead
of you and keep moving And when we charge, men,
when we charge, give 'em hell! Give 'em the bayonet.

SOUND: MACHINE GUN FIRE UP: MERGE INTO STACCATO MUSIC:

MUSIC: STACCATO DIMINISHING AND QUIETING INTO CALM AFTER STORM:

Sound can set a mood

Sound sets the mood, locale, and action in the following. Note also the deviation from routine form in getting a program on the air and off. You may wish to refer to it as you develop different patterns.

SOUND: HORSES' HOOF: AT FIRST, IN DISTANCE: THEN COMING CLOSER
TO SUDDEN HALT:

SAM: Is this the place, Tall Tom?

TOM: Sure is, partner I'll tell the folks we're here.

SAM: Are you sure they're expectin' us?

TOM: Expectin' us? Why, Sam, they're goin' to like us
They'll want us to come back every week, for we've got
stories to tell, stories of the Old West

MUSIC: THEME: "OLD COW HAND": UP TEN SECONDS: THEN HOLD UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: Yes, friends, it's time to listen to Tall Tom Perkins
and his stories of the days when the West was young. This
is the first in a new series of programs to be presented each
Friday night by the makers of (COMMERCIAL). But here's
Tall Tom and the first of his stories of the Cow Country
. . . .

ANNOUNCER: (CUTTING IN) Friends, the story you were expecting
will have to be held over This script was intended to
show how to get a program on the air, especially the first in

an extended series and it also is intended to show how to get it off. The closing follows immediately.

LITTLE BOY: That was a swell story, Tall Tom.

TOM: Glad you liked it, son

LITTLE BOY: Will you come back again some time?

TOM: Why, sure, son You turn your radio on at this time next week, won't you? But come along, Sam, we'd better get started We've got a long ride ahead of us

LITTLE BOY: Now don't forget to come back, Tall Tom.

TOM: Son, you can depend on it.

SAM: 'Night, folks see you all again next week at this same time

SOUND: DOOR CLOSES:

MUSIC: THEME: "OLD COW HAND": UP TEN SECONDS: HOLD UNDER CLATTER OF:

SOUND: HORSES' HOOFES FADING INTO DISTANCE:

ANNOUNCER: Did you like that story? Well, be with us again next week, when hard-riding Tom and his partner, Sam, will have another story to tell us In the meantime, be sure to remember (COMMERCIAL).

MUSIC: THEME: "OLD COW HAND": FORTE TO FINISH: (*Marguerite Rourke*)

Normally, keep sound and music entirely separate in your script. That is, the lines (in capitals) in which you name or describe the sound or music to be used, this because generally in production they are handled by separate persons. The sound will be handled by a sound effects technician. The music will be handled by another technician at the *turntable* to play the required transcribed or recorded music or, in case of live music, by the director or leader of the group. This turntable technician also will handle *recorded* sound effects.

However, there may be cases, as in the following example, where music and sound effects are so closely interwoven that they cannot be written separately in your script. In such cases, write SOUND AND MUSIC in the left-hand column and describe

them in the body of the script in this manner (for complete script, see *I'll Never Be Late Again*, Chapter 16):

MUSIC AND SOUND: MUSIC UP: SEGUE INTO LIGHT TUNE: SEGUE INTO GRASS, BIRD AND INSECT SOUNDS, DOWN AND UNDER:

This also is "cross-fading," the term arising from the *crossing* of sounds as they come from a studio turntable (record or transcription player). On this turntable, one platter of music may be turning, and right adjoining it another platter may be spinning, this second platter carrying sound effects. Both music and sound are carefully balanced (blended) to produce the effect desired.

CHAPTER

10

News Programs

Unless we brilliantly improve our skills and techniques, we face a crisis of meaninglessness. Innumerable brief reports, presented without perspective or background, can only drive the reader into a mental fog We must lift our sights

SEVELLON BROWN¹

There is a difference, frequently sharp, between news prepared for newspaper use and for radio. In the newspaper story, the written word, the listener has a chance to reread it if he doesn't understand it the first time. In radio, the spoken word must be clear at once or its misunderstanding its irrevocable, for the newscaster cannot go back, he cannot repeat.

In the beginning, the pioneer radio newsmen had to learn by trial and error the better words and phrases to use, the better sentence structure, the better style, that their news might be received in the home clearly and understandably, to the listener's satisfaction.

Gradually guideposts have been set up in a series of *do's* and *don'ts* that have become something like unwritten law in the

¹ From the address of Sevellon Brown, editor and publisher of *The Providence Journal* and *The Evening Bulletin*, upon the opening of the first seminar of the American Press Institute, Columbia University, New York City, September 30, 1946. "We are well past the day," he said in the same address, "when events considered news were primarily those involving novelty, shock, violence, or conflict."

radio newsrooms; for, as it does to all script that comes within its beam, radio will make more glaring the errors in news copy; likewise, it can make more brilliant the good writing.²

Radio news also the *spoken word*

First of all, radio news is conversation, the spoken word. The newscaster gives it to you, not as a formal statement, cold and ponderous and remote, but as something intimate and of interest *to you*, you in the living room in the easy chair or working over the range in the kitchen or pausing with the door open to get the time of day with the morning bus coming down the block. And it therefore is clear and concise, with no surplusage of wordy detail.

Whether the news is local news gleaned from the countryside or the metropolitan area, or brought to the station by leased wire or wires of the news collecting and distributing associations, when it goes on the air it is for the listening ear. This radio reporting may be by the station's own newsmen in the case of local stories, or it may have been done by the news service associations at news collecting points throughout the nation to reveal itself later on the station's teletypes (automatic electric typewriters that transform electric impulses into typed words on long rolls of copy paper at the rate of 60 or more words a minute). Stations may receive news not only by *radio wire* but also by *newspaper wire*, from one or more news service associations: at least two major associations, the Associated Press and the United Press, now serve both newspapers and radio with the news prepared differently for each.

² International News Service, in its *Radio News Manual*, issued in 1945, says, "Good writing is that style of simplicity and directness which is as interesting and understandable for the ear as for the eye. There is no conflict; in fact, there is a close relation." For this reason, the booklet explains, INS from the very outset offered broadcasters "the same major news wire that it offered the papers." It transmits its news "to all clients at once," which means that both radio station and newspaper get the same copy. "Copy that is easy to listen to and easy to understand" is the announced aim of its service. (To which the author of this book asks permission to make this comment: Though we start from different premises, we come out on the same wire.)

Radio news heard, not read

Time was when a radio station took the newspaper service of a news service association and frequently used that news just as it came off the wire. Radio news service has been extended rapidly, however, and even the smallest station now has a teletype clacking out news to be heard, not read.³

In workaday radio on a local station, the newscaster may be the regular announcer on duty at the time the news period comes up, but much more frequently, as on the networks, he is especially chosen for the job because of knowledge and voice. He may or may not prepare the material for which he is the *voice*. Glaring errors sometimes get into the news material if the man who put it together also puts it on the air, for there is no opportunity for double-checking. On the other hand, if a newscaster has a style of his own, he can impart his special individualities by rewriting the material. Frequently, the newscaster or voice, though leaving preparation of the news material completely to the newsmen in the radio newsroom,

³ This summary of radio news-gathering and distributing organizations may be helpful. (Of course, news-gathering organizations served newspapers long before there was a radio tower.) Organizations providing radio service include:

Transradio Press Service: Began service to stations March 1, 1934. First stations served: KNX and KFI, Los Angeles; KSTP, Saint Paul-Minneapolis; Yankee Network; and WSGN, Birmingham, Ala. Reported (July 25, 1946) approximately 125 stations on its list of clients.

United Press Associations (UP): Its main operation of producing radio news on a large scale began in 1935, though its first commercial radio news began with Station KNX, Los Angeles, in 1931. Now (August 13, 1946) serves more than 900 radio stations throughout the world, including more than 700 in the United States.

International News Service (INS): Began radio news service in 1935. It did not have figures for public use, but explained (July 25, 1946) that since the end of World War II "its client list has increased considerably, especially in the last two months." This was attributed "to a postwar expansion of radio news departments in various stations, an increase in number of stations, and an improvement in the man-power situation."

The Associated Press (AP): Its *Press Association*, generally referred to as the radio division of the AP, began operating officially April 1, 1941. WQXR, New York, was the first station on its radio wire; WSB, Atlanta, Ga., was the second. It stated (July 25, 1946) that it has added "many stations" to its radio wire since the total of approximately 500 were reported as of September 21, 1945.

will add his own touches to the script when he presents it on the air.

News comes off the teletype hunk by hunk (a story is not always complete), or story by story, bulletin by bulletin, or flash by flash, all day long and all night long, or during certain hours of each twenty-four, depending upon the kind of service the station uses.

Programs must be built to fit allotted time

However, even though a radio station has the radio service of one or more news associations, providing world-wide coverage of events, and even though such services contain summaries of the news to fit 5-minute or 15-minute program periods, what would you do with local news stories? Or local sports? Or local or national propaganda in behalf of this or that? Or local police and weather bulletins? Or, and importantly, the commercials that more often than not accompany such news programs?

The answer is plain: A news program, to be good, must be built to fit the required time period, out of the stories and material that come in from all the services and sources that the station has.

The job of the radio news writer in the newsroom is to make this material from infinitely varied sources fit the given news periods on his station. It is much more than using scissors and paste and thereby sticking something together "to fill."⁴

News periods may be 5 minutes in length, or 10 minutes, or 15 minutes (rarely are they more than that), and the stories—"stuff" is the word—must not only be made to fit but organized into inviting sequence.

Newscasts are ever-changing because of the ever-changing character of the material, but even during the war, whenever opportunity offered, radio editors endeavored to group their

⁴ This discussion is not intended to be instruction in the fundamentals of news writing; the place to get that training is in a recognized school of journalism. The discussion outlines the requirements of radio news program preparation.

news under certain broad divisions to make it more listenable and understandable.

Broad divisions of news

Now, with the war over and men attempting to relearn the ways of peace, certain broad divisions are more important than ever. These divisions may be world events, or the international scene; then national events in the U.S.A., beginning with the nation's capital; then sectional or regional news; then metropolitan or local news. The script can be so organized under these or other equally convenient groupings, the order depending naturally on the importance of the stories. However, any newsman knows that a good local or national story may break and upset the best organized pattern and script and pre-empt first place in the newscast. "If something happens," either at home or abroad, the newscaster knows he will have to work from copy hot from the newsroom, thrust at him before the mike.

Length of the radio news story

The newscaster's rate of speaking is much faster than the commercial announcer's. Competent newscasters, using well-prepared script, can maintain 180 words a minute, without causing the listener to strain his wits to keep within the zone of understanding. (In passing it can be noted here that the average reader of the printed word in the newspaper or magazine reads about 100 words a minute, and the average "hearing" rate is 160 words a minute, but in a radio newscast, the listener is likely to be *listening to the news*, and doing nothing but that, so more intense concentration may be expected.)

Now let us consider the length of a radio news story. The rule books of the press associations show as high as 600 words, but the news chief on a local station is likely to put 1 to 2 minutes, or 180 to 360 words, as the maximum. For a test of the judicious length of a news story, remember it is conversation. How long do you yourself stay on one subject in talking with a friend? You change subjects frequently; that makes

conversation lively. And that too is what makes news programs attract and hold interest.

In a representative radio newsroom on April 12, 1945—the day Franklin D. Roosevelt died—more than one entire 15-minute regularly scheduled news program was devoted to the tragedy, but the program was broken up into short stories reflecting different facets of his life and death, each story being about 2 minutes in length.

The above discussion does not apply, of course, to commentators whose pattern may be the discussion of particular subjects *at length* in their program period.

Ask yourself: How will the word sound?

The familiar conversational style emphasized throughout this book, beginning with Chapter 1, applies to radio news writing as sharply as it does to other kinds of radio writing. Probably at this stage of your progress you do not need to read every word aloud as you type out your story, but do not fail to continue making the test though you do it automatically and silently.

How will the word sound? That's the test. For example, *cockroach* or *bedbug*, how will it sound in the ears of the family group listening in the living room? How will the word *rape* sound? You will quickly discover that a word's full import never is revealed until that word is spoken aloud "in company"; that is one reason why even the most garrulous souls sometimes drop to whispers in peddling their gossip over the back fence. But in radio, you cannot whisper a story to adults only, or to men only, or to women only. Your story coming into the living room goes into the ears of younger children, adolescents and grownups. The keenest editorial judgment, a well-rounded awareness of good taste, is a primary requirement in radio news writers.

There is a simple way for you to encounter and begin solving these radio news writing problems, a test used frequently by radio news editors in trying out applicants for jobs. The same method has been used by the author in script-writing classes at the University of Minnesota for ten years.

Writing a newscast from a front page

From the front page only, of any newspaper, select stories of importance and of human interest, arrange (organize) them first of all in the order of their news value and then under broad divisions for easy understanding by a living-room audience. Next write a script to fill a 5-minute program.

At the rate (experimental) of 160 words a minute, if there are no commercial announcements to go into such a program, and you actually have 5 full minutes, you will have a total of 800 words to write. If it is a commercial program, the number will be less. (Commercial limits in news programs will be discussed later in this chapter.)

You must be brief. Here, in keeping with tradition, must be recalled what generations of cub reporters are supposed to have heard from generations of city editors: "the creation of the world was told in 10 words: 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth'." We now can add another sentence to that legend. What may prove to be the world's destruction, the use of the atomic bomb, required only 13 words: UP Bulletin, August 6, 1945: WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT TRUMAN SAYS THE UNITED STATES HAS USED THE ATOMIC BOMB AGAINST JAPAN.

In keeping your story short, you must tell all the story, not half of it. You must not misinform the listener. Your experimental first draft from the front page of the newspaper probably will contain many more than 800 words; this will necessitate rewriting it, that is, *boiling it down* to fit without losing any of the important essentials. In actual work, you would have little time to do this. You would have to make it fit in your first draft.

Radio news writing requirements

Good radio news copy must square with the long list of requirements that follow. Be sure to read them carefully; then keep as many of them in mind as possible, remembering they do not cover all the points that make up the equipment of the

radio news writer. You will find, too, that in rewriting the front page of a newspaper, you were given a head start for the most important straight news and human interest news already had been grouped there for you. Think of the radio staff that must put together a 5-minute or a 15-minute program from the several hours' disgorging of a battery of teletypes plus the local and regional material, and the legitimate and required propaganda, all from separate sources! Vigilance, unceasing vigilance is the word for it. Here are points to keep in mind (some of them were given in Chapter 3) in writing news script:

Make it short.

Make it familiar. It is conversation. *Time* once attributed to Herbert S. Moore, founder of Transradio Press, the statement that radio news should be written the way a man breaks the news to his wife that he has got a "raise."

Make it image-provoking, if not image-filled. Be ever mindful that both children and adults will hear your program in their home.

Go back to vigorous, action-packed Anglo-Saxon verbs for clarity and power.

Dust off for possible use all the color-abounding adjectives that were blue-penciled in your newspaper stories. Descriptive adjectives are not necessarily synonymous with libel but high selectivity, of course, would be needed for radio. Examples: "far-darting Eleanor Roosevelt," "swash-buckling Premier-General Senjuro Hayashi," "sassy, satirical weekly." (All from *Time* and therefore, for reading eyes, not listening ears.)

Alternate short and longer sentences to avoid the wearying staccato of short sentences only.

Avoid use of passive verbs and the passive voice. They sap the sparkle of your newscast; they do not have the drive of the active verb forms. Note the difference: (Passive) "I was told by him to go jump in the lake." (Active) "He told me to go jump in the lake."

Be vigilantly careful in the use of antecedents. When you use "he" or "she" or "it," be certain the identification is positively clear in the listener's mind. In case of doubt, repeat the primary word.

Avoid qualifying clauses, such as "if" clauses, that, when not heard, can result in widespread misunderstanding. For example, "If the convoy does not arrive tomorrow, the country is lost." Suppose the listener did not hear the "if" clause in the above; he might wonder what was going to happen to his country.

Avoid relative clauses whenever possible. They get in the way of clarity. Those beginning with "which" are particularly "sticky."

Remember that quotation marks do *not* go on the air. The context may require that you say "quote" when you begin the quotation and "unquote" when you end it. Both are proverbial "sore thumbs" disliked by user and by listener. Frequently you can get around them by putting it this way: Senator Morgan says that "so and so." In a long quotation, it will be necessary to say in the middle, "I am still quoting Senator Morgan." Again at the end, it is necessary to end the quotation for the listener by saying, "That's what Senator Morgan said." Be sure always that the listener knows who is saying it. Also, Senator Morgan not only can "say" but he can "announce" and "denounce" and "reply" among other verbs indicating conversation or pronouncements.

Do not think your listener is a public accountant or statistician. He may dislike figures as much as you do. Statistics, percentages, and the like are boring; a few of them go a long way. Have regard for the group in the living room. Will they continue to listen?

Show the source of your information at once in all stories that require it; cf. the atomic bomb story in this chapter. The newscaster never is the source of the story; he merely relays it. He gives the authority for it whenever necessary.

Avoid words or sentences of double meaning, the *doubles entendres*. In case of doubt, do not take a chance. The listener, given the opportunity, will take the wrong meaning. Rewrite the phrase or the sentence. In the case of young writers, innocence is not a virtue and ignorance is always ludicrous.

Do not let grammar get in the way of good creative writing. It should not make your writing stilted, but remember, you need skill to throw the grammar book into the wastebasket.

If a word is difficult for you to say, it very likely will be difficult for the newscaster to read aloud and for the listener to understand. Be sure to spell out difficult place names or proper names. And spell out the pronunciation phonetically, if necessary.

In using figures, avoid a long string of ciphers; write it "5 million" or "five million." Spell out digits when used singly, such as one, two, three, etc. Some stations have definite rules governing the use of figures. Follow these rules. They vary, for no one has set up a style that can be generally agreed on.

Avoid the traditional clichés of the newspaper story. A fire too often is "of unknown origin" or the victim is "rushed to the hospital" or "the woodsman spared the tree."

Only experience will enable you to keep all the *do's* and *don'ts* of radio news writing in mind, but do not be discouraged. Many men and women are automatically doing that very thing daily.

The biggest story of all time

Now let's look at some radio news stories, for example, the biggest story of all time, announcement of the atomic bomb.⁵

⁵ More than one year after the first atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima, *The New Yorker* devoted its entire editorial space on August 31, 1946, to the destruction that bomb caused. The story was entitled "Hiroshima." It was written by

Here, in adjoining columns, are the Associated Press and the United Press Associations radio news stories:

AP—Washington—President Truman announced today that the United States Army Air Forces have started using a revolutionary new atomic bomb against the Japanese.

The President's statement, released by the White House, declares that the new bomb produces more power than twenty thousand tons of TNT, and it produces a blast more than two thousand times as great as the largest bomb ever used before.

The first of the new revolutionary type bombs was dropped sixteen hours ago, on the important Japanese army base of Hiroshima. This is a city of 318,000 population that has large ordinance, machine tool, and aircraft plants as well as a major quartermaster depot. President Truman says that the bomb has added a new and revolutionary increase in destruction on the Japanese.

Said the President: "It is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its power has been loosed against those who brought war to the Far East."

So said President Truman in announcing one of the greatest developments in warfare in many years.

Note that in each story, the President was given as the authority of the story in the opening paragraph and was mentioned before the story itself was given. This is radio style. Newspaper style would give the facts first and the authority for them second. In the AP story, four of the five paragraphs do

UP—Washington—President Truman has announced that an "atomic bomb" has been used against Japan for the first time. The bomb has power equal to twenty thousand tons of TNT. That's two thousand times more powerful than any other bomb ever used.

Mr. Truman reveals that an American airplane dropped the first bomb on the Japanese army base of Hiroshima sometime Sunday. The President says the "atomic bomb" opened a revolutionary increase in destruction. He adds that the bomb now is in production and that—as he put it—"even more powerful forms are under development."

Mr. Truman describes the bomb's tremendous power in this way: "It's an atomic bomb. It's a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its power has been loosed against those who brought war from the Far East."

Yesterday's use of the atomic bomb means an American victory in the feverish race to harness the atom.

John Hersey. The editors of *The New Yorker* did this, they explained, "in the conviction that few of us have yet comprehended the all but incredible destructive power of the weapon, and that everyone might well take time to consider the complications of its use." The story was reprinted in the Sunday and daily editions of the *Minneapolis (Minn.) Tribune*, beginning September 15, 1946, and continuing for four weeks. Using *narrator technique*, the ABC Network broadcast the story in half-hour programs on four successive evenings, September 9 to 12, 1946.

the same thing. Note also the frequent use of the present tense: action "in the now," which also is radio style.

The V-J Day story

Next let us look at the V-J Day (peace) story, as the AP bulletined it to radio stations and newspapers.

(AP—for radio)

Washington—AP—President Truman announced at 7 P.M. Eastern War Time that Japan has accepted the Allies' surrender terms.

(AP—for newspapers)

Washington—AP—Japan has surrendered unconditionally, President Truman announced at 7 P.M. Eastern War Time.

The time of the surrender, of course, was changed by the editors to meet the requirements of the time zone in which the station or the newspaper was located. Again the authority for the statement was given first in the radio story, ahead of the statement itself. The first bulletins were followed, naturally, by thousands of words of additional material.

Major Bong's death

Here is the way the UP handled the story of the death of a famous flier over its radio wires:

Burbank, Calif.—(UP) America's top air ace has been killed. Major Richard Bong, who had 40 victories over the enemy, died today in the crash of an army jet-fighter plane.

Ironically, Bong was killed testing a P-80 Shooting Star in California because the army did not want to risk losing him in an air clash.

The curly-haired flier from Poplar, Wis., held the Congressional Medal of Honor for his spectacular series of victories over the Japanese. He had been stationed at Burbank, Calif., for the past few months on his new duty.

Witnesses said the plane soared from Lockheed Air Terminal and cruised around San Fernando valley for about three hours before coming in for a landing.

Bong overshot the field. His plane swerved over a clump of trees and fell to earth in a vacant field. Smoke and flames shot into the air. (MORE)

Note the opening line. It tells of the death of "America's top air ace." His name is mentioned second. In radio, you may take all the liberties you wish with the old newspaper "who, what, where" formula, just so you make your story clear and do so in the familiar, conversational style.

Next let us welcome home another flier, by comparing stories carried by different wire services:

(Newspaper or radio)

Oakland Airport, Calif.—INS—Lt. Col. Gregory Boyington, the "hottest" Marine Corps pilot of the Pacific, landed today at Oakland airport at 5:50 A.M. PWT.

Looking tanned and fit despite twenty months in Jap prison camps, Boyington leaped from the C-54 transport which brought him from Hawaii and was greeted joyously by twenty members of his "Black Sheep" fighter squadron.

The men who wrote a blazing chapter of aerial combat history in the Pacific with Boyington threw their leader up on their shoulders and paraded around with him. (MORE)

(UP—from 15-minute radio summary) At Oakland, Calif., Lieut. Col. Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, the marine ace who wouldn't say die, came home today to a roaring welcome from his "Black Sheep."

Twenty-one of the original members of the "Black Sheep" squadron that Boyington developed from a group of raw recruits were on hand to greet him. They hadn't seen Boyington since he disappeared in January, 1944, after shooting down 26 planes.

As the men boosted him to their shoulders, Pappy yelled: "This is the most wonderful thing that ever happened to me."

Each story, as reproduced, has three paragraphs. Compare the first paragraph of each, then the second paragraph, then the third. Which ones do you like better? The author prefers the lead or first paragraph of the UP story, and the two final paragraphs of the INS story.

Local feature stories

A local feature story is never meant to be world-shaking (there's been enough of that, anyway), but seemingly unimportant incidents in the activities of John Smith, citizen of Main Street, or his dog Rover, or the butterfly Hezekiah, with their wealth of common interests, can land proudly on the "first page" among the doings of the great, and likewise bring bright joy or bright tears to listeners in the living room.

Here is something that would be called a "good little feature" in any city room; it concerns quadruplets, an item out of Lansing, Michigan, that was carried by Transradio Press. Can you guess how long ago? Doesn't it sound alive and fresh and up-to-the-minute?

Lansing, Mich., May 19—The Morlok quadruplets are celebrating their eighth birthday today—in bed.

Three of the quads have measles and the fourth is recovering. Edna A. was the first to catch the disease, followed by Wilma B., Sarah C., and Helen D.

Last year the Morlok quadruplets had mumps. The sisters recovered just in time to celebrate their seventh birthday with cake and ice cream.

Said Mama and Papa Morlok: "We might have a party for the children this year, even if it is two or three weeks behind schedule."

The story is told naturally, straightforwardly, clearly, with an unwritten but clearly discernible undertone of appreciation of human values. Only a chronic grumpus would fail to respond to it. Notice the monosyllables; in radio news, just as in straight script, use of monosyllables need not mean "writing down"; it can mean making your story much clearer. Don't underestimate the power of little words. The Morlok story appeared in 1938.

Shorts invaluable

Short pieces (*shorts* to a newsman) always are needed; make-up men cry for them, and the newscaster always feels better if he has two or three at hand to take up unforeseen slack in his program. The following item about catfish would not be missed if it got crowded off the air, but, if given, would provide an entertaining light touch:

(From AP 5-minute radio summary) With the food situation what it is today, even the lowly catfish has been getting a boost up the menu ladder. The government's fish and wild life service says that large dressed catfish have been selling since early spring at between 46 and 48 cents a pound wholesale. In fact, catfish prices are only slightly less than those paid for whitefish and lake trout, heretofore the aristocrats of the fresh fish trade.

Quirks in the news, humorous little incidents of workaday America, always put a chuckle in the newscaster's farewell lines. They, too, being short, are in demand and moreover are applauded by the listener. Here is an example:

Today's quirk: Seven little pheasants marched single file across an arterial highway well within the eastern city limits this afternoon. They took their own sweet time about it, too. Not a motorist, in the backed-up lines of cars, even honked his horn. Caring not a feather how much they snarled traffic, all crossed the highway in safety. Seven little pheasants are likely to live a long time; you see, hunting is forbidden in the city limits.

Early in this chapter, it was emphasized that radio news should be conversational. Frequently, therefore, it can be a

good story well told, in other words, a narrative. A story done in narrative style for a newspaper—and using effectively the power of simple words—will require little or no change to meet the special needs of radio. Narrations have been printed in books ever since printing began catching up with the storytellers (cf. Woolcott's *While Rome Burns*).

Why *Old 107* stopped on the prairie

The example that follows was carried by the United Press. It was written by Glenn Martz under a Redfield, S. D., dateline. The incident was told later by the *Coronet* Storyteller program (sponsored by Kellogg) over the ABC Network, and appeared still later in the *Coronet* magazine. (See the story by Margie Small inside back cover of *Coronet*, January, 1946, Vol. 19, No. 3, Whole No. 111.) KSTP had an on-the-spot broadcast of the observance from Elrod on Memorial Day, 1946, and one year later, the same news reporter, Roch Ulmer, narrated a Memorial Day tribute from his station's studios.

Redfield, May 30 [1945]—Passengers were curious today when "Old 107"—Chicago and Northwestern train—stopped at a lonely spot on the prairie two miles west of Elrod.

They wondered still more when Conductor V. J. Ford stepped from a coach, walked over to an embankment and placed a wreath on a little mound marked by a simple stone cross.

They had no way of knowing the ceremony had been repeated every Memorial Day for more than half a century.

And then Ford told them the story—just as he has told it for 14 years since his father-in-law, W. F. Chambers of Redfield, died.

Fifty-five years ago Chambers was conductor on "Old 107." One day while standing on the rear platform looking over a lonely prairieside then being settled by a vanguard of pioneers, Chambers saw a little boy with windblown hair on top of an embankment.

Chambers waved back—and thereby struck up a strange friendship. Every day for two years, Chambers and the boy exchanged salutes. One day the familiar figure was missing and the next. A week passed. Then Chambers ordered the next train stopped so he could investigate.

He walked over to a weather-beaten tar-papered shack. It was empty. But on his way back to the train, he saw a mound on the right of way, exactly on the spot where the boy had stood each day and waved.

Later he learned that the boy had died and the grief-stricken parents had gone back East. He never knew their names—but the father had told folks in Watertown that the boy's last request was: "Please, Mommy, bury me out there where the man waves to me from the train."

For forty years thereafter Chambers ordered the train stopped at the grave-

side each Memorial Day so he could tender a tribute of flowers. And when he died 14 years ago, he requested that the tradition be carried on.

That's why "Old 107" stopped two miles west of Elrod today.

Commercial limitations:

Soon after the beginning of World War II mounting criticism from listeners started a general tightening of restrictions governing the amount of advertising in newscasts. Listeners, anxious to find out about Herr Hitler and his colleague Hirohito, objected not alone to the amount of commercial dosage but the way it was administered.

Regulations by networks and recommendations by the NAB brought about a general change in methods of inserting the commercials in the newscasts and cut down the amount of such advertising. CBS, for example, on February 18, 1942, in setting up its wartime standards for sponsored newscasts, cut by 20 per cent the over-all amount of commercial in comparison with that allowed in other types of sponsored programs.

Particularly did the new technique enable the listeners to distinguish immediately *between* news and advertising. The CBS instructions were specific: "The sponsor's message shall not be presented as a news item. This, of course, bars the use of words like 'flash' and 'bulletin' to introduce a commercial, and bars such phrases as 'now, news about Blank's product.' The object is [to eliminate] the application of a specific news label to a commercial."

The question was debated: Should sponsorship of news programs be abolished? The coming of peace brought a lull if not an end to the discussion.

NAB recommended (August 7, 1945) that its member stations not exceed 1 minute 30 seconds of commercial in their 5-minute programs. It was silent on the longer news programs.

NBC eliminated the middle commercial in its 15-minute news programs early in 1945.

CBS permits only 56 seconds of advertising in a 5-minute news program after 6:00 P.M. and 1 minute 8 seconds of advertising in a similar program before 6:00 P.M. Also, it fixes the maximum opening commercial at 25 seconds for 5-minute programs and 40 seconds for 10- and 15-minute programs. No

middle commercial is permitted on a 5-minute program. The tabulated CBS regulations covering news programs given in Chapter 5 are repeated here:

<i>Period</i>	<i>After 6:00 P.M.</i>	<i>Before 6:00 P.M.</i>
5 minutes	56 seconds	1:08
10 minutes	1:28	1:52
15 minutes	2:00	2:36

Each radio station has its own rules governing commercial content of newscasts. Many permit one or more *inside commercials* in a 15-minute program. Therefore, consult the news director for his station's regulations and pattern. If his station is a network affiliate, he also will have the network's regulations on file.

Patterns for newscasts

The following pattern (readily transformed into a graph) may be helpful in sizing up a 5-minute daytime news program:

Introduction and opening commercial	:20 seconds
NEWS	3:37
Closing with closing commercial	:48
Total	4:45

If you have 5 full minutes, then you would add 15 seconds to your news.

Next is a pattern for a 15-minute daytime newscast with middle commercial. If the middle commercial is not permitted, then you will "fatten" the opening and closing commercials.

SOUND: FADING UNDER: ⁶	:05
Introduction, with opening commercial	:20
NEWS	5:00
Middle Commercial	1:36
NEWS	6:44
Closing, with commercial	:40
SOUND: FADING OUT	:05
Total	14:30

⁶ You may not wish to include sound in a news program, but if you do, the clatter of a teletype, if kept under control, is not easily supplanted for creating quickly the atmosphere of news. Long before the four-note motif from

Radio news after the war

At the end of World War II, radio executives wondered how they would fill the holes left by news programs they thought would be canceled; they were under a rather common impression that such programs depended on war interest and would have to be reduced in daily number.

They crossed the bridge before they came to it; being without guideposts to take bearings on, for World War II was radio's first war, they did not realize the value of the service they had rendered to listeners, or how many men and women had been converted to getting their news by radio during the war years.

The average station, it appears from the daily log, is carrying just as much news and just as many news periods as it did in wartime. A survey by CBS at the turn of the year 1945-1946 showed that more than 60 per cent of the listeners interviewed wanted "no fewer news programs or commentators." On certain stations the number of news periods actually has been increased. But—and the qualifying conjunction is important—it's a different kind of news. This was the result, as Paul W. White, then news director of CBS, put it, of "the rediscovery of our own country as a source of news." Local happenings are taking many of the headlines; they come first, not to the exclusion of national or international happenings, but in proper ratio to the listener's interest.

And the alert station is finding new opportunities of service in developing its local and regional news, for radio today is not alone a news-relaying agency: it also is a news-gathering agency with "leg men" representing radio and reporting *for* radio. Several stations in larger centers are using portable wire, film, or tape recording equipment, first used for dramatic on-the-spot war reporting, in quick coverage of spot news and feature events in the areas the station serves. (See *Tide*, March 29, 1946.)

Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony" got itself transformed into the victory call and symbol of the last war, radio station KSTP had used the familiar beep-beep-beep—b-e-e-p to introduce its newscast. It continues the custom.

Newscasts compared

How precedence is given local and regional news is illustrated in the following opening sections—250 to 600 words each—of three 10 P.M. news programs, each one a 15-minute period in a series regularly presented seven days a week on two stations serving the Minneapolis-Saint Paul area.

The KSTP (an NBC affiliate) broadcast follows:

CUE: NEWS TONE: BEEP, BEEP, BEEP B-E-E-P: UP BRIEFLY: THEN OUT

ANNOUNCER: Mark Gregory reports the news, presented by your Phillips 66 Dealer, who invites you to try Phillips 66 Gasoline and Phillips 66 Motor Oil Now, Mark Gregory

GREGORY: Good evening Here are the headlines Hundreds of spectators at a Montana air show were mighty lucky today. Even so, six persons are dead There's new hope in the local power dispute as food representatives pointed out some possible effects, if a strike does take place A bright note crept into the polio situation GI's, and those out of uniform, 'll have to be patient for a while yet It's possible that Mr. May will tell what he knows, after all I have a story on some youngsters who used adult labor tactics on a candystore owner First, though, let's have the story on electricity

There has been no settlement, as yet, of the dispute at Northern States Power which threatens to snuff out the lights of the Twin Cities and southern Minnesota But, there does appear to be a tendency toward a compromise Late today, Frank Gleeson, personnel director of the company, made a new wage offer an offer higher than that made previously, and a bit lower than the last union demand The new proposal calls for a seven-per-cent increase, retroactive to May first, and an additional three-per-cent raise, on the first of December now union representatives are mulling it over Earlier in the day, Minneapolis Mayor Humphrey put his cards on the table He stated that special powers will be given to the Minneapolis Health Commissioner, who will see to it that the citizens do have electricity The mayor said that he had already taken steps to determine what legal power the city has to make sure that it gets electric service And,

late this afternoon, some of the possible effects of a power strike were pointed out

H. R. Leonard, manager of the Twin City Milk Producers Association, said that such a strike would deprive the city of a pasteurized milk supply He said even hospitals would be unable to get such milk Leonard explained that ninety per cent of the dairy farms were power-operated, and that, without power, farmers would be unable to cool their milk Only at Anoka, Farmington, and Elk River would power be available Bread, too, would disappear from the grocery stores, as Twin City bakers would be forced to close down Some bakeries thought they might be able to bring some bread in from outside the city, but that the supply of these sources was woefully small

Polio cases in the state of Minnesota have jumped well over the nine hundred mark tonight, and deaths since the first of the year now stand at 70 The state health department has recorded 941 cases of the disease since January first, and 633 of those have been treated in Minneapolis Latest figures released by the city health department show 34 new cases in Minneapolis in the past 24-hour period, evenly divided between resident and nonresident victims Only one death was reported, that of a nonresident City totals show 405 Minneapolis cases, and 228 out-of-state victims In Saint Paul there is now a combined total of 99 polio patients On the happier side, however, is the report that 81 Minneapolis patients, and some 30-odd Saint Paul persons have been released from the hospitals and sent home (END OF ILLUSTRATIVE EX-AMPLE)

Comment: Note how quickly the newscaster got into the news. The opening commercial is reproduced in full; it embraces 19 words. Then come the headlines or highlights, six different important news stories mentioned very briefly, the details to follow. Then into the lead story: a threatened strike of electrical workers that would halt the distribution of electric light and power. This was a purely local story, but every listener would be affected if the strike came. Obviously, all had radios, but that would be only one of the many pieces of equipment that would go dead in an electrically operated home.

The next item was a polio epidemic potentially affecting almost every home in the area, and particularly homes with children.

In this program there is an inside commercial, given by the announcer, who comes in on cue from the newscaster. The closing commercial is given by the newscaster after all news except "the weather" has been given. The closing news items may be a review of the highlights "for any late or interrupted listeners."

Another newscast at identical time

Next is the news program given on WCCO, a CBS-owned station, on the identical day at the same time:

ANNOUNCER: It's 10 o'clock, Taystee Bread Newstime, and here is Paul Wann, substituting for Cedric Adams, who is on vacation.

WANN: Good evening and good wishes from the bakers of Taystee Bread, known to all of you as the bread of grand, good taste and oven-freshness Workers are busy tonight with the grim job of digging through the smoking ruins of a horse barn at Great Falls, Montana, State Fairgrounds in a search for the bodies of victims The accident came as crowds in the jam-packed grandstand watched three army A-27 attack-bombers fly across the field in formation. One of the planes suddenly veered a little in its path, and slashed off the tail of a second one. The tailless plane went down completely out of control, and careened into a horse barn. As it hit the structure, the plane exploded, and both plane and barn went up in a roaring gasoline conflagration The other plane wobbled crazily for a mile or two, and then hit the ground just across the horizon. Each plane carried a crew of two men, and all of them were killed in both planes. How many persons were killed in the barn still isn't known. Two bodies have been recovered, and it's known that around twenty persons were in the structure a few minutes earlier. The barn was consumed in a matter of minutes, and horrified spectators heard the screams of about twenty animals which were caught in the fire. At least eight automobiles parked near the building were also reduced to wreckage when they burned after being sprayed with flaming gasoline The names of the fliers haven't been released, in accordance with the army policy of waiting until after the next of kin have been informed.

From the Department of Agriculture comes word that this country may soon be eating whiter bread, and slicing it

from normal-sized loaves. The prediction comes as a result of the Department's estimate that corn and wheat crops, previously estimated as record-breaking, are going to be even better than those expectations. Corn is the leader in the bright crop prospects, with an estimated harvest just a little under three-and-a-half billion bushels. And that figure would put it way above the previous record crop, harvested in 1944. Wheat, too, will run above the record which was set last year, and will add up to one-billion-160-million bushels on the basis of today's estimates. And both these forecasts are increases over the predictions made on July 15th (END OF ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE)

Comment: The radio news director makes his *lead* the action-packed story of a bomber crashing into a horse barn at a state fairgrounds, the crewmen being killed, the horse barn going up in flames. Note the action verbs or verbal forms: "digging," "smoking," "veered," "slashed," "careened," "hit," "exploded," "roaring," "wobbled," "sprayed," "flaming." Also note the adjectives that intensify the drama: "grim," "jam-packed," "tail-less," "horrified."

The next item, the revision upward of Department of Agriculture estimates of the 1946 corn and wheat crops, was of sharp pertinency to the area this clear-channel station serves.

The voice back of the news

In the next script, likewise presented at 10 o'clock of a week-day evening, the voice giving the news is that of Cedric Adams, columnist and newscaster. He speaks at the unusually rapid rate of 200 words a minute. This means he packs approximately 2,500 words into the 12 minutes 30 seconds devoted to news in this 15-minute period. His manner of speaking is a flow of words, then a pause, then more words, and another pause: this change of pace helps listener receptivity. (The program's over-all time is 14 minutes 30 seconds.) The same newsroom staff prepared this script and the WCCO script you have just read.

ANNOUNCER: It's 10 o'clock, Taystee Bread Newstime, and here is Cedric Adams.

ADAMS: Good evening and good wishes from the bakers of Taystee Bread, known to all of you as the bread of grand, good taste and oven-freshness.

Just a year ago tonight, we were all waiting tensely for official word from Washington for word that Japan had surrendered We had heard rumors and counter-rumors for days, we wanted the real answer And a year ago tomorrow it came President Truman took to the radio to announce Japan's surrender and to proclaim V-J Day.

Tomorrow flags will fly on all government buildings around the nation to honor Victory Day, proclaimed by President Truman to signalize the first anniversary of Japan's unconditional surrender.

In Japan the main military display will be a parade by American occupation forces A regiment once led to defeat by General George Custer in the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the Seventh Cavalry, will parade past the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.

From Navy Secretary Forrestal tonight comes an anniversary statement warning that, as he puts it, "America must firmly resolve to keep ourselves strong for the tests of the future until the United Nations is an accomplished and working fact."

And from China, where the Japanese first started their ill-fated march, comes another anniversary message, this one from Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek. The Chinese government leader appeals to Chinese Communists to help win the peace, but warns them that his government will crush rebellion (END OF ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE)

Comment: For this particular program the staff who put the program together in the station's newsroom looked at the calendar which read "August 13" and rightly decided that there was news in the fact that the next day would be the first anniversary of Japan's surrender. So the lead story brought out that fact, and caused many to recall what they did the day the war ended. Those for whom the war had meant immeasurable sacrifice would have noted with regret omission of mention of the anniversary. Others who had forgotten the fact got a merited reminder. Mention of the Indian battle of the Little Bighorn, and the Seventh Cavalry that once fought there, was good historical background to bring in. "Custer's last stand" is known to every schoolboy. Further, the site of

the battle—southeastern Montana—has particular regional interest because of its proximity to the area the station serves.

Note how the direct quotation from Secretary of the Navy—shortened to Navy Secretary—Forrestal is handled. The phrase “as he puts it” comes ahead of the 24-word quotation. Closing re-identification is not needed because the next item has to do with China. This lead story required 249 words, ample for a peacetime story.

Note the brevity of the opening commercial: 25 words. Note also the efficiency of the comma after the word “grand” in the phrase “grand, good taste.” It slows up the reading and prevents the jamming of “grand” and “good.” Another way to set up such protection might have been to insert a hyphen between “good” and “taste,” making it read “grand good-taste.” The juxtaposition of “grand” and “good” is an instance of commercial advertising diction supplanting prescribed English usage. There also is a commercial at the close given by the newscaster.

To say which is the more important, the voice on a newscast or the script, is to open up a discussion, agreement on which is as impossible as on the perennial egg-hen argument. A newscaster, that is, the voice, may be pardoned for feeling that the news broadcast would lose punch if he were not behind the script. The men in a newsroom, though they may word it very diplomatically, nevertheless have the firm and steadfast opinion that if they didn't put good script together, the newscaster, whoever he might be, would have a bumbling time of it on the air. If script is knotty, if it's filled with dead clumps of words that are hard to say, if it causes the voice to flounder, then you have a poor broadcast. And what about the listener? He is inclined to put his confidence in the voice, to think what the voice says is correct. The listener is not thinking, or he may not know, how much good script helps the voice to hold his audience broadcast after broadcast.

On the other hand, there is nothing that lowers confidence in radio news more than a voice that carries no authority of knowledge, a voice that leaves you questioning the broadcaster's knowledge of the places and the events he is trying to tell you about. Smaller stations frequently have difficulty in this par-

ticular; the sturdiest voice on such a station should be behind the news; it is better to have it scratch a little than to have it stumbling among place names it is fearful of pronouncing.

Sidewalk idiom in a newscast

And that brings us to consideration of the newscaster who not only gives the news but *prepares his own copy* in highly individualized form. Because such a combination is not common an illustrative example is given from the script of John Ford of Radio Station WTCN. The script selected is the 1:00 to 1:15 P.M. news program presented daily under sponsorship of a bread company (Holsum). The script that follows has been cut down, but the opening, several principal stories, and the closing are presented as given. The accompanying commercial announcements have been omitted.

FORD: Okay, and hello, folks. Well, the temperature is officially 75 The forecast is for a lot of clouds and scattered thundershowers tonight and tomorrow with little change But take a gander at that "scattered thundershowers," brethren, and let's hope they come through There were some rains in the western part of the state this morning. Red River Valley and up in International Falls, they got 1½ inches, by golly! For Wisconsin, it says mostly cloudy with occasional showers tonight and tomorrow too with warmer. So come on, Jupiter Pluvius! see if you can dunk a little of that moisture on the Twin Cities, for which none, incidentally, is predicted But top headlines you'll read tonight are these:

Internationally, tension grows as Jewish prisoners are shipped from Palestine to Cyprus Byrnes slugs Russia in another speech: Russia comes right back

Nationally, Truman is off on vacation Justice Jackson is mum about his battle with Hugo Black Maritime Union strike starts tying up industry 20,000 are idle at General Motors

Locally, 33 new cases of polio More events are cancelled Bathhouses and beaches close Cancellations go out from the defunct state fair Millwork strike may be over officially tonight.

And those are top headlines here are the complete stories

There's a guy in Japan, name of Yukio Ozaki,⁷ who is 89 years old. I suppose there are a lot of citizens of Nippon who are 89, but this Yukio is unusual in that he's been a member of every Jap Parliament since they had a Jap Parliament. So Yukio is such a character as ought to know the score. And what he's got to say one year from V-J Day isn't exactly hay. So here it is. Yukio Ozaki even cut off his beard when he handed in his titles, ranks, and decorations to Hirohito. And now he gazes around the Nipponese landscape and snorts, "Japanese people fresh out of brains! They do not work with each other!" And then I guess Yukio went over there in the corner and brooded, wondering if he sounded like George Bernard Shaw when he popped off that way

Don't have much more out of China today, except that our state and agriculture departments are sending a flock of farm experts over there to China and to the Philippines to teach those guys how to raise stuff. Maybe our guys will come back with some first-class recipes for birds' nest soup and rice a la grasshopper.

Over in the Holy Land, you can look for a cyclone to pop. The first boatload of Jews the British banished to barbed wire pens on the island of Cyprus arrived and two kids aboard were dead

In Paris,⁸ there's plenty of shally-gagging on between

⁷ Following is the original AP wire story from which the above was written:

Tokyo—Eighty-nine-year-old Yukio Ozaki has been a member of every Japanese Diet since the parliamentary form of government was introduced in Nippon. Today, a year after the crash of Japan's dreams of conquest, Ozaki takes a gloomy view of Japan and things Japanese. Ozaki is the elder statesman who mowed off his impressive beard when he handed back his titles, ranks, and decorations to Emperor Hirohito. Today, after a year of occupation, the octogenarian snorts the opinion that his countrymen have no brains. For one thing, says Ozaki, in order to rebuild Japan, the Japanese people must cooperate with one another. But they are not, he says; they are interfering. Ozaki adds that as far as he can see, the Jap people never think of the future.

⁸ Following is the UP story from which the above was written:

In Paris, Secretary of State Byrnes has charged at the peace conference that Russia has misrepresented the American position on treaties. He has called for freedom of economic opportunity in the defeated nations to save them from what he calls "economic enslavement."

Russia's Andrei Vishinsky then took the floor and announced that Molotov would answer Byrnes in detail at the proper time and place. However, he took the time to defend Russian policy—calling it consistent, but also realistic.

The Soviet newspaper Pravda has had a few sharp words to say about Byrnes. It has accused the American representative of trying to boss the peace conference.

Jimmy Byrnes and a couple of borscht and vodka boys Jimmy came out today and clipped Russia for misrepresenting the American position on treaties But did Rawshia sit still for that'n? Shucks, no It's daily blatter named Pravda came out using boldface type to say that Byrnes is trying to boss the whole peace conference. And Joe Stalin's boy, Andy Vishinsky, stood right up with his teeth in his mouth and charged in, saying that Vyacheslav Molotov would sure have something to say to J. Byrnes when the time and place were proper.

But that's the international news in brief. Here are a few notes about people President Truman is going boat riding on the SS Williamsburg for seventeen or eighteen days. Be back on Labor Day In Kentucky, the only man who ever owned a horse or horses that won the Derby four times died today. He was Colonel E. R. Bradley. Heart attack. He was 86 Housing Expediter Wyatt says priority permits for G.I. homes were way below the requirements in July Hot dawg! That's about as obvious as saying it is darker at night than it is in the daytime Out in Murray, Utah, the 87-year-old mother of Jack Dempsey died this morning on her little 21-acre farm. She was Mrs. Cecile Dempsey. Jack and his two sisters and one brother were at her bedside.

Today's little dilly is from St. Paul where we, at long last, get a noseful of another reason why there wasn't any butter around here or there for so long. W. H. Dankers, a University farm-marketing economist who should know the score, says consumers drank so darned much milk and cream that there wasn't enough butterfat to go around And the reason that this is such a dilly is that milk is about your most nearly perfect food, as any fool can plainly see, and which I been yelping for four years every morning Yattata, yattata and 23 skiddoo to you, kiddo! But that's the news in brief from here and there around the nation.

Locally, another 33 cases of polio are on the records in Minnesota today. That brings the state total to 1,237! And as the dreaded disease spreads and doesn't seem to either reach a peak or diminish, public and parochial schools are taking steps to delay fall openings South Dakota is doing likewise Kenosha, Wisconsin, has 45 cases now with eight new ones today Three new ones in Milwaukee. There are 137 in South Dakota; 113 in North Dakota In Minneapolis, where things are worst, six new cases today for a total of 512 since the first of the year In St.

Paul, ten new cases today for a total of 133. No new deaths were reported in the Twin Cities, though.

I don't know how much good it'll do, but here's a suggestion that sounds like everybody ought to go along with it. A listener calls in to suggest that we all be extra careful in wrapping garbage well, so's it won't bust open. Seems to me that all of us should do that every day in the year and especially now during this outbreak of polio.

But that uses up our time today and that's all from here except for this:

Slacks for you dolls now come in four standard sizes: Small, medium, wow, and hot diggety! Yup!

I'll be back tomorrow same time Monday at 7:45, too So long.

Comment: Reading any script is likely to be disheartening. Reading a script written in sidewalk idiom and frequently drawing on slang may be aggravating, but apply the familiar test: say it aloud. Even though you are a stickler for pure English, it may have unusual appeal. A great many listeners like this kind of stuff, a great many talk that way though probably no one person uses all the expressions that may embellish any particular example. John Ford himself describes it as "corn." And he has been doing a program of this kind for four years, as he remarked in the script you have just read. This script also carries a suggestion by a listener for health protection—wrap your garbage. It is not easy to transpose straightforward news from the radio service wires into the speech of the man on the street, or to handle local news with the same apparent flippancy. Actually it is more difficult to write in such a style than to write straight news; you must be doubly vigilant to guard against being misunderstood. Among other tests was that imposed by the censorship of the war years: the flow of sidewalk idiom was *not* cut on Ford programs.

In two footnotes there have been given for your reference the radio news service copy as it came from the teletypes. You can see for yourself the extent of the transposition required.

Keep in mind that a staff of writers, with the several fields of news—international, national, regional, and local—nicely divided, as is the method in the large radio newsrooms, has not put the script together. The work of building not only a program

of radio news, but a program of radio news transposed into everyday idiom, has been done by one man, and he gives it on the air: he alone bears the grief if there is error. Would you enjoy being that kind of a radio news writer, and that kind of a voice? Even educators are among his fan-mail listeners. Apparently they experience a katharsis, a liberation from the rigidities of classroom English, in hearing the sidewalk idiom tossed into their willing ears with gay but well-planned abandon.

Commentators

You will find on the air commentators discussing almost any subject you care to listen to. They came into being as naturally as newspaper columnists rose to their places in the press; in fact, many commentators were newspaper and magazine writers before they entered radio. Their viewpoints vary widely from liberalism through all the shadings to archconservatism; some of them sound notes of impending doom; some never are anything but optimistic; some are rapid-fire, others comparatively leisurely in delivery.

The top men among them are those who have the courage and the ability to give the listener unbiased interpretations and analyses.

Whether they prepare their own scripts, or have radio newsmen organize their material, commentators put their own style into their presentations and sizeable groups of listeners like *the way they say things*. They do not remain on the air very long if they do not have this appeal.

And students bent on analyzing what commentators are attempting to do, and how well they are doing it, will always find their varying viewpoints interesting.

Assignment

Write one or more 5-minute news programs of 800 words each. Build each one out of a single front page of *one* newspaper. For each additional program, take a new front page.

The Longer Program

Still the rigid requirement holds: find in each case, the right word, that, and no other.

Fifteen-minute programs are more frequent on the air than units of any other length. The principal reasons are (1) the 15-minute program is a workable unit of time, that is, it is usually long enough to permit at least adequate presentation; and (2) it permits change of radio fare four times within an hour. From this point onward, therefore, think in terms of programs at least 15 minutes in length. However, what will be said will apply to any period from 5 minutes to 60.

In making this transition from the earlier chapters, devoted to the several announcement forms and the 5-minute programs, to these longer programs, keep clearly in mind the basic requirements of radio writing given you all along this uneasy way. Remember that among those basic essentials are:

1. *Clarity.* Your script is of program length now, but it must be as clear and understandable as your announcement paragraphs.

2. *Imagery.* If you do not make your listener see what you see, you become abstract and he will think your program dry and dusty and not worth listening to.

Review Chapters 6, 5 and 7

If you are going to write drama, review the *basic* requirements: conflict, unity, coherence, progression, clarity, imagery, buoyancy, proportion, naturalness. And, because they also are important, also review the *special* requirements peculiar to radio drama, and the *advantages that are radio drama's own*. All are found in Chapter 6.

It is advisable also to look back from here to Chapter 5 for a moment, for we carry forward from that chapter and apply to these longer programs patterns that are basically similar. In that chapter, dialogue announcements (1-minute or less) were divided into four different types:

1. Descriptive or narrative.
2. Question and answer (interview or round-table discussion).
3. Presentation in layers (montage/bridge).
4. Dramatic dialogue (drama).

These fundamental patterns, it was pointed out in Chapter 7, may also be used in 5-minute programs. Here, in this chapter, they are applied to even longer programs; in fact, there is no dialogue program, whatever its length, that will not conform to the above patterns. It is true they may undergo strange metamorphoses, but their basic essentials may be identified easily in your own script, and in the examples of this and succeeding chapters.

Note that we are considering dialogue henceforth; dialogue is "a speaking between persons," never a talk by one person. Principally because it is much more entertaining, that dialogue will be dramatic or drama.

We cannot, however, wholly write off the descriptive program or the interview because there is not always sufficient time to prepare a program more suitable in form and more entertaining. Examples of both, therefore, will follow in this chapter.

Experience with 5-minute programs will have shown that you cannot use the montage or bridge for the full 5 minutes, nor can you use it for a full 15 minutes. From its very nature, it does not lend itself to sustained use. It can be used to paint

a broad or general scene quickly in the listener's mind: it is not suitable for imparting information of specific nature.

Do not write loosely

So, with 15 minutes to fill, you now may be thinking you can really step out and write freely. To you and all other good companions along this still-too-unfamiliar highway: if you mean by writing freely to write loosely, then you are writing into trouble from the start.

In other forms of writing, artists as well as journeymen do not always burn with that *hard gemlike flame* Walter Pater so earnestly recommended. They ramble; they slosh their talent around among their materials, and now and then come up with something good. In the best radio, you cannot do this, for radio amplifies weaknesses so painfully. Such weaknesses are evident, of course, almost any hour of your listening day, but such defects are not the objective of this book.

A radio writer, even a good one, cannot hold undeviatingly to the beam; the best of them experience slumps, but there is no field where good writing will stand revealed in such glory as in radio. And there is no field where more meticulous care is needed. The work is painstaking in the original drafting; likewise, in condensation or elaboration to make it fit the allotted time; painstaking down to the very last word which, like the first, and each one in between, must be chosen with all the discrimination your talent gives you. The reward may be something of an answer to all those critics who "never turn the radio on," yet write freely about its shortcomings.

Let us keep in mind, too, that only rarely does a sponsor take a program for one presentation only. Air time seldom is used that way. For that matter, only under unusual circumstances does a station or network put on a sustaining program for one time only. Naturally, programs of special events can break out any time, but, generally speaking, programs are sold in blocks, the number varying in frequency within a given calendar period. Similarly, if a program is educational or a public service, it, too, is presented *in series*, and that series likewise varies in frequency in a given calendar period.

Graph of Specific Program

Contents of a 15-minute program shown in detail

GRAPH No.4

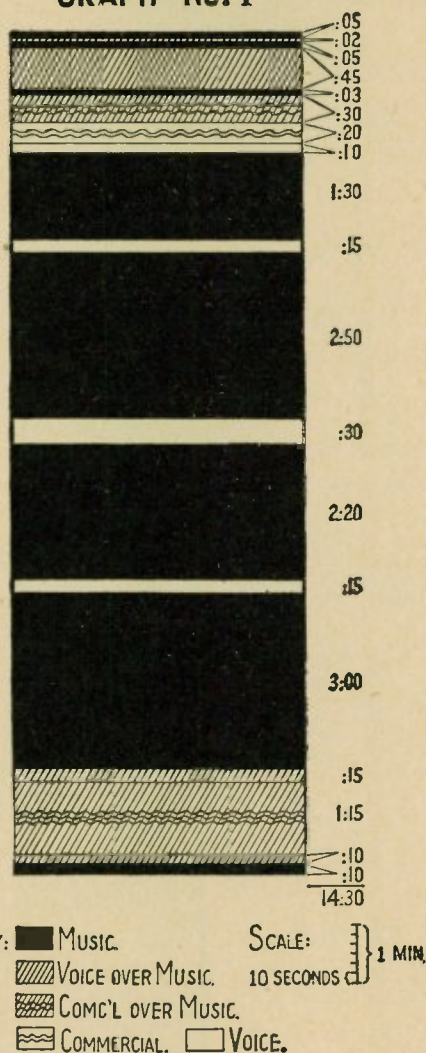


Figure 3. This graph illustrates the Mary Downey Program of music, script of which appears on page 352. It reveals at a glance the amount of entertainment (music in this case) and the amount of commercial copy in the program. For basic graphs of frequently used program patterns, see the illustration on page 101, Figure 2.

Graph your program

Before beginning to write your 15-minute program, draw a graph of it. (See Chapter 7 for graphs of 5-minute programs.) The graph for a 15-minute program (see page 186 for illustration) is made the same way, though it very frequently will have a more complex content. If you, its author, see your program clearly, you can draw a graph of it easily. If you are hazy and do not know where this or that goes, then the graph will be indefinite. Submitting a finished and attractive graph with a program to your sponsor, agency, or station always is a good thing to do. From it and the casting sheet they can see immediately what you propose; so can the program director or production chief.

The casting sheet should be the first or top page of your completed script. (Examples accompany each of the programs that follow, though they are made more compact to conserve space.) The casting sheet gives the reader, at a glance, the following information: (1) title of program, (2) date and time of broadcast (or audition), (3) name of author, (4) cast (characters), (5) sound (kinds) (6) music (titles or suggestions). Other necessary information may be admitted to this page, but do *not* make it an encyclopedia, for its purpose is to provide quickly an over-all picture of the program.

Word count in a 15-minute program

A 15-minute program takes more than three times as much writing as a 5-minute program: 2,000 words, in fact, would be the maximum number, if you used nothing but words. The rate, of course, is the same as for 5-minute dialogues: 140 words to the minute. Actual air time for a 15-minute program is 14 minutes 30 seconds, or 14:30. But remember that from this is deducted time required for the commercials (if it is a commercial program) and for whatever music and sound you use. This may reduce materially the word count of the entertainment section of your program. Again refer to Chapter 5 for a workable method of estimating these requirements. Selec-

tions of music incorporated in a program should be timed beforehand. Transcribed music has the playing time of each selection shown on the platter. Music *background* naturally *is not counted separately* for it is proceeding simultaneously with the action of your piece.

Be certain that your script is complete, a finished product. If it is complete, it will have an introduction, middle content, and closing in all the detail set forth in Chapter 7. Anything other than a program complete in every detail reveals rank amateurishness. If you omit the introduction, or the closing, someone else must write it. There are exceptions such as prize competitions where script without its setting, that is, without opening and closing, is invited, but you are advised of them beforehand.

Examples of dialogue forms

Study first the examples of the several forms of dialogue that follow before you begin writing one of these longer programs. Note not only the script content and the technical devices made use of, but the comment; in each case, both good points and defects of the scripts are cited. The first example is a propaganda program in the interest of public health.

Script: *Hope for Tomorrow* (Descriptive or narrative)

HOPE FOR TOMORROW: JOHN KEATS

(Fifth and final program in series. As broadcast)

Script by Muriel Steward

Sponsor: Christmas Seal organizations of Minnesota

CAST: Announcer
Narrator

MUSIC: Transcriptions as indicated in script

SOUND: None

CUE: THEME: "POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE": WORLD ELECTRICAL TRANSCRIPTION (WET) 308: UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: Presenting "Hope for Tomorrow," the fifth and last of a series of broadcasts bringing you the life stories of men who found their opportunity in disaster, men who waged a gallant fight against pain and physical handicap, and whose victory, written in terms of great and lasting achievement, is our heritage, a priceless heritage of courage for today and tomorrow Sponsored by the Christmas Seal organizations of Minnesota, KSTP presents notes from the life story of John Keats, one of the greatest poets of all time He lived in the shadow of physical pain, but he wrote of the adventures of the human spirit, and so triumphant was his victory over circumstances, that he gave to the world a new concept of beauty. John Keats' story is an inspiration to all who are handicapped by illness, or burdened by worry, to live victoriously

CUE: MUSIC OUT:

ANNOUNCER: The story of a life which misfortune could not crush, John Keats' amazing story, will be narrated by E. W. Ziebarth.

ZIEBARTH: From his birth, the white plague marked John Keats for its victim. His father was Thomas Keats, an hostler. Although the family circumstances were humble, the parents had ambitions for their four children, and John, who was the eldest, was sent to a good school. As a boy, he was active, lively, and fond of a fight. At the age of fourteen, his interests turned to literature and through his literary ability, he won one prize after another.

John was only nine when his father was killed. His mother, never very strong, became ill of tuberculosis and in 1810 when John was only fourteen, she died of this disease. The boy was deeply attached to his mother, who has been described as "a rather ordinary woman, whose character was conspicuous for feminine frailties. She was prodigal, impetuous, fond of pleasure and gayety." But to the boy Keats, she was the best-beloved. He worshiped her, with an almost fanatical love. During the last year of her illness, he would allow no one to do anything for her but himself. In those days, it was not known that tuberculosis was a contagious disease.

In his close attendance on his dying mother, it is probable that the boy received the infection which was to fasten itself upon his young life. After his mother's death, John was apprenticed to a surgeon.

The duties of the young Keats were not strictly of a medi-

cal nature. His job consisted chiefly of holding the doctor's horse, helping to bleed patients, working with drugs, and delivering them to patients. At night, he read medical tomes. He was not happy at this work. The death of his mother, with all its morbid aspects, ill-fitted him for constant association with sickness. His grieving young mind yearned for the consolation of the books he loved.

He received an appointment at St. Guy's Hospital in London in 1815—he was then only twenty—and in a short time was a full-fledged practitioner of medicine. Surgery was no business for one of Keats' temperament in those days. Anesthetics had not yet been discovered. The patient for operation was strapped to a table and nothing was given to dull the pain during surgical procedures but a lead bullet to clench between the teeth! In 1817, when he witnessed an unnecessary death, he laid down the surgeon's knife, never to take it in his hands again.

In the same year, his first volume of poems made its appearance. The book was not successful. Scott and Byron were then at the height of their power. But he was not easily discouraged. His first great work "Endymion" appeared in the winter of 1818. It was misunderstood, unappreciated.

His brother, Tom, whom he greatly loved, fell ill. Tuberculosis had marked another victim in his family circle. John nursed Tom through his illness, which proved to be brief and fatal.

This second close contact with a case of active tuberculosis placed Keats in imminent peril. But to the young poet it was a labor of love. The transitory nature of life was now terribly impressed upon him. Perhaps he saw the handwriting on the wall for himself. Following his brother's death, his genius flared up and in a burst of feverish creative fire, he gave the world "The Eve of St. Agnes," "The Eve of St. Mark," and the exquisite and magnificent "Ode on a Grecian Urn."

CUE: MUSIC: NBC-571: UP AND UNDER:

ZIEBARTH: In the shadow that haunted his every breathing moment, he wrote at this time:

"When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain
Before high-piled books, in charactery,
Hold like rich garners the full ripen'd grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
High cloudy symbols of a high romance.

And think that I may never live to trace
 Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance:
 And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
 That I shall never look upon thee more,
 Never have relish in the faery power
 Of unreflecting love:—then on the shore
 Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
 Till love and fame to nothingness do sink."

CUE: MUSIC OUT:

ZIEBARTH: Alas for the world which was only beginning to be aware of the bright and shining light of Keats' genius, his words were true. His life was ebbing and he knew it. In 1820, it was believed that exercise, not rest, was cure for tuberculosis. And so the stricken poet attempted walking. Next, bravely but sadly facing the separation from those he loved, he went to Italy and France, seeking a kinder climate But both of these plans were to prove futile. In the meantime, a glory entered into his writing. His poetry now bore the unmistakable mark of genius it was truly "a thing of beauty." And beauty has never had so eloquent a spokesman

CUE: MUSIC: NBC-571: UP AND UNDER:

ZIEBARTH: "A thing of beauty is a joy forever,
 Its loveliness increases; it will never
 Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
 A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
 Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
 Therefore, on every morrow are we wreathing
 A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
 Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
 Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
 Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
 Made for our searching: Yes, in spite of all,
 Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
 From our dark spirits."

CUE: MUSIC OUT:

ZIEBARTH: Never in so brief a time, was such huge creativeness. The year in which "The Eve of St. Agnes" was begun, also saw the completion of "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," the "Ode to a Nightingale," the "Ode to Autumn," and the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," and each of these great poems scaled a new

height in English literature. During this crowded year, when the fires of his creative energy were burning with a splendid flame, illness was consuming his body and the burden of poverty was heavy on his life and yet, his victorious spirit spoke in lines of immortal poetry of the glory of living

CUE: MUSIC: NBC-571: UP AND UNDER:

ZIEBARTH: "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone;
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare.
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve—
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!"

CUE: MUSIC OUT:

ZIEBARTH: Just before his death in February, 1821, the poet said:
"If I should die, I have left no immortal work behind me, nothing to make my friends proud of my memory, but I have loved the principle of beauty in all things, and if I had had time, I would have made myself remembered." "If I had had time" there had been time enough, could the poet only have known time enough, not only to give pride to his friends, but to delight the heart of the world, for generations to come. His lot had never been cast in the pleasant ways, his burden had been heavy, his time for work had been pathetically brief, but like many another brave man, he had lighted the torch of genius in the ashes of adversity, had given to the world courage for today, hope for tomorrow.

CUE: THEME: WET 308: UP AND FADE:

ANNOUNCER: Thank you, Mr. Ziebarth You have just heard notes from the life story of the English poet, John Keats, the fifth and last of a series of broadcasts sponsored by the Christmas Seal organizations of Minnesota Tuberculosis has shadowed the lives and cut short the achievements of many great men and women Your purchase of Christmas Seals will help protect all lives from tuberculosis.

CUE: THEME: OUT:

Comment: This descriptive or narrative script carries refined propaganda (the word "propaganda" may be used to describe worthy projects as well as unworthy). The actual wordage given to mention of Christmas Seals totals 22. The entire script, however, was a narration: highlights, well-linked together, from the life of John Keats. The pattern calls for the use of announcer (from station staff), narrator, and two transcriptions of music: one for theme, and the other for background music behind the poems. There were three *spots* of poetry in all. Using such a pattern, you can get a highly effective presentation with a minimum of talent. It is comparatively easy as well as convenient to produce. There is one word in the script that stands out like a sore thumb: *hostler*. If John Keats' father was a groom and took care of horses it is better to say so, than to take refuge behind a word little used in America, even in the heyday of livery stables.

The examples of poetry were wisely selected to give the program *progression*. But the writer had to present more than poetry: it was her job to present, in a brief program, a cohering glimpse of the life of Keats. And that requires understanding of your subject matter, understanding and appreciation, such as is revealed in the script. As the script and the program *came off*, they carried in the spoken word and in the overtones that were not spoken (but are always present in good script) something of the glory that was Keats. In the allotted ten minutes that is an achievement, but, in turn, such an accomplishment is the *lure* of radio.

The word "cue" is the author's style of indicating music. Similar "cue lines" may appear in script for stage productions.

Script: Interview Program (Question-and-answer)

Next a question-and-answer type of program, or interview, the occasion being the anniversary of the publication of the first American newspaper; the observance was a part of National Newspaper Week. It was presented over station WTCN, Minneapolis-Saint Paul.

FOR THE LADIES

Script by Luther Weaver

Sponsor: Minnesota Federal Savings and Loan Association

CAST: Announcer

Program conductor

Interviewee

MUSIC: Theme: "PEARL O'MINE"

SOUND: None

THEME: "PEARL O'MINE":

ANNOUNCER: (OPENING) Presenting "For the Ladies" This broadcast comes to you through the courtesy of the Minnesota Federal Savings and Loan Association of Minneapolis and St. Paul it is presented direct from the women's lounge in the St. Paul office of Minnesota Federal on Minnesota Street at Fourth You're cordially invited to attend these broadcasts every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 2:00 P.M. Mr. Luther Weaver will conduct the interview today Mr. Weaver

WEAVER: I suppose it's only fair, first of all, to explain how two masculine voices have intruded in this nook of the air, sacred for so long to the soft English syllables of Sylvia Dawes As she explained so graciously on her program Wednesday, she soon is leaving for England, but this program will continue on Mondays, on Wednesdays, and on Fridays from the women's lounge of Minnesota Federal in St. Paul today, we are glad to present, with perhaps singular propriety, Bernard H. Ridder, publisher of the St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press Just why is the appearance of a newspaper publisher on this program appropriate? Well, here's the reason two hundred thirty-five years ago almost to the day, the first regularly published American newspaper came off the hand press in Boston, Massachusetts It was the Boston News Letter, for the week of April 17 to April 24, 1704 1704 that's a long time ago, before this America was, before Washington was born, but you tell us about it, Mr. Ridder

RIDDER: Well, though there have been four generations of Ridders in the newspaper publishing field in America, even the earliest representative, the original Herman Ridder, came along more than a century after that first newspaper Therefore, I would have to go back to the records of the

publishing business to get my facts together As all of us in the business know, advertising started practically with the very first issue The editor, Campbell, of that first number of the Boston News Letter tried through an ad of his own to have merchants offer goods for sale Like good advertising in good media ever since, that first ad had pull, for in the third issue of that first newspaper, there were three ads.

WEAVER: Faith in advertising began early in America, didn't it, Mr. Ridder?

RIDDER: Yes, indeed, but I've never been able to find out whether the man who advertised for those two anvils stolen from that wharf in Boston in that third issue of the Boston News Letter ever found them or not.

WEAVER: Anvils? it would be a great testimonial for classified advertising managers in general, if it could be dug out of some musty file

RIDDER: Yes but, actually, one of those three ads really offered something for sale it was a wool cleaning mill on Long Island, so we who publish newspapers generally regard it as the first advertisement ever published in America

WEAVER: Now, how about the news that was carried in that first paper?

RIDDER: Well, they had no Associated Press they took the gossip of the captains and passengers of incoming ships and stuff from English papers, and rewrote it In fact, so diligently did this man Campbell, the first editor, play up European political events, wars, and rumors of war that he was thirteen months behind the London papers when he sold out twenty-two years later But out of that came your first newspaper, and there is the beginning of the newspaper publishing business in America

WEAVER: You said something about four generations of Ridders in the newspaper business in this country, Mr. Ridder Who was the first one of your family to lend a hand to it?

RIDDER: That was Herman Ridder, Sr., my grandfather he took up newspaper work in New York City in 1835 and his son, Herman Ridder, Jr., carried on the tradition thus started The first papers owned by the family were a group of religious publications in New York City They included the New York Catholic News, a weekly that subsequently became one of the great Catholic journals

WEAVER: Well, when did this family with the tradition of printer's ink so much a part of them, when did they get into the daily newspaper field, Mr. Ridder?

RIDDER: That came with the purchase of the New York Staats-Zeitung in 1879, a German language daily of New York founded in 1834 it has been in the family for sixty years

WEAVER: And somewhere on the honor roll of the founders of the Associated Press, isn't there a Ridder?

RIDDER: Yes, that's Herman, Jr., my father he was one of the founders and on the original board of directors of the Associated Press

WEAVER: And the Associated Press, well, all newspapermen know what the AP is, and every newspaper reader has seen that little AP logotype sunk in the date line of the stories in the papers he reads, but you describe it, Mr. Ridder what is the Associated Press?

RIDDER: It's the greatest of all news-gathering organizations The Dispatch-Pioneer Press is a member

WEAVER: And haven't I seen the name of your father in the role of presidents of that organization of newspaper publishers, I mean the

RIDDER: You mean the American Newspaper Publishers' Association yes, he was the fourteenth president

WEAVER: By the way, Mr. Ridder, what was the first English language daily you acquired?

RIDDER: It was the Long Island Daily Press at Jamaica, Long Island We now have a list of twelve papers a list that includes the New York Journal of Commerce, the business daily, and here in the Midwest, the Grand Forks Herald, the Aberdeen, South Dakota, American, and the Duluth Herald-Tribune We also have an interest in the Seattle Times.

WEAVER: And you bought the St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press, when was that?

RIDDER: That was in 1927, Mr. Weaver, and it's particularly pertinent on this anniversary of the publication of the first American newspaper because the present St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press is the direct descendant of the first newspaper ever published in Minnesota Here, look, I took it down from

my office wall and brought it along Here is the first Minnesota newspaper, the Minnesota Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 1 it came off the press May 1, 1854

WEAVER: Shades of poets dead and gone! Ben Franklin should be here, too, this is a treat It's too bad we can't televise it for you and let every listener see this first Minnesota newspaper why, 1854 Minnesota was still a territory, there wasn't a railroad anywhere

RIDDER: But that first sheet had a lot of ads see, all over the front page, the front page is plumb full of them

WEAVER: I should say it is how many, do you suppose how many?

RIDDER: One hundred and thirty, I counted them of course, there are some duplications of firms but look here, let's read some of them The Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York at that time, mind you, this was 85 years ago, boasted in its advertisement of a net accumulated fund of \$2,018,000 now their announcements show they have assets of one billion, three hundred and ninety-nine million dollars

WEAVER: Mr. Ridder, I have no idea what you're talking about as unfathomable as a vitamin, yet we all know what it does and look, see this ad? here's something really for the ladies our departed Sylvia will commend us for it Here is an ad showing that Mrs. M. L. Stokes of St. Anthony Street has just returned from New York with new millinery goods and the latest fashions (READING) she has taken great pains (that old-time printer didn't clean his type) she has taken great pains to obtain the fashions of the season

RIDDER: Mr. Weaver, spring bonnets were as dear to womankind in 1854 as they are today

WEAVER: They're nodding their approval, those here in the Minnesota Federal lounge

RIDDER: I see, and look at this ad, the confectionery shop of Renz and Karcher says it takes orders for cake and ice cream at lowest possible prices

WEAVER: Early beginning of the dairy industry in a state now famous for its butter and its ice cream if that's advertising, let's go out and buy some

RIDDER: And here, here's a good one An enterprising man advertises himself as a watch manufacturer, jeweler, and dentist At his shop he says he has an assortment of clocks, spectacles of all ages, back and side combs in a great variety, bosom pins, goggles, teething rings, flutes, and dice

WEAVER: Oh, and look at the lower part of his ad (READING)
. teeth carefully extracted, and plugged He flatters himself (this is all in the ad) that he shall be able to give satisfaction to all who may favor him with their work His motto is punctuality, dispatch, and moderate charges I suppose that dispatch means a quick yank

RIDDER: Undoubtedly, and your famous citizen, A. L. Larpenteur, after whom Larpenteur Avenue on the north city limits is named, he was advertising foreign and domestic dry goods on sale at his store at Third and Jackson Streets

WEAVER: And someone else has fifty barrels of whiskey for sale cheap, but that was eighty-five years ago Even if the ad had no pulling power, the stuff's probably been disposed of now

RIDDER: Oh, yes, indeed well, we could go on and on through the whole afternoon, but I think we'd better explain how the present Dispatch-Pioneer Press came into existence. This first newspaper, the Minnesota Pioneer, eventually merged with a paper called the Press, and became the Pioneer Press.

WEAVER: That accounts for as distinctive a name as there is in American newspaper annals but how did the Dispatch come into this picture?

RIDDER: The Dispatch? here, I brought the first issue of it along, too see, it bears the date of February 29, 1868 Talk of impeachment of the president of the United States was rife at that time see how it's played on the front page? Well, many years later that same paper and the Pioneer Press came under the management of the late George Thompson that merger was in 1909.

WEAVER: And then, when was it you said you took over the Dispatch-Pioneer Press, Mr. Ridder?

RIDDER: In 1927 we bought the paper from Mr. Charles K. Blandin

WEAVER: And you have something to do with radio, don't you?

RIDDER: We are joint owners with the Minneapolis Tribune of radio station WTCN that is carrying our program today

.....

WEAVER: That makes me think the other day I came across an interesting sidelight on the pace of development of the two media, the newspaper and radio It was two centuries after the first newspaper in America was published that the first school of journalism was established in America but in radio, now scarcely more than 17 years ago, there already are radio production departments in various schools New York University will set up a full 4-year course next fall and right here at the University of Minnesota, the first radio script writing classes were opened three years ago, or only fourteen years after stations began to fight for position on the standard band of broadcasting But let's finish your tribute in celebration of newspapers' 235th anniversary Mr. Ridder, in the course of the past 200 years, do you believe the American newspaper has retained its freedom and independence?

RIDDER: I believe the American press is as free as the American people if in modern political changes, the American people have modified this original conception of unlimited freedom of action for the individual, the same is equally true of the press Through natural evolution, newspaper-making has become a large business enterprise The demand of the reader for world-wide news coverage and comprehensive features has completely revolutionized the newspaper during the past forty years Each daily newspaper is almost a magazine in the wondrously varied appeal it makes to the reader

WEAVER: And how about the editors? the men who run the sheets? What about their personalities?

RIDDER: The original newspapers of the United States reflected the personalities of their publishers Today newspapers serve entire communities, and reflect the hopes, the needs, and the services of the communities for which they are published.

WEAVER: Then you think that magnificent creed of the late Walter Williams, founder of the first school of journalism in America, still rings true, that journalism which succeeds best is the journalism of humanity, of and for today's world?

RIDDER: Yes every creed set up in a more stable time is more or less under pressure, if not open attack, but to fear God

and honor man, which was a part of his famous creed, that is perhaps more imperative today than ever before.

WEAVER: Thank you, Mr. Ridder, for your contribution to our program today I am sure the thousands who pick their papers off the front doorstep tonight will look over that marvelous product of a marvelous country with keener appreciation of an American newspaper And now our sponsor's contribution to modern advertising The Minnesota Federal Savings and Loan Association has resources of more than thirteen million, seven hundred thousand dollars Thousands of men and women in these two cities and over this Northwest enjoy the liberal return it pays on their money Its current rate is three per cent and your account up to five thousand dollars is federally insured against loss Both profit and security are yours at Minnesota Federal you're invited to start a savings fund there at once So here's luck, in the teeth of all winds blowing

ANNOUNCER: For the Ladies has come to you direct from the women's lounge in the St. Paul office of the Minnesota Federal Savings and Loan Association on Minnesota Street at Fourth Minnesota Federal also has commodious offices in the La Salle Building on Seventh at Marquette in Minneapolis On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday this program is presented from the Minnesota Federal offices in St. Paul You are cordially invited to stop in and see these broadcasts put on the air "For the Ladies" will be presented again next Monday at this same time (Broadcast April 21, 1939)

THEME: "PEARL O'MINE":

Comment: This interview with a newspaper publisher in celebration of the anniversary of the first American newspaper was perhaps too heavily packed with historical information about the beginnings of newspapering and advertising on this continent. However, the public was more or less aware of the general observance, the particular program tying into activities incident to the anniversary. Further, as the publisher of a newspaper, the interviewee probably appreciated the publicity about advertising. Note that wherever possible, the lighter touch was used to relieve tension of fact on fact. Any interview will be better, if the person doing the interviewing also

knows something about the subject; the interviewer's lines then become something more than one cold, lifeless question after question.

The script is documentary in import though not so handled technically. True documentary presentation would have dramatized certain scenes to speed up the progression and to maintain listener receptivity. Drama would have brought new voices, holding the listener on the *qui vive*. For example, the alert documentary writer would have put a voice *behind* the first ad ever published in an American newspaper, the one mentioned early in the script in which a wool cleaning mill is offered for sale. That would have greatly heightened the impression of the fact. Note that this is a "woman's program" (see Chapter 15); the script, in its opening, explains the absence of the regular interviewer.

Script: *Give Us Leaders* (Presentation in layers—montage/bridge)

This program was presented as one of a series of public-service programs over Station KWKW, Pasadena, California. It also was given a repeat broadcast.

GIVE US LEADERS

Script by Florence V. Hastings

Sponsor: Girl Scout organizations of Los Angeles area

CAST: Announcer

Narrator

Girls' voices: First
Second
Third
Fourth
Fifth

SOUND: None

MUSIC: Organ music: chords,
chortles, quirks

MUSIC: THEME: UP FULL AND DOWN TO:

ANNOUNCER: "Give Us Leaders!"

MUSIC: UP FULL AND OUT:

ANNOUNCER: Youth is working for Victory! Ten thousand girls in the Los Angeles area alone are anxious to contribute their part in the war effort. But, in order to aid effectively, ten thousand girls need training and supervision through their local youth groups.

MUSIC: CHORD:

1ST VOICE: I want to be a Junior Nurse's Aid Girl Scout!

MUSIC: POINT:

2ND VOICE: I'd like to help in a day nursery!

MUSIC: POINT, HIGHER:

3RD VOICE: I could help harvest crops!

MUSIC: POINT, HIGHER:

4TH VOICE: I want to be a Wing Scout!

MUSIC: POINT, HIGHER:

5TH VOICE: (WISTFUL) If I could just belong to the Scouts
I'd find some way to help.

MUSIC: CHORD:

ANNOUNCER: Yes, you are anxious to bring Victory closer
Each one of you, and thousands more, want to belong to the Girl Scouts, yet cannot because they lack leaders. Who knows, you may get your wish. After today's story has been heard, interested adults may call Drexel 2185 and inquire about the Girl Scout training courses for volunteer leaders. We hope many adults will not only hear of our great need for leaders, but will offer their services.

MUSIC: UP FULL AND DOWN TO:

ANNOUNCER: And here is Ruth Barcume, our storyteller, with your story for today.

MUSIC: "OLD MACDONALD HAD A FARM": UP FULL AND DOWN TO:

NARRATOR: That's right. Old MacDonald had a farm. MacDonald? He was the happy one.

MUSIC: GAY, LIGHT NOTES:

NARRATOR: And, what's more, Old MacTavish had a farm! Right across the road. MacTavish? He was the dour one.

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: But instead of (RAPIDLY) ducks, ducks, here

MUSIC: IMITATES "DUCKS, DUCKS HERE":

NARRATOR: (RAPIDLY) and pigs, pigs there

MUSIC: IMITATES "PIGS, PIGS THERE":

NARRATOR: These farmers had (RAPIDLY) tomato plants here, tomato plants there. Here plants, there plants, everywhere tomato plants.

MUSIC: IMITATES "TOMATO PLANTS HERE," ETC.

NARRATOR: Tomatoes, as you may have already guessed, were all that old MacDonald, he was the happy one

MUSIC: GAY, LIGHT NOTES:

NARRATOR: and old MacTavish, he was the dour one

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: raised on their farms. Early in the spring, they bought hundreds of small green plants, loosened and fertilized the soil, and then set them out carefully. It took a long time and a great deal of hard work. But, of course, every once in a while, the farmers took a few minutes out to rest and talk things over

MUSIC: IMITATES LONG SIGH OF RELIEF:

NARRATOR: It was then, that old MacDonald, the happy one

MUSIC: GAY, LIGHT NOTES:

NARRATOR: and old MacTavish, the dour one

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: compared notes on their farms, and the work they were doing. Finally, all the small, new plants were set out. But this didn't mean that the work was finished. Oh, no!

MUSIC: IMITATES "OH, NO":

NARRATOR: All those tomato plants had to be tended in every imaginable way. Cultivated, irrigated. And then, of course, they must be watched constantly for snails

MUSIC: LOW, MENACING NOTES:

NARRATOR: and all the pests that loved to eat small, new plants. Not only that, young spring rabbits liked nothing better than nibbling on the tender, juicy, green leaves. Fat, old hens cannily dug their way out of the chicken yard and seemed to consider scratching up tomato plants the finest sport in the world. So you can easily see that old MacDonald, the happy one

MUSIC: GAY, LIGHT NOTES:

NARRATOR: and old MacTavish, the dour one

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: had plenty to keep them busy. They kept hard at work through all the beautiful spring days Overhead, peach trees blossomed into deep, pink blooms

MUSIC: MERRY NOTES INDICATING SPRING:

NARRATOR: And in these trees, birds sang and chirped all the live-long day

MUSIC: IMITATES BIRDS:

NARRATOR: Out in the green meadow, woolly white lambs with wobbly legs suddenly learned to run and jump and frolic in the sun.

MUSIC: INDICATING SPRING:

NARRATOR: So, with plenty of moisture and sunshine and good soil, all those wee tomato plants grew

MUSIC: POINT:

NARRATOR: And grew!

MUSIC: POINT, HIGHER:

NARRATOR: And grew!

MUSIC: POINT, HIGHER:

NARRATOR: Almost over night, yellow blossoms disappeared, and small green buttons grew in their stead. It was then, that old MacDonald, the happy one

MUSIC: GAY, LIGHT NOTES:

NARRATOR: and old MacTavish, the dour one

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: knew that spring had gone, and summer was here. On the peach tree, instead of blossoms, there were hard, green peaches. And very often now, the birds stopped singing

MUSIC: IMITATES BIRDS:

NARRATOR: just long enough to point their bills into the fruit and hope that it wouldn't be sour.

MUSIC: SHARP, SOUR NOTE:

NARRATOR: Out in the meadow, the lambs had grown to enormous size. They walked about sedately and full of dignity. Sometimes, they even slept!

MUSIC: CHORD:

NARRATOR: It was on a warm day in summer that the two met and talked of their work. "Aye, it's a good ccrop we'll have," said MacDonald, the happy one

MUSIC: GAY, LIGHT NOTES:

NARRATOR: "If the birrds nae eat them beforie they're full ripe," said MacTavish, the dour one.

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: "T'will be a bonnie ccrop, nae fear o' that," answered MacDonald, the happy one

MUSIC: GAY, LIGHT NOTES:

NARRATOR: And he was quite right. For the hard green buttons on the plants grew larger

MUSIC: POINT:

NARRATOR: And larger!

MUSIC: POINT, HIGHER:

NARRATOR: And larger!

MUSIC: POINT TO INDICATE GREAT SIZE:

NARRATOR: As they grew, one could see streaks of white where there had once been green. Then, an entire side tinged white; then, streaks of pink. Then red! (RAPIDLY) And before they knew it,

MUSIC: QUICK, SHARP NOTES:

NARRATOR: All the tomatoes were ripe!

MUSIC: QUICK, SHARP NOTES:

NARRATOR: As fast as that!

MUSIC: IMITATES QUICKLY "AS FAST AS THAT":

NARRATOR: Bushels, and bushels, and bushels of ripe tomatoes!
Tomatoes here.

MUSIC: IMITATES "TOMATOES HERE":

NARRATOR: Tomatoes there.

MUSIC: IMITATES "TOMATOES THERE":

NARRATOR: Tomatoes everywhere!

MUSIC: IMITATES "TOMATOES EVERYWHERE":

NARRATOR: But at the very moment old MacDonald, the happy
one

MUSIC: GAY, LIGHT NOTES:

NARRATOR: and old MacTavish, the dour one

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: saw the first streak of pink, they began at once to look
for men to help them harvest their crops. The two farmers
put advertisements in all the papers: Help Wanted!

MUSIC: DESPERATE: IMITATES "HELP WANTED":

NARRATOR: They called all the employment agencies!

MUSIC: CHORD, DESPERATE:

NARRATOR: They inquired among their friends and neighbors!

MUSIC: CHORD, DESPERATE, HIGHER:

NARRATOR: But these people already had more work than they
could do! There was No One to Be Had!

MUSIC: MOURNFUL, DESPERATE NOTES:

NARRATOR: For everyone was either in the army!

MUSIC: BARS FROM ARMY SONG ENDING IN POINT:

NARRATOR: or the Navy!

MUSIC: BARS FROM NAVY SONG ENDING IN HIGHER POINT:

NARRATOR: or the Marines!

MUSIC: BARS FROM MARINE HYMN ENDING IN POINT HIGHER:

NARRATOR: The two farmers didn't know what in the world they were going to do!

MUSIC: DESPERATE CHORD:

NARRATOR: And at night, in his bed, old MacDonald, who had been the happy one

MUSIC: GAY NOTES INTO SOUR:

NARRATOR: tossed and turned, and worried. He almost forgot how to smile! As for MacTavish, the dour one

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: He grew grumpier and grumpier! And didn't go to bed at all!

MUSIC: CHORD:

NARRATOR: One night while old MacDonald was tossing and turning and worrying, (RAPIDLY) he had a wonderful idea!

MUSIC: QUICK, TINKLING NOTES:

NARRATOR: He remembered having heard some place, that troops of Girl Scouts could be hired to help harvest crops as part of their war program service. He grew so excited and so happy that he jumped right out of bed! And even though it was the middle of the night, he ran across the road to tell his neighbor!

MUSIC: QUICK, RUNNING NOTES:

NARRATOR: The tail of his night shirt and the tassel of his night cap flapped out behind him in the breeze!

MUSIC: QUICK, RUNNING NOTES:

NARRATOR: Old MacTavish was pacing the floor and worrying. And he was very grumpy, indeed! MacDonald burst through the door without knocking!

"MacTavish!" he cried, "I have it! Ye'll nae need to pace the floor again this night!"

MacTavish stopped pacing and stared. "Ye have what?" "The way o'gathering our tomatoes!" MacDonald shouted.

"The Girl Scouts! Troops of lassies who can be hired to help a man harvest his crops when 'tis needed!" "Girrl Scouts!" MacTavish was so angry he could scarcely speak. "Girrl Scouts! Have ye gone clean daft, mon?" "'Tis a bright thought and I'll have them. And ye'll do it, too!" insisted MacDonald stubbornly "I'll have none o' the nae account lassies to ruin my farm!" MacTavish shouted, "Giggling and tee-heeing and doing naught o'work! Likely falling out o' trees to break their bones! Aye! 'Twould stop even the chicks from laying eggs, all those lassies running wild!" MacTavish stopped for breath and glared at his neighbor. But old MacDonald, and he was the happy one again

MUSIC: LIGHT, GAY NOTES:

NARRATOR: didn't care in the least. He had made up his mind to call a Scout troop the first thing next morning. He bid his angry neighbor good-night and started home. MacTavish and he was very dour now

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: banged the door so hard that the whole house shook!

MUSIC: CRASHING CHORD:

NARRATOR: And stumped around the rooms muttering to himself.

MUSIC: ANGRY NOTES:

NARRATOR: But MacDonald, the happy one

MUSIC: LIGHT, GAY NOTES:

NARRATOR: hummed an old Scotch air as he re-crossed the road. Back in his bedroom, he twisted his night cap to rights and fell into long, sweet sleep.

MUSIC: SLUMBER MUSIC UP FULL AND DOWN:

NARRATOR: So it came about. MacDonald, the happy one

MUSIC: LIGHT, GAY NOTES:

NARRATOR: called the Girl Scout headquarters. He agreed to the wage and the working hours per day. He arranged clean, roomy quarters for the girls to live in. And just when all those tomatoes were a rich, ripe red and nearly bursting with juicy goodness, the girls arrived. They set to work, and in no time at all

MUSIC: QUICK, SHARP NOTES:

NARRATOR: bushel after bushel of huge red tomatoes were on their way to market. But just across the road, MacTavish, the dour one

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: and his wife, who was even more dour

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: just worked!

MUSIC: CHORD, LOW:

NARRATOR: and worked!

MUSIC: CHORD, LOWER:

NARRATOR: and worked!

MUSIC: CHORD, STILL LOWER:

NARRATOR: They even took lanterns to see with and worked late into the night. But tomatoes are temperamental. They are determined to (RAPIDLY) ripen all at once!

MUSIC: IMITATE "RIPEN ALL AT ONCE":

NARRATOR: Then they must be gathered immediately or they spoil! (RAPIDLY) Just like that!

MUSIC: IMITATE "JUST LIKE THAT!":

NARRATOR: So you can easily see that no matter how hard MacTavish, the dour one

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: and his wife, who was even more dour

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: worked, they still couldn't harvest their enormous crop. Over on the other farm, Girl Scouts worked steadily six hours each day. They did some joking and laughing, but it never interfered with their work. Instead, it was a pleasant thing to hear. They didn't fall out of trees,

MUSIC: NOTES INDICATE FALLING:

NARRATOR: or run wild.

MUSIC: QUICK, RUNNING NOTES:

NARRATOR: And as for the chickens! They didn't mind the girls in the least.

MUSIC: CHORD:

NARRATOR: After the entire crop had been harvested and all the girls were back in their own homes, old MacDonald, the happy one,

MUSIC: LIGHT, GAY NOTES:

NARRATOR: met his neighbor, the dour one.

MUSIC: SOUR NOTES:

NARRATOR: "Is your poor farm all ruined?" asked MacTavish, nodding his head knowingly.

"Ruined?" MacDonald was surprised.

"Aye, by the good-for-naught lassies," insisted MacTavish.

"'Tis nae ruined," MacDonald told him, "'Tis even better now. Those lassies gathered every tomato, mon! Not only that! The tomatoes that were nae marketed, they canned! Aye, and another thing!" MacDonald laughed, for he was the happy one

MUSIC: LIGHT, GAY NOTES:

NARRATOR: "Aye, another thing. My cocks crow nae longer. Instead, they whistle, like this (G.I. WHISTLE) and I gather in twelve dozen eggs each nicht!"

MUSIC: "OLD MACDONALD HAD A FARM": UP FULL, SUSTAIN, INTO THEME: DOWN FOR:

ANNOUNCER: Nearly a million girls throughout the country are members of this international organization But thousands more want to belong. There are many ways in which you can make this possible. Girl Scout leadership is recognized as a vital war service. Call the Scout office in your town today. In Los Angeles, the number is Drexel 2185. Dial it now, and say, "I want to help."

MUSIC: SNEAK IN AS BG:

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard an original story written especially for radio by Florence Hastings, based on typical Girl Scout experiences. We invite you to listen in next week at the same time when you will hear a story of the _____. Your narrator has been _____. This is _____ speaking. (Broadcast September 6, 1944)

MUSIC: UP FULL AND OUT:

Comment: This is another propaganda program, in this instance to recruit leaders to train Girl Scouts. Though presented in wartime, the pattern, modified to fit, would be as effective in peacetime. The program's appeal is heightened by the note of gayety pervading the piece, an effect that in nowise lessens the serious import.

The talent, numerically, is held to the minimum—narrator and organist plus regular station announcer—but the narrator and organist must be skilled in radio work. The narrator carries the entire story but she has the help of the organist constantly to point up the lines. As for the organist, he provides all sound effects, the imitative devices, whether bird notes or spoken words, and the various mood settings.

The script, you will note, provides a good example of a typical montage/bridge, or presentation in layers in the first to fifth voice sequence immediately following the introduction. The script should be restudied when you meet children's programs in Chapter 17.

Script: *The Bubble Bath* (Romantic comedy)

THE BUBBLE BATH

(A romantic comedy presented by the University of Minnesota
Radio Players over Station WLB)

Script by John J. MacGregor

CAST: Announcer	SOUND: Door opening and shutting
Stringfellow McNab,	Phone ringing, receiver
a poet	lifted
Maggie, a housekeeper	Water running into tub,
(Scotch)	swish of water, splash-
Minnie, a mermaid	ing of water, gurgling
(small, squeaky voice)	of water
Barbara, one of his girl	Clatter of bath stool fall-
friends	ing over
Mary, <u>the</u> girl friend	Knocking on door
	Doorbell ringing
	Key in lock

Music: Selected "mermaid" music, both to fill and incidental

MUSIC: THEME: DOWN FOR:

ANNOUNCER: The WLB Workshop!

MUSIC: THEME: UP AND COMPLETE: FADE:

ANNOUNCER: Today, the WLB Workshop presents an original radio play by John J. MacGregor entitled "The Bubble Bath."

MUSIC: "MERMAID" MUSIC UP FIVE SECONDS AND THEN FADE BEHIND:

ANNOUNCER: Stringfellow McNab was what people call a character He was long of hair and short of cash in other words, a poet. He was also a fellow who had never made the same mistake once. Yes, you've guessed it. He was a bachelor. He lived in a low, rambling old house at the end of Elm Street. His mother had willed him the house and, with it, of course, went Maggie, the housekeeper, who considered it her domain and ruled it accordingly. We find her meeting him at the door one evening when he comes home late for dinner

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS:

MAGGIE: Well?

STRINGFELLOW: I-er-am I late?

MAGGIE: Humph! I've been trying to keep things warm for the last hour

STRINGFELLOW: I-er-had a sandwich downtown Sorry I didn't phone, but I was busy shopping. You know, Christmas presents, Maggie

MAGGIE: Humph! It must have been terribly important

STRINGFELLOW: It was I bought Barbara's present See, a beautiful hand-bound copy of Shelley. It's just the gift I wanted to give her something with that sentimental touch, but not mawkish.

MAGGIE: Now, Stringfellow, you know what I think of that blonde. She's a cat that's what she is And, anyway, you're just interested in her money.

STRINGFELLOW: I am not

MAGGIE: Yes, you are! Atlantic Ocean! You remind me more of your Uncle Sandy every day He was a bonny

highlander and he went and married a lowlander because she owned three more cows than the other girl

STRINGFELLOW: Tut, tut, Maggie Barbara's a nice girl
Maybe a little overbearing but that shows she's got character and fire!

MAGGIE: Just watch out so she doesn't build that fire under you

STRINGFELLOW: I can take care of myself The way you talk, you'd think I was still wet behind the ears

MAGGIE: I don't know what would become of you if you didn't have me to look after you You're such a fool when it comes to women Now take Mary Preston. There's a nice, old-fashioned girl.

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, Mary's all right! But you know

MAGGIE: (SIGHS) I know. No fire! well, go on and tell me. What did you buy for Mary?

STRINGFELLOW: I bought her some bubble bath

MAGGIE: (SHOCKED) Some bubble bath!

STRINGFELLOW: Sure, you know, that stuff you put in the bath and it all foams up

MAGGIE: Atlantic Ocean! Bubble bath!

STRINGFELLOW: Well, it cost two dollars But I got a sample package free

MAGGIE: Humph! Bubble bath! Stringfellow McNab, was it some dizzy blonde salesgirl who sold you that?

STRINGFELLOW: I-er-I, well, er But, Maggie, if you could have seen her She was so small and dainty, with flashing blue eyes and and

MAGGIE: (SIGHS) I know plenty of fire Stringfellow, why is it you go for these scatterbrains Why can't you fall for a sensible girl like Mary?

SOUND: PHONE RINGS: RECEIVER OFF HOOK:

STRINGFELLOW: Hello Oh, hello, Mary Yes, I'm going to be home Oh, I'd forgotten about that Sure! Will you help me? Say, that's great, Mary Yes, I'll be looking for you Goodbye

SOUND: HANG UP PHONE:

STRINGFELLOW: Mary's coming over to type my manuscript

MAGGIE: Sure, I thought so Mary helps you with your work, but Barbara gets the hand-bound copy of Shelley Mary gets the bubble bath

STRINGFELLOW: Aw, well, maybe I'll buy her some perfume, too

MAGGIE: Humph! Sometimes I get so peeved with you, String-fellow Humph! Oh, why don't you go jump in a-a-bubble bath

STRINGFELLOW: Say, that's an idea I always wanted to try the darn stuff And, besides, I can use the free sample and still have the large package left for Mary

MAGGIE: Oh! (START FADING) The very idea! You're crazy! You're hopeless! You'll never grow up

SOUND: WATER RUNNING INTO BATHTUB: STRINGFELLOW SINGING: "ANNIE LAURIE": WATER STOPS: STRINGFELLOW STOPS:

STRINGFELLOW: I guess that's enough water Now, I'd better read the directions on the package Hmmmmmmm, it says this sample is enough for two bubble baths I'll open it up

SOUND: PAPER TEARING

STRINGFELLOW: There! Hmmmmm Two bubble baths And I just want to take one to try the darn stuff Oh, well, I'll throw in the whole package There! Now stir it around

SOUND: SWISH OF WATER:

STRINGFELLOW: Gosh, look at that stuff bubble up

SOUND: "MERMAID" MUSIC SNEAKS IN HERE:

STRINGFELLOW: I've never seen so many bubbles The whole tub is filled with them And that one bubble It's bigger than all the rest And it's getting bigger and bigger and bigger Gosh, maybe I put in too much of the stuff Say, that bubble has almost reached the ceiling and it's getting bigger and bigger It's going to fill the whole bathroom I've gotta get outta here Ye Gods, it's going to break

SOUND: BUBBLE POPS: SPLASHING IN WATER:

MERMAID: (SQUEAKY LITTLE VOICE) Hello, Stringfellow!

STRINGFELLOW: Why, why, it it's a mermaid with long golden hair!

MINNIE: Certainly I'm a mermaid Minnie, the mermaid, that's me Haven't you ever heard of mermaids?

STRINGFELLOW: Well, yes, but, but I never found one in my bath-tub How did you get there?

MINNIE: That's simple I live in a bubble That's where you found me

STRINGFELLOW: Humph! I don't believe that I used to blow soap bubbles when I was a kid and I never found any mermaids

MINNIE: That's because you stopped before the bubble was big enough

STRINGFELLOW: Well, wherever you came from, you've got to go back there I can't have you cluttering up my bath-room

MINNIE: Oh, but I can't go back until I finish what I was sent to do

STRINGFELLOW: Well, what in the world is that?

MINNIE: I can't tell you now But you'll find out

STRINGFELLOW: Well, I won't have it, I tell you Please, please go away Go away before something happens

SOUND: KNOCK ON DOOR:

STRINGFELLOW: (LOW) There! See what I mean Now keep still. (CALLS) Who's there

MAGGIE: (OTHER SIDE OF DOOR) It's Maggie Barbara's here to see you

STRINGFELLOW: I'll be right out (TO MINNIE) Now you keep quiet or or I'll call the aquarium

MINNIE: Why don't you tell that Barbara girl to go fly her kite?

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, so you don't like her either

MINNIE: No, I don't But I do like Mary

STRINGFELLOW: Well, I'm going now, and I don't want to hear a splash from you, or I I'll feed you to the pelicans

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS:

MAGGIE: Well, you certainly took your time And, say, were you talking to someone in there?

STRINGFELLOW: Me? Talking? Oh, no, no! I was just just reciting poetry

MAGGIE: Humph well, you better go in and recite some to Barbara She's plenty burned up about something

STRINGFELLOW: (WHISTLES) Now I remember. I, I had a date with her tonight. Oh, gosh, what'll I do?

MAGGIE: Well, you might go in and talk to her

STRINGFELLOW: What? in my lounging robe?

MAGGIE: Well, she gave it to you for your birthday She's seen it before. And what a get-up. You look like a leopard walking around on its hind legs

STRINGFELLOW: Okay okay I'll go in and talk with her

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS:

BARBARA: Well, Mr. McNab, what have you got to say for yourself? Didn't we have a dinner date tonight?

STRINGFELLOW: Barbara, I'm sorry I forgot all about it

BARBARA: That shows what you think of me

STRINGFELLOW: Now, please, let me explain I was busy shopping and I sorta lost track of time I wanted to get you a present that

BARBARA: (CUTS IN) Oh, Stringfellow, were you buying my Christmas present?

STRINGFELLOW: Well, that's what I've been trying to tell you

BARBARA: Oh, I didn't realize, Stringfellow Well, that's different, what did you get me?

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, no, I can't tell you You've got to wait and see.

BARBARA: Well, anyway, I'm going to forgive you. You're such a sweet boy. And you're wearing my robe. Do you like it, Stringfellow?

STRINGFELLOW: It's the nicest present, Barbara. When I wear it, I always

SOUND: DOORBELL RINGS:

STRINGFELLOW: Now, who's that?

BARBARA: Maybe if you'd open the door, you'd find out.

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, yes, I guess you're right

SOUND: DOOR OPENS: AND CLOSES:

MARY: Hello, Stringfellow

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, uh, hello, Mary Won't you come in?

MARY: I hurried over because I thought if we got started with the typing I oh, I didn't know you had company.

STRINGFELLOW: I er oh, yes Mary, I want you to meet Barbara Er Barbara, this is Mary Mary's an old friend of the er family

BARBARA: What family?

MARY: Maybe you'd rather do the work some other time, Stringfellow

STRINGFELLOW: I er er

SOUND: DOOR OPENS:

MAGGIE: Stringfellow! Psst! Stringfellow Hurry! I've got to see you a minute

STRINGFELLOW: Er er Will you girls excuse me? I'll be right back

SOUND: DOOR SHUTS:

STRINGFELLOW: Ye gods, Maggie Why all the mystery! What's the trouble?

MAGGIE: Stringfellow McNab, I want to know who's in the bathroom? And why did you lock the door when you came out?

STRINGFELLOW: Er Did I lock the door?

MAGGIE: Yes, you most certainly did And I've been listening and I can hear somebody splashing around in the tub

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, but, Maggie, you're wrong I remember now. I er forgot to shut off the water I'll go in and do it now

SOUND: KEY IN LOCK: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS QUICKLY: "MERMAID"
MUSIC UP:

MINNIE: Oh, you finally came back Did you get rid of Barbara?

STRINGFELLOW: Now, see here This has got to stop why
don't you go wherever you can go and leave me in peace?

MINNIE: Has Barbara gone?

STRINGFELLOW: No, but I just got through explaining things to her
and now you start this What'll I say to her now?

MINNIE: Why don't you tell her the truth?

STRINGFELLOW: The truth! Ye gods, she'd never believe me
. . . . Nobody'll believe me

SOUND: LOUD KNOCKING ON DOOR:

STRINGFELLOW: Now see what you've done Good grief, what'll
I do? What'll I say?

MINNIE: Tell them the truth.

STRINGFELLOW: You keep out of this. You've caused enough
trouble. Well, I might as well go out and face them. And
you keep still, do you hear me?

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS QUICKLY:

STRINGFELLOW: I er oh, hello. It it's all three of
you

BARBARA: Why did you shut that door so fast. I want to know
what you're hiding from us.

MARY: Stringfellow, are you feeling all right?

MAGGIE: He does look rather white around the gills

STRINGFELLOW: The gills! Oh, ye Gods

BARBARA: Don't try to evade the question. Who is hiding in there?

STRINGFELLOW: It's it's the plumber Yes, that's it. I
got the plumber fixing a leak.

SOUND: "MERMAID" MUSIC UP AND DOWN: SPLASHING AND MINNIE
GIGGLING:

BARBARA: The plumber, is it? Why, why, you Brigham Young!

STRINGFELLOW: No, no, I'll tell you the truth But please don't
laugh.

BARBARA: Well? Go ahead I'm listening.

STRINGFELLOW: It's it's a mermaid.

ALL: What!

STRINGFELLOW: I I tell you it's the truth. As I live and breathe, there's a mermaid in the bathtub

BARBARA: That finishes everything. I'm through. Do you hear?
I never want to see you again. Understand? Through.
Finished!

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND SLAMS:

STRINGFELLOW: There! See! I knew no one would believe me.
Just for that, I'm going in and and

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS: "MERMAID" MUSIC UP AND THEN DOWN:

MINNIE: (GIGGLES) Hello, Stringfellow

STRINGFELLOW: I'll hello you! Do you realize the trouble you've caused me?

MINNIE: No, but I know the grief I've saved you from

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, is that so? Well, do you know what I'm going to do?

MINNIE: No (GIGGLES) What are you going to do?

STRINGFELLOW: I'm going to catch you and feed you to the cat!

SOUND: SPLASHING: MINNIE GIGGLING:

STRINGFELLOW: Don't duck around like that! How can I catch you? What's happening? You're getting smaller and smaller and smaller

MINNIE: My work is done, Stringfellow. I hope you and Mary are very happy together.

STRINGFELLOW: I've got to catch you. They'll never believe me

SOUND: SPLASHING: MINNIE GIGGLING:

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, gosh, there I pulled out the plug Hey, Minnie, where are you?

MINNIE: (VOICE SLOWLY FADING AWAY) Good-bye, Stringfellow
goodbye goodbye

SOUND: WATER GURGLES:

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, my gosh, she went down the drain!

SOUND: LOUD KNOCKING ON THE DOOR:

MARY: Stringfellow, are you all right?

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, yeah, yeah, I'll open the door.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS:

STRINGFELLOW: Well, don't stare. Why don't you say something?

MAGGIE: Humph! You're just like your Uncle Angus He was a sailor and he was always telling the story about the time he saw the Flying Dutchman. Humph I think (START FADING) I'll go and finish the dishes

STRINGFELLOW: Mary, you don't think I'm crazy, do you?

MARY: Why, no, Stringfellow. You're a poet and and anything just anything can happen to a poet

STRINGFELLOW: Thanks. Gee, Mary, you're the only one who really understands me. But listen, don't ever let me take another bubble bath!

MUSIC: "MERMAID" MUSIC: UP AND FADE:

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard "The Bubble Bath," an original radio drama by John J. MacGregor. Appearing in the play were _____ as Stringfellow McNab; _____ as Maggie; _____ as Minnie; _____ as Barbara; and _____ as Mary. Your announcer, _____.

THEME: UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: Next week the University Radio Players will present _____ an original radio drama by _____. Remember, next Friday at four!

THEME: UP AND OUT:

Comment: Here is a romantic comedy, with a cherishable light touch and easy good humor. The author has taken a bathroom, put a mermaid in it, and caused the principal character, a bachelor, to duck in and out of it repeatedly during a lively 15 minutes, while the mermaid, talkative and giggly, keeps the plot bubbling. It is a situation that, with a touch less sure, might have produced something nauseous; likewise, it is a test in avoiding *doubles entendres* that all along the way might have

intruded. The conflict is: love, or which girl will get him. Barbara has so little support that—and it is a dramatic weakness—her case seems hopeless. With the solution foreseeable almost from the beginning, the progression of the piece depends on the mermaid, and on the dour housekeeper, born to die an old maid; in these characters lies so much entertainment that the listener does not question too closely the absence of sharp conflict in the dramatic structure. The author got the idea for the piece while he stood gazing into a drugstore window wherein was displayed a package of bubble bath powder.

What you have just read was the final script as it was broadcast. To get that *quick curtain*—usually better for any radio drama—the original draft of the closing was rewritten. The changes are important though seemingly minor. The original draft follows:

SOUND: MORE SPLASHING: MINNIE GIGGLING:

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, gosh, there I pulled out the plug! Hey, Minnie, where are you?

MINNIE: (LONG FADE) Goodbye, Stringfellow goodbye, goodbye

SOUND: WATER GURGLES:

STRINGFELLOW: Great Caesar's Ghost! She went down the drain!

SOUND: LOUD KNOCKING ON DOOR:

MARY: Stringfellow! Are you all right?

STRINGFELLOW: Oh, yeah, yeah I'll open the door

SOUND: DOOR OPENS:

STRINGFELLOW: Well, don't stare Why don't you say something?

MARY: You do look pale, Stringfellow Shall I make you some coffee?

STRINGFELLOW: No, thanks, Mary I just want to sit down and take it easy for a change

MAGGIE: Humph! Mermaids! You're just like your Uncle Angus. He was a sailor and he was always telling the

story about the time he saw the Flying Dutchman
 Humph! (START FADING) I'm going to finish the dishes before
 I start seeing things

STRINGFELLOW: Mary, you don't think I'm crazy, do you?

MARY: Crazy? Why, no, Stringfellow Certainly I don't
 You're a poet and anything just anything
 can happen to a poet!

STRINGFELLOW: Thanks, Mary You're a swell girl And
 you're the only one who really understands me. But, listen

MARY: Yes, Stringfellow?

STRINGFELLOW: Don't ever don't ever let me take another
 bubble bath!

SOUND: "MERMAID" MUSIC UP AND OUT:

Script: *Who Listens to What?* (Expository drama)

WHO LISTENS TO WHAT?

(As broadcast)

Script by Miriam H. Bushnell

CAST: Reid Erikson, WLB	Rosy
Workshop Director	Women playing bridge
Announcer	Little boy
Studio aid	Little girl
Professor	Rosy's Poppa
Micky	

SOUND: Bugle taps
 Laughter

MUSIC: "ON WINGS OF SONG"

EREKSON: I am Reid Erikson, the WLB Workshop Director. Those of us who work in radio, script writers, talent, or directors frequently wonder just who is listening and we also wonder what they are listening to we sometimes think we know, and then again we are not sure. For example, take a high-brow program, so-called because it's supposed to be directed to listeners of learning. What happens when such a program finds its way into some other living room, or into a tavern, or into a parked car Let's try television

in reverse on the trail of the unanswered question "Who Listens to What?"

ANNOUNCER: (FILTER) (SLIGHTLY POMPOUS AND DEFINITELY OVER-PLAYED) We invite you to hear the "Listen and Learn" program, brought to you each Wednesday evening at this time. Tonight we have as our special guest Professor Wellred Professor Wellred will discuss the science of semantics, or, as the man in the street might say, and pardon the touch of vernacular, he will give us the "low-down on words" without further ado, Professor Wellred

PROFESSOR: (FILTER) Thank you, Mr. Announcer, and good evening, radio audience.

STUDIO AID: Hey, hey, Erikson, hold that up. We haven't got an audience for that kind of stuff tonight. The high-brows have gone to the symphony, there's nothing but jitterbugs listening, jitterbugs and baseball fans, and love-sick kids in parked cars

EREKSON: No time to change now, we're on the air let's see who listens to what? Let's experiment.

STUDIO AID: (DOUBTFULLY) O-o-o-kay, but I'm telling you it's program suicide Don't blame me if you talk to dead air.

PROFESSOR: (FILTER) I'll repeat, regrettably there seems to have been some kind of disturbance in the adjoining studio As you are all aware, words are the indispensable tools of humanity. Animals grunt, bark, roar, bleat, and squeal but animals do not talk only man talks man alone, of all the animals has conscious thought and expresses that thought with words words, mark you, words

MICKY: Ain't dat swell, Rosy? gee (WITH THE FINAL "S" INTENDED BUT NOT UTTERED)

ROSY: What's it mean, Big Boy? Huh? What's it mean?

MICKY: Just dat we use woids to talk wid dogs cain't hosses cain't only a guy like me and youse got a brain to t'ink wid, and woids to say what he tinks.

ROSY: (FLIPPANTLY DISINTERESTED) Yeah, woids any bum's got woids

PROFESSOR: Words, sentences, paragraphs are instruments of the mind of man words are clear and crisp. Words are soft and mellow words are hot and throbbing they caress, they nag, they boil with malice

ROSY: (GIGGLES) Like Ma, when Pop is stewed

PROFESSOR: Words clothe a lovely thought with "sweetness and light" sentences rip the covering from inarticulate mood and make emotion vocal. Paragraphs carry sentences of vibrant words smoothly, like a gliding river, along the stream of consciousness.

ROSY: Woids, woids, woids dey don't mean nuttin' turn on a hot boogie-woogie band, Big Boy.

MICKY: No, Rosy, no I gotta listen a marf is what his mind is. I got t'oughts lots a t'oughts good t'oughts no way to use 'em. All day long, I tamp and rivet tamp and rivet and de t'oughts churn an' pound in my head no way to get 'em out, sec? Woids that's the secret he says woids woik for your mind like tools minds are like dis "Raddio." T'oughts all boxed up inside turn de dial woids broadcast t'oughts, sec?

ROSY: (SCORNFULLY) Are yous crazy? Can de chatter, Big Boy lotta woids is de bunk

MICKY: Dat's because you're a dumb-bunny Aw, Rosy, come back here don't get mad. Gee, you're pretty. You don't need no woids your lips, your eyes says plenty

PROFESSOR: Sometimes words express noble thoughts and deeds. Then it is easy to believe verily man is created in God's own image. Listen to the words of a famous document that has bound a nation together for one hundred and fifty years "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal (CONTINUE THIS AS BACKGROUND FOR THE NEXT TWO SPEECHES OF MICKY AND ROSY) that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness

MICKY: (WITH ABOVE) Gee, Rosy, them swell-soundin' woids means me it's for us it's de law of our country

ROSY: (FLATLY) 'Tain't so, though anybody that ain't cuckoo can see 'tain't so look at Esobel Warburon she's got a fur coat. Her big job in life is to look pretty Me, I woik all day in her old man's factory Have I got a fur coat? No Not even cat fur

PROFESSOR: And these noble words of the young Nathan Hale, as he gallantly went to his death "my only regret, that I have but one life to give for my country"

SOUND: BUGLE: TAPS:

MICKY: (SOFTLY) You crying, Rosy? (GENTLY) See what woids done to you?

ROSY: (PETULANTLY SNIFFING) Naw, I ain't cryin'. It's what he done, not what he said, makes me (SNIFF) makes me (SNIFF-SNIFF) feel like I er have a cold comin'

MICKY: (TENDERLY) Aw, Rosy here, here's my handkercher

PROFESSOR: Sometimes words are subtle and sly they distort the truth while seeming as clear as crystal. (FADE) Watch a sharper selling

ROSY: (INTERRUPTING) Yeah, Micky like old Timkins tryin' to sell me a mink coat made o' rabbit fur imagine that old geezer crashin' de radio

PROFESSOR: (FADE IN) are vague and elusive, veiling the true meaning, as a heavy mist veils a feeble gas jet in a dark alley

ROSY: (SCORNFULLY) You should know, Wise Guy your woids don't light no Mazda lamp in my brain

MICKY: That's because yer trap woiks overtime and puts yer brain to sleep listen

PROFESSOR: Sometimes words are vile, infamous, and cruel, making us believe man is begat of the devil sometimes words are whimsical, obligatood by children's laughter

SOUND: LIGHT LAUGHTER:

LITTLE BOY: This is funny listen,

"Beware the Jabber-wock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jub Jub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch."

SOUND: LAUGHTER:

LITTLE BOY: "'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe"

THE LONGER PROGRAM

SOUND: LAUGHTER: UNDER AS:

LITTLE GIRL: (INTERRUPTING) Let me let me say one:

"Christopher Robin
Had wheezles
And sneezles,
They bundled him
Into
His bed."

"They expounded the reazles
For sneezles
And wheezles,
The manner of measles
When new.
They said, 'If he freezles
In draughts and in breezles,
Then PHTHEEZLES
May even ensue.'" ¹

SOUND: LAUGHTER: UP AND OUT:

MICKY AND ROSY: LAUGH:

MICKY: Gosh, what funny words!

ROSY: (PRACTICALLY) He was sick that kid in the pome
poor little kid if I we ever have a kid like that,
I'd give him caster ile

MICKY: (HUSKILY) Gosh, Rosy wouldn't a I'l fella love dat
Jabber thing? Dragons, swords, fightin' them woids
make me think of pillow fights

ROSY: (BRISKLY) Caster ile

PROFESSOR: Sometimes words are used extravagantly, or wickedly
scattered about, like beads dropping unheeded upon a hard-
wood floor Listen to these women chatter at a crowded
bridge party

WOMEN: (AD LIB) Really, my dear too, too divine but
definitely simply marvelous. They say she (FADE) dyes
her hair then I said and he said

MICKY: The guy said "animals grunt, bark, roar" nuttin'
about monkeys Gee women chatter jes' like

¹ Taken from "Sneezles" from *Now We Are Six* by A. A. Milne. Published and copyrighted 1927 by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York.

monkeys ouch ouch Say, Rosy, have a heart
 women scratch like cats, too. Gee dat hoits

PROFESSOR: Sometimes a thought struggles for expression, and "beats its wings against the bars of words." When these thoughts are uttered in rhythmical language, they are called poems.

Some words, called poems, soar and sway
 With lilting cadence, like a bird
 Singing on golden wings.
 In and out among the words
 Like crimson thread in woven nest
 Exquisite fancy plays.

MICKY: When woids get goin' like dat, it's like an airplane loopin' de loops.

ROSY: Yeah they swing along streamline like roller skatin'.

PROFESSOR: Sometimes words are joined to melody in ecstatic union. Such union is called song. Listen to this song.

MUSIC: "ON WINGS OF SONG": UP AND THEN UNDER SOFTLY:

MICKY: Listen, Rosy, sweet it'll be like dat fer us
 beautiful like a song me de woids, you de music
 our life a song

MUSIC: UP AND OUT:

PROFESSOR: Some words, though shouted, are not heard if the ears of the mind are closed, urgent words are like clashing glaciers that grind against etherless silence in the valleys of the moon Words, words, words uncomprehended, beat against the deaf ears of lovers, as lapwings beat against the stones of a prison tower.

ROSY'S POPPA: (CALLS FROM A DISTANCE) Rosy Ro-osy!

ROSY: Dat's Poppa. (CALLS) Yes, Poppa

ROSY'S POPPA: Send that young punk home, and come to bed
 (FADE) How many times I tell you

MICKY: (SOFTLY) Don't speak use your lips for kissin'
 your ears to hear my heart singin' 'gainst yours a song

POPPA: Rosy, you hear me send him home

MICKY: Sh Ssh Woids just woids

THEME: "ON WINGS OF SONG": UP AND OUT:

EREKSON: This has been a WLB Workshop presentation of an original play for radio, entitled "Who Listens to What," written by Miriam H. Bushnell.

Comment: As stated in the introduction, this 15-minute program attempts to answer the question raised in its title: "Who Listens to What?" You never know just who is listening to your program and it is an error to think that any program automatically screens out all the people you did not write it for or those you think will not "understand" it. We must keep in mind that every listener interprets a given program his own way and that way may be different, very different from the way we planned for him. In "Who Listens to What?" the conflict, high-brow vs. low-brow, sharp at first, grows less and less as Micky, the low-brow, interprets time after time in interesting sequence, the professor's didactic statements. The entire piece makes use of opportunities inherent only in radio; this should be done more frequently by radio writers. You will, I am sure, applaud the neat turn at the climax.

Script: *Saga of the Wind* (Elemental drama)

Study this program for mood. Is it maintained throughout the half hour? Where is the conflict?

SAGA OF THE WIND

(As broadcast by the University of Minnesota radio station)

Script by Blanche Anderson

CAST:	Billy	Doris
	Addie	Jimmy
	Wilbur	Peg
	O'Brien	Harry
	Ellen	
SOUND:	Wind	Child crying
	Door opening and closing	Screen door opening
		Footsteps

Ripping paper	Climbing stairs
Pounding on door	Creaking rocker
Baby crying	Dishes rattling
	Pouring coffee

MUSIC: Theme: "CARRY ME BACK TO THE LONE PRAIRIE", "RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES"

ACT I

THEME: "CARRY ME BACK TO THE LONE PRAIRIE": UP AND FADE FOR:

SOUND: WIND: UP AND FADE BEHIND FOLLOWING:

ANNOUNCER: If there was a time when the wind did not blow across the prairie, it was long ago. For the wind roamed the plains with the Indians. And the wind welcomed the first settler. It blew upon his feeble campfire But once the campfire had grown lusty, it bore the threat of a prairie fire. The wind howled about the settler's frail prairie schooner. When he slept and when he ate, the wind was with him. His children knew its sound before they knew their mother's voice. The wind was still with a man when his eyes closed in death. And the wind howled mournful requiem over his grave It greeted Wilbur Thomas and his wife Addie and their son Billy when they moved into Dakota territory. When their sod shanty was rising on the prairie, the wind was their neighbor. And it was their constant companion when they planted and harvested their first crop But Addie's voice was like the voice of spring itself; her eye mirrored the brightness of the sun; and her quick energy was equalled only by that of the wind.

BILLY: And maybe I'll have a tin horn that'll go toot, toot, and maybe a red wagon, won't I, mama?

ADDIE: Perhaps. Now, wash your hands like a big boy so you'll be ready for supper. My, there's a wind out.

BILLY: What if it'd blow us all away, mama? What if it'd blow us all away?

ADDIE: It'd have to be quite a wind for that, Billy. I wonder what's keeping your father.

BILLY: What if it would blow a chunk of sod right out of the wall? Mama, why do we have to live in a house made out of dirt? Peety Sanderson lives in a house made out of wood.

ADDIE: In the spring, Billy, we'll start building our house. And it will have two stories, and

SOUND: DOOR OPENS, WIND UP: DOOR SHUTS: STAMPING FEET:

ADDIE: Anything wrong, Wilbur? It took you so long.

WILBUR: It's that wind. I tied a rope to the house, so it won't blow away.

ADDIE: You think there's a storm coming up?

WILBUR: It's starting to snow now. Getting colder, too.

BILLY: We're going to have a house built of wood! We're going to have a house built of wood!

ADDIE: I wish they'd start up the school. I declare, Billy, you get wilder every day.

WILBUR: You haven't seen anything of O'Brien, have you?

ADDIE: No, and it'll be a sad C-H-R-I-S-T-M-A-S if he doesn't get here.

BILLY: I know what that was. You spelled Christmas.

WILBUR: I should have gone to town myself. You can't trust those Irish.

ADDIE: Come and eat now; careful, Billy, don't upset the candle.

SOUND: POUNDING ON DOOR: FOOTSTEPS: DOOR OPENS: WIND UP:

ADDIE: Oh, Mr. O'Brien, come in.

SOUND: DOOR SHUTS: WIND DOWN:

WILBUR: Hello, O'Brien, just in time for supper. How's the weather?

O'BRIEN: (IRISH ACCENT) Sort of a stiff breeze. You're looking fine, Mrs. Thomas. Nothing like a woman to brighten up a sod shack, I always say.

ADDIE: Here's a chair, Mr. O'Brien, sit down and have a bite to eat.

O'BRIEN: I better not stay long, it's getting worse.

WILBUR: What's the news in town?

O'BRIEN: Business rushing. They told me to tell you the lumber's here for your house.

BILLY: Goody, goody! We'll have a house built of wood.

ADDIE: Goodness, Billy. Little boys should be seen and not heard.

O'BRIEN: Lots of building going on here in the spring. Nels Olson, Jake Peterson, the Osgood boys, they're all building. This country'll be just like Iowa when we get through with it.

WILBUR: This country'll never be like Iowa. Too much wind. Too flat.

ADDIE: Here, have some more potatoes, Mr. O'Brien. You're building yourself, aren't you?

O'BRIEN: Sure, got to build a house for the girl in Iowa. Couldn't eat another bite. I better be getting a move on. Glad I've got just two more miles to go. Thanks for the supper.

ADDIE: Thank you for bringing the groceries.

WILBUR: You're sure you can make it?

O'BRIEN: Sure, all you got to do is to follow your nose. If them nags you sold me come back here, you'll know I'm laying in the gully somewhere.

ADDIE: Maybe you'd better stay all night. You can bunk with Billy.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS: WIND UP:

O'BRIEN: This storm can't lick this Irishman. So long, everybody.

ADDIE: }
WILBUR: } Goodbye.
BILLY: }

WILBUR: Shut the door, Addie. Do you want to heat up all Dakota territory?

SOUND: DOOR SHUTS: WIND DOWN:

ADDIE: Wilbur, he's gone.

WILBUR: Sure, he's gone.

ADDIE: He just stepped out of the door and he was gone. Everything is all white and I can't see a thing.

WILBUR: Here, I'll take a look. Stay back, Billy.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS: WIND UP: DOOR SHUTS: WIND DOWN:

WILBUR: Just like that windbag. Sit here talking while the storm was getting worse. It's a good thing he's settling down. If he gets through the storm

ADDIE: Do you think maybe he won't make it?

WILBUR: Oh, I guess it isn't that bad.

BILLY: Can I look in the packages, mamma? Can I?

ADDIE: No, now it's time a little boy should be in bed.

BILLY: Just one little peek?

ADDIE: No, off to bed with you.

BILLY: Aw.

WILBUR: Mind your mother now.

BILLY: Well, all right. We're going to have a house built of wood.

ADDIE: He got everything here's the sugar and the flour, and, oh, Wilbur, this must be the popcorn. I wish we could have got that red wagon for Billy. What's this package?

WILBUR: I don't know.

ADDIE: Here.

SOUND: RIPPING PAPER:

ADDIE: Look, a toy gun. I didn't order it.

WILBUR: Sh Billy will hear It's just like that Irishier.

ADDIE: He shouldn't have. He hasn't got any too much money. What's this?

WILBUR: Not one peek until Christmas.

ADDIE: Wilbur, you shouldn't have. Let's look at the plans.

WILBUR: You'll have them all wore out before building time. Here.

ADDIE: You'll wear them out carrying them around in your pants pocket. They're still there, the parlor, with our bedroom off it, the dining room, and the second story with Billy's room.

WILBUR: You really want to stay? Stay here, here in Dakota?

ADDIE: Of course, this is our home. We've planted trees on it. They don't give much shade now, but in five or ten years we'll have the best grove in the country. And there ain't another place around here with raspberry bushes.

WILBUR: Once we get to living in a house like real folks, maybe I'll feel different about it.

ADDIE: Of course, you will. Just think. We've only been here two years and think of the people who have been here five years and are still living in sod shanties.

WILBUR: Yes, guess you're right there.

ADDIE: Listen, did you hear something?

WILBUR: Just that blamed wind.

ADDIE: I thought I heard something else just outside the door.

WILBUR: I'll go see, but I think you got a nightmare.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS: WIND UP:

WILBUR: Addie, the horses. They're back.

SOUND: DOOR SHUTS: WIND DOWN:

WILBUR: He didn't make it.

ADDIE: Maybe he found a haystack. Maybe he stopped at Peterson's.

WILBUR: He couldn't have. Peterson's is a good five miles beyond his place even. That fool Irisher. Why didn't he stay here?

ADDIE: He bought a gun for Billy. Just slipped it in with the other things.

WILBUR: Where in tarnation are my boots?

ADDIE: Here, drying out. You going to look for him?

WILBUR: Just look around a little.

ADDIE: But he's been gone so long. Maybe he got home and then the horses got away and came back. Yes, that's what happened.

WILBUR: We don't know what happened. We don't even know how long them horses have been standing out there. And there ain't a haystack he could have crawled into.

ADDIE: Yes, you've got to find him. It ain't right not to.

WILBUR: It's the least we could do for anybody. You know, Addie, without the wind, this would be a nice quiet snow. But with the wind, it's a white hell.

ADDIE: You take the horses, and if it gets too bad, follow the horses. They'll bring you back. They come back once and they'll make it again.

WILBUR: Sure, now don't worry, Addie. Go to bed. We'll lick this country yet.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS: WIND UP: DOOR SHUTS: WIND DOWN:

MUSIC: "RIDE OF VALKYRIES": FADE DOWN FOR:

ADDIE: No. Wilbur, we'll never lick this country. No one will. Not till someone finds a way to stop the wind from blowing. Even if you shut it out, it's still there and it always will be.

MUSIC: "RIDE OF VALKYRIES": UP: FADE DOWN:

SOUND: POUNDING ON DOOR:

O'BRIEN: Oh, Thomas, it's me! Thomas!

SOUND: DOOR OPENS:

O'BRIEN: (ACCENT BROADER, CHEERY) The top o' the mannin', Mrs. Thomas. And good mannin' to you, Master Thomas. And how were ye enjoyin' the storm we were havin'. Sure, and I came to get my fine horses that couldn't wait to get themselves Mrs. Thomas, are you sick? Good Lord, you look like you seen a ghost I just came to get my horses I seen them here. They're right outside the barn I seen them here. Don't look at me like that, Mrs. Thomas. They took me home all right and then before I could ever get them unhitched, they were gone Mrs. Thomas, don't look like that.

BILLY: Mama, don't look like that. We're gonna have a house built of wood.

MUSIC: "RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES": UP AND OUT:

ACT II

MUSIC: "RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES": FADE FOR:

ANNOUNCER: And in the spring, the sound of building rose above the prairie wind. And in the springs that followed, more little white packing-box houses dotted the plains and the red barns rose miraculously beside them. The sod shanties became only bleak memories As the years passed, the farm boys who yearned for houses built of wood forsook the homesteads of their fathers and moved into the small towns. So Billy Thomas became Will Thomas and acquired a grocery store and a family But Addie Thomas remained Addie Thomas and was content to live on the old farmstead. The

years sprinkled gray hairs upon her head and etched little crow's-feet at the corners of her eyes. But the light was still in them, and her energy was still as ceaseless as the wind, which swept down Main Street on a summer afternoon

SOUND: WIND: ROCKING CHAIR CREAKING:

ADDIE: It sure is a pleasure to visit you here in town, Ellen, you and Will. You town folks do have it comfortable running water, 'lectric lights, and this nice screen porch.

ELLEN: Yes, mother.

ADDIE: If we get a good crop this year, I've got a good notion to build one on my house. Mrs. Olson, the tenant, sure would like it.

ELLEN: Yes, I suppose she would.

ADDIE: 'Course there ain't many people going past out there like there is here, but it'd be real nice anyhow. There ain't nicer people I could have living with me on the farm than the Olsons, next best to having folks of your own with you.

ELLEN: Yes.

ADDIE: I do like to watch the people going past. Don't you feel good, Ellen?

ELLEN: It's this headache and the wind. It's been blowing for three days now that hot dry wind.

ADDIE: Maybe it's going to blow up a rain. We sure could use one.

ELLEN: Mother, don't you hate the wind?

ADDIE: Can't say as I do. Seems sort of friendly. Course I had a spell when I couldn't stand it. That was just after Wilbur died in the blizzard. But that was a good many years ago.

ELLEN: If it would only stop. If it would only cool off. The house is just like a bake oven

ADDIE: I suppose it's 'cause you're from Ohio you mind it so much.

SOUND: CHILD CRYING: SOUND OF SCUFFLING AND BLOWS:

DORIS: (COMING NEARER) Mamma, mamma, Jimmy's hitting me.

JIMMY: Well, she stepped in my mud pie.

ELLEN: Keep still! Isn't it enough that the wind is blowing like this without you children making so much noise?

DORIS: Mamma, make him stop!

ELLEN: Jimmy!

JIMMY: I won't stop. She stepped in my mud pie on purpose.

DORIS: I did not!

JIMMY: You did!

SOUND: BLOWS: CRYING:

DORIS: (SOBS) I did not.

JIMMY: You did.

ELLEN: I'll give you something to cry for.

SOUND: SCREEN DOOR SLAMS: SLAPS: BOTH CHILDREN CRYING: DOOR SLAMS:

ELLEN: I'm going up and lie down. I can't stand it.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS LEAVING, CHILDREN STILL CRYING:

ADDIE: Jimmy, Doris, come in on the porch and sit down for a spell.

JIMMY: She stepped in my mud pie.

DORIS: I did not.

JIMMY: You did.

ADDIE: Now, Jimmy, is that the way for a big boy to act to his little sister? I guess I can't have a little crybaby helping me on the farm.

JIMMY: You don't mean I can't go home with you, grandma?

ADDIE: You can if you're a nice boy. Come in on the porch now and shut the door quick so the flies don't get in.

SOUND: DOOR SLAMS: SOUND OF BARE FEET:

DORIS: What are you making, grandma?

ADDIE: Something for a nice little girl that don't cry.

DORIS: I'm not crying, grandma, am I?

ADDIE: No, I guess you ain't.

JIMMY: Why do you say "ain't," grandma?

ADDIE: Oh, I don't know. It seems like the right thing to say.

JIMMY: Mamma says I won't be a nice boy till I stop saying "ain't."

DORIS: Is that for me, grandma, what you're making. What is it?

ADDIE: It's a yoke for a nightie.

JIMMY: It's too fancy.

DORIS: It is not.

JIMMY: It is, too.

ADDIE: It's too fancy for boys but not for girls. And there ain't no use fighting about it.

JIMMY: When are the Olsons coming so I can go home with you?

ADDIE: Tomorrow, I guess.

JIMMY: I can learn to milk a cow. Mr. Olson said I'm old enough.

DORIS: I want to go home with you, grandma.

JIMMY: Oh, Doris, you're too little.

ADDIE: Maybe next summer, Doris, when you're a little bigger.

DORIS: And maybe I can pick the eggs, and maybe I could have a little lamb all myself.

ADDIE: Maybe Look who's coming!

JIMMY: It's daddy. Hello, daddy!

WILL: (FADING IN) Hello, kids. Phew, what a day!

ADDIE: Yes, it's a real hot day.

DORIS: Daddy, next year I'm going home with grandma.

JIMMY: I'm going tomorrow and learn to milk a cow.

WILL: Where's Ellen?

ADDIE: She's laying down. She's got a bad headache, and she's all tuckered out.

WILL: Guess I'll go up and see her.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS: CLIMBING STAIRS:

WILL: How's your headache, Ellen?

ELLEN: It's awful. And that wind is still blowing.

WILL: Yes, and it was powerful hot in the store.

ELLEN: It's hot all over. There isn't any way to cool off.

WILL: Harry asleep?

ELLEN: Yes, that's the only thing that's gone right. And he has prickly heat. The children are fighting. And that wind!

WILL: The kids aren't fighting now. They're sitting down there with ma as quiet as anything.

ELLEN: Do you always have to call her "ma"? Can't you call her "mother"? "Ma" sounds so vulgar.

WILL: Sounds all right to me.

ELLEN: You could try to be more refined and be an example to the children. Not that it makes much difference. They play with all the tough youngsters in town.

WILL: They've got to play with someone.

ELLEN: I wish we could move. I can't stand this wind, Will. It's getting me. I can't stand it.

WILL: Oh, it'll probably go down at sunset.

ELLEN: You've been saying that for three days. If we can't move, can't you get a hired girl for me? You should have seen the washing I had today.

WILL: Well, it costs money to run a business. I still have plenty of debts on this house. Besides, you had ma to help you today.

ELLEN: Yes, and that's another thing. When is she going home?

WILL: Tomorrow, she said.

ELLEN: Well, I for one won't be sorry. She sits around being cheerful.

WILL: What do you expect her to do? Be a whiner?

ELLEN: So I'm a whiner, am I? I've been a good mother to your children. I've baked and cooked and washed and gone without things. And what thanks do I get? I'm called a whiner!

WILL: Now, Ellen.

ELLEN: And another thing! I'm not allowing Jimmy to go home with your mother.

WILL: Why, Ellen, you can't do that. He's been planning to go out there for a whole year.

ELLEN: Yes, and after he's been there, it takes me a whole year to get him to use reasonably good grammar.

WILL: It's good for him and he's going.

ELLEN: It puts notions in his head. Before you know it, he'll want to be a farmer instead of a doctor as I've decided he's going to be.

WILL: You're the one that puts notions in his head.

ELLEN: I want him to make something of himself. I suppose Doris will be wanting to go out there next.

WILL: Next summer, she said. But maybe the wind will go down by that time. When will supper be ready?

ELLEN: Supper! Me with a splitting headache, and you talk about supper!

WILL: I'm not the only one, you know. Your children might possibly need food, too.

ELLEN: Some sandwiches, maybe.

WILL: Sandwiches! Say, what is this, a tea party or something? I been working hard all day. I need something solid. Seems funny a guy can't have a meal waiting for him when he comes home hot and tired and hungry.

SOUND: BABY CRYING:

ELLEN: Hot and tired? What do you think I am? I'm not hot and tired, am I? And now you've wakened the baby! I hope you're satisfied. Well, you can just walk the floor with him for a change. I'm through. I've done enough. I can't stand it a minute longer.

ADDIE: (FROM DOWNSTAIRS) Will! Ellen! Come and eat. I've stirred up a little supper for you.

THEME: "CARRY ME BACK TO THE LONE PRAIRIE": UP AND OUT:

ACT III

MUSIC: "CARRY ME BACK TO THE LONE PRAIRIE":

ANNOUNCER: And the years came and went, but the wind stayed. With the years, Addie's hair became always a little grayer;

her wrinkles, always a little deeper. The years came as silently as pack rats in the night. In their coming, they took from Addie first this bit of powerful energy, and then that But as certainly as the pack rats of the West left something in place of what they took away, so the years left here a bit of rich philosophy, and there a bit of peaceful acquiescence. But her faith the years did not touch at all. The past sat close beside her And the wind blew. And with its blowing the farm homestead grew always a little grayer. The raspberry bushes had long since vanished. Some of the trees were only gaunt memories. The soil was still there. And as long as there was soil that would grow crops, there was life upon the prairie In the fall of 1933, no rain fell; in the spring of 1934, the dust storms came. But Addie Thomas rocked placidly in her chair.

SOUND: WIND THROUGHOUT: CREAKING ROCKER:

ADDIE: I declare that wind gets stronger every minute. You can't hardly see the barn for the dust.

PEG: Well, I'm certainly glad I didn't start the housecleaning before these storms came. Maybe I'm not a good housekeeper, grandma.

ADDIE: What? Not a good housekeeper? Foolishness! My Harry married a fine housekeeper.

PEG: You can write your name on any table or chair in the house.

ADDIE: What if you can? Look at old lady O'Brien. Never missed a housecleaning, spring and fall, and look at her. Died at sixty-five. Let's see, that was the year of the flu.

PEG: Harry must have met some of his buddies in town.

ADDIE: Yes, 1918, that's when it was. Never did see so many flowers at a funeral.

PEG: Have you ever seen the wind so bad, grandma?

ADDIE: Oh, the wind is always blowing. There was the time Wilbur died in the blizzard. That was a good many years ago. Then there was the time Ellen left Will. The wind was blowing then, too.

PEG: I can't understand her leaving just on account of the wind. I'd like to see any old wind come between me and Harry.

ADDIE: She left Harry he was a baby then and Doris, and took Jimmy with her.

PEG: That's something else I don't understand Why she left that helpless baby. I wouldn't dream of leaving Jerry.

ADDIE: She wanted him to be a doctor, I guess. Not that he ever did get to be one. I've never seen that boy from that day to this. My, she was a queer one, that Ellen. Never did understand her.

PEG: Mmmm I smell the coffee. I'll bring it in here and we'll have a party.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS LEAVING:

ADDIE: Yes, Ellen sure was queer. Didn't like my grammar. This Peg, now, she ain't like that. Time sure changes. Doris in the city with her father. Humph. Living in an apartment, cause he's too old to run his grocery. Ain't even sixty yet. Doris always was like her mother.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS: DISHES RATTLING:

PEG: Maybe this'll wash the dust out of our mouths.

SOUND: POURING COFFEE:

ADDIE: Been there all morning, too Say, this tastes just right.

PEG: Glad you like it, grandma.

ADDIE: Peg, you was a teacher. Does my grammar bother you?

PEG: Oh, grandma, how you talk! Grammar is just like a dress. It's the person inside that counts.

ADDIE: You do say the nicest things, Peg.

PEG: Oh, here's Harry.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS: DOOR OPENING: WIND UP:

PEG: (CALLS) Harry, come on in. Just in time for lunch.

SOUND: DOOR SHUTS: WIND DOWN: FOOTSTEPS:

HARRY: Whew! What a day! What a country!

PEG: Here's your coffee.

HARRY: How are you, grandma?

ADDIE: Can't complain. It's real nice having a party in the morning.

HARRY: Well, it won't be long before we'll be wondering if we can afford coffee for breakfast.

PEG: It isn't that bad, Harry.

HARRY: Not now, maybe, but it won't be long now.

PEG: Well, we may not get much of a crop

HARRY: I'll say we won't. Not with the seeds blowing out of the ground and the soil blowing into Minnesota.

PEG: There'll still be the cream and egg money.

HARRY: What'll we feed the cattle and chickens?

PEG: Well, the pastures

HARRY: The pastures haven't even begun to turn green yet and it's the end of April.

PEG: See anyone in town, Harry?

HARRY: Yeah, saw Tom O'Brien.

ADDIE: Let's see, Tom O'Brien That would be Mike's son.

HARRY: He's Mike O'Brien's grandson.

ADDIE: So he is. Time goes so fast I can't hardly keep track of people.

HARRY: He's selling out. Moving down to Minneapolis.

PEG: Selling out? Oh, no, Harry!

ADDIE: You mean he's selling the old O'Brien place?

HARRY: He lost that a year ago, he told me. Some insurance company owns it now. He's not the only one that's leaving either Peg, our little calf doesn't look so good. Come on out and see what you think.

PEG: All right. Grandma, listen for Jerry, will you?

ADDIE: I'll listen all right, but 'twon't do no good. He's the best baby I ever did see, even if he is being raised by them new-fangled ways.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS: DOOR OPENS: WIND UP: DOOR SHUTS:

ADDIE: So so my boy's aiming to quit, aiming to quit. One thing more to teach that boy One way to do it.

MUSIC: "RIDE OF VALKYRIES":

SOUND: WIND: FOOTSTEPS:

PEG: Oooh, this is awful. I got a haystack in my eye.

HARRY: Save it, we'll need it.

PEG: I'm going to run for it.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS RUNNING: DOOR CREAKS SHUT:

PEG: Dust in my eyes, my mouth. Where's the calf?

HARRY: Calf's all right. Didn't want the old lady to know till I'd told you.

PEG: What?

HARRY: It's this. We're pulling out.

PEG: Oh, no, Harry.

HARRY: We'll have an auction sale and go to Minneapolis and I'll get a job.

PEG: Do you know what you're saying, Harry?

HARRY: Sure, I've got it all thought out. This country is done and there's no use sticking around.

PEG: And the farm? What are we going to do about that? And grandma?

HARRY: We'll get a renter.

PEG: And who will rent a farm that the owners can't run? And what about grandma?

HARRY: That'll be the worst of it.

PEG: She'll never leave. You know that. This is her home. She built it herself. She's watched over every acre.

HARRY: This is no time to be a sentimental fool.

PEG: And no time to do wishful thinking about jobs. Here anyhow we have a roof over our heads.

HARRY: Oh, this country! Sometimes I wish mother'd taken me instead of Jimmy.

PEG: At this particular moment, I feel almost inclined to agree with you. But you can put this in your pipe and smoke it. I'm not leaving. Grandma and I can run the farm.

SOUND: DOOR CREAKS: WIND UP: FOOTSTEPS:

PEG: Maybe I'm a sentimental fool and maybe it doesn't pay to be one, but dear God, don't let that wind come between me and Harry.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS: FOOTSTEPS:

ADDIE: How's Tiny's calf?

PEG: It looks all right, but you know how Harry is about his livestock.

ADDIE: Yes, Harry's a good hand with the cattle. Harry's a good farmer. But he don't know it yet.

PEG: What, grandma?

ADDIE: Nothing, nothing at all.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS: WIND UP: DOOR SHUTS: FOOTSTEPS:

ADDIE: Glad to hear Tiny's calf ain't bad, Harry. Ought to bring a pretty fair price, that Tiny.

HARRY: That cow's a prize. She'd be the last one I'd part with.

ADDIE: I been thinking, farming ain't what it used to be. Prices ain't good even if you do get good crops. Maybe we ought to sell Tiny and the rest of the stock and get out.

PEG: }
HARRY: } What?

ADDIE: We ought to be able to get a pretty fair renter.

PEG: You're not serious, grandma.

ADDIE: I hear Martin's boy is looking for a place.

HARRY: That washout? He's ruined every farm he's ever been on. I wouldn't have him on my farm.

ADDIE: Then there's Jake Turner. He'd like a farm.

HARRY: That flat tire! He doesn't even know which end of a cow to milk.

ADDIE: Well, probably we could get someone. I could maybe live with Doris and Will, and you could get an apartment. Think of the stores, Peg.

PEG: All the stores in all the cities wouldn't make up for one sunset. Think of not being able to smell the roses, or the sweet clover.

ADDIE: Or the pigpen.

PEG: I'd rather smell that than have to smell a lot of other people's cooking. And think of Jerry in an apartment.

ADDIE: And, Harry, wouldn't it be nice not to have to get up at four or five in the morning to milk Tiny and the rest of the critters?

HARRY: It would be awful. Why, Tiny's one of my best friends. And think of Jerry growing up not knowing even what a calf looks like except in a book. And not caring or knowing whether the wind blows or not.

ADDIE: Well, it's blowing now. And it's blowing the seeds out of the ground. There won't be much of a crop.

HARRY: So what? You've had bad years before, haven't you. Prairie fires, blizzards, grasshoppers, black rust, droughts Some years bad, some good. It'll always be that way. There'll always be something to tide us over. And some day it'll rain, some day, the rain will come.

ADDIE: Well, yes, it always has.

HARRY: Then I'm staying. Unless, of course, you don't want to rent the place to me.

ADDIE: Rent? Oh, dear, no. I guess, come right down to it, I'd hate to leave.

PEG: I wouldn't let you, grandma.

ADDIE: I nearly had myself talked into it, though.

HARRY: I knew you weren't a quitter. I wasn't so sure of myself for a while.

SOUND: BABY CRYING:

PEG: Mother's coming, Jerry.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS:

ADDIE: Land sakes, I thought the child had smothered he's been that quiet. You got a fine wife, Harry.

HARRY: You're telling me. To say nothing of a darn swell grandmother.

ADDIE: You know, Peg reminds me of someone I used to know I wonder who it was.

ANNOUNCER: So Addie Thomas stayed on the farm she had built. And in time the years took their full toll and the wind mourned above her grave. But her energy passed to other hands and her faith to other souls. And always the wind blows and hundreds of others who have left it, hear it, and are restless with an old longing.

SOUND: WIND UP: FADE UNDER:

THEME: "CARRY ME BACK TO THE LONE PRAIRIE": UP AND OUT:

Comment: The conflict (and it is very old) in this half-hour drama is between Addie, the Dakota pioneer woman, and the elements. The wind always is blowing over the lines. You feel it, you hear it even though sound effects have been cut out. It's a fight between primal forces rarely openly expressed in the dialogue, but all-powerful in the motivation and progression of the piece. Note the maintenance of mood: always it reflects the prairie, majestic in loneliness, and the men and women who are part of that loneliness and that grandeur. If they leave it, they become restless with "an old longing." Also note the projection into the future of the premise or thesis of this drama. Its action, applicable to the particular time it portrays, also is pertinent to oncoming years and new generations. In dramas such as this, sound, as of the wind, becomes more than a mere sound effect; it becomes the soul of the piece. This drama was a "toughie" to produce, Director Glenn H. Smith said.

Script: *Machine* (Stream-of-consciousness drama)

This experiment in stream-of-consciousness technique goes into a man's mind putting the happenings there into words.

MACHINE

(As broadcast and transcribed for repeat presentation)

Script by Kenneth C. Rogers

CAST: Announcer	SOUND: Factory bell or whistle
Bill (also Bill No. 2) ²	Machines
Tony	Rattle of metal on wooden truck
Margie	Rattle of steel plates being dumped
Larkin	Hammer on steel
	Punch press

MUSIC: Theme: "JUBILEE"
"MARGIE"

Chord on Novachord

² In production, to set the voice of Bill No. 2 apart from Bill No. 1, a "chamber effect" can give it sufficient remoteness or "otherwhereness." The chamber effect may be obtained by speaking into a reversed megaphone, or into a fiber or metal wastebasket mounted on its side.

MUSIC: THEME: "JUBILEE": UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: The WLB Workshop!

MUSIC: THEME: UP AND OUT:

ANNOUNCER: Today the WLB Workshop presents an original experimental drama by Kenneth C. Rogers entitled "Machine." Bill Humphrey runs a punch press, a huge machine that stamps out little squares and circles from metal plates circles and squares that are later to be used in making fans, automobile parts, and other machinery. The punch press consists of a huge block of steel weighing a thousand pounds. The block of steel is raised several feet from the parts to be punched out When Bill presses on the foot treadle, the block falls and punches out the metal in the shape of the die that has been fitted in the block. When he releases his foot from the treadle, the motor raises the block ready to repeat the operation Now it is eight o'clock

SOUND: FACTORY BELL OR WHISTLE:

ANNOUNCER: Time for the machines to go to work

SOUND: NOISE OF ONE MACHINE: OTHERS: ALL JOIN IN TO CRESCENDO:
FADE DOWN AS BACKGROUND:

BILL: (YELLS OVER SOUND) Tony, Tony! Hey, Tony Come on with those plates!

TONY: (OFF MIKE) Keep'a the shirt on! I come!

SOUND: APPROACHING RATTLE OF METAL ON WOODEN TRUCK:

TONY: (FADE IN) Here'a you are, Bill'a, my fran

BILL: How many of these have ya' got?

TONY: Boss'a, he say ten thousand. Here's 'a the orders. Bet'sa mucha work today, Bill'a, my fran

BILL: Brother, you're not kiddin' Okay, dump 'em right here in the bin, Tony.

SOUND: RATTLE OF STEEL PLATES BEING DUMPED:

BILL: How's the wife and kid, Tony?

TONY: Oh, she's a fine. They both a fine That bambino, what'a letele devil He'a holler all night No sleep for Tony, ha-ha-ha!

BILL: Well, that's what you get for bein' a papa

SOUND: RECEDING RATTLE OF WOODEN TRUCK:

BILL: So long, Tony

TONY: (FADING) So long, Bill'a, my fran

BILL: (TO HIMSELF) Let's see now one thousand of the one and five-eighths Have to change her over, I guess

SOUND: BANGING OF HAMMER ON STEEL: CLINKING AND RATTLING:

BILL: Well, I'll try her out

SOUND: PUNCH PRESS IN REGULAR CLANGS: SLOW:

BILL: She's goin' good this morning

BILL NO. 2 (FILTER HERE AND THROUGHOUT) Funny how a machine has good days and bad days, just like a man or a woman Yeah, some days she's just like a woman Can't do nothin' with her

SOUND: PUNCH PRESS RUNNING SLOWLY:

BILL NO. 2: Everything set Here we go Put the plate under press the foot down Take her out throw her on the pile (IN RHYTHM WITH THE SOUND OF THE PRESS) Put foot take it out Put foot take it out. Put foot take it out Put foot take it out

SOUND: PUNCH PRESS: UP AND FADE: SHORT PAUSE: SWITCH TO NORMAL: UP AND FADE AGAIN: (TO DENOTE PASSAGE OF TIME):

TONY: (FADE IN) Okay, Bill, my fran Here's more stock!

SOUND: RATTLE OF DUMPED STEEL PLATES:

TONY: Here comes'a boss oh, oh. He looks sore (FADE) Tony, I tink he go now!

LARKIN: Humphrey, you gotta get some more speed! You're fall-

ing behind Snap it up, or so help me, I'll get somebody who can!

BILL: But, Mr. Larkin, I'm working her faster 'n usual I don't want to have any rejects.

LARKIN: Now you listen to me. I don't like you and I never did. You keep up with production or I'll fire ya! Maybe you don't wanta work. Well, so help me, if you don't, I know lots a guys who do. Now get goin'! Ya hear me?

BILL: I hear ya.

SOUND: PUNCH PRESS. INCREASED TEMPO SLIGHTLY:

BILL NO. 2: (FILTER MIKE) I'd like to hold his head under this block and step on the treadle (MOCKING) I don't like you and I never did (FADE) Why, that

SOUND: SOUND OF PRESS: UP AND FADE:

BILL NO. 2: Margie! I ain't thought about Margie all day. Margie

BILL: (NORMAL) (SINGS): Margie, I'm (WHISTLES THE MELODY)

BILL NO. 2: I can't think about Margie no more Remember We busted up Fifteen dollars a week (FADE) we busted up.

SOUND: PRESS: UP AND DOWN TO BLEND WITH:

MUSIC: WEIRD RISING CHORD ON ORGAN OR NOVACHORD: OUT:

BILL: (NORMAL) Gee, Margie, it's nice to be with you on Sunday Whad'you do last night? Why, ya know, this was the first Saturday night in months we didn't see each other.

MARGIE: I was out with Frank.

BILL: Whada you mean, out with Frank? Margie! Out with Frank? Say you're kiddin', Margie.

MARGIE: I ain't kiddin', Bill.

BILL: We-l-l-l, I like that! You stand me up to go out with another guy (ANGRILY) Why, you little tramp! I oughta slug you.

MARGIE: Don't you touch me, Bill Humphrey!

BILL: Oh, but Margie we're gonna get married, you and me You even said so yourself!

MARGIE: Married! (LAUGH) Don't make me laugh How we gonna get married on fifteen dollars a week? And that's all you'll ever make. Fifteen dollars a week. So, when a nice fellow like Frank, who works in the bank, asks me to go out, I says yes. A girl can't wait forever You don't get no younger, ya know (FADE) A girl can't wait forever

SOUND: BLEND IN PRESS IN A BIT FASTER RHYTHM WITH RISING MUSIC:

BILL NO. 2: A girl can't wait forever You don't get no younger a girl can't wait forever

SOUND: SOUND OF PUNCH PRESS IN ANGRY RHYTHM:

BILL NO. 2: I oughta had an education Like in that western magazine. The guy points right at ya with his finger. You, too, can earn \$5,000 a year Make big money Be an aviation mechanic Make big money Be a radio mechanic This means you (FADE) Make big money.

BILL: (NORMAL) Tony! (CALLING) Tony! Take her away

SOUND: RATTLE OF TRUCK:

TONY: Okay, Bill'a, my fran Say, what did boss'a tell ya?

BILL: He was just squawkin' I didn't go fast enough.

TONY: He's a crazy I know You getta more work than anybod'. Let me tella you Bill'a, my fran His wife, she rides him. She ride him alla the time. She's got a no good brother she wants Larkin to give him your job You betcha Tony, he know

BILL: Why, the dirty I should

TONY: Close'em up'a, Bill. Here he comes

LARKIN: What are you two guys cookin' up? Get a hump on, Tony. Humphrey, you're getting too many throw-outs. I checked with the inspector. You had twenty today. I'm givin' ya one more chance. If you have any more defective pieces you're fired. You hear me! You're fired!

SOUND: BANG, BANG OF PUNCH PRESS: FASTER:

BILL NO. 2: You can't win. You can't win. If you speed up, you make mistakes. If you go slow, you get told to speed up.

Fifteen a week. Can't get married Oh-h, it'd be swell to be married to Margie Swell to be married

SOUND: PRESS: BLEND INTO:

MUSIC: WEIRD HIGH-PITCHED CHORD ON ORGAN OR NOVACHORD:

BILL: (NORMAL) Pour me another cuppa coffee, will ya, Margie?

MARGIE: Just a minute till I turn the toast.

SOUND: BABY'S CRY:

BILL: Listen, the kid's cryin'.

MARGIE: The doctor says that's good for him. Exercises his lungs.

BILL: I wish we could make up our mind what we're gonna name him. (FADE) Gee, he's a cute little beggar

MUSIC: WEIRD RISING CHORD: BLEND INTO PUNCH-PRESS SOUND EFFECTS: BRING IT UP GRADUALLY LOUDER AND LOUDER: SWITCH OVER TO NORMAL AND BRING SOUND IN FULL VOLUME: FADE FOR DIALOGUE:

TONY: Bill! Hey, Bill'a, my fran! Wake up!

BILL: (VAGUELY) Huh? Whatsamatter?

TONY: You look like'a you sleep. Gotta watch out, Bill I know guy who fall asleep one time at the press and lose three fingers. Here's some more'a stock.

SOUND: SOUND OF STEEL PLATES BEING DUMPED:

TONY: She's a get hot! Sun she come up outside What'-cha think?

BILL: Yeah. She's hot. Bring some water around, Tony, will ya!

TONY: Okay (FADE) Bill'a, my fran Okay

SOUND: RECEDING RATTLE OF TRUCK:

SOUND: BANG, BANG OF PRESS: FADE AS BACKGROUND:

BILL NO. 2: It's hot Sweating now All warmed up. Sweat under your arms. Sweat. Sweat on your forehead, runnin' down in your eyes sweat, sweat, sweat. (IN RHYTHM WITH SOUND OF PRESS) Sweat, sweat, sweat . . . fifteen dollars a week. Margie. (WHISTLES "MARGIE" MOURNFULLY) Tony knew a guy that cut off three fingers in the machine. Three fingers I bet he got a nice chuck of insurance. Three fingers Machine cut 'em off Three fingers!

BILL: (NORMAL) No no! Bill no!

TONY: (OFF MIKE) (CALLS) What's a matter, Bill?

BILL: Nothin', Tony Nothin' at all.

BILL NO. 2: (WHEEDLING) It'd be easy. All you'd have to do is slide 'em under the block. You'd never feel it Maybe a little afterwards. See how she cuts through that plate? Like butter (FADE) Yeah like butter

SOUND: SOUND OF PRESS: VOLUME UP: FADE AS BACKGROUND:

BILL: I must be goin' nuts Bill, get a hold of yourself Yer goin' crazy.

BILL NO. 2: No No! You've never been saner Figure it out There'd be nothin' to it. Say you get three hundred dollars a finger Why, that's nearly a thousand bucks You could marry Margie! Enough to pay down on a house and furniture Maybe get a little car.

SOUND: PRESS: UP FULL VOLUME AND FADE: PRESS IS RUNNING FASTER NOW:

BILL NO. 2: As much as you'd make in forty weeks!

BILL: But, I couldn't ever work again Nobody wants a guy with one hand!

SOUND: PRESS FASTER:

BILL NO. 2: Not your right hand. Your left hand. You could go to school and learn something. Be an airplane mechanic. Go ahead do it do it do it!

BILL: (NORMAL) No, no I can't No!

SOUND: PRESS FASTER:

MARGIE: (FILTER) A girl can't wait forever. You aren't getting younger, Bill Sure, I went out with Frank! Fifteen a week is all you'll ever make! (FADE) and a girl can't wait forever

BILL NO. 2: It won't hurt, Bill Go on Nine hundred bucks. Your left hand. Put it under there (SLOW) Go on go on

SOUND: TWO BANGS OF THE PUNCH PRESS: ON THE THIRD TIME, SOUND AS IF PRESS STRUCK SOMETHING SOFT: MACHINE STOPS:

BILL: (SCREAMS) Oh oh! My hand! My hand! I've cut off my hand! (GROANS)

TONY: (FADE IN) Bill! Bill'a, my fran! Whas-a-matter, Bill? (GASP) Mother Mary! Oh oh (PITY) Bill Bill'a, my fran

THEME: UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard "Machine," an original radio drama by Kenneth C. Rogers Appearing in the play were _____ as Bill Humphrey; _____ as Margie; _____ as Tony; and _____ as Boss Larkin. "Machine" was produced by Philip Gelb. Your announcer _____.

THEME: UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: Next week, the University Radio Players will present "Prelude for Posterity," an original radio mural painted in words and music by Florence Hastings Remember, next Friday at four for "Prelude for Posterity." (See Chapter 18.)

THEME: UP AND OUT:

Comment: This 15-minute program was an early experiment in stream-of-consciousness drama. It remains a good example of how to use that technique. The repeated juxtapositions of Bill in normal voice and of his thoughts do not need to follow one another so relentlessly. However, the author was thinking correctly when he set off an entire stream-of-consciousness scene by a weird musical chord. Note them in the script. Similar devices are used repeatedly in current radio. The introduction, *i.e.*, the announcer's speech describing Bill Humphrey and the punch press can be more adroitly handled. A better way might be to retain the good line: "Bill Humphrey runs a punch press, a huge machine that stamps out little squares and circles in metal plates;" then to follow with the factory whistle and the announcer's lines, "Time for the machines to go to work," as in the script; then to follow the "Sound of one machine and all joining in" with a description, less stilted, of the operation of the press. There is a great deal more to this drama than meets the eye on a cold reading (that is true, of course, in most good scripts). Bill's rate of pay obviously reflects the depres-

sion years. Though wages have since increased, the economics of living are usually a problem for newlyweds under any pay scale.

Script: *Moonlight* (Romantic drama)

Study this script for its use of words and music and sound to create moonlight that is more than moonlight.

MOONLIGHT

Script by Helen B. Connelly

CAST: Announcer	SOUND: Bomber motor
Narrator	Anti-aircraft guns
Tim	Rap on door
Pilot	Door opening and closing
Nicolette	Footsteps
Man	Rustle of branches
Woman	Lap of water
	Oars dipping
MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE"	Cloth tearing
	Gurgle of liquid

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE": UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Tonight, as usual, the Vagabond Players present a play written especially for the radio. Tonight's drama is entitled "Moonlight." The narrator was one of the crew of a B-24 bomber operating out of an airbase somewhere in France. Here's the narrator and the story.

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE": UP AND UNDER:

NARRATOR: I promised Tim I'd try to get back to Le Fleuve some day and find the girl. The village wasn't called Le Fleuve, of course for military reasons, I can't name it, but it was on a river and a river ran through the land, the land that had belonged to the girl's father and his father before him. I promised Tim I'd try that's all I could do. I didn't think I would ever get back that way. But I did only a few months later. It doesn't seem to make any sense, any of it even me getting back there. There are so many things I don't understand. I don't even know where to start. I guess maybe the night I showed Tim

a picture of Betty, my girl, was part of it. It was just before our thirtieth mission. We were sitting around waiting I was watching Tim smoke a cigarette taking long easy drags (HALF ANGRILY) You're the calmest darn monkey I ever saw. Sometimes I think

TIM: (EASILY) Take it slow, fellah.

NARRATOR: What do you think about when you sit there looking into space?

TIM: Nothing.

NARRATOR: Nothing, huh? Well, let me tell you something you can't think about nothing.

TIM: What do you hear from your girl?

NARRATOR: Aw! She says the lilacs are in bloom. Weeks ahead of time. She thinks that's a good omen.

TIM: (REFLECTIVELY) We used to have lilacs. They were all around the house. White and purple and some that were almost red. We had a wren house in the white lilac bush. I was about six then. My mother woke me up one morning early and told me to come downstairs. The baby wrens were out of the nest. (LAUGHS) They were funny little things. One of them hopped right up on the porch and looked at me. Mother told me to stand still and not frighten him. He had two little spears of down sticking up on top of his head and he looked as if he thought he could take care of himself fine.

NARRATOR: I had a baby robin once for a pet. He used to play with our dog Shep. Used to sit on the dog's head and old Shep used to look at me sort of disgusted. (LAUGHS) Crazy darn dog. Thought I'd never want another dog when Shep got poisoned. Then one day this Sport came to the house and just stayed. We still got him. . . . he's pretty old now. Say do you want to see a picture of Sport?

TIM: Sure. Say she's pretty sharp.

NARRATOR: Oh, that's my girl, Betty. She had to stick her nose into the picture. Sometimes I call her Snubnose. Says Sport is as much hers as he is mine.

TIM: Have you known her long?

NARRATOR: Betty? We went to kindergarten together. My mother used to make me dance with her when we went to Gregory's dancing school. She was ten and I was eleven.

TIM: Didn't like her then, huh?

NARRATOR: Sure I liked her, but I didn't like to dance. Say, how about bringing out a picture of your girl I let you see Snubnose.

TIM: Aw, I never seem to have anything to say to a strange female.

NARRATOR: You don't have to say anything to a girl. You don't have a chance to say anything. Golly, I have to practically muzzle Snubnose to get her to stop babbling.

TIM: If it's someone you know, it's all right. Then I can talk and I know what she's talking about. After this business is over

NARRATOR: (CYNICALLY) When this is over, you'll be an old, old man, son. I'll write Snubnose to find you a nice, gentle old lady and the four of us will spend our evenings playing a fast game of checkers.

TIM: Yeah.

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE": UP AND UNDER:

NARRATOR: It was right after that that we were briefed for our thirtieth mission. It wasn't any tougher than any of the others but

SOUND: BOMBER MOTORS: SOUND OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE: FIVE SECONDS:

PILOT: (CALMLY) All right, men. That's done it.

SOUND: MOTORS LOUD:

PILOT: O.K., men. Remember to scatter. Good luck.

SOUND: ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE: MOTORS:

MUSIC: FILTER: "CLAIR DE LUNE": FIVE SECONDS:

SOUND: FURTIVE RAP ON DOOR: SILENCE: RAP ON DOOR: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS:

TIM: (DEEP SIGH) This place is a wreck. It's almost as light as day in this moonlight. Funny, the house looks all right from the front. Must have been a nice little shanty before it was bombed.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS (TIM'S):

TIM: A piano!

SOUND: CHORDS ON PIANO:

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE": PIANO: FIVE SECONDS:

TIM: (SUDDENLY) Hello. Hello, there.

NICOLETTE: Please don't stop. It's been so long since there's been music in this house.

TIM: Well I

NICOLETTE: (STARTLED) Oh you've been hurt Here wait.

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE": UP:

SOUND: TEARING CLOTH: GURGLE OF LIQUID:

NICOLETTE: The antiseptic might sting a little.

TIM: You're very expert at this, aren't you?

NICOLETTE: I ought to be. I've had quite a bit of experience. You're an American, aren't you?

TIM: Yes, but you speak English very well. I studied French for three years but all I know are the French words to the "Marseillaise" and a few phrases like pomme de terre and comment allez vous.

NICOLETTE: (LAUGHS) I have studied English all my life. My father started to teach me when I was very young. We used to have English conversation at dinner every night. There. Now, monsieur, comment allez vous?

TIM: Très bien, merci.

NICOLETTE: You see, it's coming back to you.

TIM: Let me see vous êtes très belle No, that isn't what I mean. You aren't just beautiful you look like you look as if you had walked down one of the moonbeams.

NICOLETTE: But I did. I always come down the moonbeams.

TIM: Your voice sounds like the ripple of a little brook over stones warmed by the sun.

NICOLETTE: You sound a little feverish. Here, just put this thermometer under your tongue and be quiet.

TIM: No, if I'm delirious, I want to stay that way. I like it.

NICOLETTE: You must be hungry. I'll see what I can find

TIM: Don't go. I have some rations. The American Army is the best fed army in the world, you know. In this compact little biscuit we have roast beef, roast turkey, mashed potatoes, mince pie, and a shot of orange juice. Have one?

NICOLETTE: But you should have something hot there may be a tin of coffee or tea

TIM: Not now. Just stand there with the moonlight streaming over you. That's nice. Ver-r-y nice. I thought French girls were dark. But you're blonde and sort of gentle

NICOLETTE: You make me sound like a pet for the children.
(LAUGH)

TIM: I like the way you laugh. I like the way you talk. I

NICOLETTE: (ANXIOUSLY) I like that you should lie down and rest. You must get some sleep. You're weaker than you think.

TIM: Weak! I could lift a mountain!

NICOLETTE: Please!

TIM: All right. If you'll sit beside me so I can look at you. What's your name?

NICOLETTE: Nicolette. I'm called Niki.

TIM: Nee-kee, huh. My name is Tim.

NICOLETTE: Now close your eyes, Tim. You will need your strength.

TIM: (DREAMILY) There was supposed to be an old man here named Pierre.

NIKI: Don't talk, please. That would be Pierre LeBrun. He lives eight kilometers from here. You must have taken the wrong turn. When you have had some sleep, I'll go with you part of the way. We'll follow the river three kilometers and in the distance there will be a big stone barn (FADE) you will proceed in that direction and

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE": UP FIVE SECONDS: AND UNDER:

SOUND: SNORING:

NIKI: Tim Tim. Wake up! See, I have found the coffee. There is no cream but it is something.

TIM: What? I must have dropped off to sleep for a minute. I didn't intend to.

NIKI: (LAUGHS) You have been asleep for nearly three hours.

TIM: No, no. I was just resting my eyes for a minute.

NIKI: I'm glad you rest your eyes, monsieur. Your vocal cords got little rest. What a magnificent way of snoring you have. Like a symphony with lovely flutelike whistles.

TIM: (SHEEPISHLY) Gosh, I must have looked like a dope.

NIKI: (QUICKLY) Oh, no, Tim. You didn't look like that. You were so very tired and your poor feet all blistered. You must have walked all day.

TIM: Hey! You're not going to cry, are you?

NIKI: (SNIFFING) No. No, I'm not going to cry. But you have so much more walking still. And you are feverish, but we must go. Oh, it is bad that there should be wars.

TIM: (SINCERELY) It will be the best walk I've ever taken.

NIKI: Finish the coffee, Tim.

TIM: Down the hatch. Let's go. Maybe you should take my hand. You know the way.

NIKI: Here, Tim

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE": UP AND UNDER:

SOUND: RUSTLE OF BRANCHES AND LAP OF WATER:

TIM: Golly, what a night.

NIKI: (SOFTLY) It's beautiful, isn't it?

TIM: Niki do you live all alone in that house?

NIKI: My father was killed when the house was bombed.

TIM: Niki, I'm going to get back this way some day. I'd like to write to you.

NIKI: No, you must never write, never.

TIM: But I'm coming back. Remember that. What do you do all day? Read? Play the piano?

NIKI: There is much to do, always

TIM: How old are you, Niki?

NIKI: Seventeen.

TIM: I'm twenty. We're 37 years old together. That's middle age. Have you ever read any books about America?

NIKI: Only poetry. I read an English book once "Lavengro." Do you know that?

TIM: "Lavengro?" Why, yes, yes, I know

NIKI: "There's night and day, brother³

TIM: "Both sweet things

NIKI: "Sun, moon and stars, brother

TIM: "All sweet things

NIKI: "There's likewise a wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother

TIM: "Who would wish to die?"

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE": UP:

NIKI: There is the barn, Tim. Sec?

TIM: Mn-n-n-n. Does that mean you're turning back?

NIKI: Yes, Tim.

TIM: I don't want to go on without you and I don't want you to go back without me.

NIKI: I can go no farther, Tim, no farther.

TIM: How will I find you again? I must see you I feel as if I had known you always.

NIKI: You will find me again, Tim. You must go now. Goodbye.

TIM: Niki!

NIKI: (FAINTLY) Goodbye goodbye.

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE":

TIM: Niki, where are you?

MUSIC: INDICATING MOVEMENT THROUGH FOLLOWING MONTAGE USING PHRASES OF "CLAIR DE LUNE":

MAN: The boy will lead you, monsieur. He knows the way.

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WOMAN: half a kilometer to the house with a chestnut tree on the right

SOUND: OARS DIPPING IN AND OUT OF WATER; ROAR OF MOTORS CLOSE; BURST OF GUNS:

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE":

TIM: (DELIRIOUSLY) Niki, Niki!

NARRATOR: I thought Tim was out of his head when he talked about the girl but the doctor said he was conscious for a while just before he died. We were in Le Fleuve not so long after that. I remembered what Tim had told me about the place A Norman house that looked O.K. from the front, with this little river running through the land and a grand piano in the living room. It wasn't so hard to find. Everyone knew where the Chardon house was. I knocked on the door but no one answered. I walked around inside. The living room had a high ceiling way up to the sky. The piano was in a sort of alcove. I saw the couch where Tim had slept that night and a basin and the wrapper from a bandage. This was the place all right but the girl wasn't around. I met an old man in the road. My French had improved considerably so we managed to understand each other Is this the Chardon house?

MAN: Yes, monsieur.

NARRATOR: Is anyone living there now?

MAN: Oh, no, monsieur. The house was bombed nearly a year ago.

NARRATOR: I know, but there was a girl Nicolette. She ministered to a friend of mine.

MAN: Yes, monsieur. The girl Nicolette and her father. They lived there. But the house was bombed.

NARRATOR: But the girl stayed on after her father was killed. Do you know where she is now?

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE":

MAN: But, monsieur. They were both killed. Nicolette and her father. When the house was bombed.

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE": UP AND OUT:

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard "Moonlight" brought to you by the Vagabond Players. In the cast were _____. The

play was directed by _____. The script was written by Helen B. Connelly The Vagabond Players invite you to listen next week at the same time to another play written especially for radio. The quotation from "Lavengro" is from the story by George Barrow.

MUSIC: "CLAIR DE LUNE": UP AND OUT:

Comment: In studying this 15-minute drama, be constantly alert to this fact: it unifies words and music and sound effects into the kind of a portrayal possible only in radio, and then only after radio's limitations have been sublimated into something akin to art. Before the piece is finished, any sound that you hear whether words or music or effects, has taken unto itself something of all three elements. The handling, therefore, is not the unskilled technique of a clump of words and a dab of music, then some especial sound effect dropped in; it is these things so handled that they all work together to produce a praiseworthy single effect. For analysis, suppose music other than Debussy's "Clair de Lune" had been chosen. The effect would not have been the same. Whenever "Clair de Lune" comes in, it sheds moonlight on the scene. Fortunately, the author appreciated so sensitively what she had done that she named her program "Moonlight." The drama properly could bear no other title. It is comparatively easy to point out such technical talent after you encounter it. It is another thing to create it for the lumbering critic to point out afterward. That is the reason I am sure the gods will reward the creative writer with a finer wreath of bay or laurel than they will the uncreative critic.

The best in radio will spring from talented blending of words and music and sound effects. We have the door only a little way open on that virtue which can produce, with skill and genius, art in radio forms.

Script: *The Call of Pan* (Dramatic comedy)

Next a comedy with Pan of the nimble hooves cavorting through the lines. Note the mood with the lilt of spring in it that is maintained throughout.

THE CALL OF PAN

(Presented over KUOM, the University of Minnesota radio station)

Script by Ruth Heffelfinger

SOUND: Telephone bell
Click of receiver
Clatter of hooves
Filter mike for Pan except first speech

CAST: Pan, who is also the narrator, a gossipy man
Vi-let, a telephone operator
Mrs. Van Campen, socially inclined
Mr. Somers, harassed plumber
Rudie Benson, bachelor around town
Betty Prescott, a high-school girl
Buddie Jones, a high-school boy
Aunt Susan, maidenly and prim

MUSIC: Theme: "MOMENT MUSICAL" by Schubert
Flute or slide whistle

THEME: "MOMENT MUSICAL," 15 SECONDS:

ANNOUNCER: The Radio Guild of KUOM, the University of Minnesota radio station, presents "The Call of Pan": a story of crossed telephone lines and wrong numbers, when spring is in the air I mean on the air when Pan, that mischievous old spirit of spring, tosses his horns, blows a few notes on his pipes, and prances up and down rustic lanes. His cloven hooves can even be heard clattering through city streets, dodging the traffic.

SOUND: CLATTER OF HOOVES KEEPING TIME TO MUSIC FOR 20 SECONDS:

MUSIC: "MOMENT MUSICAL," WITH A FEW NOTES ON FLUTE. UP 20 SECONDS, THEN DOWN AND HOLD AS BG:

PAN: I am Pan, the Spirit of Spring. When I whisper into the heart of a poet, he reaches for his pen. When I lean on the shoulder of a young man, he flips through his list of telephone numbers. When I tickle the ears of a housewife with my goatee, she begins wielding the moth spray. Ah yes Spring has peculiar powers. Right now I'm looking through an open window in the town of Pineville. A telephone operator is sitting at her switchboard. I think I can make her hear me under those earphones.

MUSIC: A FEW NOTES ON FLUTE: "MOMENT MUSICAL": FADE:

PAN: (FILTER FOR PAN STRAIGHT THROUGH) Vi-let! Vi-let!

VI-LET: What's wrong with me today? It seems as though I hear voices when there's no one on the line. Must be something the matter with the switchboard I'd better report it.

PAN: Vi-let Vi-let! Can't you hear me?

VI: Sure I can hear you. Did you get your party?

PAN: I'm calling you, Vi-let. This is Spring. Didn't you notice anything different about Pineville when you came to work this morning? Didn't you see the lovely flowers on the lawn at City Hall? I always did love dandelions And didn't you notice that fresh sweet smell in the air? I mean after you got past the livery stable? And didn't you notice the gentleman near the drugstore the one who resembled George Bernard Shaw? Well, that was I Pan. Come on, Vi, let's have a little fun.

VI: Don't get fresh with me, whoever you are. Get off the line, please. I've got to take a call. Number please? 213? Yes, Mrs. Van Campen, that's the right number for H. V. Somers Plumbing Company. Mr. Somers ought to be there, too. He just hung up Your pink bathroom? Oh, that's too bad. I'll ring him again.

SOUND: BELL, RING TWICE:

PAN: Don't tell me that's the Mrs. Van Campen, Vi-let? Why, I know her well. Many a spring I've played my pipes for her. Yes, many a spring perhaps too many. But who can tell! I hear she was divorced again last fall.

VI: Yes, she was. And the trouble she's had with the plumbing in her pink bathroom! You wouldn't believe it Say, what are you doing listening in? Go on, get off the wire. I've got to ring that number.

SOUND: BELL ONCE:

MRS. VAN: (FADE IN) and it's getting worse all the time. Really, Mr. Somers, I can't live in the house a minute longer with that water going drip drip drip all night. Why, you've no idea!

MR. SOMERS: Now, lady, I promised I'd come this evening after work, and fix you up, but I can't come no sooner. You know how

hard it is to get help these days. And it seems like everybody's got a leaky valve or a busted pipe

MRS. VAN: But Mr. Somers, I can't live (FADE) another minute

VI: Number please? 659? That line is busy. No, ma'am, I can't break in. No, ma'am, I never listen in. (MUTTERS) Imagine her nerve!

PAN: (SLYLY) Of course you never listen in, Vi-let. Neither do I. But I know that girl's voice. Isn't it Betty Prescott? Last time I saw her she was still wearing bobby socks Nice little girl, too blue eyes and a page boy haircut. But full of mischief. One year she stole my pipes, and what a time I had getting them back, too! Had to pay a forfeit. (LAUGHS) What's she up to now?

VI: Oh, she's carrying a torch for Rudie Benson. He's twice her age, and if her father ever catches her There she goes again. Number please? 659? I'll ring it for you.

SOUND: BELL TWICE:

RUDIE: Rudie Benson speaking.

BETTY: Rudie, this is Betty. Oh, Rudie, I thought I'd never get you. Your line's been busy for half an hour.

RUDIE: (IMPATIENTLY) Yes, Betty, what did you want?

BETTY: But Rudie, whom do you talk to for half an hour?

RUDIE: (SARCASTICALLY) Only you, my sweet. Now tell me what you want before your dad hears you.

BETTY: When am I going to see you again?

RUDIE: (SIGHING) Well, you know what a fuss your dad made last time, Betty. Of course I'd love to take you to dinner sometime. But do you think it's wise?

BETTY: Oh, Rudie, would you? I'll come Friday. No, Thursday's sooner, even though it's a school night. At your apartment?

RUDIE: Hell, no I mean certainly not. What would your father say? No, no I'll meet you at Aunt Martha's (FADE) Tea Room at

VI: Number please? 711? Pardon me. 717 and don't get fresh with me, Buddie Jones. That number's busy.

PAN: Ah, so Buddie Jones is back in Pineville. He never had much use for old Pan. thought I was a back number.

But then, he never did think much about anything but football, even in the spring. I wonder why he's calling his old-maid aunty.

VI: Say, who are you anyway? You know as much about Pineville people as I do and that's saying a lot.

PAN: Maybe I know even more, my dear.

VI: There's Buddie on the line again. 717? Just a moment please. Go ahead

AUNTY: Hello.

BUDDIE: Is that you, Aunt Susan? This is Buddie.

AUNTY: Well, Buddie, how are you?

BUDDIE: Oh, I'm just fine, Aunt Susan. How are you?

AUNTY: I'm very well, thank you.

BUDDIE: (VERY POLITELY) I'm so glad, Aunt Susan. Did you have a nice day?

AUNTY: Very pleasant, thank you, Buddie. I gave Fifi a bath and took her for a walk. And would you believe it! She lay down in a mud puddle and rolled! Her fur is in a shocking condition again, and

BUDDIE: Well, that's too bad, Aunt Susan. Maybe I could come over Sunday and give her another bath for you. But I was wondering do you think would it be possible

AUNTY: Come to the point, Buddie. Come to the point.

BUDDIE: Well, as a matter of fact, Aunt Susan, I need five dollars the worst way. And I thought (FADE) maybe

PAN: Vi-let

VI: Oh, are you still there? What's your name anyhow?

PAN: (MUMBLING) Calling my hand, can't

VI: Callahan? Well, Mr. Callahan, what do you think of those people? You know, the more I hear folks talk on the phone, the more it seems that one of the parties never wants to talk to the other party.

PAN: Why don't you do something about it, Vi-let?

VI: What could I do?

PAN: (CONFIDENTIALLY) Why don't you get their lines crossed and see what happens?

VI: Oh, I couldn't do that (THOUGHTFULLY) or could I?

PAN: (INSINUATINGLY) Of course you could. Go ahead and try it. There are three calls flashing on the switchboard right now. Mix them up, Vi.

VI: Operator 213? There's your party, ma'am 659? There's your party, ma'am 717? Hold the line, please. Here's your call There, Mr. Callahan, are you satisfied?

SOUND: BELL RINGS TWICE:

MRS. VAN: Hello, hello. This is Mrs. Van Campen speaking, 26 Primrose Place. Is this Mr. Somers?

RUDIE: No, this is Rudie Benson.

MRS. VAN: Oh, the new man! Then Mr. Somers will be able to come.

RUDIE: I don't know anything about Mr. Somers but

MRS. VAN: Well, no matter. I like your voice. You'll do, if you know anything about leaks.

RUDIE: Leaks! What kind of leaks?

MRS. VAN: Oh, you know, just leaks. Come a little before dinner. I'm entertaining tonight.

RUDIE: Do you mean cocktails?

MRS. VAN: Don't be impertinent. I'll be in the pink room, waiting.

RUDIE: In the pink room! How delightful. But really

MRS. VAN: Now hurry. I can't tell you how long it's been since

RUDIE: I'll be there for sure. Woo Woo!

PAN: Very good indeed, Vi-let. You've really started something.

VI: You're telling me!

PAN: The other call is that Betty Prescott?

SOUND: BELL RINGS ONCE:

BETTY: Hello, darling, is that you?

BUDDIE: Yes, it's me all right, but what happened to Aunt Susan:
I got cut off.

BETTY: (MUFFLED VOICE) But this isn't Rudie, is it?

BUDDIE: Sure it's Buddie, who are you?

BETTY: Why, darling, it's Betty. And I just called up to tell you
I'll meet you tonight instead of waiting until Thursday, be-
cause Dad's gone to Lodge meeting.

BUDDIE: Well, I'll meet you, but I have to get that loan first.

BETTY: Loan? What are you talking about, honey?

BUDDIE: Why, that loan I was talking about before you cut in.
You know, Aunt Susan

BETTY: Who's Aunt Susan? Is she the one you talk half an hour
to instead of me? Because if she is, I'll I'll scratch her
eyes out.

BUDDIE: Now listen, sugar, don't do that because I've got to get the
loan first. And you sound O.K. to me, and I'll meet you
anywhere you say, but please get off the line quick, or Aunt
Susan will be up to her elbows in soapsuds washing Fifi

BETTY: Are you crazy, Rudie Rudie

SOUND: CLICK, CLICK:

BETTY: Oh, dear, (FADE) he's hung up.

PAN: My, my, Vi-let, what next?

SOUND: BELL RINGS TWICE:

AUNTY: Hello, Bud? Are you still there?

MR. SOMERS: Sure I'm still here, and even if you are getting palsy-
walsy calling me Bud, I can't come to fix no pink bathrooms
before supper.

AUNTY: How did you get on the line, my good man? And who are
you?

MR. SOMERS: I'm not your good man, and you know darn well who
I am. Though sometimes I hardly remember myself, what
with women chasing me all the time for every little leak

AUNTY: Well, I do declare! I never chased a man in my life.
Are you sure you know me?

MR. SOMERS: Never more sure of anything, ma'am. And now, if you'll leave me have my supper

AUNTY: Oh, now I know. It's you, Buddie. Is that what you call throwing me a rope or slinging me a line well, anyway, it's all right, dear. I've changed my mind. You can have the loan, but remember you promised to wash Fifi. Her back needs a good scrubbing.

MR. SOMERS: Now ma'am, I said I'd come over and fix your pink bathroom, but I never said I'd scrub no backs. Now (FADE) wait a minute, ma'am

PAN: (LAUGHING HEARTILY) I couldn't have done better myself, Vi-let.

VI: (BEGINNING TO CRY) Look what you made me do, Mr. Callahan. I'll be reported and I'll lose my job. Oh, this is awful.

MUSIC: "MOMENT MUSICAL": HOLD AS BG:

SOUND: FILTER OFF FOR PAN:

PAN: (CONTRITELY) Well, that was yesterday. Maybe I did carry things too far. Poor Vi-let. Maybe she will lose her job, and it'll be my fault. Old Pan, always sticking his horns into a dilemma! Well, it's another day and here's Vi-let at her switchboard again.

SOUND: BELL TWICE:

SOUND: FILTER ON FOR PAN ALL THROUGH:

PAN: Oh, oh, here come the complaints. That's Mrs. Van Campen again. Well, get it over quickly, Vi-let.

VI: Is that you again, Mr. Callahan? Why don't you leave me alone? My hand is shaking so I can't find the right plugs. Look what I just did. I crossed the lines again.

RUDIE: Rudie Benson speaking.

MRS. VAN: Oh, Mr. Benson. I'm glad I got you again and not Mr. Somers. We did have such a pleasant evening, didn't we? But do you know you forgot to fix the leak!

RUDIE: Why, Mrs. Van Campen, you never mentioned a leak! But I could come over again this evening.

MRS. VAN: You could? Oh, Mr. Benson, that would be too, too divine.

RUDIE: The pleasure is all mine, I assure you, dear lady.

MRS. VAN: You put it so charmingly. I hope I never have to deal with Mr. Somers again.

RUDIE: Leave it all to me, and you (FADE) never will.

VI: The wolf! Well, that's two less complaints, anyway.

PAN: Let's see how Betty is making out.

BUDDIE: Hello.

BETTY: Oh, Rudie, why didn't you meet me at Aunt Martha's?

BUDDIE: So you're the chick I was talking to last night! I was talking about Aunt Susan, not Aunt Martha.

BETTY: Rudie, are you still kidding me? Because I'm serious. Maybe I am still in high school, but I'm crazy about you

BUDDIE: Gee, are you? But I wish you'd stop calling me Rudie, and tell me where your Aunt Martha lives.

BETTY: (IN A SMALL VOICE) Oh I guess I must have the wrong number.

BUDDIE: Please don't hang up, Betty. Let's have a blind date, and forget this other guy. He's not so hot if he's giving a girl like you the run around.

BETTY: Do you really mean it?

BUDDIE: Sure I do. I go to high school myself. Now tell me how to get (FADE) to Aunt Martha's

PAN: Whew! Well, that's that. Go ahead, Vi-let. Ring Aunt Susan, or she and her plumber will never get together.

SOUND: BELL RINGS TWICE:

AUNTY: Hello.

VI: 717? Hold the line please. Here's a call for you.

MR. SOMERS: H. V. Somers Plumbing Supplies.

AUNTY: Hello, did anyone call Miss Susan

MR. SOMERS: Not me. No, ma'am.

AUNTY: Why, I know your voice. I spoke with you last evening. It isn't Buddie after all. I beg your pardon.

MR. SOMERS: Well, if it ain't the dame that wanted me to wash her back!

AUNTY: The very idea! Of course not, it was Fifi.

MR. SOMERS: No matter. I'm a busy man. But if there's anything I can do for you, maybe I can make a date this evening. Have you a leaky valve or a busted pipe now?

AUNTY: I'm in very good health, thank you. But it's a fine spring evening, and if you would care to stop by on your way from the office I find your colloquial English singularly picturesque.

MR. SOMERS: My what? Well, never mind that. If there's anything wrong, I'm your man.

AUNTY: (ROMANTICALLY) My man! Well, maybe And by the way, come just as you are. (FADE) Don't dress

VI: Well, what do you know! Not a complaint!

PAN: Far from it, Vi. Far from it. I knew it all the time. It takes old Pan to fix things.

VI: Mr. Callahan, are you still listening in? Who are you, anyway? Say, I'd like to meet you. I go off duty at 6, and I know the swellest little café

PAN: Well I I That is Maybe you wouldn't Well, gosh! Now I have put my hoof in it!

SOUND: HOOF BEATS IN TIME TO MUSIC:

MUSIC: "MOMENT MUSICAL," ENDING IN FLUTE NOTES:

ANNOUNCER: And that, friends, was "The Call of Pan." The script was written by Ruth Heffelfinger, in the radio writing course of the University Extension Division, and presented tonight by the Radio Guild Players. In the cast were _____. The production was directed by Corinne Holt.

THEME: "MOMENT MUSICAL": (Broadcast spring, 1946)

Comment: Crossed telephone lines are not a new device; the new twist comes in the origin of that confusion: Pan himself. The lines have the gayety and freshness of spring in them that only the poorest kind of production can deaden.

The plumber, a good character whose stature grows with the lines he is given to speak, can walk away with the show. He must be a heavy-voiced, slow-of-wit individual intent only on "fixing leaks." The tides of spring have no more effect on him than on the wrench in his hand.

Note at the beginning of the script the quick, yet easily followed, transition from soliloquy by Pan to magic (again it's Pan) at work through "voices" on the telephone operator. Note, further, how well the plot progresses as the telephone operator cuts the listener in on Mrs. Van Campen's first talk with the plumber. Of course, the writer, in putting the listener at the telephone operator's shoulder, stationed him at the very crossroads of all activities of the six characters whose calls are tangled. It would have been labored drama if you had had to follow the action from one of their houses to another. Here you are *listening in* throughout the program. Note that not one of these characters actually meets another face to face, not even Pan and the telephone operator.

The piece, written especially for radio, takes advantage of opportunities that are radio's own. How much would it lose in a stage presentation, if such a presentation were attempted by adaptation?

Other types of programs

But dramatic shows are only part of the daily radio fare. There are variety shows in endless variety, frequently with comedians, and everyone of these comedians is looking for more gags. Don't toss your jokes into the waste-basket; toss them at the comedian himself. But write them for a particular "comic," fit them to his line of chatter, and be sure they do fit. How are you going to get your stuff to the attention of the comedian? Use the mails. Write the comedian's manager or agent, or his chief writer, or the comedian himself. He is as eager to get good material as you are to provide it.

Quiz shows

Quiz shows, like variety shows, are of many patterns. They lend themselves to team or group competition and local shows can become highly popular in given areas. Though quiz shows obviously are not rehearsed, nevertheless, the script writer can supply the program pattern and outline ideas for successive programs.

Quiz programs vary in erudition from the consistently superior *Information Please* down to the simplest merchandise quiz, with a bag of groceries for the participant who can name the quality that is the opposite of ignorance.

Likewise they vary in amount of prize money and merchandise offered participants and contributors.

They have the important advantage—and this may be the principal reason for their long life on the air lanes—of providing participation by the listener wherever he may be, as well as the numerically insignificant studio audience.

Isolation, not always confined to a lone ranch house but frequently suffered in a metropolitan apartment, is relieved through the mental stimulation such programs provide. If the question: Why does a man sleep on the outside of the bed? gives reason for laughter as well as thought to the studio audience in the *Man on the Farm* quiz (CBS), it also provokes similar reactions among listeners all along the network.

Similarly, listeners with musical ears are likely to bend them more or less eagerly to the business of identifying a sequence of tunes presented on Phil Baker's *Take It or Leave It*, a program that has made the phrase "\$64 question" a part of the American vernacular. For example, one contestant identified *The Blue of the Night* (\$2 award); *The Wearing of the Green* (\$4 award); *Blue Skies* (\$16 award), but stumbled on *Black Magic*, two correct answers short of the \$64 goal.

Dr. I.Q., "the mental banker" (NBC), enjoys posing such a question as this: "In 1920 James M. Cox of Ohio ran for president on the Democratic ticket. Who was the other Ohio man who ran on the Republican ticket in 1920 and won?" The contestant muffed the question, giving the interrogator opportunity to inform not only the contestant but all who were listening that it was Warren G. Harding.

And from sets of questions (usually in threes) submitted by listeners, *Information Please*, through its "board of experts" and Clifton Fadiman, master of ceremonies, entertains a network audience every week with interrogations like this sequence:

"What, according to a familiar quotation, 'makes the whole world kin'? What 'stopped at the water's edge'? What 'flies out at the window when poverty comes in at the door'?"

Such questions set millions of folks across the nation to thinking and whenever a listener answers the question or questions correctly, that listener, experiencing a glow of achievement, gives himself a pat on the back, figuratively at least. The answers to the above, in case you did not answer them as you read them, are, in sequence: "One touch of nature"; "my darling daughter" (admonished by her mother to hang her clothes on a hickory limb but not go near the water), and "love."

This program has further perpetuated itself through the issuance of an *Information Please Almanac* (first edition 1947), containing more than 1000 pages of the kind of interesting and entertaining information purveyed weekly during the program's long activity. Since the show went on the air on May 17, 1938, according to CBS, more than \$82,000 has been paid to senders of questions used on the program, and 1,817 sets of the Encyclopedia Britannica have been awarded to questioners who succeeded in stumping the experts. During the war, *Information Please* and its experts, CBS stated, appeared at bond rallies in Boston, Philadelphia, Hartford, Conn., Cleveland, Chicago, San Francisco, Baltimore and Newark, N. J., and sold a total of \$678,554,515 in war bonds.

Among the factors which promote longevity of quiz programs is the rivalry of given geographical divisions, or cities, or groups within a city where the program is purely local in character. For example, over Station KOMO, Seattle, Wash., and Station KGW, Portland, Ore., may be heard "The Quiz of the Two Cities," while over WCCO, Minneapolis-St. Paul, may be heard "The Quiz of the Twin Cities," where rival groups of contestants in studios in either city answer in turn similar questions, the listener, of course, hearing the answers of both teams.

Mystery shows

The mystery show is highly popular; in fact, the demand for radio mystery stories has brought forth for airing too many pieces in which illogical development, even absurdity, crowds natural progression out of the lines. Anything for a story has resulted in high artificiality of plot, while boresome deduction

(narration) crowds into too-small compass drama that might be enlivening if given time for enactment. The new writer profitably can study the old masters: Poe, Stevenson, Conan Doyle, and other writers of his preference.

Sports programs

For sponsored play-by-play accounts of football games or baseball games or other sports events on local stations or regional networks, the alert script writer will put his commercials in the mood of the game. Listeners rightly object to a lumbering commercial that might have been written weeks previously and then not for a sports broadcast. Certain sportscasters use highly individualized idiom in their portrayal of games; they would not object, if you carried over into your commercial such expressions to maintain the spirit of the event. Likewise, each sport has its own lingo which also is a cue for tying the commercial dosage more acceptably into the broadcast period.

Assignments now and hereafter

Beginning with this chapter, make and carry through to completion your own assignments for each chapter. Undoubtedly certain chapters and their subjects will be of greater usefulness to you than others. However, writing experience in each major field of radio programs, as discussed in the respective chapters, will add to your over-all facility.

CHAPTER

12

The Radio Serial

*Women continue to listen while
critics clash, and writers write.*

It would be alluring but incorrect to believe that the telling of stories began when women, lonely while their menfolk were away fighting or hunting or merely away, turned to the spoken word to entertain themselves around primitive hearths long before there was a radio on the shelf above the kitchen sink to bring in the radio serial. Researchers protest that this is not quite the truth; they say that story telling began with the admonitions of mothers to their children in "warning examples," and in "embroidered exploits" ¹ in which men boasted of their prowess though they may have been scared to death.

But story telling is old, very old, and its corollary, listening to stories, likewise; it long has answered a need in the human race. In this obvious but often-forgotten fact lies the reason that women listen to radio stories, radio serials if you please, known as "soap operas" in the argot of the studios though never so monickered in the front office of the advertising agency, sponsor, station, or network. The stay-at-homes wish to be entertained, and they turn to the radio for the same reason that

¹ Ransome, Arthur, *A History of Story Telling*, pages 6 and 7. T. C. Jack, London, 1909.

they pick up a magazine, a book, or a newspaper. And many of them are lonely, for loneliness is an inseparable part of human life, unadmitted though it may be.

The listener is looking for entertainment

The average listener has the radio on not to criticize what is being offered, but for the enjoyment it brings. She turns the knob, not primarily to find fault with the serial, however defective it may be, but to listen to the story for the diversion it provides. Nor do we primarily read a book, a magazine or a newspaper to find fault with it, or criticize it. We read it for the pleasure or the information it gives, or both. And we do not brand a neighbor moronic because she reads a certain type of magazine month after month, or follows a certain comic strip day after day in the newspaper. A survey made by CBS,² one of many on this much debated subject, shows that 56 percent of the cultural group called "average," that is, between High and Low, listens to daytime serials.

² *Radio's Daytime Serial*, page 7. Columbia Broadcasting System, New York, September, 1945. By "Committee of Research Authorities": for business research, Dr. Raymond H. Franzen; for radio research, Dr. Paul F. Lazarsfeld; for psychological research, Dr. Carl R. Rogers; for public opinion research, Elmo Roper.

Additional findings of this survey: of all women at home, 54 percent listened to serials; 46 percent did not. Forty percent of college women listened to serials; 35 percent of the higher economic level listened, and, by cultural groups, 41 percent of the high, 56 percent of the average, and 59 percent of the low were listeners.

The women who listen hear more than one serial, the average being 5.8 different serial programs a day, or an average of 1 hour and 27 minutes spent by each woman in hearing the serials. And they do not listen regularly each day. The average serial program is heard 2.5 times a week, the daytime serial usually being presented five days a week. You may properly ask: What does the listener do while she is listening? Thirty-one percent of the time, she does nothing but listen. Sixty-nine percent of the time, she is doing something else as well: 26 percent of the time she is doing kitchen work; 20 percent of the time, general housework; 12 percent of the time she is sewing; 7 percent of the time she's eating; 2 percent of the time she is dressing; and 2 percent of the time she is reading or playing games.

(The above survey is used because it offers answers to questions the open-minded critic himself would be likely to ask.)

Radio not originator of mediocrity

The kind of writing which dominates radio serials did not come in with radio; it—let us call it popular mediocrity—has been present practically since pamphlets first were printed in America. Long before there was a radio in the living room, this mediocre literature appeared in the printed material of the time. Serials, or continued stories, of varying literary value, persist in magazines and newspapers today. We can find the vein of such mediocrity by glancing through the books in any new or old bookstore, in any library. A little excavating easily turns up the evidence.

Excerpt from *St. Elmo*

There was a writer in the South—to give a random but suitable selection—who wrote, among other novels, one entitled *St. Elmo*. It came out in 1866. In reading the following excerpt, keep in mind previous comment on popular mediocrity in writing. Also keep in mind that *St. Elmo* was “the literary sensation of the country” when it was published. (See *The Bookman* of June, 1909, Vol. 29, No. 4, pages 344–345.)

“..... Can you consent to be Douglass Manning’s wife?”

There was no more tremor in his voice than in the measured beat of a bass drum; and in his granite face not a feature moved, not a muscle twitched, not a nerve quivered.

So entirely unexpected was this proposal that Edna could not utter a word. The idea that he could ever wish to marry anybody seemed incredible, and that he should need her society seemed utterly absurd. For an instant she wondered if she had fallen asleep in the soft, luxurious corner of the carriage, and dreamed it all.

Completely bewildered, she sat looking wonderingly at him.

“Miss Earl, you do not seem to comprehend me, and yet my words are certainly very explicit. Once more I ask you, can you put your hand in mine and be my wife?”

He laid one hand on hers, and with the other pushed back his glasses.

Withdrawing her hands, she covered her face with them, and answered almost inaudibly:

“Let me think—for you astonish me.”

"Take a day, or a week, if necessary, for consideration, and then give me your answer."

Mr. Manning leaned back in the carriage, folded his hands, and looked quietly out of the window; and for a half hour silence reigned.

Brief, but sharp was the struggle in Edna's heart. Probably no woman's literary vanity and ambition has ever been more fully gratified than was hers, by this most unexpected offer of marriage from one whom she had been taught to regard as the noblest ornament of the profession she had selected. Thinking of the hour when she sat alone, shedding tears of mortification and bitter disappointment over his curt letter rejecting her MS., she glanced at the stately form beside her, the mysteriously calm, commanding face, the large white, finely moulded hands, waiting to clasp hers for all time, and her triumph seemed complete.

To rule the destiny of that strong man, whose intellect was so influential in the world of letters, was a conquest of which, until this hour, she had never dreamed; and the blacksmith's darling was, after all, a mere woman, and the honor dazzled her.

To one of her peculiar temperament wealth offered no temptation; but Douglass Manning had climbed to a grand eminence, and, looking up at it, she knew that any woman might well be proud to share it.

He filled her ideal, he came fully up to her lofty moral and mental standard. She knew that his superior she could never hope to meet, and her confidence in his integrity of character was boundless.

She felt that his society had become necessary to her peace of mind; for only in his presence was it possible to forget her past. Either she must marry him, or live single, and work and die—alone.

To a girl of nineteen the latter alternative seems more appalling than to a woman of thirty, whose eyes have grown strong in the gray, cold, sunless light of confirmed old-maidenhood; even as the vision of those who live in dim caverns requires not the lamps needed by new-comers fresh from the dazzling outer world.

Edna was weary of battling with precious memories of that reckless, fascinating cynic whom, without trusting, she had learned to love; and she thought that, perhaps, if she were the wife of Mr. Manning, whom without loving she fully trusted, it would help her to forget St. Elmo.

She did not deceive herself; she knew that, despite her struggles and stern interdicts, she loved him as she could never hope to love anyone else. Impatiently she said to herself:

"Mr. Murray is as old as Mr. Manning, and in the estimation of the public is his inferior. Oh! why can not my weak, wayward heart follow my strong, clear-eyed judgment? I would give ten years of my life to love Mr. Manning as I love—"

She compared a swarthy, electrical face, scowling and often re-

pulsively harsh, with one cloudless and noble, over which brooded a solemn and perpetual peace; and she almost groaned aloud in her chagrin and self-contempt, as she thought, "Surely, if ever a woman was infatuated—possessed by an evil spirit—I certainly am."

* * * * *

While she sat there wrestling as she had never done before, even on that day of trial in the church, memory, as if leagued with Satan, brought up the image of Mr. Murray as he stood pleading for himself for his future. She heard once more his thrilling, passionate cry, "Oh, my darling! my darling come to me!" And pressing her face to the lining of the carriage to stifle a groan, she seemed to feel again the close clasp of his arms, the throbbing of his heart against her cheek, the warm, tender, lingering pressure of his lips on hers.

When they had crossed the ferry and were rattling over the streets of New York, Edna took her hands from her eyes; and there was a rigid paleness in her face and a mournful hollowness in her voice, as she said almost sorrowfully:

"No, Mr. Manning! We do not love each other, and I can never be your wife, we shall always be firm friends, but nothing more."

An expression of surprise and disappointment drifted across, but did not settle on the editor's quiet countenance.

Turning to her, he answered with grave gentleness:

"Judge your own heart, Edna; and accept my verdict with reference to mine. Do you suppose that after living single all these years I would ultimately marry a woman for whom I had no affection? Permit me to ask whether you intend to accept the love which I have reason to believe Mr. Murray has offered you?"

"Mr. Manning, I never expect to marry any one, for I know I shall never meet your superior, and yet I can not accept your most flattering offer. You fill all my requirements of noble, Christian manhood; but after to-day this subject must not be alluded to."

"Are you not too hasty? Will you not take more time for reflection? Is your decision mature and final?"

"Yes, Mr. Manning—final, unchangeable. But do not throw me from you! I am very, very lonely, and you surely will not forsake me?"⁴

Has there been improvement?

If you're interested, get the book at your library or at your bookshop and find out whether Edna did become Douglass

⁴ Evans, Augusta J., *St. Elmo*, pages 369–375. Grosset & Dunlap, New York. First published 1866.

Manning's wife, or married St. Elmo Murray. Envision this man and this woman sitting for half an hour in their respective corners of the carriage *while silence reigned*. Picture *the brief but sharp* struggle in Edna's heart. Enjoy the generous hunks of narration, administered by the author in a solicitously interpretative way that these palpitating hearts may be understood. Better than this one scene of a half hour in a carriage, read the entire book. And then turn on the first convenient radio serial and determine if this vein of writing has not been improved, considerably improved, in our own time. First of all we find that we are not so slushy, not so droolingly sentimental—but make your own analysis as a radio script writer.

Augusta J. Evans, who wrote *St. Elmo*, was born in Georgia in 1838, and was the first Southern woman to enter the field of American letters. Before she died in 1909, she had earned royalties of approximately \$200,000 from her writings.

Excerpt from *The Maid of Maiden Lane*

Now, in following this vein of writing, let's move up to the current century. The excerpt that follows is from *The Maid of Maiden Lane*, a story of New York social life in the early days of the republic, when Congress was still debating where to put the national capital. The book was published in 1900.

"... I am resolved to marry Cornelia. I will not give her up; not for an earldom! not for a dukedom! not for the crown of England!"

And to these thoughts he flung off, with a kind of passion, his coat and *vest*. The action was but the affirmation of his resolve, a materialization of his will. To have used an oath in connection with Cornelia would have offended him; but this passionate action asserted with equal emphasis his unalterable resolve. A tender, gallant, courageous spirit possessed him. He was carried away by the feelings it inspired: and nobly so, for alas for that man who professes to be in love and is not carried away by his feelings; in such case, he has no feelings worth speaking of!

Joris Hyde allowed the sweet emotions Cornelia had inspired to have, and to hold, and to occupy his whole being. His heart burned within him; memories of Cornelia closed his eyes, and then filled them with adorable visions of her pure, fresh loveliness; his pulses bounded; his blood ran warm and free as the ethereal ichor of the gods. Sleep was a thousand leagues away; he was so vivid,

that the room felt hot; and he flung open the casement and sat in a beatitude of blissful hopes and imaginations.

And after midnight, when dreams fall, the moon came up over Nassau and Cedar Streets and threw poetic glammers over the antique churches, and grassy graveyards, and the pretty houses, covered with vines and budding rosebushes; and this soft shadow of light calmed and charmed him. In it, he could believe all his dreams possible. He leaned forward and watched the silvery disc, struggling in soft, white clouds; parting them, as with hands, when they formed in baffling, airy masses in her way. And the heavenly traveller was not silent; she had a language he understood; for as he watched the sweet, strong miracle, he said softly to himself—

"It is a sign to me! It is a sign! So will I put away every baffling hindrance between Cornelia and myself. Barriers will only be as those vaporous clouds. I shall part them with my strong resolves—I shall—I shall—I—" and he fell asleep with this sense of victory thrilling his whole being. Then the moon rose higher, and soon came in broad white bars through the window and lay on his young, handsome, smiling face, with the same sweet radiance that in the days of the gods glorified the beautiful shepherd, sleeping on the Ephesian plains.⁵

Find out for yourself whether this likeness "of the beautiful shepherd sleeping on the Ephesian plains" got the girl, Cornelia, or lost her to his rival. Yes, of course, there was a rival; that's where the conflict (see Chapter 6 for basic requirements of drama) comes in. What would be your reaction to this description of a young man in love if it came out of the radio in your living room? this young man "whose blood ran warm and free as the ethereal ichor of the gods." If you did not think it silly, you might decide it was travesty and enjoy it. Yet this was a popular book in its time; the author, Amelia E. Barr, got \$1,200 for the manuscript, and it even ran serially in newspapers of the day. Mrs. Barr, like popular writers in our own time, made her living by writing. Her life story is a record of a valiant woman. There will be further mention of her later.

It is our privilege to read or listen to what we wish

Many other examples could be cited and the way of popular mediocrity charted more thoroughly down through the years of

⁵ Barr, Amelia E., *The Maid of Maiden Lane*, pages 88-89. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1900.

American writing. It is reasonable to point out to writers and critics who turn to the radio and expect it to pour forth *The Atlantic Monthly* constantly that there was a following for the kind of writing indicated in the two excerpts. It brought entertainment and diversion to a great many people in its day. Similarly, a considerable segment of America's population likes that sort of literature nowadays. In fact, 20,000,000⁶ American women now listen daily to daytime radio serials. Are they getting from the radio better popular fare than was provided their sisters back, say, in 1866 when there was no radio but when *St. Elmo* was published, or in 1900, again before radio, when *The Maid of Maiden Lane* was published? What they listen to might be better but so might what they read. Despite the troubles of our times, this continues to be a free country. We continue to turn on the radio to what we like to hear; we continue to read what we like in magazines and newspapers, and select books that please us.

Raising the level of our storytelling

If we want to write popular stuff, and many of us either want to do so, or are compelled, as Amelia E. Barr was, to do so or starve, then can we not make our writing better? Can we not keep raising the level of our storytelling? There are those who insist that the writer of a radio serial must write down to his audience, down to the mental level of an 8 to 12-year-old child. Actually, children of those years are pretty bright human beings (see Chapter 17). One can learn a great deal from them. I think the phrase "writing down" is misused in this instance. Perhaps clarity is meant, but clarity is important not only for radio writing but is an ingredient of all good writing, and always has been. If we must have figures to guide the creative artist in radio writing—and likewise they should guide radio's business offices—then, as was noted in the CBS survey of daytime radio serials mentioned previously, 56 per cent of the cultural group known as average listens to daytime serials.

⁶ *Radio's Daytime Serial*, CBS previously cited, page 14.

That survey divides audiences into three cultural levels, as follows:

- (1) the *high* cultural level consists of people who have completed high school or college, and who are in the high or high-middle economic levels.
- (2) the *low* cultural level consists of people who have less than high school education, and are in the low or low-middle economic levels.
- (3) the *average* cultural level consists of people whose education and economic condition lie between high and low.⁷

The reasonable inference is that the people of this average intelligence level have had a year or more in high school. There is no reason for believing they are morons, though moronic intelligence frequently is mentioned by critics in describing the level of appeal of the radio serial.

If 56 per cent of the cultural group known as Average listens to daytime serials—isn't that a directive to keep making stories for radio better? And additional incentive lies in the fact that more and more people will be listening to the radio as new stations, particularly in the frequency-modulation or FM bracket, are erected and put on the air.

To write a serial, start listening

Now, something about the serials themselves. You undoubtedly have listened to them. If you haven't done so, and yet believe you can write one, start listening at once. You don't have to stir beyond your front door; the radio in your own room is your demonstration laboratory. Begin taking its serials apart at once. You will, by such awareness, be in a much better position to formulate and develop a radio serial story. This listening is likely to make you regard the critics with tolerance born of understanding, especially those who reveal they have little knowledge of actual serials, though they find much fault with them, and do much talking *about* them.

⁷ *Radio's Daytime Serial*, CBS previously cited, page 6.

Current problems in serials

Any writer of a radio serial deserves a very low bow. It's a stupendous job these women, and men, are doing: just how heavy a task will be pointed up later. And do not make the error of underestimating the intelligence of such writers. They are an alert bloc of professionals, keenly aware not only of the nation's activities but the tendencies in the thinking of its people and of the possible channels that thinking may cut in the months and years ahead.

If the charge of *innocuous conflict* is leveled against the general output of such writers, remember the sponsor is a factor in how far they can go in directing thought. And upon the radio industry itself, because of the vast number of persons that hear a particular program daily, rests the obligation to answer the question: Should we take greater advantage of the opportunities for service presented by the problems of our time?

Serial writers as guests on intellectual programs

Why are not the Michaels, the Phillipses, the Carringtons, and other successful serial writers invited to participate every now and then on intellectual programs, particularly such programs as *The University of Chicago Round Table*, or *Invitation to Learning* where commercial sponsor or advertising agency interests would not conflict? They too would have something to contribute that you and I, as well as senators and congressmen, could profit by.

Selections from radio serials

To make adequate presentation of radio serials, even by excerpts, would turn this particular section of a chapter into a book; however, let us investigate as far as possible various phases of serial-writing techniques as revealed in representative material that has been presented on the air and listened to by millions. The selections offered are typical of the radio serials that you can hear daily, Monday through Friday, in your living room.

An excerpt from *Today's Children*

First, an excerpt from *Today's Children*, a serial that, under a different title, first went on the air September 11, 1933. It has had three different sponsors in all. Under its present sponsorship, General Mills, Inc., it has been running continuously since June 29, 1942. The excerpt is the closing three to four minutes of the June 6, 1946, program carried by the NBC Network. Participants in the four-way dialogue are Mama Schultz, Papa Schultz, their daughter Bertha, and, incidentally, Marilyn Murray.

MAMA: That's all right, liebbling—we all liked Richard—we all like Keith. Your own mind you had to make up.

PAPA: You better think some more.

BERTHA: Papa—it's all over.

MARILYN: Of course it is—she's decided.

PAPA: Some more you better think about it. One way or the other I ain't gonna say anything—but such a man like Joseph—[Papa called Richard, Joseph.—*Author*]

MAMA: Like Richard. You ain't gonna say anything but you're going to say it anyhow.

PAPA: Like Keith Armour he ain't—you don't have to tell me that. Like a movie star maybe he don't look—the same way of talking like Keith he ain't got. All right—with the hands he works a plain working man he is.

BERTHA: Papa, that doesn't have anything to do with it.

MARILYN: Why make it so hard for her, Papa?

BERTHA: You seem to forget that Keith was in my life long, long before I ever knew Dick.

MAMA: Liebbling, you don't have to explain.

BERTHA: But Papa feels so sure that I've let Dick down, treated him unfairly maybe I have, maybe I have, but why keep reminding me of it?

PAPA: Maybe I don't think you know what you want. You and Keith Armour—don't I know what it's always been?

MARILYN: Papa, I don't think it's nice of you now to

PAPA: Nice or not nice I gotta say it. How many times has she seen Keith Armour—two, three, four times—in how many years? Letter—Ja, all kinds of letters. Like a book they were writing—about two other people, not about themselves so long you been writing the book, Bertha, that now—whether you like it or not—you gotta write the last chapter.

BERTHA: Papa—

PAPA: Better think a little yet. Getting married to someone, lieb-ling—that ain't writing no book. Tell her, Mama, tell her what it is

MAMA: I ain't gonna say nothing

PAPA: Day after day living with someone—that's what getting married is—getting along with somebody—the way it's been with you and Joseph—Richard, I mean.

BERTHA: Papa, this isn't helping things—it isn't helping at all.

MAMA: Too much already, Friedrich, you've said.

EFFECT: TELEPHONE RINGS—HOLD UNDER:

BUSINESS: PAUSE:

BERTHA: Keith he said he was going to call. Excuse me.

PAPA: (FADING) Is she happy, Mama? Does she look happy to you?

MAMA: (OFF) So now don't say anymore.

EFFECT: RINGING STOPS WITH RECEIVER OFF HOOK:

BERTHA: Hello? Oh, yes, Keith. (PAUSE) Yes, he's left. (PAUSE) Oh, about an hour ago. (PAUSE) No, he didn't stay very long. (PAUSE) No No, he didn't he made it very easy. (PAUSE) Naturally, I'm a little upset. (PAUSE) Yes, Keith of course I love you. (PAUSE) All right, darling. (PAUSE) Yes, tomorrow. (PAUSE) All right goodbye.

EFFECT: RECEIVER ON HOOK:

MAMA: (FADING IN) Bertha lieb-ling so tired out you look. You better go to bed.

BERTHA: (DAZED) Mama

MAMA: Lieb-ling lieb-ling

BERTHA: (BUILDING) Mama (CALLS) Papa—Papa, you're right. I don't know what I've been thinking—I don't know what

I've been doing. What have I done to Dick—to myself? I can't go through with this—I can't!⁸

MUSIC: BRIDGE:

ANNOUNCER: You are listening to TODAY'S CHILDREN.

(CLOSING COMMERCIAL ANNOUNCEMENT FOLLOWS)

Comment: It is obvious, even from this brief excerpt, that here is the old problem of a girl torn between two lovers. Which one will she accept? The conflict is clear. Papa Schultz is for Richard whom he persists in calling Joseph. Mama Schultz "ain't saying nothing." Bertha must decide between Keith and Richard. She apparently had accepted Keith, but as the episode ends, she exclaims, in a *rising* (see Chapter 6) scene, "I can't go through with this, I can't." Period. Curtain. Theme Up. In radio serial technique, this is a good, tried and true way to end a scene. Let the heroine dangle in a quandary, the listener likewise. And because everyone always wants to know how a story comes out, we come back for the answer on the day following. But the next episode may not provide the answer; in fact, in any radio serial that runs true to stylized pattern, the answer shouldn't come quickly. That is the technique of attenuation which critics say reaches absurdity, or, using the Anglo-Saxon root which has more bite, they call it *stringing out*. The author, on the other hand, who knows the audience as a mother knows her child, insists that a listener doesn't want to part with a hero or heroine who has become as much a fixture in the listener's daily life as the clock in the kitchen.

Climaxes in newspaper serials

The ending of each episode on a climax or something akin to it is not so new a device as it appears to be. When it was general custom for a newspaper—some still do—to carry at

⁸ Reproduced by special permission of General Mills, Inc., the sponsor; Carl Wester & Co., the producer, and Irna Phillips, the author. Copyright 1946 by the joint owners, Irna Phillips and Carl Wester. Agency, Knox Reeves, Advertising, Inc.

least one serial story, or more accurately, when the newspaper turned a story into a serial by presenting it in installments, day after day, the editor, if he had time to read what he was putting into his paper, quite naturally tried to end each installment in a more or less breathless or interest-provoking spot. His problem was to find sufficient spots of this kind; he and his scissors were under a handicap; the story had *not been written*, as a radio serial is written, *to end on a high note daily*.

Excerpt from *Masquerade*

Now, let's look at another excerpt, this one from *Masquerade*, a new serial that went on the air under its present sponsorship January 14, 1946, and therefore a mere upstart compared with many other serials proud of their ten or more years of radio life. *Masquerade* presents the old yet ever new triangle: a man and two women. The characters are Barbara, a war widow and a teacher, accused by Marian Field of having designs on Tom Field, Marian's husband and a school principal. The excerpt is the closing dialogue between the two women; Marian, the wife, has just warned the teacher that she is going to drive her out of town.

BARBARA: I have a great deal of respect for Mr. Field—a great deal of admiration for him. In everything I've seen him do, he's displayed an understanding, a patience that—well, that I've simply marveled at. He has a wonderful set of values, Mrs. Field—he's a fine man.

MARIAN: Thank you for telling me.

BARBARA: He's never said anything to me about his home life—any problems the two of you may have faced. He's never discussed that with me. But if this is a sample—if this is a sample of what he's been exposed to in the way of suspicion, distrust,—unreasoning jealousy

MARIAN: Now look here—

BARBARA: You've no one but yourself to blame for the wreckage of your marriage.

MARIAN: Well, I don't intend to—

BARBARA: I've listened to what you've had to say—now you listen to me. I lost my husband and there can't be, there never will be anyone else. I've lost my husband yes I had everything that you have, once—everything you could have had. I had a husband as fine, as wonderful in every way as Mr. Field is. But I lost him—I wasn't given the opportunity to keep him. I had no control over the matter. But you—women like you—who have within their grasp everything, everything, and through their own selfishness, lack of appreciation, blindness you dare to come here and accuse me of

MARIAN: How can you be such a hypocrite?

BARBARA: Hypocrite—you should accuse anyone of hypocrisy. Why, I don't think you even know how to be honest with yourself. You don't have the courage, the honesty, to look within yourself, to see where the real trouble lies. Well, I'm not going to permit you to do that as far as I'm concerned. (REPEATS) You'll drive me out of this town oh yes, a week ago I was ready to leave—I was sick of Fairview and the people in it. I was going to run away. I almost ran away, but you've just given me as good a reason as I could ever want for remaining right here in Fairview. You've placed this on such an ugly, personal basis—I simply wouldn't give you the satisfaction. I have work to do here—work with young people. I've suddenly realized just how important that work is—how badly it's needed.⁹

MUSIC: BRIDGE:

ANNOUNCER: You are listening to MASQUERADE. (Broadcast June 28, 1946)

Comment: Here, as you undoubtedly noted, only two characters are before the microphone: two women fighting over a man. Although divorce was mentioned earlier in the script, it probably will never come to pass for radio listeners do not like their characters to resort to divorce. In this script, the wife introduces the subject by saying she will not divorce her husband.

In another serial of family life, a divorce involving two important characters was impending. Letters began arriving from

⁹ Reproduced by special permission of General Mills, Inc., the sponsor; Carl Wester & Co., the producer, and Irna Phillips, the author. Copyright 1946 by Radio Scripts, Inc. (Irna Phillips). Agency, Knox Reeves, Advertising, Inc.

listeners: they didn't want it to happen. What did the author do? He killed the wife in a fortuitous accident—and thereby threw a good actress out of a job. But the listeners were satisfied. The letters of protest ceased immediately.

To get back to *Masquerade*, note again the rising scene as the episode ends: a speech in which our heroine announces she will stay in Fairview and fight the scandalmongers. Listeners applaud her for it and hope she wins; in fact, they'll be listening again Monday (the episode under discussion was broadcast on a Friday) for the next episode to reveal more about this fighting woman teacher.

Compared with the excerpt from *Today's Children*, this closing is not so sharp in dramatic action. You will see, by comparing the length of the dialogue lines in the respective examples, that in *Masquerade* the speeches are longer and much more preachy than the lines in *Today's Children*. If you wish to speed up the action of your piece, shorten your lines.

The old bugbear: *dashes*

Let's return to radio script style for a moment. In Chapter 4, you were urged to forego the use of dashes in radio script for stated reasons. In both preceding excerpts you find them used. Some dot-dot-dots are slapped in also, and the time-honored period or full stop, of course, appears. There seems to be no particular reason for the use of dots in one place, dashes in another, and the period in still another; there may be; for certain there should be. However, the characters, because they have worked with this kind of script for a considerable time, have come to know what the typist means by a period, or a series of dots, or some dashes. With the aid of the producer they undoubtedly have set up acceptable interpretations, but isn't that adding unnecessary little complications to the interpretation of radio script which should read, and therefore flow, clearly? And what about new talent? Doesn't it bump its head, or its tongue, on the lines? A common or universal style in radio writing would help every author to get his lines interpreted better; the talent would find them more comfortable on the tongue.

Script: *The Guiding Light*

So much for excerpts. Now let's take a complete script, an episode from a 1946 presentation of *The Guiding Light*. Note that the script style discussed and illustrated in Chapter 4 and followed with intentional exceptions, throughout this book, is used in presenting it. Commercials are included. A full discussion of serial commercials was presented in Chapter 5.

THE GUIDING LIGHT¹⁰

(As presented over the NBC Network June 14, 1946)

Script by Irna Phillips

CAST: Clare Lawrence, the
 mother
 Tim Lawrence, the father
 Lucile Marshal, the grand-
 mother
 Ricki, the son

SOUND: Wrapping paper rattling
 Splashing in bathtub

MUSIC: Theme: chords on organ

MUSIC: CHORDS:

ANNOUNCER: "The Guiding Light"

MUSIC: CHORDS:

ANNOUNCER: brought to you by Wheaties, "Breakfast of Champions."

(OPENING COMMERCIAL)

DONOVAN: I assume, Prentiss, that you're a member of the Clean Plate Club.

PRENTISS: You bet I am, Gregg also the clean bowl club, if you know what I mean, and I think you do.

DONOVAN: Sure, Ed. After all, who'd want to miss that last delicious spoonful of milk, fruit, and Wheaties?

PRENTISS: Can't think of a soul, Gregg.

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DONOVAN: Me either. And y'know, Ed, that's mighty important, I mean that Wheaties are so bloomin' good you want to eat every last spoonful.

PRENTISS: You mean with the Government asking us not to waste any food

DONOVAN: Yeah, the world food situation is critical, and we Americans don't want the less fortunate peoples overseas to starve.

PRENTISS: I'll say we don't.

DONOVAN: So if we take only as much food for each meal as we can eat, and then eat every bit of it, we'll be able to send more overseas.

PRENTISS: Thereby helping to prevent widespread starvation.

DONOVAN: And it's important that we choose our food with care, especially when it comes to wheat products.

PRENTISS: Wheat being mighty precious

DONOVAN: Yeah, we want full value from the wheat we use. And that's where Wheaties come in.

PRENTISS: You mean because Wheaties are flakes of one hundred-per cent whole wheat.

DONOVAN: And besides that, they're so doggone delicious that I don't see how anybody could stop before he'd finished that last spoonful of Wheaties, "Breakfast of Champions."

MUSIC: THEME:

ANNOUNCER: (LEAD IN) And now, "The Guiding Light."

CLARE: (FADING IN) Well, if everyone's finished eating, let's go in the living room.

TIM: Swell dinner, honey.

RICKI: Yeah, swell dinner, Mom.

CLARE: Thank you, gentlemen. I'm glad you enjoyed it.

LUCILE: Well, I enjoyed it too even if I did contribute to the cooking of it.

CLARE: Yes, what am I doing, taking all the bows? Your contribution was just about the whole meal.

TIM: Come on, Mother. You don't mind if I lean on you a little, do you?

LUCILE: Oh, not at all.

TIM: (FADING, BACK) My legs are a little wobbly with the load I'm carrying.

RICKI: (FADING SLIGHTLY) My legs are wobbly too, Dad.

CLARE: (ON) Ricki.

RICKI: (SLIGHTLY BACK) What, Mom?

CLARE: (RATHER LOW) Here, dear. Take this.

EFFECT: PACKAGES EXCHANGED:

RICKI: (ON) Is it time now, Mom?

CLARE: Yes, it's time for you to give Daddy his presents Do you know your little speech, what Grandmother told you to say to him?

RICKI: Sure.

CLARE: Well, all right let's go.

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

TIM: (FADING IN) It's cooled off a little this evening. It was pretty hot in the ball park this afternoon.

CLARE: (LOW) Tim.

TIM: (SEEING THE GREEKS BEARING PRESENTS) Oh.

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

CLARE: All right, Ricki.

RICKI: Here, Daddy.

TIM: Well! What's this?

RICKI: Happy Father's Day from Mimsy and Me and Mom and Gran, your loving family.

EFFECT: PACKAGES EXCHANGED:

TIM: Well, what do you know?

RICKI: Open it It's a token of our little affection.

LUCILE: Oh, my our little affection! (LAUGHS)

CLARE: (CONTROLLING HER MERRIMENT) Mother! Yes, a little token of our affection.

TIM: Well, say is this a surprise! I should say I will open it.

EFFECT: PACKAGE OPENED UNDER:

LUCILE: (CHUCKLES)

RICKI: What are you laughing at, Gran?

LUCILE: Why uh nothing, dear. Your father he looked so surprised. I

CLARE: Yes, didn't he look funny? You did such a nice job of surprising him, Ricki.

TIM: Well, look at this necktie! Isn't it a beauty!

RICKI: There's something else, Dad.

TIM: Yes, I see there is. I wonder what it could be.

EFFECT: TISSUE PAPER:

TIM: Hm (NONPLUSSED) Why, it's uh it's a uh

CLARE: (QUICKLY) A folder for your desk to keep your letters in.

TIM: Yes, I uh can see it is.

LUCILE: (CLEARS HER THROAT) Ahem!

RICKI: I made it at school, Dad.

TIM: (INCREDULOUSLY) No! You made this fine folder for my desk?

RICKI: Sure I made it.

TIM: Well, sir, that's just about the finest piece of work of its kind I've ever seen And you made it? All by yourself?

RICKI: Yes.

CLARE: Isn't it nice?

TIM: I should say it is! Come here, guy. (HUGGING HIM) Hm Thank you very much, son. I I certainly appreciate this.

RICKI: Mimsy gave you the tie. But she had to go to bed.

TIM: Well, they're both just about the best presents I've ever received. And was I surprised!

RICKI: Did I say my speech right, Gran?

LUCILE: Yes, you certainly did, child. I don't know when I've been so entertained.

CLARE: Mother handled the production of the presentation speech, Tim.

TIM: So I gathered.

CLARE: I understand the original version was somewhat longer. It was cut a little when we decided to celebrate Father's Day today on account of you're going to New York.

TIM: Well, thank you all from the bottom of my paternal heart. This is by all odds the best Father's Day of my life We had a great time at the ball game, didn't we, kid?

RICKI: I'll say. Are we going to go again some time, Dad?

TIM: You bet we will.

CLARE: Well, you have about a half hour more to enjoy each other's society, you two men and then you must go to bed, Ricki.

RICKI: In a half hour?

CLARE: Yes, dear. So make the most of your time. I'll call you when the half hour is up.

MUSIC: BRIDGE:

EFFECT: SPLASHING OF WATER IN BATHTUB:

CLARE: All right, Ricki get out of the tub, now. This bath has gone on long enough.

EFFECT: SPLASHING ABATES:

TIM: Yes, you'll be waterlogged if you stay in there much longer.

RICKI: What's "waterlogged"?

TIM: It means that you're full of water.

CLARE: Step out, dear.

EFFECT: WATER BIZ OF RICKI GETTING OUT OF TUB:

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

RICKI: I can dry myself, Mom.

CLARE: All right. Take the towel. But hurry. It's getting late.

RICKI: I will. (SLIGHT PAUSE) Dad?

TIM: Yes?

RICKI: Does the shortstop have to be the fastest man on the team?

TIM: Yes, just like I told you. He has to be fast as a cat.

RICKI: Why does he?

TIM: Well, he has a lot of ground to cover out there. Most right-handed batters hit to the left side of the field. That means he has to do a lot of running back and forth, scooping up the ball.

RICKI: Will I be a shortstop when I get big?

TIM: I wouldn't be surprised.

RICKI: And scoop up the ball like they did today?

TIM: Well, it'll take a lot of practice to do that.

CLARE: All right now your pajamas.

RICKI: You don't have to tell me, Mom.

CLARE: Well, just keep busy.

TIM: Hug me good night now, fellow. I'm going downstairs.

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

RICKI: Good night, Dad.

TIM: Good night, son. And thanks very much for a fine Father's Day.

RICKI: That's okay.

TIM: (FADING) See you downstairs, honey.

CLARE: Yes, Tim. (PAUSE) My, you had a good time with Daddy today, didn't you?

RICKI: Sure He's a good old Dad, isn't he, Mom?

CLARE: Yes, Ricki, he's he's a good old Dad. (PAUSE) All right. (FADING SLIGHTLY) Come along into your room. (PAUSE) (FADING IN) We'll have to skip the reading tonight, Ricki it's so late.

RICKI: Okay.

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

CLARE: Well! It's it's okay, is it? You don't mind my not reading to you?

RICKI: Naw! (ECHOING TIM) I've had a big day, Mom. It's time to turn in.

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

CLARE: I see Time to turn in (SLIGHT PAUSE) Come on, my my little red-headed hero-worshiper Kneel down and say your prayers.

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

RICKI: Our Father who are in Heaven. Bless Mom and Mimsy and Gran, and bless my Dad and (INTERRUPTING HIMSELF) (SLIGHT PAUSE) Mom, Dad's my real father, isn't he?

CLARE: Why, yes, he is Now finish your prayers.

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

RICKI: But Mom when I was a little baby you went to the hospital. And you saw me and you said: That's the nicest little baby I ever saw. And you took me home with you Didn't you?

CLARE: (A LITTLE TENSE) Yes.

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

RICKI: You adopted me?

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

CLARE: (MORE TENSE) Yes, dear, I adopted you.

RICKI: Well (SLIGHT PAUSE) Dad didn't adopt me. He's my real father. . . . (PAUSE) Mom, who's my real mother?

BUSINESS: PAUSE:

CLARE: (QUIETLY AND DELIBERATELY) Your real mother is dead, Ricki. (SLIGHT PAUSE) She died while you were still a little baby.

RICKI: Oh (SLIGHT PAUSE) But you're my mother now, aren't you, Mom?

BUSINESS: SLIGHT PAUSE:

CLARE: Yes, dear, I'm your mother. (SLIGHT PAUSE) Go on with your prayers.

RICKI: Bless Mom and Dad and Mimsy and Gran (FADING UNDER CLARE) and Jonathan. And help me to be a good boy. Amen.

CLARE: (OVER RICKI) God forgive me for what I said but that's the way it's got to be!

MUSIC: BRIDGE:

ANNOUNCER: You are listening to "The Guiding Light."

(CLOSING COMMERCIAL)

DONOVAN: Friday, you know, is "Round Up New Customers for Wheaties" Day. A day when I give you some extra good reasons why you should try this famous "Breakfast of Champions."

Now I can't think of a better reason for urging you to try Wheaties with summer and vacation coming on than to point out that Wheaties are ready-to-eat.

Yup, Wheaties are ready-to-eat. Which means that the kids can help themselves to breakfast whenever they happen to want some.

All they have to do is shake those golden flakes into a bowl, top with milk and fruit, plug in the toaster and breakfast is got. Which is a big help when Junior suddenly decides to get up at the break of dawn to watch the guy next door fix his motorcycle.

Easy to fix and mighty easy to eat that's Wheaties. And they're nourishing, too, being flakes of one hundred-percent whole wheat.

So I hope you'll jot down Wheaties on your week-end grocery order. That General Mills product, Wheaties, "Breakfast of Champions."

MUSIC: THEME:

Comment: Again let's consider just the episode before us, not the hundreds of quarter hours that have preceded it. *The Guiding Light*, which has had only two sponsors during the nine years of its life on the air, has been running continuously since January 25, 1937.³ Note that in this episode the action hinges

³ Procter & Gamble was its first sponsor; General Mills, Inc., its second. The General Mills sponsorship continued from March 17, 1942, to November 29, 1946.

on Father's Day, a more or less general observance in every household. In this particular home it took on something of a rite. The Lawrence family observed Father's Day on Friday, June 14, the day the script was presented; the calendar observance was two days later on Sunday, June 16. This would cause no dissatisfaction among listeners; they would expect the Lawrences to observe the day, and they would understand that Friday was the nearest day to Father's Day, there being no presentation of *The Guiding Light* on Saturday or Sunday. What the author did here was to take proper advantage of a receptivity widened by general participation, for nearly every family knows there is a Father's Day, whether father himself gives a hoot about it or not. This necessity of awareness of the calendar makes it a must for every script writer always to have an almanac (preferably *The Old Farmer's Almanac*) in one hand as he punches out his story on the typewriter.

The action of the piece builds up interest, pertinent to Father's Day, because of the question: "What became of the mother of this man's child?" Now, what is the action in the episode, that is, the surface action? Merely giving the kid a bath. Nothing very dramatic about it; actually it proceeded with much less disturbance than frequently takes place in an average home. But this obvious action did offer a common interest, for most families have children, and most children get baths whether they want them or not. The bath gave opportunity for the script writer to tuck in natural dialogue for the boy; she put into his mouth words that he naturally would say. And writing dialogue for a juvenile is not easy in any medium. Child-training experts frequently bog down in translating their good counsel into words that a kid or his mother can understand. Let's take a few pertinent examples from the script.

Note how quickly Ricki, the boy, came back at his father by asking, "What's waterlogged?" after the father had used the word "waterlogged" in the preceding line. And after the boy gets out of the tub he tells his mother, "I can dry myself, Mom." Any youngster wants to do things himself. Further along, Ricki objects to his mother's telling him, "Now your pajamas." His rejoinder again is the natural thing for a boy to say, "You don't have to tell me, Mom."

A kid on his knees saying his prayers is likely to interrupt them with exclamations of wonderment over incidents and experiences of a busy day, or to ask a question, apparently irrelevant, but in nowise so to him. Here the plot comes into the prayer itself as Ricki asks, "Mom, who's my real mother?" And here Clare, the mother, makes a decision and gives voice to it, "Your real mother is dead, Ricki." Then she asks God's forgiveness for what appears to be a lie. Curtain.

Here is an ending intentionally stronger than usual because this particular script is a Friday presentation, and the adroit writer, in this wise, will quicken the listener's interest enough to maintain that interest over the two-day lapse of Saturday and Sunday when no episode is presented. You may be sure the mother's statement to Ricki will come up in the family council on the succeeding Monday. Meantime, over Saturday and Sunday, the listener is left to mull over, or worry with, or attempt to decide for herself, the answer to the problem: Did Clare do right in lying to Ricki about his real mother?

Radio serials written for radio, not made over to fit

In studying radio serials, be increasingly alert to the methods used by writers to make their stories please the listening ear. Remember, too, that radio serials with certain exceptions, are created for the listening ear *first*; they are not made over from material originally created for some other medium. Writers skilled in other fields, as well as amateur radio writers, will find study of radio serials richly rewarding, for they provide a wealth of examples of script writing technique.

If you have your heart set on writing a radio serial, remember it is a tough field to break into. The disposition of buyers is to keep the strong interest-pullers on the air and to lop off the weak ones; therefore, it is only rarely that a new serial is added. General Mills, Inc., added *Masquerade* in January, 1946. The total number of serials on the air—make your own check by consulting representative logs of stations of the CBS and NBC networks—is 40 to 45. The peak in number apparently has been passed.

Are you in good physical condition?

As a possible writer of radio serials, ask yourself this question: Am I in good physical condition? For it requires stamina, much stamina, both physical and mental. Do you know what you are perhaps too blithely stepping into? Can you write 1,300 words a day, five days a week, for, say, ten years? Saturdays and Sundays you have off, but you'll be unwise if you do not spend them worrying up new attenuations of your plot. A radio serial is presented five times a week for an endless number of weeks—months—perhaps years. Each episode is 15 minutes (14:30 actual time on the air). Out of this by network daytime regulation (see Chapter 5) the commercials, fore and aft, may occupy up to 3 minutes 15 seconds. This leaves at least 11 minutes and 15 seconds to fill with words. At the rate of 140 words a minute (Chapter 4) which is not too fast a pace for other drama, you would need to write 1,575 words. But soap operas usually are slower-paced; the slam-bang speed of "put up your hands or I'll drill you" would be too nerve-wracking day in and day out. The complete episode from *The Guiding Light*, reproduced earlier in this section, contains only 1,022 words, but it happens to be very leisurely paced. There's no hurrying a kid taking a bath, as any parent well knows! The estimate of 1,300 words an episode is an average. You may desire earnestly to cut it still more before you are finished.

Marketing a serial

But let us suppose you still want to write a radio serial and your physician has given you assurance that your constitution is likely to hold up under the strain. Then, how many scripts should you write before trying to market your work, for you must produce evidence in writing, the actual scripts, not merely "the grand idea." Opinions vary as to how far you should go, but the following limits are practical. Of course, they can be lengthened or shortened to meet varying requirements.

For the *plot*: outline it episode by episode for thirteen weeks. That means 65 programs. Actual number of *completed scripts*:

five covering the first week, then the Friday script for each of the seven succeeding weeks, plus a thoroughgoing outline for each episode for which, in that seven-week period, you have not written a script. This means nine completed scripts.

By the time you have finished the work indicated in the above preparatory labors you may have proven to yourself that your heart, and nerves, and brain can stand the strain. If so, then what will you do with your "presentation package"?

Advertising agencies, handling radio accounts, are first on your calling or correspondence list. Frequently, a network commercial program is produced by an outside agency, using the network's facilities. This is true in the case of radio serials. They may be put on the air from network studios by the radio division of the advertising agency handling the advertising of the firm sponsoring the serial. Or they may be put on the air by a radio production firm hired by the agency to take over the job. Script, talent, music, and time on the air, all are paid for by the agency for the sponsor.

However, do not overlook the industrial firms themselves, both those already using radio serials and those that might be interested in so doing. It's their money that will go to buy your work, directly or indirectly, through an advertising agency.

If you know personally anyone in an advertising agency handling radio accounts, or among sponsors or possible sponsors of radio programs, that is, business-firm personnel, make the most of that acquaintanceship in trying to market your story.

If you still are at a loss where to start, then get the names of industrial firms sponsoring radio serials from the commercials presented five days a week along with the dramas. Only the product itself may be mentioned, but you can verify who makes it by buying a package. Write or approach the radio advertising manager of that firm.

All of these approaches have been used often, but radio, beginning to stir in an unfortunate rut, should be waiting with open mind for additional ideas, for new work from new writers.

In any approach you make, you may get shunted around a good deal, but you as a writer already have demonstrated to yourself that you have perseverance. So persevere. And this also is axiomatic: a new idea is beyond price, but be sure to put

a price tag on it. (See Chapter 19 for further discussion of the marketing of scripts.)

Money in writing radio serials

There is money in radio serial writing. To date, this is true for the few, not for the many, but it is a field in which radio writers are comparatively well paid. Outside of network time, the writer tops the list of costs that go into a radio serial. The pay, according to *Fortune*⁴ for March, 1946, varies from \$125 a week for dialogue writers, the skeleton drapers who take the outline submitted by the creator and clothe it in words for the air, to \$500 for the top writing brains.

The *Fortune* article puts the reputed income of Irna Phillips of Hollywood at \$200,000 a year for the four soap operas she plots; dialogue writers fill them in. *Time* as long ago as June 10, 1940, said she was earning "about \$4,000 a week." When you, along with millions of other listeners, turn on the *General Mills Hour* on your NBC station, you are meeting her characters. She writes *The Guiding Light*, *Today's Children*, *Masquerade*, and *Woman in White*. The first three are represented by actual script in this book.

The weekly pay of Elaine Carrington of New York, also according to *Fortune*,⁵ was \$3,500, earned by "talking her scripts into a dictaphone." (You will recall the suggestion made in Chapter 1: "chatter over your typewriter.") When you turn on your CBS station, and hear *Pepper Young's Family* (begun in 1932), or *When a Girl Marries* (1939), or *Rosemary* (1942),⁶

⁴ "Soap Opera: Manufactured at low cost, it pleases advertisers and flatters women" (Author's name not given), *Fortune*, March, 1946, Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, Page 119 *et seq.* Its summation: "[soap opera] an excessively shabby art."

⁵ "Soap Opera," *Fortune*, March, 1946, Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, page 122.

⁶ CBS announced, in a publicity release in August, 1946, that mood music had been introduced in the presentations of *Rosemary*, emphasis being on the fact that it is a *daytime* serial. The music was to be used to punctuate and set the mood of the successive scenes. It was to be held under, and was not to intrude on the action.

The blending of words and sound and music is the special opportunity of good radio; well-produced shows consistently reflect this appreciation of radio values.

you are hearing conversation, the spoken word of their creator, Mrs. Carrington. She was "a successful short story writer for the *Ladies' Home Journal* and the *Saturday Evening Post*" before she began writing radio serials twelve years ago.

"Soap operas fill a tremendous need of people who have no life of their own," she said (*Time*, August 26, 1946). "There are so many lonely people in the world. I try to create situations that everybody can identify themselves with, and then, whenever everything turns out happily, everybody's happy."

"I think the critics of soap operas are the people who don't listen all the time. You can't get anything out of one broadcast. It takes me six months to create a character, but when she's built, my listeners will go through thick and thin with her."

"The one thing I admit is wrong with most soap operas is cliff-hanging. I never cliff-hang."

Mrs. Carrington founded *The Carrington Playhouse*, a weekly sustaining program on MBS which presented the scripts of competing new writers. (For further reference, see Chapter 19, Section B, *Opportunities for Free-Lance Writers*.)

Mrs. Barr the author of fifty-eight novels!

If Amelia E. Barr, that remarkable woman mentioned earlier in this chapter, were alive today, she would be right alongside the Hummerts and the Phillippes and the Carringtons in turning out radio serials. *Fortune*, in the article previously referred to, credits Frank and Anne Hummert of New York City with the manufacture of fifteen radio serials, a staff of dialogue writers, of course, helping in putting the plots into playable form. But think what Mrs. Barr did in her time. Standing up at her high desk (for that is the way she worked) she wrote *fifty-eight* novels, six volumes of short stories and tales, and hundreds of poems. The poems included one every week for fifteen years for one publication. There, and let it be accepted graciously, was a manuscript mill in action long before there was radio! And she wrote for women in her time just as our script queens do today. She developed a philosophy about women, which she expressed in "Confidences," the foreword of

her autobiography *All the Days of My Life*, published in 1913:

I write mainly for the kindly race of women. I am their sister, and in no way exempt from their sorrowful lot. I have drank [sic]⁷ the cup of their limitations to the dregs, and if my experience can help any sad or doubtful woman to outleap her own shadow, and to stand bravely out in the sunshine to meet her destiny, whatever it may be, I shall have done well; I shall not have written this book in vain. It will be its own excuse, and justify its appeal.

It may be that women enjoy being sad. Think of this possible tendency in considering the wholly humorless soap operas!

But do you still wish to write a radio serial? The pay is good, but the work is endless. If you still are so minded, perhaps you are alert enough to devise a new approach, a way of writing that uses both established techniques and invents new ones, thereby causing listeners to prick up their ears—and sponsors likewise.

Other serials to study

In your radio studies, be certain to listen to *One Man's Family*, written and produced by Carleton E. Morse; investigate, too, what Sandra Michael has done and is doing. Both have made important contributions to this field.

Friends of *One Man's Family*—it is approaching its fifteenth year on the air and has a permanent place in millions of American homes—do not consider it a soap opera. It is a 30-minute, once-a-week show, but that is not the important difference. That difference is in the kind of writing. It is structurally better as drama; it has easy plausibility; it frequently is a good story, well told, and it gives a weekly exposition of child-training. Physicians and child welfare specialists are among its friends. This constant tackling and coping with the problems

⁷ This unnecessary footnote forces its way in. The use of the preterit form of the verb *to drink* seems to arise from an aversion, still encountered in cloistered nooks of this America, to any allusion to intoxication; here, though the correct past participle, *drunk*, would have to be divorced from its connotation and pushed into the barroom, it apparently was unfit to be spoken or written.

presented by growing children of our own time make *One Man's Family* a constructive force in the home.

Parenthetically, listen to such fireside celebrations as Thanksgiving and Christmas as they are portrayed in this serial. They are traditional observances that are in the script, and a part of life of the *Family* every year.

World War II put more melodrama into the serial and with the melodrama also came more mystery, for Carleton Morse not only loves *One Man's Family* but also mystery plots. (He is the author of the radio program *I Love a Mystery*.) The use of melodrama and mystery would provide means of avoiding undesirable attenuation. Consider his writing problem: How would you like the job of shepherding a family like his over the air lanes? It would mean, in creating fifty-two half-hour programs a year for fifteen years, the writing of an estimated grand total of 2 million or more words. Could you do it?

Excerpt from *One Man's Family*

The background, briefly, for this excerpt from *One Man's Family* is this: Clifford Barbour is in the hospital undergoing an operation to relieve head injuries suffered in an automobile accident. The Barbour family is grouped in a reception room, awaiting a report on the outcome. Claudia is speaking:

CLAUDIA: If we could only get some report hear just some little thing

PAUL: No news is good news

HAZEL: Oh yes

(PAUSE FOR CLOCK TO TICK FULL MIKE)

PAUL: When I was outside just a few minutes ago the night was more beautiful than I've seen it for a long while

CLAUDIA: Beauty? Who wants beauty now?

PAUL: All of us Now more than any other time There's something everlasting in beauty Something everyone can have Something everyone can hang onto

CLAUDIA: With Clifford lying up there

PAUL: With Clifford lying up there beauty is more important than ever And do you know what I think of, when I want real beauty? Maybe it would help some of the rest of you too it's so full of coolness, and restfulness and peace. Let me say it to you It's the Twenty-third Psalm (PAUSE) The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever (PAUSE)

HENRY: (SOFTLY) Beauty You hear that, Fanny

FANNY: Yes, Henry

HENRY: (SOFTLY) Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life (WHISPERS) beauty!

CLAUDIA: (SOFTLY) Nicky darling

NICKY: (SOFTLY) My very dear

HENRY: (SOFTLY) Yes yes

JACK: (SOFTLY) You you knew that by heart, Paul

PAUL: I used to say it over and over when I was in France I needed something to hang onto in those horrible days And this had so much of richness, so much of promise I clung to it as though it was my last straw Green pastures still waters They were my idea of Heaven

HAZEL: Oh, Doctor

DOCTOR: Yes, it's safely over

HENRY: Eh? Clifford! He's all right?

DOCTOR: Sound asleep in his bed in much better condition than his family is, if I'm any judge

FANNY: (BREAKS) Henry Henry

HENRY: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.⁸

ORGAN THEME: "DESTINY WALTZ"

Comment: It is easy for writers to turn their plot and their problem over to God and trust him to get them out of their dilemma. This is said advisedly and in no wise sacrilegiously. Poets of the mediocre school take this refuge constantly. However, in the example before us there is no creaking in the plot because of this turning to the Almighty. Rather, the author has done the human thing, the unostentatious natural thing: he has found peace beside still waters in a time of great trial. Is there anything else to do? And isn't it done with sincerity? Also, note the readability of the Biblical passage. This is true, for a special reason: the King James version of the Bible reveals a high percentage of Anglo-Saxon root words and derivatives. The value of Anglo-Saxon root words to the radio writer—it was mentioned early in this volume—is immeasurable.

Sandra Michael

Back in 1937, in the first verse play ever written for radio (see Chapter 3), Archibald MacLeish attacked fascism. Americans didn't give the piece much thought; we turned our backs on his warning. In October, 1939, after Hitler had many of us fairly well convinced that he was invincible, Sandra Michael came through with an anti-fascist serial, in *soap opera* form, and got it on the air. And the same sponsor (Procter & Gamble, William M. Ramsey, radio director), that presents normal radio serials, put it on. Its title: *Against the Storm*. It earned its author the *Peabody Award* for outstanding achievement in radio drama. This award is frequently likened, though not very accurately, to the Pulitzer prize in letters.

It would be a regrettable oversight not to mention the fact

⁸ This excerpt is from the script, broadcast February 20, 1938, which Mr. Morse gave the author for his script library. It is always rereadable. Reproduced by special permission of Carleton E. Morse, author of *One Man's Family*, and the National Broadcasting Co., Inc.

that her brother Peter and her sister Gerda,⁹ both of them writers, contribute to the Sandra Michael serials.

Against the Storm attracted a good audience, but its life on the air was short compared with average soap operas. Started in 1939, it was voluntarily taken off by the author in 1942. The complete script of 835 episodes of *Against the Storm* is a splendid rebuttal to the charge of *innocuous conflict* leveled frequently at radio serials.

Script: *Against the Storm*

Here is the final episode (No. 835) as presented the morning of Christmas Day, 1942. It was written by Sandra and Gerda Michael. It is reproduced here as it was written, including punctuation style. (Sponsor, Procter & Gamble. Agency, Compton Advertising, Inc.)

AGAINST THE STORM ¹⁰

Script by Sandra and Gerda Michael

CAST: Kathy	Manuel
Siri	First soldier
Professor Allen	Second soldier
Phil Cameron	David
Mark	

SOUND: Chimes

CHIMES: ESTABLISHED NOTES:

THEME: 25 SECONDS: FADE DOWN AND OUT:

ANNCR: AGAINST THE STORM presented by the makers of VELVET
SUDS IVORY SOAP.

(2-SECOND PAUSE)

ANNCR: OPENING COMMERCIAL:

⁹ The sisters, Sandra and Gerda, were awarded the King Christian Medal of Liberation in recognition of their efforts in the liberation of Denmark from Nazi rule.—*Western Radio News*, September, 1946. See script of *The Open Door* that follows in this chapter.

¹⁰ Reproduced by special permission of Sandra and Gerda Michael, joint authors. Copyright 1942 by Sandra Michael.

THEME: ESTABLISHED TUNE:

CHIMES: ESTABLISHED NOTES:

ANNCR: Now today's chapter of "Against the Storm," radio's distinguished award-winning drama, written by Sandra and Gerda Michael.

THEME: ESTABLISHED TUNE:

ANNCR: There had been moonlight on Christmas Eve; looking out of her window at Professor Allen's home in Hawthorne, Kathy Reimer saw the shadow of the house on the snow in the yard precise, neat as a paper cutout. The sky shone blue in the clear air, and the stars were brilliant with the cold high and far away.

Tomorrow would be Christmas. Before she went to sleep, Kathy decided that she would try to wake early, and go for a walk on Christmas morning. The weather promised a clear sunrise.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION TO NEXT MORNING:

KATHY: Quietly, Toni. We must walk down the stairs quietly. Everyone is still asleep.

ANNCR: It was eight o'clock as Kathy and the dog, Toni, walked down the stairs. Kathy went to the doorway of the living room for a moment, to look at the Christmas tree.

KATHY: (LOW, OR SOFTLY) Good morning, green tree

ANNCR: It stood there so quietly. Last night, it had been decorated with the help of everyone in the house, Manuel, Phil Cameron and Mark besides

SIRI: A gold one, now, Mark, to balance with this one over here—

MARK: Okay, Siri—

PHIL: Don't strive for symmetry, children. Confusion is half the charm of an old-fashioned Christmas tree.

SIRI: Well, you've achieved that all right, Lieutenant! Manuel, would you see if you can get this angel to hang right?

MANUEL: Yes, I think what it needs is another string to balance it properly.

SIRI: Guess you're right. I love that angel.

KATHY: I think I like the colored bubbles best of all see how they reflect the room.

SIRI: Make everything look very wonderful and glamorous, don't they?

MARK: Nicky always says they look to her as if you might be able to see the future in them any minute.

PROFESSOR: Not the future, Mark. Only the past.

PHIL: The past, Professor?

PROFESSOR: That's true for me, at least. Every Christmas when I look at one of those little globes of color hanging on the Christmas tree, I can look into it and see far, far back to the Christmas days when I was a boy.

SIRI: You know, that's right. So can I.

MARK: (FADING) To the day when you were a little girl, Siri.

SIRI: (DISTANCE) Yes, when I was a little girl

MUSIC: CONTINUES IN BG:

ANNCR: The tree stood there so quietly now in the morning light. Kathy moved from the doorway, and just as she turned she was aware of a little wave of movement throughout the whole tree: it was her reflection in all the glowing balls of color, moving as she moved. The girl in the bright little globes disappeared, returned to the lost days back beyond the vanishing point in the picture . . . Kathy and the dog went out of the house; the door made no noise; the snow should have had the sound of sugar underfoot, but it didn't. There was no creaking from the hinges of the gate. They walked east, toward the coppery winter sunrise. Just beyond the last houses of town, they saw something approaching. That is, Kathy saw it. Toni seemed not to be aware of anything except the chance of perhaps smelling a rabbit.

KATHY: What is that coming toward us? Toni, look ahead. No, no, ahead, up there along the road Oh, Toni, pay attention, please Why, it is people soldiers, Toni

ANNCR: The dog continued to sniff the air for game, while Kathy waited for the straggling group to reach them. Soldiers they were, or most of them. Walking as if they were tired, but looking eagerly ahead. They were dressed in different kinds of uniforms, American, British, Chinese, and many Kathy

didn't recognize. One or another stopped now and then, resting to get his wind. Now the first one was at the place where Kathy had stopped.

KATHY: Good morning! Merry— (STOPS SUDDENLY)

ANNCR: Merry Christmas? To a soldier in ragged and bloody uniform, staggering along a winter road? Kathy's voice was shocked still. And the soldier hadn't looked at her, or heard her speak. He wandered on. So did the next, and the next. Then one of them stopped when he saw Toni. He stopped to stroke the dog.

SOLDIER: (SMILING) I had one just like him, at home.

KATHY: (EAGERLY, HAPPY THAT HE HAS SPOKEN) Oh, do you really? Where is your home?

SOLDIER: A little town called in your language, the Lovely Hills.

KATHY: That's a wonderful name. Is that out west somewhere?

SOLDIER: It is in Russia.

KATHY: in Russia?

SOLDIER: Yes. Can you tell me what town this is we are coming to?

KATHY: Hawthorne. That is a town called Hawthorne.

SOLDIER: And today is Christmas.

KATHY: Yes. Today is Christmas.

SOLDIER: Perhaps we shall not be welcome.

KATHY: Not welcome! Why?

SOLDIER: Oh, we are not very presentable. Very dirty with mud and blood, (FADING) and today everything should be festive and gay. (REMEMBERING. CALLING BACK CHEERFULLY) But a very happy Christmas to you!

KATHY: Oh thank you and to you

ANNCR: Kathy stood bewildered for a moment, until a new sight amazed her. Two young men came toward her, one in uniform supporting the other, who was dressed in curious garments, a sort of prison costume, she thought. This second one wore on his right arm a yellow band, and the golden star of David. The one in uniform wore the Nazi swastika

KATHY: good morning.

SOLDIER: Good morning, fraulein!

DAVID: Good morning, Kathy Reimer! You remember me from Hamburg, from the Academy!

KATHY: David, David! They said you had died in a concentration camp——

DAVID: And so I did——

KATHY: But this one you are walking with, arm in arm! A Nazi, David!

DAVID: We could have been friends, before, but until he was killed in Russia, he had no idea, Kathy, the Nazi poison had absolutely destroyed his reason.

SOLDIER: My reason, my heart, everything. Death set me free. What an insane fantasy I was taught to believe, within the walls of the Nazi world! The wasted years! (LAUGHING NOW) Why, David, here, and I, we would have been a wonderful team had we had the chance! He plays the piano like a gifted angel, and I had some small talent as a violinist when I was a boy. Well, David, come along!

DAVID: Yes, we must continue on our way. Goodbye, Kathy Reimer, (FADING) and very happy holidays to you!

KATHY: Thank you! (MORE TO HERSELF) Oh, thank you, David And may none of you knock in vain on the doors of Hawthorne

PHIL: (HIS VOICE VERY NEAR, AS IF RIGHT AT HER SHOULDER) I don't think they will, Kathy——

KATHY: (STARTLED) Oh, Philip! I did not know you were here.

PHIL: This is a dream, Kathy. You are dreaming.

KATHY: Yes, I know But will they be welcome?

PHIL: Watch and see. I think they will.

KATHY: But this is Christmas morning. Everyone wants to be happy and gay. Those soldiers are muddy and covered with blood

PHIL: Look. You see, Kathy?

KATHY: They have come to the houses!

PHIL: You see? The first one knocked

KATHY: And the door was opened!

PHIL: The others open, too. One after another, all along the street
.....

KATHY: They are welcome!

PHIL: And don't think they're somber guests on Christmas morning, Kathy. No one should be afraid to think of them today not because we can forget that they died for us but we can also remember that they lived, and even those who were brutalized and poisoned by Nazism, once could have had it in them, like the others, like our own beloved dead, to love life and their fellow man. They could have laughed and sung with the others and as the others want all the world to sing and laugh in the future.

KATHY: Listen, Philip do you hear laughter now? Is it the soldiers laughing?

PHIL: I think it is. Let's remember them that way, the soldiers, the men and women and children who with their own lives have bought song and laughter for us and for the new world to come. Remember, and welcome them to our hearts today and forever.

ALL: (LAUGHTER INTO SONG):

DICK STARK: With this Christmas episode, Against the Storm concludes the series that began in the first weeks of the war, in October, 1939. All of us who have worked together here, under the direction of Axel Gruenberg the cast; William Meeder, our organist; the writers, Sandra and Gerda Michael; and everyone associated with Against the Storm would like you, the listeners, to know that we shall always remember your warm and generous friendship with the deepest gratitude. May your holidays and the New Year be bright with the faith that "as brothers together" all people, after the war is over, will build and maintain a world of peace and justice for all.

MUSIC: ESTABLISH, THEN FADE FOR CLOSING COMMERCIAL:

ANNCR: CLOSING COMMERCIAL:

THEME: FORTE UNTIL FADE OUT:

Comment: It is not difficult to pick up the thread of the story

for the introductory happenings are universal in appeal: a Christmas tree, with flash-back to the decorating of it the night before: the walk with a dog on Christmas morning: then something different! Out of the otherwhere, along the road beyond the last houses at the edge of town, came muddy and bloody human beings: soldiers from the armies of the war then in progress. And these soldiers are dead men, victims of the war, walking up to American citizens' doorways in an American town on Christmas morning. What a way to exemplify the Christmas spirit in a radio program on Christmas day! might be the conventional querulous exclamation. Any one who happened to hear this program as it came into his living room, felt it was the lane in front of his house that the soldiers used and the doors of the cottages along his street that opened to admit them, and from which came their laughter on Christmas day.

Good storytellers can work the magic that puts the reader or the listener into a character and into a scene. Well does one remember such episodes. In asking Sandra Michael for the script, the author described the scene: vivid despite the intervening years. It is unnecessary to point out its lesson: that men and women and children died that all people, after the war was over, might live "as brothers together."

Script: *The Open Door*

Against the Storm was followed by *The Open Door* which came on the air in 1943. (Its sponsor was Chase & Sanborn coffee. Agency, Ted Bates Advertising, Inc.). It is the story of a college professor who had found refuge in America, but whose life was colored by experiences in Nazi-occupied Denmark. It may not have been written to carry quite all the social significance of *Against the Storm*, or perhaps it carried just as much but more adroitly; in either case, *The Open Door* is honest and entertaining story telling. Its dramatic structure is not weakened by wearying attenuation; there is no apparent stringing out of the action. The illustrative example that follows is the first half of Episode 23, presented July 21, 1943.

THE OPEN DOOR ¹¹

Script by Sandra Michael

CHARACTERS:	Narrator	Russian Woman
	Lisa	Chinese Woman
	Tommie	German Woman
	Dean Hansen	

SOUND: Clock chimes and stroke

ANNOUNCER: Good morning, friends, you have come to "The Open Door" and the makers of Chase and Sanborn Coffee invite you in.

THEME: ESTABLISH, THEN FADE UNDER:

HANSEN: (CHEERFUL, BRIGHT) Come in, come in! The door is open.

NARRATOR: There is an "open door" to a good way of life for all men. This "open door" is called brotherhood and over its portal are these simple words: "I am my brother's keeper!"

THEME: UP, THEN UNDER:

NARRATOR: "The Open Door" is the story of Erik Hansen, Dean of students at Jefferson University. It is a story of the people who enter the "open door" of his home and his heart, seeking comfort and advice.

THEME: UP, THEN OUT UNDER OPENING COMMERCIAL:

ANNOUNCER: OPENING COMMERCIAL:

THEME: UP, UNDER, AND OUT:

NARRATOR: On this evening, because his daughter Lisa was going away the next day, Dean Erik Hansen didn't come up to tell his grandson good night. He made an excuse to stay downstairs, promising instead to play the piano and sing so that Thomas Erik would be able to hear it upstairs in his bedroom.

Lisa had talked with Tommie in the afternoon about their separation, and about everything she hoped he would remember to do and to be during this summer "on his own" here at his grandparents' house. So tonight nothing was said about

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any leave-taking. Lisa read to him from his new favorite story, "The Wind in the Willows," loaned to him by David Gunther. Reading it, holding the time-battered book, Lisa felt as if David were here with them; and she knew that as far as Tommie was concerned, the author, Kenneth Grahame, got less credit for the delightful story than David did.

When Tommie grew sleepy, Lisa closed the storybook, and read poetry to him as she always did at the last; it made no difference whether he understood the poetry or not, all that mattered was the music of meter and words Still, she ended with one he knew and liked for itself, de la Marc's "Summer Evening."

LISA: (VERY FAINTLY AND FAR AWAY, DEAN HANSEN AT PIANO HEARD AS BG)

The sandy cat by the farmer's chair
Mews at his knee for dainty fare;
Old Rover in his moss-greened house
Mumbles a bone, and barks at a mouse.
In the dewy fields the cattle lie
Chewing the cud 'neath a fading sky.
Dobbin at manger pulls his hay:
Gone is another summer's day.¹²

SILENCE: EXCEPT FOR SONG, VERY FAINTLY IN BG:

LISA: (IN LOW VOICE OR WHISPER) good night, darling

TOMMIE: (MUFFLED, FAR-AWAY VOICE) 'Night, Mummy.

LISA: (STILL LOW VOICE) Oh, I thought you were sleeping, Tommie.

TOMMIE: (AS BEFORE, HE IS REALLY HALF ASLEEP) (NEGATIVE) M'm-uh.
Not 'sleep. Is Grandpa singing?

LISA: Yes he is, darling. Can you hear him? listen

HANSEN: SINGING STILL VERY FAR AWAY:

TOMMIE: Yes. I hear him G'night, Mummy.

LISA: Good night, darling Good night.

NARRATOR: Lisa bent over and kissed her son's temple lightly. His skin was moist; there was a warm fragrance about him, an immemorial fragrance, newly washed, sleepy, warm and summerlike.

¹² The poem "Summer Evening" from *Peacock Pie* included in *Collected Poems* by Walter de la Mare. Copyright 1920 by Henry Holt and Company. Reprinted here by special permission of the publishers.

LISA: I'll miss that—

NARRATOR: Lisa thought

MUSIC: BG UNDER FOLLOWING SPEECHES:

LISA: (SHE SPEAKS AS LIGHTLY AS POSSIBLE AND UN-SELF-PITYINGLY) I'll miss putting you to bed at night. Miss reading to you. And I won't wake up in the morning knowing it's time to see you again, help you dress, get your breakfast, listen to you chatter your head off about everything you're going to do all day. Oh, I'm going to miss you, my son my good, solemn, merry, funny little son

RUSSIAN WOMAN: (VOICE OFF) I miss my son, also. He was a little older than your boy He was fourteen. His name was Maxim. Once I sang to him, too, when he was a baby. Old lullabies that Russian women, and women of all the world, have sung to their children for hundreds of years. At night in the summertime, he would fall asleep just as your little one, now, his hair damp and sweetly fragrant against his forehead and he dreamed dreams like those of your boy. In those days. He sleeps, a twisted corpse now, murdered at Leningrad by the Fascists. My son Maxim, who was to have been a doctor, a good doctor, one day.

CHINESE WOMAN: I, too, miss my son, and my daughter, children of China. I saw them for the last time one summer evening, as they slept secure in our home. The Japanese came to bomb that night. My children, who were only children, like yours, died that night in the summertime yes, I, too, miss my children.

GERMAN WOMAN: And I, my two sons. They were only mine when they were very small, then they became Hitler's children. Poisoned, deceived, ruined. They grew up to become murderers one of them I know helped to kill our good neighbor, a Jewish professor. Now both of my sons are dead, one in Norway, one in Holland. I lost them long, long, long before their physical death and I miss them. I, reviled of the world, mother of Nazis For me, no comfort anywhere, or ever, so long as I live

LISA: That's it, that's what my sorrow is not saying goodbye, leaving Tommie here, safe and secure and happy in my father's home but feeling the agony of all the others, the millions of mothers who have lost their sons and daughters. It's their sorrow I know tonight.

MUSIC: VERY GRADUALLY, DURING FOLLOWING, FADE IN SINGING AND PIANO TO NEARER DISTANCE, BUT STILL IN BG:

NARRATOR: Lisa walked quietly out of Tommie's room, along the hall, and down the stairs, in the direction of her father's voice. She walked down the stairs very slowly, listening to the music; when she got to the bottom step, the singing faded to humming. In the stillness, she could hear the light tinkle of silver and china in the kitchen. Gusta was washing the dinner dishes with as little noise as possible, so that she, too, could hear the music.

LISA: Listen. A saucer, set on a stack of saucers The silver, lifted piece by piece from the tray to the silver-drawer That's rhythm, too, and music What a well-practiced tune, dear Gusta

SOUND: HALL CLOCK, STRIKING HOUR CHIMES AND EIGHT STROKES, PARTLY IN BG:

LISA: And the clock has its own summer-evening sound. Summery, like those big insects throwing themselves against the screen door Listen to the sprinkler in the garden, smell the water in the air, a green smell, like grass; a dark and damp smell like the earth Peaceful, peaceful world.

MUSIC: SONG FADES ON: AND LISA, WALKING INTO THE LIVING ROOM, BEGINS TO SING TOO:

DEAN: (AS THEY FINISH SONG) Well, Lisa! Hello!

LISA: Hello, Father.

DEAN: How is the boy? Asleep by now?

LISA: Sound asleep.

[END OF ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE BUT NOT OF EPISODE]

Comment: Study carefully the way this script gets itself on the air. The title, *The Open Door*, lends itself to easy introduction, and every fair advantage is taken of it. Note that the narrator in his very first lines sets up the purpose of the story: "There is an 'open door' to a good way of life for all men" and then he tells you what the story is, a story of the people who enter this *Open Door*.

The scene opens at storybook time in the college professor's household. A mother, who is to leave the next day, is reading the evening story to her son. The book she is reading, Kenneth

Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*, is a favorite of many parents, and many a child has been slowly maneuvered into bed with the help of the Water Rat, the Mole, and the Toad.

Note particularly the use of de la Mare's poem, "Summer Evening." Its tranquillity pervades the entire script, or to put it another way: the script sustains the mood throughout the program.

Fortunate is any author who can find a poem so *right* for her use. This is poetry so far removed from an inane jingle that nearly every mother listening to the broadcast, and every kid that happened to be home, must have caught the four clear images etched by those eight rememberable lines. Read them over again; they are worth it.

Now for Sandra Michael's script itself. Did the narrator have too long a speech at the opening? Re-read it. If action is flowing through the lines, such action would tend to overcome the hazard of one voice becoming monotonous. Goodnight scenes of mother and child can be overdone ingloriously. Was this scene? The 13-line scene was quickly erased by the stream-of-consciousness portrayal that followed in the scene beginning "Lisa thought" What Lisa thought and what the Russian woman and the Chinese woman and the German woman thought all came in as the *stream of consciousness* of Lisa.

Then back to the *now*, as Lisa walked out of her son's room, along the hall, and down the stairs, with the tinkle of china and silver coming to her from the kitchen, and the clock too having "its own summer-evening sound."

Analyze carefully the devices used in the excerpt before us: (1) to get the program graciously on the air; (2) to set the mood of a summer evening; (3) to carry that timeless serenity into the household itself. Also note how music is an integral part of the presentation: it is *blended in*.

The latter half of the script contains a strong piece of propaganda by Dean Hansen to "vote for the people and the laws that you know will mean the most good for the most people." Don Quinn handles civic propaganda likewise in the *Fibber McGee and Molly* script; so does Carleton E. Morse in *One Man's Family*.

Radio Daily in reviewing this program said in its issue of July 29, 1943:

"Because of the quality of the writing, *The Open Door* lends itself immediately to worthwhile listening. It is not hampered by the [soap] 'opera' format, although on the surface it would seem that way it breaks away from the channelized format that has caused that type of strip-show to creak and groan under the burden of woe, misery, conflict, and unrequited love Its appeal is an honest one that most listeners should appreciate after hearing a plethora of tripe."

What is also important, as the above review points out, is that the script attracted and got positive production, skilled direction, and excellent talent. Perhaps *The Open Door* should be reopened. The troubles of this postwar era need to be vigorously dealt with on the air. It is worth remembering that some of the best writing, the best work radio has done in public service, was in its well-dramatized propaganda pieces during World War II.

Script: *Lone Journey*

Lone Journey, also by Sandra Michael, opened for a *return engagement* on the air in May, 1946, but its original première was in May, 1940; it ran for two years or more at that time. The serial has the Montana ranch country for its setting. Its 98th episode, in commemoration of V-J Day, August 14, 1946, follows:

LONE JOURNEY¹³

Script by Sandra and Peter Michael

CAST: Narrator
Sydney Mackenzie
Lynne Alexander

Dr. Mortensen
Lansing Mackenzie
Olivia Oliver

THEME: UP AND CUT:

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ANNOUNCER: An invitation from Carnation. Listen now to "Lone Journey," the distinguished American radio novel written by Sandra and Peter Michael. "Lone Journey" is brought to you by the Carnation Company, producer of quality foods for nearly half a century.

THEME: UP AND CUT:

ANNOUNCER: OPENING COMMERCIAL:

THEME: UP AND UNDER:

NARRATOR: This is Chapter Ninety-Eight of "Lone Journey."

THEME: ESTABLISH, THEN FADE OUT AND UNDER:

NARRATOR: A year ago, one year ago today, the fourteenth of August, 1945, in Lewistown, Montana, Sydney Sherwood Mackenzie had telephoned to her uncle, Henry Newman, out in the Valley, from her mother-in-law's house in town—

SYDNEY: Uncle Henry? You've heard the news? Were you listening to the radio? Oh, yes, it's over, it's over, Uncle Henry. They've surrendered The war is over I know, I can't either. It's just too I don't know what to say (BETWEEN A LAUGH AND TEARS) Oh, yes, any day now, any day you can expect to hear from some prison camp our soldiers will take them over right away now, won't they, Uncle Henry? Yes Oh, listen! Listen, can you hear them, Uncle Henry? Listen—

EFFECT: UNDER LAST OF ABOVE, CHURCH BELLS BEGIN TO RING; THREE DIFFERENT KINDS, FIRST ONE ALONE, THEN OTHERS JOINING IN:

SYDNEY: Did you hear them? All the church bells in town are ringing and this time it's true, it's really true! Yes, I'm coming out right away. As soon as I can get there. I'll see you all at the Spear-T as soon as I can get there. 'Bye-bye, Uncle Henry, 'bye!

EFFECT: PHONE REPLACED:

EFFECT: BELLS CONTINUE:

SYDNEY: Please please let it be true, this time and for always, for always. Never, never, war again

EFFECT: BELLS AND MUSIC, BELLS FADE OUT:

NARRATOR: Today, a year later, Sydney is standing at the windows in her office at the Mackenzie School of Music, looking down

on Main Street. Lynne Alexander is sitting in a chair nearby

LYNNE: Well, it's a year ago.

SYDNEY: A year ago, I was so happy, everything seemed so wonderful, so incredibly wonderful, I really thought for a while my heart would just give out I didn't see how it could keep up.

LYNNE: I know. That's the way I felt. It was wonderful and so bitterly tragic, too that terrific relief, knowing that the war was over and that awful, awful ache of sorrow for those who wouldn't come back, and those who had been so cruelly hurt.

(SILENCE)

SYDNEY: And we were all so full of hope.

LYNNE: (SHARPLY) Don't say we were. We are. Not just hope, either. We aren't just hoping for peace and good sense. We're jolly well insisting on it. We've got it, and we're going to keep it. We haven't anything to fight about, with anybody. Settling problems by blasting people to bits of all the insanity. Golly. Are we men or morons?

SYDNEY: (SMILING) You should get that paper of yours started, Lynne.

LYNNE: Ha. Shouldn't I, though?

SYDNEY: I didn't mean that we'd lost any hope

LYNNE: Oh, I know that, Sydney! I wasn't talking at you.

SYDNEY: You know, a year ago today I was so certain that it would just be a few days before we'd hear from Lansing, my husband.

LYNNE: (SYMPATHETICALLY) Oh, yes, Sydney I suppose you were.

SYDNEY: I thought he must be in a Japanese prison camp. And now we'd find out, we'd get a telegram a lot of people did, you remember, from their men who had been reported missing.

LYNNE: Yes, I know.

SYDNEY: In a way I guess those were the worst days for us. For Lansing's parents and me waiting every hour to hear

..... because we knew we could hear, soon, if Lance was alive. And we didn't.

LYNNE: How long had he been missing then?

SYDNEY: Over a year, then. Since January, 1944. And I had been so sure all that time, so sure that Lansing was alive, somewhere. I've believed it until just recently Lynne, sometimes I still believe it.

LYNNE: That isn't strange. It must be almost impossible to accept a fact like that to believe someone won't come back I mean it naturally takes time before you can get used to the thought, and really believe it.

SYDNEY: Lynne, you know that I'm going to marry Wolfe Bennett this fall?

LYNNE: Yes, I do know, though I didn't know whether I was supposed to have been told and I'm awfully happy for you, Sydney. And for Wolfe. I wish you all the happiness in the world.

SYDNEY: Thank you.

LYNNE: If any two people should have a wonderful life together, it's you and Wolfe. And you will have, I know you will.

SYDNEY: It's just so sad, isn't it, that so much has to be lost so much has to be forgotten if any of us are ever really going to be glad again.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION:

NARRATOR: One year ago, not in Lewistown, but in a Pacific jungle, a fallen plane had served as a shelter for more than three weeks now for two survivors of the crash an American soldier and a young English girl. Both had been prisoners of the Japanese, but they had never met until the day of the flight that ended in this deep jungle. On this day a year ago, the American soldier was ill. At first he had pretended the fever was nothing, but finally he had given in to the orders of his comrade that he must take to his bed and stay there until the fever is gone. His bed is a pile of great palm-leaves, neatly arranged in the small space that he has allotted to himself in the plane, with packing cases for two walls, the outer shell of the plane for another, and a hanging of nipa-palms for the fourth. The hanging has been drawn aside now, so that the steaming midday heat may be less oppres-

sive but as a matter of fact, the patient is unaware of his surroundings; he is dreaming, the tantalizing, taunting dreams of fever He thinks, of course, that he is at home at home in Lewistown, standing in the blessed, cooling shade of the trees on the courthouse lawn

MUSIC: DREAMY AND VAGUELY "WEIRD" A "SICK" QUALITY IN THE HAUNTING NOSTALGIC MUSIC:

LANSING: It looks so cool here, it's the coolest-looking place I know, except Spring Creek but it feels a little warm today, don't you think it does, Sydney?

SYDNEY: Oh, no, I think it's lovely and cool, and listen to the clock!

EFFECT: UNDER ABOVE, COURTHOUSE CLOCK BEGINS TO STRIKE; FIRST FOUR STROKES ARE NORMAL ENOUGH, THEN THE SOUND BECOMES THE HARSH FLAT STROKE OF A METAL HAMMER ON NONRESONANT METAL OR ON WOOD:

LANSING: (AS THE FIRST FOUR STROKES ARE HEARD) Yea, there's the courthouse clock, but it feels hot too, how hot that sound is, listen doesn't it hurt you to hear that hot, burning, pounding sound? Sounding pound, pounding sound, boom, boom oh, my head hurts boy, it hurts.

SYDNEY: What you need is a nice cool shower—

LANSING: (WITH YEARNING) Oh, yea, gosh, could I have a nice cool shower right now?

SYDNEY: Why, of course you can, just turn it on—

LANSING: Not right here like this with all my clothes on, I can't take a shower like this?

SYDNEY: Why, yes, you can. Here, I'll turn it on—

LANSING: Oh, look out, it's hot, it's much (GASPS) it's much too hot!

SYDNEY: Well, then we'll just turn on the cold. Remember, you're in America now, and we have both hot and cold running water any time you want it there, you see?

LANSING: But it's hot, Sydney, this shower is just as hot as it was in the jungle, and it's not wet. It's a dry shower. It's only hot.

SYDNEY: (LAUGHS) Now you're being stubborn, Mr. Mackenzie, sir. Let's go out to Spring Creek for a swim, what do you say?

LANSING: That's a wonderful idea. But I'm a little tired, maybe I'd better take a nap first.

SYDNEY: You do that, darling. You take a nap. I've got a date anyway, so I'll see you later.

LANSING: You've got a date with Wolfe, I suppose.

SYDNEY: Why, yes. Naturally I have.

LANSING: Naturally. And if I hadn't come back at all, I'd certainly have expected you to go out with Wolfe now and then.

SYDNEY: That's only natural.

LANSING: That's only natural. Especially since Wolfe is the guy you should have married in the first place.

SYDNEY: Yes.

LANSING: Only there's Nita. She won't like it if her husband takes you out.

SYDNEY: Nita's dead. I wrote and told you. Nita's dead.

LANSING: I know it. I wonder if it's restful to be dead. No. You wouldn't know it, so it wouldn't be, and I'd rather go for that swim if only I weren't so tired.

SYDNEY: I wish you'd play something for me, Lance. I do so miss hearing you play.

LANSING: (TOUCHED) Do you, darling? Do you really?

SYDNEY: Of course I do. I do, of course. Of course, I do.

LANSING: This piano is too high, I don't think I can reach the keys Oh-h, my arms are stiff, it hurts to stretch them up that high to reach the keys Oh gee! Now the piano stool is too high! I'll fall off!

SYDNEY: Play something, please play something, please.

LANSING: Gosh, I almost fell off. This stool is so high it makes you dizzy. Well, okay I'll play something gosh, it's wonderful to get your hands on a piano again Let's see now Let's see. I'll play a Grieg concerto, I think

EFFECT: TAP OR THUD OF PIANO KEYS ON WORN FELT; NO STRINGS: ONE "NOTE" HAMMERED REPEATEDLY:

LANSING: I don't know, I can't remember it without my music. I'm so thirsty, the music sounds dry, sounds awfully dry.

MORTENSEN: (FADING IN) It's no use talking about it, talking about it. Turn on the sprinkler system, give the lawn some water, and the grass will stay green. It's very simple.

LANSING: Oh, boy, that water looks good, Dr. Mortensen!

MORTENSEN: Naa! And what is all this we hear about you, my boy?

LANSING: I don't know.

MORTENSEN: All those telegrams from the jungle! Why, poor Sydney has been so anxious about you!

LANSING: She has?

MORTENSEN: Well, what do you think? All those telegrams! Lost in the jungle! Don't know what jungle! Miss Oliver is a very brave girl! The mosquitos are terrible!

LANSING: Well, they are.

MORTENSEN: Then put up some mosquito netting. You have enough of it, bales and bales of it all over the place.

LANSING: We have enough of it. Bales and bales of it. Crates and boxes and boats and battleships of it. Of what? Of everything. Ammunition. Guns and bombs and bullets and every hellish device anybody ever heard of to tear people to pieces and then we have medicine to fix 'em up, bandages and bandages and sulphur and penicillin and morphine and stuff to fix 'em up after they're smashed to pieces only you can't always fix 'em up again, can you, Dr. Mortensen; sometimes the damage is just a little too bad. Too bad. War is too bad, too bad. Did you ever tell people about that, how hellish awful filthy crazy it is?

MORTENSEN: We try to, Lansing. We try to tell them.

LANSING: (CALM, QUIET, REASONABLE) Yea. That's good. I'm glad. Because it's really terrible. It's really insane, you know, it really is. Imagine. Sending people out to see how badly they can smash and hurt each other, tear each other to pieces people, good, ordinary, peaceful people who'd rather just stay home. Isn't it silly? No. It's insane. It's sick. It makes you sick to think about it, Dr. Mortensen. Oh, look out, look out!

MORTENSEN: What's the matter? (FADING) What is it? What's the matter?

LANSING: (OVER LAST OF ABOVE) They're coming over again, see they're coming back, look out, run, run, run! (HE WAKES, DRAWS A DEEP BREATH) Oh-h Oh, me

EFFECT: IN BG, OUTSIDE PLANE, JUNGLE SOUNDS:

OLIVIA: (FADING IN) Did you call me, Mr. Mackenzie you are awake now?

LANSING: Oh, yea, I'm awake now. (HIS VOICE IS PERHAPS MORE TIRED, QUIETER, THAN AT TIMES IN DREAM WHEN IT MAY HAVE BEEN QUITE VIGOROUS, SINCE HE WAS TALKING ONLY IN HIS MIND, NOT ACTUALLY)

OLIVIA: Feel a little better, I hope?

LANSING: (SMILES) Yep. Feel much better, thanks.

OLIVIA: I'm awfully glad. I have a water-leaf here for you, would you like a nice cool drink?

LANSING: Would I? I'll say I would thanks a million.

OLIVIA: There. It's opened.

LANSING: Thanks, thanks (HE DRINKS) ever so much. Ah

OLIVIA: Thank heaven for those wonderful water-plants! Aren't they really a miracle?

LANSING: You bet. (WIPING HIS MOUTH) That was a lot better than that dry water they wouldn't give me in my dream.

OLIVIA: Oh, dear. Isn't it awful to dream when you're thirsty? You can never get anything to drink. Never quite.

LANSING: No. Altogether, that was a very unsatisfactory visit home.

OLIVIA: That's a shame. The least we could have would be happy dreams, you'd think.

LANSING: Naw, I don't care. So long as it was only a dream, what's the difference? If everything's okay when we really get there that's the thing that counts.

OLIVIA: And it will be, of course.

LANSING: Oh, sure Well, believe it or not, I think I'll go to sleep again. And this time, no dreams.

OLIVIA: All right! Sleep well and I'm so happy that you're better.

LANSING: Thanks. Kinda glad myself Say, Miss Oliver!

OLIVIA: Yes, Mr. Mackenzie.

LANSING: Have I asked you what day this is?

OLIVIA: You have, but I don't think you really knew it at the time, you were wandering a bit. It's the fifteenth of August.

LANSING: Here, or at home?

OLIVIA: It's the fifteenth here The fourteenth at home.

LANSING: Thanks. The fourteenth of August

MUSIC: TO BUILD IMPACT OF FOLLOWING:

NARRATOR: The fourteenth of August, 1945

EFFECT: CHURCH BELLS, UP AND FADE:

THEME: UP AND CUT:

ANNOUNCER: (DRIFT OVER INTO CLOSING COMMERCIAL):

THEME: UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: tomorrow in Chapter 99 of "Lone Journey," brought to you by the Carnation Company who also present the Carnation Contented Hour each Monday evening.

THEME: FORTE TO FADE OUT:

Comment: Civic anniversaries are observed in every home, in varying degrees to be sure, but the participation, aside from the significance of the day, is usually a welcome departure from the workaday routine. Listeners would think it strange if the characters in their serial did not likewise observe the day. The script in question is Sandra Michael's solution of the problem of how to celebrate the first anniversary of V-J Day. When a writer has a preacher among his characters, as Irna Phillips had in the person of Dr. Rutledge (Arthur H. Peterson) in *The Guiding Light* you have a perfect vehicle for sermons in commemoration of the respective anniversaries. Dr. Rutledge's sermons, delivered in the little church at Five Points, were praiseworthy. Folks expected them to be, and enjoyed the plain homespun lines. But in *Lone Journey* there is no preacher; the setting is Montana: the war has impinged on the lives of the characters as it has on us all, and the husband of one of those characters, Lansing Mackenzie, was reported miss-

ing in that war and reluctantly believed dead; in fact, Sydney, his wife, is about to remarry. As she says in the script, she does not know what happened to her husband, no word, no letter. In this situation, the author raises the curtain to let the listener, not the wife, see what was happening to the missing man on V-J Day, one year before. The plane he was using to escape from a Japanese prison camp had crashed in a jungle, and he was fighting a fever. His fever-ridden dream constitutes the episode. That dream, of course, was of home and his wife back in Montana. He admitted afterward to his fellow survivor in the jungle that it wasn't a pleasant dream but he didn't care provided "everything's okay when we get there . . . that's what counts."

Note, particularly, the device of the author to drive home the date of the episode. The sick man inquires and is told what day it is. He repeats, "The fourteenth of August." Then the narrator is given the ending line, "The fourteenth of August, 1945." The author makes use of the narrator frequently in her scripts. As remarked in Chapter 6, he is a handy fellow to have around; you do not have to account for his presence every time you bring him in. The fact that the missing husband was alive seventeen or eighteen months after his wife last heard from him gives a lively turn to the plot at an appropriate time: the first anniversary of V-J Day.

Some conclusions

Perhaps now we can put together some conclusions about this much discussed phase of radio entertainment:

What the radio has been doing, and what it continues to do while it is entertaining the listener in her home, is to make popular mediocrity glaringly obvious to the well-informed critical listener. Why? Because, in general, the daytime radio serial today is more or less imperfect drama, burdened with narration, and attenuated beyond despair. It is deficient in unity, it is illogical, implausible and avoids anything but innocuous conflict. Not every serial, of course, reveals all of these imperfections. But, you can find similar structural defects and similar avoidance of pressing social problems of the

time in much that has appeared and is appearing in the printed word.

We should not expect radio in one generation—it celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1945—to remove a liking for the popular though mediocre. If forces for uplift were at work in American reading and, as a carry-over thereof, in American listening preferences, then the magazines and the newspapers surely have had their opportunity for service in the generations since the English language was introduced on this continent. But progress is not made by written or spoken pronouncement. You do not simply say: now we'll have discriminating taste, and get it. That purging of the air lanes contended for so earnestly by some of us will not come immediately out of any conference, no matter how sincerely the learned folk, the educators, psychologists, sociologists, medical men, and critics desire it. Progress does not come that fast. It comes slowly.

Radio programs never written "in committee"

And it will come through the work of writers, men and women, laboring alone in their individual cubicles, far from the maddening conference table, yes, by creative writers who can transmute the suggestions of all the varied interests into something the listener will continue to enjoy listening to. For radio programs never are written in committee. Needless to say, the propaganda-bearers for this or that science or cause or profession will be excluded from this final creative job; what they have to offer should rightly have every fair consideration; but the manner of the presentation, the determination of the amount, for example, of social propaganda a script can bear to remain entertaining, that is the creator's own province; and especially is it his job to determine how history is to be told, for in that is the storytelling art referred to at the beginning of this discussion.

Telling our stories better

The time is auspicious to begin telling better stories on the radio. Radio should be receptive to them. The serial form

need not be barred, indeed not, but must it be strung out through sodden years of endless grief?

First of all, make the story shorter. Note carefully the change in pattern in *Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy*. (See Chapter 17). Though it is an old serial for juveniles, its episodes, beginning September 2, 1946, were shortened to six weeks each! Then a new story takes over.

Next, speed up the action. A character does not need a week to get her lipstick out of her purse. Faster action, of course, would "eat up" plot material more quickly but it would lessen the attenuation and loosen up the formula-bound technique. Present handling too frequently means plunging a character into a dilemma for a certain number of weeks, say seven weeks or 35 programs, then extricating her, and immersing her in a new trouble.

Then, too, there are obligations to society, the obligations of meeting and solving social problems that the most uninterested sponsor can approve in well-written script.

And the humanities! What about the art of living? We are beginning to discover that too many of us have overlooked it in American life. But the humanities are permanent values, good to turn back to.

Surely, with quickened awareness on the part of writers, these values can be added in increasing measure to new and better stories for radio.

CHAPTER

13

Music

Music! Give us more of it!

Even the sharpest critics of radio enjoy, or commend, the music it provides. No medium ever equalled it for broad (one might as well say universal) dissemination. And that dissemination has been a powerful educational force in quickening appreciation of things musical among all classes of people. For listeners generally, music entertains a dominant number day after day, night after night.

And the tastes of those listeners are various, so programs are built to meet those tastes. "Hot stuff" or jive, currently popular tunes, revivals of old favorites, semiclassical numbers, and classical music all enter the alert station's daily log of presentations.

Nearly every musical program requires script; the writing of it is an important part of the work of the station's or network's staff writers, advertising agency writers, and men and women in other fields using radio. Some radio writers have musical knowledge of varying degrees to begin with. Others acquire it along the way. By the very exigency of his job, a man who may not know a piccolo from a doodle-sack may be, and frequently is, required to write a musical program. Do not be disheartened. If you think you are unmusical, you cannot remain so for very long in radio. You soon learn that a piccolo is a small shrill flute and a doodle-sack is a Scotch bagpipe.

Melodious incongruities

And as an objective writer you soon encounter the fact that musicians, well grounded in their art, sometimes cannot see the program for the notes, while you, having the words, say, of a given song in mind, with the tune a secondary thing, know that those words and that music would be incongruous in a given situation. A worthy musician friend once earnestly desired to use "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground" or (he was willing to compromise) "Beautiful Dreamer" as the background for a commercial in a program of Stephen Foster music sponsored by a savings and loan association. The incongruity, the inappropriateness of either melody was obvious to the program-builder, but the musician thought only of the music, not the words. What was done? The solution was simple: "My Old Kentucky Home" was used, perfect in its connotation of home, and the business of home ownership which was the principal service of the sponsor.

A 15-minute program is the minimum period in which music can be effectively used. This does not mean that you cannot put a dash of it in a 5-minute or a 10-minute program, especially if you use transcriptions, or recordings, both economical in cost and easy to handle quickly on short notice; but if you know how to put a 15-minute program containing music together, you will know how to use music in a shorter period.

A musical program needs all the individuality possible. Therefore, begin devising a pattern that will heighten the appeal of the program as your series progresses—a lone program is a comparative rarity in radio as you have learned.

Into that pattern keep feeding music that fits. As you go along, one program after another, your pattern and the kind of music it demands will become increasingly clear. There should be constant development and refinement of your program; otherwise you get a "sameness," and that is retrogression.

If you plan to use live talent, say a trio of instrumentalists, or a quartet of singers, or a chorus, the musical director at the station and the director of the group itself both can help you. If you plan to use transcribed or recorded music, the responsi-

bility on your shoulders is greater, for you yourself are the conductor; the platter cannot answer back if it's a misfit and out of mood; all it can do is start revolving and you get what you get; so does the listener. But the music librarian in charge of transcriptions and recordings at the station can help you avoid unseemly clashes in titles or in mood.

Unified impressions

What is of prime importance in building musical programs is this: there is a way of putting words and music together, a way of blending them into a program so well that they give to the listener and leave with him a unified impression of loveliness. Nothing grates; spoken word and musical selections are in harmony; mood is established and remains unbroken through an extended series. That is good showmanship.

And right at this point, background music well can be discussed. Not all music is full volume; some of it is held in the background behind the words. It may be used behind a commercial to make it "easier to take," or it may be used behind lines of poetry to heighten their effect. Use music as background, or *BG* as the script sheets often say, at the appropriate time, then and then only. You yourself can *feel* the propriety of such use better than anyone else. Theme music frequently is used in part as background music.

There is another method of handling music in a program, a-shovel-of-this-and-a-shovel-of-that method, or a hunk of words, and a platter or selection of live music without regard for totality of effect, but with regard only for taking up fifteen or thirty minutes of time. If you wish to avoid thought, cancel out showmanship, and make a very unpretty mess, pursue such a method.

(For discussion of musical-clock or time-service programs, see Chapter 15.)

Transcriptions and recordings

The ordinary phonograph record revolves at 78 rpm (revolutions per minute). It can be played on the air and is fre-

quently so used, but the engineer in the studio will tell you that recordings do not wear as long and do not sound as well as transcriptions. Engineers, by the way, are very helpful men to know, so get acquainted with them early. They can be among your most constructive critics.

Transcriptions came in with radio; they were especially devised for radio use to fill the need of a recording that would carry an entire 15-minute show on *one* side. This obviated sometimes grievous interruptions, for the large 12-inch phonograph record will *play* only $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 minutes. A transcription—it is also called an electrical transcription, or an ET—revolves at $33\frac{1}{3}$ rpm. In studio argot, both recordings and transcriptions frequently are designated as *platters*. However, the listener usually cannot distinguish between a transcription and a recording. For each the necessary identification, by FCC regulations, is made when it is used on the air. These regulations cover any material put on a platter, whether it is the spoken word or music or both.

In programs of more than 5 minutes and not more than 30 minutes, the identification is required at beginning and end.

In programs of 5 minutes or less, the identification is required "immediately preceding the use thereof," except that *no* identification is required for programs of 1 minute or less.

In programs longer than 30 minutes, identification is required at the beginning, at each 30-minute interval, and at the end. However, it is unnecessary to interrupt a speech, a play, a religious service, or symphony concert or operatic production to put in this "sore thumb" (as it frequently is referred to in the studios).

Whenever possible, this identification should be tucked neatly into the script before the transcription is made, so the ET itself will carry the required phrases, such as: "This transcribed address," or "This program of transcribed popular tunes." In the case of transcribed music and live voice, then the required identification should be shown in the introductory script by, *e. g.*, "Music at Twilight, a transcribed concert of organ melodies," and at the close: "You have been listening to a transcribed concert, etc."

Each transcription carries the exact running time on its label. Phonograph records do not.

Now let us look at the script of some descriptive or narrative programs using music. The first is the eighty-seventh Sunday concert of the *Meadowlarks*, a program of transcribed music.

Script: *The Meadowlarks* (Descriptive or narrative)

MEADOWLARKS

(Fifteen-minute program of transcribed music
broadcast on Sunday afternoon)

Sponsor: F. C. Hayer Co.

CAST: Station announcer
SOUND: None

MUSIC: Theme: "TAKE A LESSON
FROM THE LARK"
"TURKEY IN THE STRAW"
"TREASURE ISLAND"
"NONE BUT THE LONELY
HEART"
"LA CUMPARSITA"

OPERATOR: THEME: "TAKE A LESSON FROM THE LARK": WORLD NO. 744:
TWENTY SECONDS: HOLD AS BG THROUGH OPENING COMMERCIAL:
FADE OUT AS NEXT SELECTION IS ANNOUNCED:

ANNOUNCER: One o'clock, Meadowlark time in the Twin Cities. Summer took up her job in earnest today, according to the calendar, and you in turn should graciously retire from hard work. Meadows summer-comfort appliances for the modern home, beautiful appliances such as the Meadows Square Tub Washer, and the Meadows Automatic Ironer continue, as they have for twenty-five years, to be the magic key to real enjoyment of the summer season. See these fine machines at your dealer's tomorrow. Easy payments easily arranged. With their summer-comfort suggestion tucked into your memory, the Meadowlarks open their concert of transcriptions with a classical American rural tune, a tune that for years has been rolling down the folkways of song like a sturdy old wagon slicked up, as Carl Sandburg so patly says, with new axle grease on all four wheels. Hear the Meadowlarks hit up "Turkey in the Straw."

OPERATOR: "TURKEY IN THE STRAW": WORLD NO. 263: TIME 1:55 ¹

¹ Note the varying positions in which the *time* is shown in the music programs that follow. There is no established position in the music line for it. It is determined by station custom or individual preference. Preferred position is shown in *Mary Downey Plays*. The "1:55" above means 1-minute 55 seconds.

ANNOUNCER: Remember "Treasure Island"? Well, that favorite number is back again in a new arrangement, and the Meadowlarks will let the Troubadors sing it for you.

OPERATOR: "TREASURE ISLAND": WORLD NO. 1297: TIME 2:47

ANNOUNCER: This is the eighty-seventh concert of the Meadowlarks, who turn now to Tschaiowsky and continue their program with the Dreamers singing "None But the Lonely Heart."

OPERATOR: "NONE BUT THE LONELY HEART": NBC NO. 251 TIME 3:22

ANNOUNCER: Ironing in hot weather is the hottest kind of job, but not if you have a Meadows Automatic Ironer in your home laundry. (100 WORDS OF COMMERCIAL OMITTED) The new Meadows Square Tub Washer and Automatic Ironer add new ease and comfort, and new economy and thrift to the weekly laundering job. In justice to yourself, see these models before you buy. They are on display tomorrow at the L. S. Donaldson Department Store, or the W. O. Anderson Sales Company, 2821 Thirty-Fourth Avenue South, or Billman's Furniture Store, 2506 Central Avenue, Minneapolis, or the Emporium Department Store in St. Paul. The Meadowlarks now resume their concert to the swinging rhythm of the tango, "La Cumparsita."

OPERATOR: "LA CUMPARSITA": WORLD NO. 121 TIME 2:50

ANNOUNCER: Your sponsor in this extended series of Sunday concerts by the Meadowlarks is the F. C. Hayer Company, 100 Third Avenue North, Minneapolis, distributors of Meadows Washers, Meadows Ironers, and Electrolux kerosene-operated refrigerators. The musical selections on today's program were transcriptions.

OPERATOR: THEME: "TAKE A LESSON FROM THE LARK": WORLD NO. 744: FADE FOR:

ANNOUNCER: Until one P.M. next Sunday, the Meadowlarks will remember you

OPERATOR: THEME: UP AND OUT:

Comment: Note the simple pattern: in fact, nothing could be more simple. One voice, that of studio announcer, using the descriptive or narrative style, plus transcribed music. This particular script carried 10 minutes 54 seconds of music which left 3 minutes 46 seconds for descriptive narration and commercial. The 1-minute introduction includes 50 words or ap-

proximately 25 seconds of commercial woven in to make it more "palatable." The heavy "slug" of commercial in the middle is approximately 200 words or 2 minutes in length. The final commercial of 32 words comes in the closing immediately preceding the final theme. Total commercial amounting to 3 minutes 15 seconds, is heavy, but there is relief in that two of the music selections are preceded by no commercial reference other than identification of the program. The mood sequence does not exist. The "inside" selections are "Turkey in the Straw," then a chorus number, "Treasure Island," then another chorus singing "None but the Lonely Heart," followed by the closing number, a tango "La Cumparsita." Each number, however, had distinct entertainment value because of current popularity. At time of presentation, the Federal Communications Commission regulations required that in a program of such length, transcription identification be given both at the opening and closing. In earlier programs in this series, the then-current regulations required that each transcribed selection of music be so identified. On certain stations, the engineer or "operator" plays the transcriptions, not the Announcer. However, "music" is the better word in script for any station.

Script: *Journeys in Melody*

Next, a closely knit *mood* program, built out of transcribed music.

JOURNEYS IN MELODY

A Blue Theme

(As broadcast, Station KYSM)

Script by Olga Marie Novák

Sponsor: Mankato City Bus Lines

CAST: Station announcer

SOUND: None

MUSIC: Theme: "ACCELERATION
WALTZ" "VALSE BLEUETTE"
"VALSE BLEU" "DISILLUSIONED"
"DU UND DU WALTZ"

(Music continued on following page)

"THERE'S A BIG BLUE CLOUD"	"BLUE ECHOES"
"BLUE BELLS OF SCOT- LAND"	"BLUE BUTTERFLIES"
	"OUT OF A CLEAR BLUE SKY"
	"BLUE DANUBE"

"ARIOSO," Handel

ANNOUNCER: For convenience safety and economy
Ride your Mankato City Bus lines.

THEME: "ACCELERATION WALTZ": (748 K) UP TEN SECONDS AND FADE
TO BACKGROUND FOR:²

ANNOUNCER: "Journeys in Melody" presented by your Man-
kato City Bus Lines.

MUSIC: "ACCELERATION WALTZ" (748): SEGUE IMMEDIATELY TO "Valse
Bleu" (889 K): UP TEN SECONDS AND FADE FOR: (3:15)

ANNOUNCER: Tonight the Mankato City Bus Lines bring you
music in a blue mood music to dream to in the moon-
light The orchestra plays "Valse Bleu."

MUSIC: "Valse Bleu" (889 K): UP AND TO CLOSE: SEGUE TO "THERE'S
A BIG BLUE CLOUD" (1005 H): UP AND FADE TO BG: (2:46)

ANNOUNCER: The sky seems to be clouding over but even the
clouds are willing to reflect our blue mood. And Karen
Temple sings "There's a Big Blue Cloud."

MUSIC: "THERE'S A BIG BLUE CLOUD" (1005 H): UP AND CLOSE: SEGUE TO
"BLUE BELLS OF SCOTLAND" AND FADE TO BG: (2:10)

ANNOUNCER: Ever stop to think how many blue flowers there are?
Cornflowers larkspur, asters yes and the flower
that inspired the music the Mankato City Bus Lines bring
you now the "Blue Bells of Scotland."

MUSIC: "BLUE BELLS" UP AND TO CLOSE SEGUE TO "ARIOSO"
(658): UP FOR 30 SECONDS (UNTIL NEXT TRANSCRIPTION IS CUED)
THEN FADE TO BACKGROUND FOR:

ANNOUNCER: A convoy gathers in the dawn ships meet and
move together under sealed orders. For days they fight cold
seas hoping the secret of their destination has been
guarded from the enemy.

² Underscoring of all music or sound lines is a style followed by some writers and stations. An illustrative example, above, shows this treatment of the first musical number in *Journeys in Melody*.

Suddenly the enemy strikes and thousands on the close-packed transports die before they've even had a chance to fight. Killed because too many people saw and talked! A soldier's mother worried out loud about her son and his shipping orders

A milkman gossiped about the extra cars of soldiers on the morning train a girl talked too loudly in the bus a shipyard worker tried to show off in a cafe They all talked too much.

Unguarded talk costs lives equipment ships and battles. When you've lost enough of these you've lost the war. There's one big conversational rule for every American Whenever you want to talk about what you found out don't. Careless talk costs lives!

MUSIC: IMMEDIATELY SEGUE TO "BLUE ECHOES" (1029 E) UP AND FADE TO BG: (2:59)

ANNOUNCER: It's rumba rhythm in the deepest of blue shades, and Buddy Moreno sings "Blue Echoes."

MUSIC: "BLUE ECHOES" (1029 E) UP AND TO CLOSE: SEGUE TO "VALE BLEUETTE" (893 M): UP AND THEN FADE TO BG: (2:05)

ANNOUNCER: It's the "Valse Bleuette" this time, on the Mankato City Bus Lines Concert.

MUSIC: "VALE BLEUETTE" (893 M) UP AND TO CLOSE SEGUE TO "DISILLUSIONED" (MacG 2254) UP: THEN FADE TO BG: (2:30)

ANNOUNCER: Really sad and melancholy is this song that Sterling Young and the orchestra play now What could be bluer than "Disillusioned."

MUSIC: "DISILLUSIONED" (MacG 2254) UP AND TO CLOSE: SEGUE "DU UND DU WALTZ" (679 H) UP AND PLAY FOR ONE MINUTE. THEN FADE TO BACKGROUND FOR:

ANNOUNCER: If wishes were buses you could solve your own transportation problem. But since you can't, the Mankato City Bus Lines will do it for you. It's only a short, comfortable ride downtown when you go by bus. Or when your arms are full of packages, you'll be glad to relax and let the Mankato City Bus Lines whisk you home in no time at all. Make it a habit to go by bus it's inexpensive it's convenient. Remember the shortest the quickest way, is the Mankato City Bus Lines Way!

MUSIC: "DU UND DU WALTZ" (679 H) UP AND TO CLOSE SEGUE "BLUE BUTTERFLIES" (913 L) UP AND FADE TO BG: (2:25)

ANNOUNCER: No more deep indigo, please! Let's have some music in the lighter vein ah, the orchestra obliges with "Blue Butterflies."

MUSIC: "BLUE BUTTERFLIES" (913 L) UP AND TO CLOSE: SEGUE "OUT OF A CLEAR BLUE SKY" (854 M) UP AND FADE TO BG: (2:48)

ANNOUNCER: The sad blue notes slide away on a sunbeam and Frank Ross sings "Out of a Clear Blue Sky."

MUSIC: "OUT OF A CLEAR BLUE SKY" (854 M) UP AND TO CLOSE: SEGUE TO "BLUE DANUBE" (860 K) AND FADE TO BG: (3:45)

ANNOUNCER: No music in a blue mood could be complete without the sparkling "Blue Danube." The Mankato City Bus Lines Orchestra plays it now.

MUSIC: "BLUE DANUBE" (860 K) TO CLOSE, OR WITHIN 30 SECONDS OF THE PROGRAM CLOSE: SEGUE TO THEME (748 K):

ANNOUNCER: Tune in again next Friday evening at 8:30 for another program of "Journeys in Melody," presented through the courtesy of your Mankato City Bus Lines. Remember for convenience for safety and economy ride your Mankato City Bus Lines.

MUSIC: THEME UP TO CLOSE:

Comment: Here is a program built on a "blue theme"—not "blues." Note the sequence of numbers: "Valse Bleu," "There's a Big Blue Cloud," "Blue Bells of Scotland," "Blue Echoes," "Valse Bleurette," and others. Note also the manner in which the successive tunes come up full, then are faded down as background behind the narration, then brought up to forte again. (Not a new device, but an old one that can be effectively used in polished presentations of recorded music.) The script was one of a series of half-hour shows presented Friday evenings. Another program in the series (showing again a well-thought-out objective) was dedicated to the freedom-loving nations of the world, the selections including characteristic Czechoslovakian, English, Russian, Brazilian, Mexican, and other pieces.

Programs built in the above manner are a great deal more than alternations of carelessly chosen words and platters of music. The effect in the living room is well worth the pains taken to make the program good radio. Such programs bring

relaxation and enjoyment to millions of listeners who as yet do not care for symphony concerts; likewise, they help those desirous of further explorations in music to appreciate more and more the majesty of great music.

Script: *The Fireside Singers*

Next, let's listen to the Fireside Singers, a live talent quartet.

THE FIRESIDE SINGERS

(As broadcast)

CAST: Station announcer
Quartet

SOUND: Doorbell chimes

MUSIC: Theme: "NOW THE DAY IS
OVER"

"ONE MORNING IN MAY"

"WHEN THE WHITE AZALEAS
START BLOOMING"

"I'LL SEE YOU AGAIN"

"HOW CAN I LEAVE THEE"

"IN THE SWEET BY AND
BY"

SOUND: SPECIAL CHIMES: THREE DIFFERENT BLOWS:

ANNOUNCER: Good evening to you all May we come in?
We're the Fireside Singers; I'm sure you remember us.
(COMMERCIAL, 8 WORDS SPONSOR'S NAME AND ADDRESS) First,
we'll have our theme, "Now the Day is Over."

THEME: COME IN FAST: "NOW THE DAY IS OVER": UP FULL FOR 20
SECONDS: DO NOT DRAG: AFTER ONCE THROUGH, DROP TO HUM-
MING AS BACKGROUND FOR FOLLOWING: HUM ONLY ONCE
THROUGH: THEN FADE OUT:

ANNOUNCER: (COMMERCIAL, 40 WORDS) Yesterday, by all the al-
manacs in the land, was the first day of spring so you'll
find our program tonight reflecting the new season. (COM-
MERCIAL, 76 WORDS) Now, festooned in spring garlands from
first tenor to heavy bass, the Fireside Singers want to tell you
about "One Morning in May"

MUSIC: "ONE MORNING IN MAY": (2:00)

ANNOUNCER: (COMMERCIAL, 77 WORDS) And now, let's hear about
those white azaleas that bloom every spring down in the
Kentucky highlands

MUSIC: "WHEN THE WHITE AZALEAS START BLOOMING" (1:25):
ARPEGGIO (:05): SEGUE INTO "I'LL SEE YOU AGAIN": SING JUST
ENOUGH TO IDENTIFY IT: THEN OUT:

ANNOUNCER: There's a lovely tune we'll sing it for you in just a moment, for it's only going to take that long to tell you what a pleasure it has been for us to present these programs each Sunday evening for the past twenty-six weeks Yes, that's right, for six straight months now you have been joining us each Sunday for tunes all America loves. We're sorry we haven't been able to sing quite all the numbers you have asked for, but we've done our best to get them all in. Perhaps you've been wondering who our Fireside Singers are. Well, I think right now is a good time to tell you Ted Kline is first tenor Ray Irons, second tenor Lee Heminghaus, baritone and Nels Swenson, the deep, deep bass. Their accompanist is James Allen Boys, you may all take a bow, while I add that script for this series of broadcasts was written by Luther Weaver who also directed the programs. Many of you listeners have taken the trouble to write and tell us that our programs, made up of old-time melodies everyone knows, and financial advice particularly suitable for these times, have been good morale-builders in this period of stress. We hope they have. (COMMERCIAL, 61 WORDS) And now, the Fireside Singers have a treat for you, a real treat It's that imperishable song Noel Coward wrote for his tuneful musical play "Bittersweet" "I'll See You Again"

MUSIC: "I'LL SEE YOU AGAIN": (2:00)

ANNOUNCER: Thank you, Fireside Singers, that was beautifully done. In many an old-fashioned garden this summer, tucked away in corners where the rocks are cool and the sun not too hot, you are likely to find little clusters of forget-me-nots and there's one in our next song, too Let the Fireside Singers reveal it as they sing "How Can I Leave Thee"

MUSIC: "HOW CAN I LEAVE THEE": (1:50)

ANNOUNCER: We've selected for the closing hymn of our twenty-sixth program a song being sung by many a choir this very evening in churches throughout America a hymn of faith and perseverance and courage its title, "In the Sweet By and By."

MUSIC: "IN THE SWEET BY AND BY": SEGUE INTO "NOW THE DAY IS OVER": HOLD AS HUMMING IN BACKGROUND: (1:25)

ANNOUNCER: Well, friends, now that the day is just about over, we must be going, too. (COMMERCIAL, 77 WORDS) So, from all of us to all of you, good luck, until we meet again.

THEME: "NOW THE DAY IS OVER": FULL VOICE, FORTE TO FINISH:

Comment: This group of singers came into the living room each Sunday afternoon at 5:30 o'clock, the program always opening with the sound of a doorbell chime, followed immediately by the friendly query, "Good evening, may we come in? We are the Fireside Singers, etc." Use of this homey and friendly greeting, in no wise in the vernacular or in dialect, contributed to the effect of a group calling to sing before the fireplace in the listener's home. The theme, "Now the Day is Over," set the mood which was maintained in each program of the series. Old familiar folk tunes were used principally, though now and then worthy pieces currently popular or recently popular also were included. The music selected tied the program into the service of the sponsor to the community.

Script: *The Majesty of Song*

Next, a program by a live talent organization, a choir, singing *a cappella* under the direction of a skilled conductor.

THE MAJESTY OF SONG

(As broadcast)

CAST: Announcer
60-voice choir
Conductor, George Hultgren

MUSIC: Theme: "DEAR LAND OF HOME" ("FINLANDIA")	"THE SONG OF THE JOLLY ROGER"
"SALVATION IS CREATED"	"O BLEST ARE THEY"
"THE STARS ARE BRIGHTLY SHINING"	"DRINK TO ME ONLY WITH THINE EYES"
"TONERNA"	"PRAISE TO THE LORD"

THEME: "DEAR LAND OF HOME": FORTY-FIVE SECONDS FORTE, THEN AS BG FOR OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT: CUT AS OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT ENDS:

ANNOUNCER: The (SPONSOR) presents "The Majesty of Song," the Minneapolis a cappella choir, directed by George Hultgren, in the first of a series of Sunday afternoon concerts. Today their sixty mixed voices will be heard in the magnificent chorals of the Russian composers Tschesnokoff and Tschai-kowsky, and of F. Melius Christiansen of Minnesota. (COMMERCIAL, 33 WORDS). (SPONSOR'S NAME) invites you to hear these concerts, to enjoy them, you and all your friends. More than that, they invite you to mail in the name of your favorite song, one you would like to hear the choir sing. Not all numbers suggested may be available; nevertheless, the sponsor and the choir will do their best to please you in "The Majesty of Song." The opening number today will be the stirring choral "Salvation Is Created." The composer Tschesnokoff.

MUSIC: "SALVATION IS CREATED":

ANNOUNCER: You are listening to the Minneapolis a cappella choir of sixty voices in "The Majesty of Song" presented by the (SPONSOR'S NAME). Now it's a pleasure to present George Hultgren, director of the choir and distinguished concert artist, in two numbers the first, the tenor aria from Puccini's opera "La Tosca," "The Stars are Brightly Shining."

MUSIC: "THE STARS ARE BRIGHTLY SHINING":

ANNOUNCER: Mr. Hultgren continues with Sjöberg's Swedish melody "Tonerna" which brings to you something of the beauty, the magic, and the music of a summer night.

MUSIC: "TONERNA":

ANNOUNCER: And now, with true Northland gusto, the Minneapolis a cappella choir's male chorus takes to the sea, with white sails shaking, and a Jolly Roger snapping at their masthead. Chudleigh Candish's rousing chantey "The Song of the Jolly Roger," yo-ho, my lads, yo-ho!

MUSIC: "SONG OF THE JOLLY ROGER":

ANNOUNCER: But safe in port again, the ties of home endear themselves ever more closely as the years pass, and time fills with ever greater charm the very silences of the place you live in. No evidence more confirmatory of what home means is needed than the speed with which this nation, its citizens and its resources, are helping the homeless, the thousands who have lost their homes in the Ohio and Mississippi Valley floods. And through all the years of its existence, the (SPONSOR'S NAME) has been helping thrifty men and women build their

homes. (COMMERCIAL, 248 WORDS) And remember to mail in the name of your favorite song for use by the choir in a later program. The next choral "O Blest Are They" is outstanding among Tschaiakowsky's compositions for mixed voices. The arrangement is by Noble Cain.

MUSIC: "O BLEST ARE THEY":

ANNOUNCER: Practically the entire Christian era comes within the compass of the next song. In the second century, there was a rhetorician in the court of Septimius Severus in Rome. His name was Philostratus. He liked to write letters. Sometimes they were to real people. Other times they were written to imaginary people for the sheer joy of writing. Two letters Philostratus wrote came down the centuries to fall under the vigilant eye of Ben Jonson, that sturdy English poet. Delightful old Ben turned them into a poem "To Celia." That was fourteen hundred years after the letters had been written. "To Celia" is just another name for "Drink To Me Only with Thine Eyes." The male chorus of the choir will sing it for you. The arrangement of the score is that of the late Dr. Rhys-Herbert of Minneapolis.

MUSIC: "DRINK TO ME ONLY WITH THINE EYES":

ANNOUNCER: The closing number of the Minneapolis a cappella choir today will be the magnificent choral composed by F. Melius Christiansen, director of the St. Olaf choir, "Praise to the Lord." The full ensemble of sixty voices will be heard in this song of praise.

MUSIC: "PRAISE TO THE LORD": SEGUE INTO THEME: HOLD FOR THIRTY SECONDS: MAINTAIN IN BACKGROUND:

ANNOUNCER: So we bring to a close the first concert by the Minneapolis a cappella choir. (COMMERCIAL, 88 WORDS) "Dear Land of Home," the choir sings it in farewell. They will greet you with it again next Sunday at this same time in your beloved land of home.

MUSIC: THEME: FORTE TO FINISH:

Comment: This group of sixty didn't know any so-called "pop" tunes, but under the masterly baton of their conductor they could do Bach as well as Negro spirituals. They achieved a majesty in song that made their program singularly appropriate as a Sunday afternoon concert. However, never expect a program of great music to lead in listener-percentage rating. Cer-

tain types of business or service, however, would find it contributing importantly to prestige in the community served. The savings and loan association which sponsored this program found this to be true.

Script: *Dining Out* (Interview)

An interview, that is, a question-and-answer type of program is next. It has live music. As presented on the air, it used the services of a trio of musicians who played the violin, guitar, and accordion and piano. In addition, one of them, a baritone, sang. A special announcer was assigned to the program from the beginning.

DINING OUT

(As broadcast)

CAST: Announcer (special)
Hostess
Musicians' trio

SOUND: Dinner gong

MUSIC: Theme: "DINNER AT EIGHT"	"WHEN I GROW TOO OLD TO DREAM"
"DID YOU MEAN IT?"	"THESE FOOLISH THINGS REMIND ME OF YOU"
Brahms' "LULLABY"	"WITHOUT A SONG"

THEME: "DINNER AT EIGHT": OPEN WITH SIGNATURE MUSIC: HUM THE REFRAIN: FADE UNDER AND HOLD AS BG THROUGH OPENING COMMERCIAL:

KARL: First call for dinner!

SOUND: FOUR BLOWS ON DINNER GONG:

KARL: You are right. This is the Miller Cafeteria program "Dining Out," the best appetizer on the air lanes. And what do you think? This is the last time you will hear "Dining Out" until after the holidays. Our hostess, Margaret Miller, will tell you about it later. In the meantime, even though our little company of players does retire temporarily from these Sunday conversations with you, remember the refreshing ap-

peal of the famous Miller dishes will be especially relished by you Christmas shoppers. And at the Miller Cafeteria, you may check without any charge your armloads of packages, while you enjoy your luncheon or your dinner. The Dinner Hour Trio have been listening very intently as I announced a holiday vacation for us, and they raise in vibrant melody the question "Did You Mean It?".

MUSIC: "DID YOU MEAN IT?": SEGUE INTO BRAHMS' "LULLABY": SEGUE INTO "WHEN I GROW TOO OLD TO DREAM":

KARL: Mrs. Miller, give us the story of Emily, the queen of your salad bowl before we sign off for the holidays. Just how many salads does Emily make for your counter?

MRS. MILLER: Thirty-five salads is the average number, Mr. Karl, thirty-five different kinds every day of the year; and, whether it's January or July, every lettuce-leaf is crisp, every tomato refreshingly cool. Emily Nelson, who has been with us for twelve years, is the genius who devises our salads. Always she is making new combinations and embellishing the old. She never is happier than when she has achieved some startlingly beautiful mold in which are suspended pears and grapes and cherries, and an appeal to eat them all. And what she can do with radishes! For garnishing, she turns them into as many different shapes as

KARL: As women's hats this season. Hurrah for Emily! I'm thinking the hat designers get their hunches from looking at Emily's radishes. But you said there are thirty-five salads that Emily makes. Why, that's one for every one of your programs. Do you know that this is program number 35, and you've been our hostess on "Dining Out" for thirty-five weeks or the greater part of a year

MRS. MILLER: All right, I didn't realize it. Time goes so fast, and it has been so jolly appearing with you all. Right now, before I tell you what we're having for dinner today at Miller's, I want to thank all of you for making this program the enjoyable quarter-hour it has become. And I'm sure our countless listeners will join me in the appreciation I want to express to you, Mr. Karl, and to our gracious trio, Mr. Bjorklund, Mr. Spears, and Mr. Floe. And now, our dinner, and your dinner today

KARL: Yes, Mrs. Miller, what is your recommendation today?

MRS. MILLER: Well, I do want you to try Paul's beef consommé. It's a lovely amber brown and rich in the goodness of

strengthening, vitalizing fresh meat. And in it, as lovely surprises, are those little embellishments Paul calls quenelles. Someone the other day called them pennies from heaven they thought they were so good.

KARL: Aren't you going to have fowl every day from now on through the holidays?

MRS. MILLER: Yes, Mr. Karl, today, for example, we have roast spring turkey, just as we did on Thanksgiving Day, and roast Long Island style duck. Oh, you should try that roast duck today. It's so good with currant jelly. Then, too, we're having baked chicken served in individual pieces just as you do at home.

KARL: Mrs. Miller, whether you're here or not, I shall get hungry every Sunday promptly at 12:45 P.M. And listen to the Dinner Hour Trio. They're paying me back. They're going to play "These Foolish Things Remind Me of You."

MUSIC: "THESE FOOLISH THINGS REMIND ME OF YOU": SEGUE INTO "WITHOUT A SONG": SEGUE INTO THEME: FADE DOWN FOR:

KARL: We really couldn't leave you without a song in our hearts. So, until we return after the holidays with more melodies and a new array of appetizers on the pantry shelf, keep in mind the pleasure of dining at this nationally famous restaurant, the Miller Cafeteria, at 20 South Seventh Street, in downtown Minneapolis. Your Dinner Hour Trio has enjoyed playing "When I Grow Too Old to Dream," Brahms' "Lullaby," "These Foolish Things Remind Me Of You," "Did You Mean It?" and "Without a Song."

KARL: Now, until after the holidays, your hostess, Margaret Miller, and the Dinner Hour Trio wish you joy in "Dining Out" Last call for dinner!

SOUND: FOUR BLOWS ON DINNER GONG:

THEME: "DINNER AT EIGHT": UP TO END: (Broadcast December 6, 1936)

Comment: To advertise food, as though it were a packaged item on a dusty shelf, would be fatal. It must be made attractive and always delicious. You must say something more than "Yes, we have some nice wrinkled prunes today." Much air time and much good money of sponsors are wasted on food commercials rolled down the gutter of routine radio sales "blah." First

reading may give you the impression that the program is heavily commercial. Admittedly, there is frequent reference to food but the effort is to make those references informatively helpful and lively with appetite appeal. Listeners used to say the program made them hungry every Sunday. Many of them, the cash register showed, came in and ate.

The personality on this program was the hostess; likewise, she was a personality in the cafeteria. Her lines in the script are written to fit her manner of speaking on the air. She sounded like the hostess of the cafeteria. Interlocking of script and music became neater as the program progressed, and the talent, never changed, became more and more familiar with the job.

Script: *Mary Downey Plays*

In the program that follows, the entertainment consists solely of selections by an organist of talent. The only voice in it is that of the special announcer who carries the commercials and introduces the musical numbers, usually four.

MARY DOWNEY PLAYS

(As broadcast over WTCN)

(15 minutes of organ music at
10:30 P.M., 5 evenings a week)

CAST: Organist
Announcer

MUSIC: Opening Theme: "FINLANDIA," Sibelius
"WALTZ IN A," Brahms
"AIR," Bach
"STARS IN YOUR EYES," Kreisler
"FULL MOON AND EMPTY ARMS," arranged by Kay-Mossman
from Rachmaninoff
Closing Theme: "ZIGEUNER," Coward

THEME: "FINLANDIA," FADE AFTER 5 SECONDS FOR:

ANNOUNCER: "Mary Downey Plays"

THEME: UP, THEN FADE UNDER TO CUE:

ANNOUNCER: To the peace and quiet of your fireside, let us add this music for your enjoyment a presentation of the Minnesota Federal Savings and Loan Association, a community-building organization that will be glad to help you refinance your home, solve the problem of home-ownership, or set up a savings account

THEME: UP FULL, THEN UNDER TO CUE: TOTAL TIME 1:20:

ANNOUNCER: Minnesota Federal invites you to join us just as often as you can in these programs of restful fireside music, and here it adds a word on the thrifty side When wages are good, that's the time to put aside savings against the days when one's earnings may not be so large Right now perhaps is an ideal time for you to start a savings account It can be done very easily at Minnesota Federal This old, established institution always pays a profitable return, you're certain of safety for your money because it's insured against loss, and you'll like the friendly service always extended I believe you'll enjoy having an account at Minnesota Federal where you can select a savings plan to fit your wages You'll be money ahead, that's for sure.

THEME: OUT:

ANNOUNCER: Mary Downey opens her regular evening program with one of Brahms' loveliest waltzes, the "Waltz in A" Miss Downey

MUSIC: BRAHMS' "WALTZ IN A": TIME 1:30

ANNOUNCER: You are listening to Mary Downey's program of evening music, presented in your home tonight by the Minnesota Federal Savings and Loan Association Miss Downey's next number, an "Air" from Bach

MUSIC: "AIR": BACH: TIME 2:50

ANNOUNCER: A Fritz Kreisler composition is next in our concert tonight His melodious "Stars in Your Eyes" It is a request number Perhaps you have a favorite selection If you mail us its title, we shall be glad to add it to the first appropriate program Now, "Stars in Your Eyes"

MUSIC: "STARS IN YOUR EYES": TIME 2:20

ANNOUNCER: Frequently in our time, singable lyrics make many new friends for a classic This is true in our next selection, Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto in its popular setting of "Full Moon and Empty Arms"

MUSIC: "FULL MOON AND EMPTY ARMS": TIME 3:00 GO INTO
 "ZIGEUNER" AT 10:42:45: ESTABLISH, THEN FADE UNDER TO CUE:

ANNOUNCER: You have been listening to Mary Downey in her eventide concert of music you like to hear Minnesota Federal presents these programs each evening at 10:30 to 10:45, Monday through Friday Join us whenever you can, yes, turn your radio on for this welcome fireside music Among other facilities provided by Minnesota Federal in serving home builders is the Home-Planning Library where you can see for yourself how other folks built their homes how they solved the problems of door locations, hall area, closet space, heating and many other questions You'll find this Home-Planning Library at the Minnesota Federal office in either Minneapolis or Saint Paul Browse through these many books on house construction, room arrangement, interior as well as exterior decoration, landscaping and kindred subjects There is no charge You may use them freely And also make use of the helpful suggestions of Minnesota Federal's friendly advisers in financing your new home They have helped thousands set up good homes for themselves in these Twin Cities And while at Minnesota Federal, pick up your free copy of a practical booklet, entitled "How to Build the Home You Want" This is Max Henderson extending Minnesota Federal's friendly invitation to remember this music until tomorrow evening when Mary Downey will play again for you.

THEME: "ZIGEUNER": FORTE TO FINISH:

Comment: The music content of this particular script is Brahms' "Waltz in A," "Air" by Bach, the Fritz Kreisler composition "Stars in Your Eyes" and the popular number, "Full Moon and Empty Arms," Rachmaninoff's "Piano Concerto No. 2" set to lyrics. It is somewhat heavy on the classical side, at least to a reader of the titles. However, it left a rememberable impression of something unified that was worth listening to, even though the average listener may not be a devotee of Brahms, and certainly not of Bach. It is not always easy to achieve that singleness of effect which the four selections in this program each contributed to. (See Chapter 8, *Theme Music*, for discussion of variance in opening and closing themes in this program.)

The first question here is: Can organ music alone be made sufficiently appealing to a large enough number of listeners? The standard pattern would be to keep the organ incidental, and have a singer sing, and an announcer or other male voice read poetry; such a combination is frequently used in an evening program; if it is in the late evening, the singer may be discarded and the job turned over to the organist and the reader.

Admittedly this program is one designed to meet what many critics of radio say they would like to hear. This was their opportunity; if they and their friends listened, then that listener interest should be reflected in returns of goodwill and patronage to the sponsor.

Because evening time was not immediately available, the program was presented for its first five months at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon; its competition at that hour on the air included a "soap opera." The regular survey (Hooper) showed only fair listener interest in the new program.

Then it was moved to evening time, a suitable period having opened up. Because the evening time did not fall within regular survey hours, the frequently used device of offering something free to the listener was used to test the program's listener interest. The offer, an attractive 48-page collection of Christmas carols, was mailed *free* to listeners, upon their written request.

It was made on fifteen successive programs. The response showed more than 500 individual requests for single copies of the booklet (group requests *not* included). It cannot be compared, because of variance in listener appeal, with an offer of a box-top and 10¢ for this or that, or an offer of garden seeds or other wanted item where the response is many times greater. (See comment on Contests and Prizes and Offers in Chapter 5.) The program limited its appeal to those who were looking for good music on the air, and the test reconfirmed an established radio truth: listeners to this type of program are not prolific letter writers; they do not participate in mass in radio offers.

The pattern for the program is illustrated by Figure No. 3 on Page 186. It was maintained in all programs of this series for the first six months of presentation. Then a change was made to offer the music in uninterrupted sequence. The pat-

tern for the introduction and the opening commercial remained unchanged, but the remainder of the program was as follows:

THEME: OUT:

ANNOUNCER: Tonight's program of restful fireside music embraces the following numbers, in uninterrupted sequence: Carroll Gibbons' "Garden in the Rain" "Santa Lucia" Paolo Tosti's "Beauty's Eyes," and Robert Schumann's "Evening Song" or "Abenlied" Now, Mary Downey plays the first number: "Garden in the Rain"

MUSIC: "GARDEN IN THE RAIN": TIME 1:30 "SANTA LUCIA:" TIME 2:20 "BEAUTY'S EYES": TIME 2:40 "ABENLIED": TIME 3:20 TOTAL TIME 9:50:

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard Mary Downey play her eventide concert that embraced the following selections: "Garden in the Rain" "Santa Lucia" Paolo Tosti's "Beauty's Eyes" and Robert Schumann's "Abenlied"

MUSIC: GO INTO "ZIGEUNER" AT 10:42:45 ESTABLISH, THEN FADE TO BG AND HOLD UNDER UNTIL CUED UP:

ANNOUNCER: (FINAL COMMERCIAL, 100 WORDS) Our music tomorrow evening will embrace "Penny Serenade" Debussy's "Reverie" "You Keep Coming Back Like a Song" and Cyril Scott's "Blackbird's Song" Now let us extend Minnesota Federal's friendly invitation to remember this music, until tomorrow evening when Mary Downey will play again for you

THEME: FORTE TO FINISH:

The objection to the pattern of uninterrupted music is that sponsor identification is not so easily maintained. But the listener, particularly in the evening hours, may be grateful to the sponsor for 10 minutes or more of music with no announcer's voice interrupting. At least here was such an opportunity.

Still later, to make use of a four-manual organ of unusual excellence, this program was moved to a municipal auditorium. There it was presented before a visual audience as well as being broadcast. The pattern of uninterrupted music was maintained, the music amounting to 11½ or 12 minutes of the program time with the commercial content, merely the identifica-

tion of the sponsor by name, held down to a total of 54 words or approximately 20 to 25 seconds out of the total program period of 14½ minutes. The remaining time, amounting to 2 to 2½ minutes, was used in introducing the program, inviting the public to listen to or see the broadcast, and announcing the next program.

Great music is becoming popular music

The radio is making great music popular music, and any station, even the smallest, can present great music and master musicians simply by playing records or transcriptions of their works. The script suitable for such a program would in large part also be appropriate for a program in which a symphony orchestra was to play the music in an elaborate modern studio, for the music itself is the same. The program that follows is an example of a program of recorded classical music, a field in which noncommercial and certain commercial stations have successfully built up permanent audiences. It usually is presented five evenings a week, Monday through Friday.

Example of *Record Sheet*

Record Sheet for
MASTERWORKS OF MUSIC
Program 1719—WCCO—July 16, 1946
Using the following Columbia Records:

- 11753-D (Opening Theme) "SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN C MINOR"—Bec-
thoven
- 70063-D "SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN D MAJOR," "Reformation"—Mendels-
70064-D sohn. First Movement. Columbia Broadcasting Sym-
70065-D phony, Howard Barlow, Conductor.
- 70066-D "SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN D MAJOR," "Reformation"—Mendels-
70065-D sohn. Third Movement. Fourth Movement. Colum-
70064-D bia Broadcasting Symphony, Howard Barlow, Conduc-
70063-D tor.
- 11870-D (Closing Theme) "SYMPHONY NO. 5"—Shostakovitch

Script: *Masterworks of Music*

(Figures show total
time consumed)

(Figures show time
of respective units)

ANNOUNCER: Columbia Records present Masterworks of Music.

(3 sec.)

(3 sec.)

THEME: UP: BEETHOVEN'S "FIFTH SYMPHONY"

(32 sec.)

(29 sec.)

THEME: FADE TO BG AT SIGNAL FROM ANNOUNCER:

ANNOUNCER: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to another half hour of the world's great music, recorded for your endless pleasure on Columbia Masterworks Records.

Tonight, we are to hear a performance of the SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN D MAJOR—the "REFORMATION" SYMPHONY—by FELIX MENDELSSOHN.

Although MENDELSSOHN was of Jewish birth, there was no inconsistency in his choice of theme for the "REFORMATION" SYMPHONY. The distinguished family into which he was born, finding life in Hamburg intolerable after its occupation by the French in 1811, removed to Berlin, and there adopted the Christian faith, which MENDELSSOHN himself adhered to throughout his life. The composer's sincere piety was evident in much that he wrote—the great oratorios, a number of religious songs and the "REFORMATION" SYMPHONY. Tonight, we shall hear three movements—the first, third and fourth—from this latter work, played by HOWARD BARLOW and the COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. The "REFORMATION" SYMPHONY is listed as MENDELSSOHN'S fifth work in the form, but in reality it was completed earlier than the fourth. It was composed for the tercentenary of the Augsburg Convention, and MENDELSSOHN made use in it of liturgical motifs and hymn tunes. Probably because of an outbreak of disturbances which culminated in the July Revolution at Paris in 1830, the symphony was never performed at the Augsburg session, however, and two years later musicians in Paris, terming the work "too learned," cancelled a projected performance for that city.

The actual premiere took place in Berlin in 1832, at a benefit concert for widows and orphans. The symphony

opens with a beautiful and impressive theme. In the first movement may be recognized a cadence adopted by WAGNER as one of the principal motives of PARSIFAL; this is the so-called "Dresden Amen." In the finale, LUTHER'S noble hymn, A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD, is conspicuous. We hear now the first movement from MENDELSSOHN'S "REFORMATION" SYMPHONY, recorded on COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS by HOWARD BARLOW and the COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYMPHONY.

(2 min. 40 sec.)

(2 min. 8 sec.)

MUSIC: "SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN D," "REFORMATION"—Mendelssohn First movement:

(12 min. 55 sec.)

(10 min. 15 sec.)

ANNOUNCER: You are listening to a performance of MENDELSSOHN'S "REFORMATION" SYMPHONY, recorded on COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS by HOWARD BARLOW and the COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYMPHONY. Omitting the brief Scherzo, we continue now with the third movement, which, in turn, will be followed without pause by the final Allegro.

(13 min. 12 sec.)

(17 sec.)

MUSIC: "SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN D," "REFORMATION"—Mendelssohn Third and fourth movements:

(25 min. 57 sec.)

(12 min. 45 sec.)

Note: The third movement begins about one inch from the edge of Side 5 (70066-D), where it is separated from the end of the second movement by a pause of several seconds. The operator should familiarize himself beforehand with this break.

ANNOUNCER: Tonight's program of MASTERWORKS OF MUSIC has been devoted to MENDELSSOHN'S "REFORMATION" SYMPHONY—one of the many fine COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS recordings by HOWARD BARLOW and the COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYMPHONY. (107 WORDS OF COMMERCIAL ON OTHER COLUMBIA RECORDS OMITTED.)

And so, we come to the close of another concert of the world's great music, performed by the world's great artists on COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS RECORDS.

We cordially invite you to be with us tomorrow at this time, when MOZART'S SONATA IN D MAJOR and

RAVEL'S VALSES NOBLES ET SENTIMENTALES will be the featured works on our concert.

Until then, this is _____ bidding you a pleasant good evening for COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS.
(27 min. 15 sec.) (1 min. 18 sec.)

THEME TO FILL: "SYMPHONY NO. 5"—Shostakovitch:

Comment: Here the stage is quickly set: after a few introductory words of welcome, the script reads: "Tonight we are to hear a performance of 'Symphony No. 5 in D Major,' the 'Reformation' symphony, by Felix Mendelssohn." A short history of the symphony follows. Many among the listeners know these historical facts, but the script writer should take into account those who are just "coming up" in appreciation of music and may have only recently discovered this series of programs; they will appreciate this brief review of the genesis of the "'Reformation' Symphony;" so will those whose memory of musical history has faltered.

Note the opening theme selected from Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony." This same excerpt would be used unvaryingly in opening each program. If you as a script writer know Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony" you undoubtedly could make a selection. If you are not that far advanced musically, then call on the musical director to help you out. The record then can be marked (with red scotch tape, or a white wax pencil) so the correct grooves will be played, or better, the particular excerpt of workable length can be transcribed to a separate theme record; use of this theme record will avoid misadventures with your theme.

For the closing theme, Shostakovitch's "Symphony No. 5" is used to fill the required time. If no time were lost, your excerpt from this symphony would amount to a playing time of 2 minutes 15 seconds. Selection of a suitable excerpt should be made as previously described. Any shortening of the program obviously would lengthen the closing theme. This use of separate themes, one for the opening, and one for the closing is another deviation from the normal handling of theme music explained in Chapter 8. (It also occurred in the program *Mary Downey Plays* immediately preceding.) This deviation might add interest to the program by providing bits from two

different symphonies for the listeners to identify happily or argue about.

As shown on the *record sheet* attached to the script, this is a Columbia Masterworks program in behalf of Columbia records, therefore a commercial program. However, the commercial content is held to a minimum. Count for yourself the number of words in the commercial references.

If this or other music were presented by means of records on a noncommercial station, no mention of the *brand* of records would be made; likewise no mention of the particular brand is normally made in presenting music in a sustaining or non-commercial program on a commercial station.

The script as presented is a reproduction of the copy supplied the station, including capitalization of the titles of the musical selections and names of composers; it has been the author's experience that underscoring of words for emphasis or clarity is less harrowing than capitalization to the announcer or character handling the script.

Note that the *record sheet* which accompanies the script is decidedly helpful to the music librarian in assembling the records for the program; also, it lessens the danger of a hurried or harried announcer starting a symphony and finding one of its movements missing!

Clearing music

The selections incorporated in any program of music submitted to a station must be *cleared* by that station before they go on the air. This includes both live talent numbers and selections that may be recorded or transcribed. Therefore, have your script at the station in ample time for such inspection. Each station has its own time requirements governing the receipt of script in advance of presentation of any program. However, in the case of musical programs, a special check is made by the station to determine if it has the right to use the music designated in the program; that is, whether it is *licensed* to use it. Also investigation is made to determine whether any number you have included in your program is a *restricted* number.

Stations and networks are licensed by the various music pub-

lishers, such as American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP); Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI); Sesac, Inc.; Associated Music Publishers, Inc.; and others, to use the music of such groups of publishers. The networks, of course, have licenses from all such groups. Larger stations likewise have entered into such agreements with all or several of the publisher groups; small stations may not find such complete blanket coverage necessary.

The use of music by other than a licensed station makes the user subject to copyright infringement action, possible recoverable damages being commensurate with the size of the station.

As stated, publishers have the right to restrict the use of a tune, this to prevent its being worn out before its time. In other words, they take it off the air to give the tune, and perchance the listener, a rest.

Networks also may bar a particular tune because of an objectionable word in one line, or one stanza in poor taste, or in certain cases the entire number. Radio, as was pointed out in Chapter 3, reaches all the people. And all the people are not likely to accept as being in good taste a risqué tune that is causing chuckles on Broadway. Frequently the questionable words of a popular tune are rewritten to make it more suitable for use on the air in meeting the demands of a mass radio audience.

Stations also take special care in accepting the original compositions of new authors whose work has not yet been formally published. They may ask such an author to sign a release form absolving station and advertiser from any responsibility for infringement of copyright on music already published.

CHAPTER

14

Religious Programs

*A word fitly spoken
Is like apples of gold in baskets of silver.*

—A PROVERB OF SOLOMON

Sponsors with repetitious commercials, comedians with unfunny jokes, politicians with blustiferous harangues are not the only ones who err in the use of radio. Preachers, zealous in their labors, sometimes reveal startling unawareness of the medium. They exhort, they harangue, they shout at us in our living rooms. Most listeners like to be talked *with*, not *at*. Too many religious programs do not give them this opportunity.

However, preachers are learning that radio, going as it does into practically all the homes in a given area, is a medium of tremendous possibilities in the cause of religion. They are learning too that merely transferring a church service to the air by installing a set of microphones in a church auditorium does not mean a successful religious program. Too often this is still the usual procedure, but the number of listeners and, what is more important, the effectiveness of the service might show decided increase if that service were built for the living rooms of the community or region or nation, instead of for the relatively small number in the church auditorium. Preachers make the same error many comedians make: they "play" to the "studio" audience when infinitely more people are listening at home, or might well be listening if the service were built for them.

A radio audience exercises free will

The home audience, in largest part, did not come voluntarily to hear the preacher preach. In homes differing sharply one from another, men and women and children are looking for something interesting on the radio; if the religious program does not interest them, they dial it out.

Talk is usually boring on the air (see Chapter 5), no matter how praiseworthy the subject. Interest must be maintained or the listener will move to something else. Many sermons could—and should—be greatly reduced in length for use on the air. Further, they should be written for the radio audience, not the visual one. As a means of evaluation, preachers could have recordings made of their sermons, and then listen to those recordings as they are *played back* to them. The preacher then would be the listener, and in fairness to his audience, he should ask himself:

Have I said anything worth listening to?

Have I said it clearly, even beautifully?

Have I talked *with* them, or have I shouted at them, irritating them in the peace of their home?

His conscience well could be his guide.

Music and the mood of worship

Too little use is made of music, music that stirs the human soul, the world's great universal music. It provides the appropriate setting for a sermon, establishes the appropriate mood for meditation. Never before has music had so great an ally as the radio, for the radio too is universal: it is everywhere, and it appeals, variously, to every man. Therefore, the alert religious program-builder will make use of the appropriate piece or pieces that his good taste tells him will add grace and beauty, and, perforce, motivation to his program; and his script—sermon—should be in keeping with the program and its music.

How much music should be included? In a 15-minute pro-

gram, two-thirds of it well could be music: this leaves an approximate 5 minutes for the message or sermon. This may seem too short but consider the 30-minute program of the Salt Lake Tabernacle choir, a half hour of "music and the spoken word" in which not more than five minutes is devoted to the "message"; the remainder is good music, frequently majestic music.

But those scant five minutes are effectively used. Well-prepared script—call it a lesson or sermon if you wish—reveals thorough awareness of the use of the spoken word, including, of course, the good taste that good radio presupposes.

There are other programs that likewise are worth careful study in establishing a pattern for an effective religious program. They include *Southernaires* (ABC) and *Wings over Jordan* (CBS). Their patterns give music similar predominance with the spoken word held to the requirements of good listener interest.

Script: *Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir*

SALT LAKE TABERNACLE CHOIR ¹

Script by Richard Evans

(Organ begins playing "As the Dew" on signal at 9:59:00 continuing until 9:59:50)

(At 10:00, on signal, organ and choir break into "Gently Raise," singing words to end of second line, from which point choir hums for announcer's background to end of verse)

ANNOUNCER: Again, with music and the spoken word, we beckon your thoughts unto the hills, as another week of life begins for all men.

At this hour the Columbia Broadcasting System and its affiliated stations bring you the 843rd presentation of this traditional broadcast from Temple Square in Salt Lake City.

J. Spencer Cornwall conducts the singing of the Tabernacle choir.

¹ *The Spoken Word* by Richard L. Evans, heard over Radio Station KSL and the nationwide Columbia Broadcasting System from the Tabernacle, Temple Square, Salt Lake City, September 9, 1945. Copyright 1945.

Alexander Schreiner is at the organ. The spoken word by Richard Evans.

(PAUSE)

We begin with an anthem by Tertius Noble written on a Fifth Century hymn which recalls the story of the calming of the troubled waters: "And He arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, peace, be still. And they who were with Him said one to another, what manner of man is this that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" (Mark 4:39:41) We hear the choir singing "Fierce was the Wild Billow . . . peril was nigh, then saith the Light of Light: 'Peace! It is I!' . . . Thou, when the storm of Death roars sweeping by, whisper, O Truth of Truth, 'Peace! It is I!'"

(Choir sings "Fierce Was the Wild Billow"—
Noble)

(Organ background)

ANNOUNCER: For this day's first organ solo offering, Alexander Schreiner presents from Temple Square the Bach "Prelude and Fugue in C Minor."

(Organ presents "Prelude and Fugue in C Minor"—
—Bach)

(Organ background)

ANNOUNCER: A "Prayer" from the nineteenth-century writings of Cherubini gives the Tabernacle choir its next theme, with sober words of thoughtfulness: "When I, judged, shall stand before Thee . . . child and father stand together . . . at Thy feet when we shall gather."

(Choir sings "Prayer"—Cherubini)

(Organ background)

ANNOUNCER: Quietly recalled now by the voice of the Tabernacle organ is the "Andantino Tranquillo" by Victor Young.

(Organ presents "Andantino Tranquillo"—Young)

(Organ background)

ANNOUNCER: We live these days, in the long-awaited expectancy of the return of those we love. Some of them have already come back; some of them, to our deep sorrow, do not walk this way again; our reunion with them will wait another time and place—but most of them are yet to come—and concerning them and concerning ourselves, there are some things we may well remember: Generally

speaking, the longer people live together the more they think alike; and the longer they are apart the less alike they think. The thoughts of those who have shared the same experiences are quickened by the same memories. But now we have coming back to us those who have seen things we have never seen, things which they would never want us to see, things which, God being willing, neither we nor they may ever be called upon to see again. In some measure this breaks the chain of association with those we love and cherish and wait for. Then, too, you who now come home—it may be that in your homesick loneliness and waiting you have charitably idealized us and have forgotten some of our small faults and have magnified some of our virtues. It may be that we shall see some changes in each other. Time and experience cumulatively leave their marks upon all of us. We shall see broadened stature, and in some of you the faces of men that were boyish when you left. Some of you come home to sons and daughters whom you have never known. Many of you have missed part of the joy of watching your own children grow up. Some of you may, to begin with, feel as strangers in your own homes—but not so much so but the same virtues and lovable qualities which have always endeared you to us and made you part of us, will quickly make us one again. You are ours, and we are yours. Our own family and folk are not something we own or disown by changing fortune or the whims of circumstance. They are something of which we are part, and which are part of us, everlastingly, eternally so. And so, whatever changes, be patient—all this is part of the price of war. All this is the inevitable result of years and months spent widely apart, and of unnatural thinking and living—but the changes we may see in each other, will be minimized as our paths run together again, as our experiences become once more common experiences. Gratefully we welcome you home. Thanks to you for what you have done. Thanks to you for what you have given. And may God bless you and keep you until, with forbearance, with wisdom, with intelligent consideration and the patience of understanding, we shall know again together the joy of living and working and walking into the years ahead.

(Organ fades and swells here with improvised interlude—about 30 seconds—and continues to give announcer background for the following)

ANNOUNCER: "Awake, my child, the dawn is here, and o'er the mountain lights appear, all gold and red and amber-hued, the earth with life is fresh imbued, awake, the day is near! Awake, my soul, Thy dawn is here!" This song of the dawn by Pearl G. Curran, with words by Feril Hess, is sung now by the Tabernacle choir.

(Choir presents "Dawn" by Curran-Hess)

(If time permits, organ presents without announcement "O Lord of Hosts" by McIntyre or an improvised interlude)

(Organ background)

ANNOUNCER: There is time to sing, before we close this day from Temple Square, an exalted theme from Mendelssohn's "Elijah"—the closing chorus of that profoundly moving Oratorio: "And then shall your light break forth as the light of morning breaketh Lord, our Creator, how excellent Thy name is in all the nations! Thou fillest Heaven with Thy glory."

(Choir sings "And Then Shall Your Light Break Forth"—Mendelssohn)

("As the Dew")

ANNOUNCER: Until we beckon your thoughts again unto the hills, may peace be with you, this day—and always.

This concludes another presentation in the 17th year of this traditional broadcast from the Mormon Tabernacle on Temple Square, brought to you by the Columbia network and its affiliated stations, originating with Radio Station KSL in Salt Lake City, at the Crossroads of the West.

When another seven days have come and gone, those voices which now fade within these echoing walls, will return again with music and the spoken word, over your Columbia station.

J. Spencer Cornwall conducted the singing of the Tabernacle choir. Alexander Schreiner was at the organ. The spoken word by Richard Evans.

This is CBS—the Columbia Broadcasting System. (Copyright 1945)

Comment: Important to the denomination or the individual church or the preacher interested in using radio effectively is the fact that this program gives the listener the satisfying sense that it is *for him*, in his living room. He, the listener, is gratified that it is so written, directed, and produced. How greatly this heightens its effectiveness, particularly because it is a religious program, is beyond the measure of statistics. The radio listener does not like to feel he is second choice in a presentation; he dislikes the waves of applause that greet him in a secular program: likewise he may dislike the connotation of the sermon delivered to the visual audience and the background of

"audience murmur" that he may get from a service relayed to him from a church auditorium.

Every preacher does not have a great choir at his command, but knowledge of radio and the intimacy that effective use of it demands will help him put together a program out of the material he has to work with that will make more advantageous use of both music and the spoken word.

The script of the Tabernacle choir program is reproduced here as it was written and used for that particular broadcast. (Our soldiers were returning from the war.) Its mechanical form shows sharp variations from the customary mechanical style. (Refer to established style used in all programs, except as noted, in this book.) However, the program's talent are accustomed to their script and it serves them gratifyingly well. It is admittedly the best pattern for a religious program that has been devised to date. The program now is in its eighteenth year on the air.

CHAPTER

15

Store Programs: Purely Commercial

Primarily, they require enthusiasm for radio, and understanding of the medium: then constant, painstaking supervision.

Store programs can be as varied on the air as the establishments themselves, and just as individualistic, but ingenuity in using radio, including painstaking supervision that will develop the possibilities of the medium, often is absent.

Whether the store is large or small, successful use of radio requires, first of all, enthusiasm. Whoever writes or directs the advertising must look upon radio as one of the major means of acquainting the public with what his store has to offer. If the advertising director happens to have come to his job well trained in the printed word, and in the printed word alone, it is only natural he should turn to and rely on the medium in which he was trained; he will think, therefore, in terms of small ads, or quarter pages, or full pages; the written word with pictures will be in his mind.

Indifference the block to effective use

If, under pressure from the management, he turns unenthusiastically and perfunctorily to the air with a few announce-

ments to back up a clearance sale that is splashed in four pages in the evening paper, he is not making use of radio. Results based upon the yardstick of indifference are not conclusive. How could they be? If radio is used, it should be used with thorough understanding, with keen awareness of its possibilities. However, the advertising director cannot carry the ball alone. Even though the director may be trying to use radio effectively, buyers or heads of departments may be the stumbling blocks. They traditionally like to see their merchandise described and pictured in the store ads. Each department head takes pride in the amount of space, plainly visible in a newspaper ad, given to his own department, but it is not always convenient for store personnel to hear their radio advertising. The management, therefore, should be especially vigilant to give the staff opportunity to hear the store's radio programs or announcements. There is as much need of familiarizing the store's personnel with radio advertising as with printed ads. That's merchandising your advertising.

Any advertising director trained primarily in the printed word, or without specialized radio writing training, should put on his staff a competent radio writer. Such an assistant, or assistants, will bring radio and its use into constant consideration and evaluation in the store's planning.

There are many stores in smaller cities and towns where the boss himself writes the newspaper ads, all of them. Perhaps the community served by a store of this kind has a 250-watt station, no larger. It would be absurd for such a store to employ a special man or woman to write its radio advertising. In such case, the store's boss can call on the station to transform his written words into material appropriate for the air, if he does not care to attempt it himself.

Describing your merchandise

The common objection to radio advertising is that you cannot show merchandise by radio: wait until television comes, then use will be made of it.

You *can* describe merchandise by radio in word images that invite; you *can* make that merchandise appealing; you *can*

make it a wanted item, *if* you know how to use radio. With appropriate music or sound effects, you can create a setting of merchandise-in-use, and with it desire for that merchandise, a desire so alluring or appealing that the price, if used, will merely complete the image in the listener's mind.

Throughout this book, the emphasis has been on images; they persist throughout radio, good radio; they figure importantly in store programs. In radio script that sells, you will describe, for example, a dress so completely and so invitingly that the listener not only can see it, but will want it.

Describe every item of merchandise in as complete detail as possible. Create an image of it in the listener's mind. Price appeal, of course, may shorten the description. However, remember how thoroughly the mail-order houses describe their merchandise in their catalogs. That is your cue in writing radio script for your store. If each button were different on a woman's coat, in such case, you would describe each button. *That is description.* Even in television you would need to point up the description of those buttons.

Television and store programs

This will not become a television-saturated nation, in the degree it now is radio-saturated, all at once. Because of *the nature of the critter*, it will advance slowly in the more sparsely populated areas. (See Chapter 19.) But, as the areas widen in which television is available, it will help sell more and more goods. However, in television as in radio, in the long pull, after the first pink newness is worn off, we shall have to entertain; simply picturing the merchandise on a screen in the living room will not be enough. Television, obviously, requires closer attention than radio from the listener, for the watcher, the audience, must be within visual range of the television screen and he must be looking at that screen or he will miss the show; he cannot be wandering about the house, one ear cocked, for example, to the football game, as he does in radio.

Mrs. Housewife is going to tire, tire quickly of vacuum cleaners and washing machines and coffee pots and hand lotions and what have you, merely displayed, or worn, or used.

We shall have to entertain her while making that merchandise appeal to her, or to her husband. Gowns, dresses, suits, lingerie must be modeled in loveliness, not merely displayed on racks. The entertainment segment of a given program must be present in television as it is in radio, or the audience will disappear. And television stage shows are going to take money to produce in splendor. If radio, while it is growing up—many think it still is in its infancy—brings the listener distress, be very sure that television, while it is kicking its diapers off, also may try the spectator's soul.

And will the advertising man trained only in the printed word be any happier with television than he was with radio? Not unless he himself learns how to make use of the new medium, or has assistants with the know-how. Such training must be supplemented with enthusiasm for the medium, for you cannot successfully use the spoken word (radio) alone, or with pictures, unless you like to work with it.

Constant supervision essential

As in any good thing, work, creative work, must go into a store's radio program. Further, when it finally goes on the air, the program should reflect careful planning for the *long pull*. And all the time it is on the air, it will need constant supervision. Without new material *fed* to it at every turn, your program will become static, and that, in radio, means certain retrogression. Further, the talent, even though that talent consists only of a "platter turner" or "disc jockey," and the station production staff will keep on their toes if they know the representatives of the sponsor or the advertising agency, or both, are listening. And this alertness will be strengthened if your scripts reflect constant day-by-day alertness in preparation. A sure way to create indifference is to submit sloppily prepared script. Therefore, never put it together with a curse or a prayer at the end of a day.

In the big town or small town, the successful store program depends, too, on regular, consistent use of radio. If the advertising budget permits, it should be presented day in and day out, month after month, year after year. It takes on greater

individuality, greater appeal, the longer it is on the air. It becomes a public service (musical clock programs have this virtue especially) that brings Olson's Department Store, or Susie's Dress Shop, or Bill Smith's Super-Market into the living rooms of the community; that paints rich images in the listeners' minds, images of merchandise or service they want; that gives them also civic and community information as a public service they wait for and expect to hear.

The musical clock

Now the simplest of all programs of public service (and by public service is meant telling the listener something he wants to know, that does not cost him a cent, and that he is grateful for), is the *musical clock*. The pattern is standardized: the time, the temperature, the weather, and other information of general usefulness that is in step with the calendar and the activities of your community. But your program, as the following excerpt shows, is more than time, temperature, and weather; it may contain a 1-minute commercial on any product, followed by 2 or 3 minutes of music. Then will come the time, and temperature, and, at less frequent intervals, the weather, followed by another commercial, this time perhaps in dialogue. One of the voices can be the regular announcer; the other voice can well be that of a woman, a shopper, regularly reporting to home folks by means of this program. The dialogue may be about women's purses or men's pajamas or what you will. And following it will be more music. The pattern is simple; if well-handled, with image-provoking script, it can establish a large audience. Again, it is not a "quickie" as successful sponsors of musical clocks will tell you. If you start a musical-clock program, stay with it month after month, year after year.

Script: *Musical Chimes*

The following is the *Musical Chimes* program of The Dayton Company, Minneapolis, a program now in its twelfth year of continuous presentation. Its first broadcast was September 1, 1934. It is usually 1 hour in length, though summertime

station-network schedules sometimes cause it to be shortened to $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ hour.

MUSICAL CHIMES

(Presented over Station WCCO, Minneapolis-Saint Paul)

Sponsor: The Dayton Company

CAST: Announcer
Shopping reporter

MUSIC: Recorded (see script)
SOUND: None

ANNOUNCER: Good morning 7:30 time for Dayton's "Musical Chimes."

THEME: "GOOD NEWS" (ORGAN): UP FULL 15 SECONDS, THEN UNDER FOR:

ANNOUNCER: This is the hour that keeps you on time in the morning, in tune with the day, and informed of shopping advantages by the Northwest's great store, The Dayton Company, Minneapolis.

THEME: UP AND OUT:

ANNOUNCER: Our recorded music opens this morning with "Brazil," as played by Morton Gould and his orchestra.

MUSIC: "BRAZIL": MORTON GOULD & ORCHESTRA:

REPORTER: Good morning, everyone. Thinking of ways to amuse the youngsters while they're staying at home these days really isn't hard. I discovered a variety of fascinating games and keeping-busy ideas that are bound to delight the kiddies. As a matter of fact, the wonderful new cutout set in the children's section of the Book Store at Dayton's is even tempting me; it looks so interesting. The colorful paper dolls represent boys and girls of foreign lands and the native costumes, and authentic paper houses and domestic animals typify the life of a particular country. This interesting series embraces the famous Elliott Method of visual teaching. And you can choose cutout sets of many different nations until you have a whole collection to enjoy and study. An individual cutout set is 75¢.

ANNOUNCER: The time is 0:00. The temperature is 00. Next, we hear Carmen Miranda singing "I Yi Yi Yi Yi"

MUSIC: "I YI YI YI YI": CARMEN MIRANDA:

REPORTER: Even Fido can benefit from having his youthful masters at home now, because he can be given a real "streamlined" cleaning. It's done with a special hygienic cleaning powder recommended for dogs and cats and really simple to do. Just stand the animal on a large piece of paper, and sprinkle the powder over him generously. Rub in thoroughly, and then brush and comb out until the coat is soft and silky. This is a particularly practical method of cleaning, since many pets cannot stand a water bath. Dayton's Dog house on the second floor has Hygienic Cleaning Powder at \$1 a package.

ANNOUNCER: The time is 0:00. The next number, a Mexican medley.

MUSIC: "MEXICAN MEDLEY": GOULD:

REPORTER: You'll certainly have no trouble scooting your youngster off to his daily bath with one of the new mechanical boats in Dayton's Toy Store to sail in the water. Actually, this plastic boat will float in any pool of water in the yard or in the house. It's one of the first mechanical toys since the war and a streamlined yacht that any child will be proud to own. You can be sure this plastic boat at \$2.39 will be a favorite plaything and something to amuse the children for hours on end.

ANNOUNCER: The time is 0:00. The temperature is 00. (WEATHER FORECASTS FOR NORTHERN STATES) "Alo Alo" is Carmen Miranda's next song.

MUSIC: "ALO ALO": MIRANDA:

REPORTER: The grade school crowd can really take advantage of this extra time at home by making themselves a pair of moccasins to have ready when school starts. Just like an honest-to-goodness cobbler, a youngster can make his own "mocs." The equipment is all contained in the official moccasin kit in Dayton's Boy Scout Trading Post. And included in this kit are leather sides, soles, tongue, and rawhide lacings, plus complete instructions. A moccasin kit is \$2.95 and if ordering by mail or phone, be sure to specify shoe size.

ANNOUNCER: The time is 0:00 "La Cumparsita" is our next number by the orchestra.

MUSIC: "LA CUMPARSITA": GOULD:

REPORTER: Lots of little girls will find this vacation at home a good time to try their hand at embroidery and Dayton's Downstairs Store has a nice selection of piecework that calls for simple embroidery stitches. There's a cunning bib for a baby sister or 3-piece boudoir set for Mother's room. All made of a cotton fabric with the stitches plainly outlined and complete with sewing directions. Priced as low as 25¢ an article, the embroidery work, along with colored thread, will be found in the Downstairs Store.

ANNOUNCER: The time is 0:00 The temperature 00. A Xavier Cugat arrangement of "Hasta Mañana" is our next number.

MUSIC: "HASTA MAÑANA": CUGAT:

REPORTER: There's fun galore for the youngster who has a Judy Puzzle to play with during these days at home. These entertaining puzzle games are offered in amusing story book characters as well as beloved Walt Disney figures. Each piece is a heavy chunk of wood and mounted on a wood base which makes it a lasting toy. It's a jigsaw type of puzzle, so, when completed, forms a clever picture of some familiar character. A Judy Puzzle is \$1.20 in Dayton's Toy Store.

ANNOUNCER: It is (TIME) Now let's listen as the Boston Pops Orchestra plays "Jalousie"

MUSIC: "JALOUSIE": BOSTON POPS ORCHESTRA:

ANNOUNCER: (STATION BREAK): This is WCCO. The "Musical Chimes" of The Dayton Company, Minneapolis, continues for another fifteen minutes of recorded music and shopping news. A list of the selections played on this morning's program will be found in the Radio and Record Store, located on the sixth floor at Dayton's. It is now (TIME).

MUSIC: "CHICA CHICA BOOM CHIC": MIRANDA:

(The final quarter hour—this particular script was for a summer schedule of 45 minutes—followed the same pattern as the first half hour. It carried commercials alternating with recordings as follows:

COMMERCIAL—Scrapbooks

MUSIC—"Jarabe Papatio"

COMMERCIAL—Children's Books

MUSIC—"South America, Take It Away"

COMMERCIAL—Sewing School

MUSIC—"Rancho Grande")

ANNOUNCER: Each weekday morning at 7:30, this program of recorded music is brought to you by The Dayton Company, Minneapolis, with the time, temperature, weather forecasts, and shopping news by your Dayton reporter. The sun rose this morning at 5:06 o'clock and will set at 7:27. Today's store hours are from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Goodbye.

THEME: "GOOD NEWS": FORTE TO FINISH:

Comment: Here is a store program, a typical *musical clock*, that has become an institution in the clear-channel (WCCO) region served. It gives the listener the time, the temperature and the weather, all important items in the workaday morning; it is vital in helping the mother of a brood get the youngsters off to school on time; it gives the businessman in town the correct time while he's shaving; and it tells the woman on the farm, or in the city, what's available in merchandise at "the Northwest's great store, The Dayton Company, Minneapolis." The latter element, of course, is the reason for the program's existence, but while providing those suggestions for shoppers it serves the public worthily in providing *wanted* time signals and weather information, thereby heightening the acceptance of the commercial content.

No obvious pressure

No obvious pressure is exerted by the announcer (man's voice) or by the reporter (woman's voice) to get the listener to buy or do anything. The announcer, neither unctuous nor grandiose but matter-of-fact, does not belong to the "get-it-now-or-die" brigade. The reporter does not testify daily that she wears, uses, eats, or takes a single one of the items she talks about. Nor, praises be! is her voice syrupy. She carries the program by *describing in detail* various articles each morning. She—rarely is the talent changed—has been doing this for twelve years. The items may be related, as in the script you have just read, or they may be unrelated. The commercials vary from 80 to 100 words in length, and average 45 seconds each. There are twelve of them in a 60-minute program, the total time devoted to commercials being 9 minutes. Three

additional minutes are used in giving the program's introduction, closing, titles of music, and time and weather. Weather reports in detail are given on the quarter hours. Time and temperature reports are given after each musical number. The pace is leisurely.

The ratio of music to the spoken word averages 4 to 1, which means that in a 60-minute program you will find, using approximate figures, 47 minutes 30 seconds of music against 12 minutes of voice; in a 45-minute program, such as the example shown, 35 minutes 30 seconds for music against 9 minutes of voice. (The running time of a 10-inch phonograph disc is about 3 minutes; of a 12-inch disc, about 4:30.)

This program's skillfully fostered magic lies in the common denominator: wisely selected music. The music is recordings (not transcriptions). They are sold at the store. There are as many musical numbers as there are commercial announcements; and each recording is much longer than the announcement it follows. The selections are predominantly *popular*, chosen for current or permanent appeal on the melodious side. Extreme *boogie* is rarely used. There usually is at least one classical number and that too is likely to be one that is popular. The music on a given morning may or may not be related; one morning Jerome Kern melodies may comprise an entire program; the next morning, the selections may have no bearing one on the other. In the script example, Latin American tunes make up the program. To a musician or a musically inclined person, a program of related music gives a decidedly more unified effect. However, the program rarely is listened to that way; the audience turnover is tremendous for (ask yourself the question) who has time to sit down and listen to 60 minutes of music at breakfast time? There is constant tuning in and out, to get the time or the temperature or the weather.

Timely service to the community

The script also indirectly reflects awareness of a common community problem, in this case tragic, for poliomyelitis was epidemic not only in the immediate metropolitan area but throughout Minnesota and in adjoining states. Harassed

mothers, trying to keep their children at home to avoid possibility of infection (it was vacation time) were using every available means to provide entertainment for the stay-at-homes. The program offers various suggestions to keep the boys and girls, not only at home, but "out of mother's hair."

Frequent announcements of time

The program gives the time following every musical selection; that is important for, first of all, the listener turns to the radio to get the time in the morning. If he cannot get it on one station, he will turn to another. So keep time uppermost in any *musical clock*; make the program live up to its name. The weather should be a close second. And if your commercials are hard-selling, then you destroy the public service of your program, and make a serious inroad on its appeal. No one wants his radio shouting at him in the morning.

The six-day-a-week grind the script writer faces in a program of this kind will lead her or him into many clichés, or stereotyped phrases, unless unceasing vigilance is maintained. Note that the word "only" is *not* used in giving an item's price. An entire generation has grown up in advertising, believing, apparently, that "only" and the price are inseparable, for example, "only \$11.49." It is a relief not to hear it. The opportunity to build appealing images is manifold in describing the respective items of merchandise. But those images must be clear; you must use words the listener understands. Do not festoon your goods or wares with advertising patter, frequently meaningless. The advertising fraternity is prone to create words and phrases of which they are both fond and proud, but which mean little to the layman. Fashion experts commit the same errors. A script-writer needs to interpret for the listener this jargon, new each recurring season and just as certain to pass. That interpretation is constant and lively and informative in the best script.

Script: *Turning Winter into Spring*

Next is an example of a 10-minute program by a department store for a special or seasonal event. Spring happens to be

the motivation and the mood of the program, but similarly you can build a program reflecting autumn with rich, golden music, or winter with winter wonderland music. The script entitled *Turning Winter into Spring* presented early in the month of February follows.

TURNING WINTER INTO SPRING

(Presented over Station KSTP, Saint Paul-Minneapolis)

Sponsor: Schuneman's Inc.

CAST: Announcer
Eileen Kennedy (woman
commentator)

SOUND: Canaries singing

MUSIC: Theme: "SKATER'S WALTZ"
"SPRING, BEAUTIFUL SPRING"
"Valse Bleuette"
"NARCISSUS"

THEME: "SKATER'S WALTZ": 30 SECONDS: SEGUE INTO "NARCISSUS": WET
NO. 2063: 30 SECONDS: THEN FADE FOR ANNOUNCER AND MISS
KENNEDY'S FIRST OR SECOND LINE:

ANNOUNCER: "Turning Winter into Spring!"

KENNEDY: With everybody talking, thinking, wanting so many things

ANNOUNCER: Schuneman's presents spring's first showing of
new fashions.

KENNEDY: Schuneman's 69th Anniversary Sale with the season's first showing of spring fashions in the windows, and throughout the store, where amidst colorful spring atmosphere, you'll hear canaries raise their voices in song, blending with the beauty of the store's spring decorations and creating an enchanting background for spring's first fashion event. Listen to our canaries singing as you'll hear them in the store when you visit Schuneman's.

SOUND EFFECT: CANARIES SINGING:

ANNOUNCER: And now our canaries accompany our orchestra playing a spring favorite, "Spring, Beautiful Spring," the first of our transcribed selections.

MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS: "SPRING, BEAUTIFUL SPRING": NBC NO. 235: 2 MINUTES 40 SECONDS: FADE CANARIES UP AND DOWN THROUGHOUT:

ANNOUNCER: There's no whispering about what Miss Eileen Kennedy, Schuneman's commentator, now has to say about this great merchandising event, Schuneman's 69th Anniversary Sale.

KENNEDY: Thank you, Cal Karnstedt. As Saint Paul closes another successful Winter Carnival, and with Easter but a few short weeks ahead, the biggest thrill of this great anniversary sale lies in the fact that it presents the first large assortment of everything new in fashion. It's a sale that turns your thoughts and spirits to balmy days ahead, a sale that truly turns winter into spring. You'll find new spring clothes for yourself and your family, as well as great quantities of household furnishings and staples to replenish your depleted supplies. Our anniversary sale brings you all these things at the deep price reductions so typical of a store-wide sale at Schuneman's prices that I know you'll appreciate and want to take advantage of.

ANNOUNCER: Visit Schuneman's today, take advantage of the many money-saving values to be found throughout every department in the store, at prices that mean substantial savings for you.

KENNEDY: Exciting new dresses, blouses, sweaters and skirts for spring. Smart new spring coats and suits, lingerie and hosiery.

ANNOUNCER: New spring shoes that feature every important fashion trend.

KENNEDY: Smart accessories, bags, gloves, neckwear to make your costume complete.

ANNOUNCER: Let's not forget the men and the Men's Shop, Miss Kennedy.

KENNEDY: No, indeed. Men, young and old, will find grand selections of the newest of the new shirts ties socks pajamas and accessories from which to choose at prices that will gladden their hearts and lessen the strain on their pocketbooks.

ANNOUNCER: And for the home?

KENNEDY: It's a splendid opportunity to save on china and glassware.

ANNOUNCER: Draperies and home furnishings everyday household needs.

KENNEDY: From basement to roof, our store is filled with anniversary sale values, but if you will check Schuneman's 69th Anniversary Sale advertising in your Saint Paul Dispatch tonight, you will find six pages of anniversary savings. Now, while we have time, let's listen to our canaries again accompanying the orchestra as it plays

ANNOUNCER: "Valse Bleurette."

MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS: "Valse Bleurette": NBC NO. 324A: 2 MINUTES 5 SECONDS: FADE CANARIES UP AND DOWN THROUGHOUT:

ANNOUNCER: Today is courtesy day, ushering in the 69th Anniversary Sale at Schuneman's in downtown Saint Paul. Remember this 69th Anniversary Sale at Schuneman's is store-wide, every department brimming with fresh new merchandise to fill your every want. No matter what you may need for yourself, for your family, for your home, you'll find it at Schuneman's in an atmosphere of spring that will greet you when you step into this friendly Saint Paul store

KENNEDY: Until tomorrow morning at eight-fifteen, think beyond winter visit Schuneman's 69th Anniversary Sale where winter has turned into spring.

ANNOUNCER: Musical selections heard during the past 10 minutes were transcribed.

THEME AND SOUND EFFECTS: "NARCISSUS": WET NO. 2063: CANARIES IN BACKGROUND AS TIME PERMITS: (Aired 2/6/1940, Agency, David, Inc.)

Comment: Here the emphasis is not on the merchandise in detail but on the store-wide event in particular. And that store-wide event was a spring sale. The listener, especially Mrs. Housewife, knows what a store-wide sale is: a selling of all kinds of merchandise, in every department throughout a store.

The script before us, therefore, sets forth the merchandise in general: spring clothes and smart accessories for women, shirts, ties, socks and pajamas for men, as well as china and glassware, draperies, home furnishings, and everyday household needs.

Canaries! Alive and *canned*

The program's effectiveness came from the use of sound, and what was that sound? Canaries! Live birds were singing from their cages throughout the store. And the radio program, as you noted in the script, has canary birds singing all through it. The birds on the program were *canned*, that is, they were on platters or recordings. They required no feeding or watering; but as a constantly recurring sound, they were artistically and effectively used in creating a real springtime mood. Could you accomplish by means of printed words and zinc etchings of birds and flowers what this program achieves? Here is music, springtime music; here is merchandise, springtime merchandise: the two appealingly blended into loveliness that could be seen and purchased and shared by a visit to the sponsoring store.

Script: *Musical Favorites*

The next script is that of a music store, which naturally makes use of music to quicken interest in its Steinway pianos and Hammond organs. Note the kind of music that is presented on this Sunday evening program, and as you read the program determine for yourself whether the words and music are *right* in time, tempo, and mood.

MUSICAL FAVORITES

(Presented over WINN, Louisville, Ky.)

Script by Bess Lyman

Sponsor: Shackleton's Music Store

CAST: Announcer

SOUND: None

MUSIC: Theme: "ON WINGS OF SONG"

"CARMEN":

"PRELUDE TO ACT I"

"HABAÑERA"

"ARAGONAISE"

OPERATOR: THEME: "ON WINGS OF SONG": UP FOR 20 SECONDS: THEN FADE FOR:

ANNOUNCER: Good evening. Shackleton's, three-o-seven and nine West Broadway, home of the Steinway piano, Capehart combination, and Hammond organ, is happy to have you present at this Sunday evening recital of recorded "Musical Favorites."

OPERATOR: THEME: UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: Tonight we are to hear some highlights from "Carmen," considered by many to be the greatest opera ever written. Although Georges Bizet was French, he, nevertheless, contrived to portray the warm tones of the South and the characteristic rhythms of Spain with remarkable success in the music of "Carmen." The Prelude to Act One, played by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski, is first. This prelude opens with the brilliant theme later used as "The March of the Toreadors." This is followed by the ever-popular "Toreador Song," interrupted in turn by the "Fate" theme, or "Devil's Strain," the only bit of heavenly music, according to an old legend, that the Devil, upon being cast out of Paradise, could recall!

OPERATOR: "PRELUDE TO ACT I":

ANNOUNCER: To everyone, sometime in life, come disappointments and often bitter grief. Fortunate is the person who has within himself, resources of the spirit on which to draw at times like this. Music, for instance, has soothed many an anguished heart, helped lighten the load of many a seemingly intolerable sorrow. Childhood is the time to cultivate the talent for music. Shackleton's, the distinguished Louisville house of music, says any child can learn to play the piano, the best introductory instrument, as easily as he acquires familiarity with any other subject, such as geography or history. With a teacher who uses today's advanced methods, your child will make amazing strides from the very first lesson. Practicing becomes a pleasure, not a chore. An inexhaustible, lifetime source of joy awaits every youngster in the study of music. Parents, let Shackleton's tell you what convenient terms can be arranged on the purchase of a new or expertly reconditioned piano from their extensive stock Risé Stevens is about to sing the "Habañera" from "Carmen" for us. This aria for mezzo-soprano, rightly regarded as one of the greatest operatic airs in musical literature, is based on a dance that takes its name from Havana, Cuba, where it origi-

nated. Now, the "Habañera," as sung by the Spanish cigarette-maker, Carmen, while she's trying to attract the attention of Don Jose!

OPERATOR: "HABAÑERA":

ANNOUNCER: How often have you said, "I'd give anything in the world to be able to sit down to the piano and play even the simplest tune." Don't let this happen to your child. Perhaps you've thought a good piano was impossible to get today. Quite the contrary. Shackleton's has a wide selection of excellent new and used Story and Clark and other equally fine pianos now available. Investigate these pianos this coming week. Shackleton's, on Broadway, between Third and Fourth, will gladly arrange terms for you. Our next selection from "Carmen" is the beautiful and fascinating Spanish dance written for the ballet that precedes the third act "Aragonaise," played by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra.

OPERATOR: "ARAGONAISE": SEGUE INTO THEME: "

ANNOUNCER: This Sunday evening quarter hour of "Musical Favorites" has been a presentation of Shackleton's and has come to you on records. Shackleton's, three-o-seven and nine West Broadway, home of the Steinway piano, Capehart combination, and Hammond organ, hopes you have enjoyed these operatic selections and invites you to hear a program of popular music Tuesday evening at nine-fifteen. All recordings on this program are available for your own collection at Shackleton's. This is Harry McTigue, speaking for Shackleton's and inviting you to join us Tuesday evening at nine-fifteen. Good night.

OPERATOR: THEME: UP AND OUT: (Aired 9/17/44)

Comment: It's the words you put into the announcer's mouth and the music that accompanies those words that count in this kind of program. There is a sequence here and a unity that cuts off objections to helter-skelter playing of records (or transcriptions) frequently raised by music-lovers; this should help to get them to visit the music store. In this program, there are 2 minutes of commercial, 2:30 of comment on the music, and 10:00 of music, thus filling the required 14:30 in the 15-minute period. The NAB suggested limit on commercial time, as shown in Chapter 5, is 2:30 for a 15-minute program. By

this yardstick, there is no excess of commercial to get in the way of listener appeal.

Note that this was a program of classical music as befits a Sunday evening offering. Note also, that the next program on the schedule, a Tuesday evening presentation, will be popular tunes.

You may wonder over the character "operator" in the script. This is a designation for the engineer in the control room, particularly applicable in those stations on which the engineer, not the announcer, *turns the platters*. But it also can introduce the music cues for the Announcer himself.

The manner in which acknowledgment is made that the music is not by live talent should be noted because it is skillfully done. It does not stick out like a sore thumb.

Many patterns for store programs

Additional programs that may be used by stores are discussed in the succeeding chapters. The patterns are in endless variety: participation programs for the low-budget store, audience shows for the larger budget, quiz contests conducted in the store itself (suitable for *chain* groups), newscasts (frequently sponsored by drugstores), and sports casts and football score bulletins (particularly suitable for men's clothing and sporting goods stores). But just as important as the kind of program is the way it is used. The sponsor who expects a program to run itself will find the results extremely disheartening. Another firm may take the program over and, by giving it the script and other attention it merits, turn it into a success.

The boss who wants to go on the air

As a script writer, you may encounter the problem of the boss who is enthusiastic about radio, providing he is in the program. You have your colleagues' sympathy: not every sponsor who can finance a radio program has a radio personality. You find them appearing on the networks as well as on local stations, capable executives but utterly unable to project themselves into the ether. A buoyant female extrovert in the outer

office could do a better job on the air. If you have this problem, at least suggest to your boss that he put his voice on a platter. Let him hear how he sounds. It may or may not work.

CHAPTER

16

Women's Programs-Participation Programs

Critic! Thy name is Woman!

Women's programs. It's a name applied in commercial radio to programs conducted by women for women, and it takes a highly qualified woman (and usually a good voice) to make such a program successful. Only the women who carry on such programs day after day, week after week, through the year know what a gauntlet of criticism they run, for women listeners are especially critical of their own sex on the air.

But day after day and week after week, gracious women do go before the mike and tell their more or less always critical sisters what is new in fashions, in cosmetics, in soaps, in soups and sealing wax, in all the myriad articles in the stores and on the counters, in the shops and on the racks for women.

Under the name of, say, Janet Smith, a pleasant-voiced girl can speak exclusively for one store or shop, or she may speak for several products or services. If the latter, then her program becomes a *participation* program; this will be discussed later.

Interviews handy

If she is sponsored by one store exclusively, the program conductor obviously cannot talk for, say, 15 minutes, exclusively

on the merchandise of that store, no matter how good it is. There must be entertainment or something in the line of public service provided to relieve the gab. Frequently, therefore, a store in wartime presented a series of interviews with service men and women as they returned to town on leave or furlough. Likewise, when the war ended, they began providing, through spokesmen of various agencies, as well as the service men themselves, solutions to problems of those veterans as they fitted themselves back into civilian life, a readjustment that continues to present problems calling for wise solution.

The above is only one use of the interview type of program, for the interview can be used, and often is used, effectively in a woman's program whether sponsored by a store, or service, or product. The interviewer, of course, is the woman who conducts the program. The interviewee is the special day-to-day attraction. It requires planning to carry forward to success such a series of programs; it requires constant long-range thinking, not only to get interesting people for your program, but to get them at the right time. The publicity directors of the various public-service and commercial organizations are certain to be friendly! Often they can make timely suggestions for use of this talent.

It may be well to repeat here that the *interview* (see Chapter 5) is not the best type of entertainment; drama is the best. But the interview is better than the one-voice talk, and an interview is handy. It can be easily arranged; it requires a very minimum of talent: the interviewer and one other person who, it is hoped, will say something interesting. Not every person is interesting before the microphone; some of them sparkle radiantly in preparation for the broadcast and *go dead* when the mike is open. That is one of the griefs of the program conductor.

Interesting local people

A good program conductor will scan the news columns and the social pages of the newspapers in her constant search for *talent*. She will alternate nationally famous persons with less

well-known but frequently just as interesting folks. If her program is a daily stint, she may go on the air once a week with a talk of her own for her audience.

Studio audience infinitesimal

There are two important methods to widen the appeal of such a program. One is the easier and more obvious way: *i.e.*, to have a studio audience, but the fact is frequently overlooked that for any program of merit, the studio audience is infinitesimal. What are fifty people, or 100, or more (except as they may inspire actors needing such inspiration) against the hundreds or thousands or millions who might be listening. A studio audience is visual evidence that may please a shortsighted sponsor; what he should be interested in is the over-all poll taken by one of the survey organizations.

Listener participation

The other, and better, method to broaden appeal is listener participation, not only through the program but through its inspiration, maintained through weeks and months and years by engendered interest. Suppose, for example, you formed a general club for all listeners and gave it the name of your program; then as members or prospects showed up at the broadcasts or communicated with you by mail or telephone, you learned of their interest in different activities. It would be easy, then, to divide them into, for example, music groups or writing groups, others of them could visit the sick and the shut-ins. Under a competent chairman, you could start a group of them in any activity they desired. They could on occasion put on special programs in your series. This is listener participation that means real accomplishment, but it is not achieved by using the publicity clip sheets and throwing trivial verbal fodder into the microphone at a certain time daily. It requires careful planning, well-organized script, and presentation engendering confidence among listeners. For the proper

sponsor—it well could be a financial institution—this type of program has sturdy value over a long period of time.¹

Participation programs

A participation program is an established daytime period often (though not always) devoted to the housewifely arts. Regular fare on many stations, sometimes it is good; sometimes it suffers from lack of brain power. It is financed by several sponsors who *participate*, or share jointly the cost of the advertising put out impartially by the program conductor, usually a woman. Not only does such a program fit limited budgets but large concerns also find it highly advantageous in introducing a food product, a soap, a cosmetic, a household gadget, or kitchen appliance in selected markets.

The program conductor or shopper, that is, the mistress of ceremonies, is the soul of the show. If she is bright and ingenious, and the successful must be, the program sparkles, attracts listeners, and has a loyal audience though usually it never breaks any records in a rating survey. The minimum program period is 15 minutes; many of them run to half an hour. The pattern is like this: the distinctive theme is followed by an introduction, preferably a second voice which frequently is that of the studio announcer on duty at the time; however, an announcer, regularly assigned, may act as handy man and convenient stooge for each show. The introduction brings in the shopper who scatters newsworthy comment, household hints, and her sponsors' announcements through the period. Music,

¹ Mary Proal Lindeke developed and executed this idea in a program entitled *For the Ladies* presented over WTCN in the Twin Cities area for more than three years. The name of the listeners' club bore the name of the program. It was open to any woman interested, and its members divided themselves into common interest groups and carried on various activities. The program received recognition as an important contribution to radio's opportunities of service. The pattern was the interview. There was always a studio audience, but the largest audiences were those that assembled when one or other of the participating groups had a special meeting and joined in broadcasting the particular program of that day. The presentation, originally three days a week, developed into five times a week; when this country entered World War II Miss Lindeke went into war work, including Red Cross work in Japan.

live or recorded, provides pleasant interruption in the flow of talk.

On many shows of this kind, the guiding genius will heighten interest in her programs by including interviews with a visiting celebrity, or a good male cook, or a gardening enthusiast.

Use or non-use of script

The secret of a successful participating program depends on the versatility of its conductor. Some of them "simply abhor" script; some of them write their entire show, that is; they use script for their entire program. The conductor who insists that "having it written destroys spontaneity" usually is a poor interpreter of script and does not want to admit it. The one who works entirely from script and is a good interpreter or talker of the written line is in a position to give her audience much more thoroughgoing, helpful information, information of a more constructive kind than mere unauthenticated chatter, based on helter-skelter notes.

But the shopper, if she is worth her time on the air, has a line of chatter, an idiom of her own, whether she ad libs or talks from script, and she prefers to work her commercials into this same idiom. If sponsor or agency, in providing her with commercial announcements (a length of 1 or 1½ or more minutes is usually determined by the station), insists that these be given "as written," then it is standing in its own light; in no program will a prosaic, run-of-the-mill announcement show to greater disadvantage than in a participation program, where the shopper may have to grit her teeth to get through it. No, if sponsor or agency is alert, it will give the shopper commercials simply as information, and let her rework them into effective *plugs* in her own way in her own program. To attempt to provide individual and good participation programs with commercial script especially written for each program and shopper is unusual. But that it could be done with great effectiveness and would be appreciated by the respective program conductors hardly can be denied. It would entail familiarity with each program and is one of those fields advertising agencies could explore in contributing to better radio.

Script: *Lady Lookout* (Participation)

Let's look at the script of one of these participating programs. Script was used for the entire program. It was written and broadcast by Bess Lyman, known as *Lady Lookout* on Station WINN. Note the outline of the pattern following:

INTRODUCTION

FEATURE

BENDIX E. T. (1 MINUTE TRANSCRIBED STORY) COMMERCIAL

FEATURE

ALLSWEET COMMERCIAL

FEATURE

UNITED FRUIT COMPANY COMMERCIAL

FEATURE

SWIFT'S COMMERCIAL (LARD)

SPECIAL REQUESTS

LIST OF ITEMS OFFERED FOR SALE BY LISTENERS

BEST SHOPPING VALUES

CLOSE

LADY LOOKOUT

CAST: Announcer
Bess Lyman

SOUND: None
MUSIC: Theme: "YOU AND YOU"

MUSIC: THEME: "YOU AND YOU": UP FOR 20 SECONDS:

ANNOUNCER: Bess Lyman, "Lady Lookout," invites you to spend a quarter-hour chatting about beauty, children, homemaking all the interests that make up your busy woman's day!

MUSIC: THEME: UP FOR FEW SECONDS MORE: THEN FADE FOR:

BESS: Good morning, everyone. There's a house on Lafayette Square in Washington, not a very large house, but a distinguished one. Mrs. Truxton Beale, a social leader in the Capital, owns it. At the moment, the house is being remodeled, restored rather, and Mrs. Beale tells some of its history. Stephen Decatur built it in eighteen-eighteen. The commodore had captured a number of Barbary pirate ships, and, when they were sold, he obtained a federal grant to build the house. Benjamin Latrobe drew the original plans they turned up in an antique shop in Washington in nineteen thirty-seven, and they're being used now in restoring the old dwelling. Latrobe was the architect Thomas Jefferson asked

to design parts of the White House and the capitol. Decatur lived in the house until he died, after his duel with Commodore Barron. After that, a good many noted men lived in it. Martin Van Buren was one of them. Henry Clay, another. And illustrious foreign envoys often made the house their headquarters. General Edward Beale acquired the property in eighteen-seventy, and Mrs. Beale's husband inherited it. Mrs. Beale installed electricity at the beginning of the war, but the beautiful drawing rooms where she gives her parties are still lit by candle. During its long history, the house has undergone many changes. The lovely Georgian hand-made bricks were covered with sandstone. So were the white stone lintels in the sills. Gingerbread trimmings were added from time to time, and these are the things that will be removed. Mrs. Beale's house remains her property, even though the government has recognized it as a national shrine. She hopes it will be maintained, always, in its original beauty. We can't all live in beautiful, historical houses like Mrs. Beale's, but here's something that's going to be a great help in keeping household linens and curtains, and the family's washables in spic and span order. Listen to this transcribed description of it.

OPERATOR: BENDIX E. T. NO. 3:

BESS: Want to hear another little story? This one is from New York. Patrolman Thomas Reilly was on duty at an intersection when a thirty-gallon can of milk fell from a passing truck. He halted traffic while the driver retrieved the can. He was about to blow his whistle when a small, white cat crept to the middle of the street and started lapping up some of the gallons of milk spilled from the container. The whistle remained unblown, traffic was at a standstill and the lights changed to green three times before the patrolman restored the normal flow of traffic. By that time the cat was sitting contentedly on the curb, licking its paws.

You'll feel like licking your paws, too, when you serve hot biscuits with (154-WORD COMMERCIAL ON SWIFT AND COMPANY'S ALLSWEET MARGARINE WAS WOVEN INTO SCRIPT HERE.)

I have a little report here from the War Food Administration I want to pass along next. We seem to be doing a lot of talking about food this morning and that suits me just fine, even though it makes me more conscious than ever of lunch-time. If you're suffering from a post-Thanksgiving let-down, if you feel you could use a little perking up in your menu interest, you may be glad to know most markets are offering

a variety of Southeastern vegetables in moderate supply. You'll find cauliflower celery cabbage, all at reasonable prices. Of course, your best buys are Irish potatoes and onions. Other good buys are rutabagas, snap beans, turnips, and sweet potatoes. The fruit situation remains unchanged from the past few weeks, with plenty of apples of several varieties selling right around ceiling price. Plenty of oranges are available and grapefruit supplies are adequate for the demand. Tangerines too, are available in moderate supply. For variety in your fruit bowl, there are light supplies of pears and a few, high-priced grapes. Pecans, walnuts, and other nuts are still in light supply, but they're adequate for the current demand.

When it comes to bananas, the best thing to do is take them where you find them. Don't worry if they appear a little green. They ripen best if you take them home and put them in your fruit bowl. Then let them ripen at room temperature. Don't put bananas on the ice. This keeps them from ripening and impairs their delicate flavor. They can be eaten as soon as they're all yellow, but they're at their best for flavor when the peel is flecked with brown. You know, an interesting thing about bananas is that, whereas they were once considered indigestible, doctors now recommend mashed, fully ripe bananas for small babies. Children who don't care for milk have been found to take it willingly when served with ripe bananas. In fact, bananas and milk together produce an almost completely balanced ration. That brings to mind one of my favorite desserts banana whip. You make it with crushed bananas, whipped cream, and sugar. Be sure to add a dash of vanilla, too. By the way, these authoritative facts about bananas come to us from the United Fruit Company. (See *Chiquita Banana*, Singing Commercial, Chapter 5.)

We've stopped worrying about packages for our boys and girls serving overseas. But word comes from England that our service people there are mighty worried about packages for us. Late shoppers over there have a problem. G. I. Joes and Janes already have sent about two or three million dollars worth of gifts, a good deal of it through the army exchange service. Those were the early birds, the Johnnys-on-the-spot. But others were busy and still others wanted to send special articles that they'd chosen themselves, not out of a gift catalog. First, they ran afoul of England's strict clothing rationing. British industry has been geared to war for five years, so Americans couldn't buy sweaters, or lingerie,

or gloves. Not without coupons, and, of course, they don't have coupons. No costume jewelry, either, unless it's second-hand, and then it's expensive. A big London department store advertised "bargains in used jewelry." One of the items was a very plain bracelet, priced at six pounds, six shillings which amounts to about twenty-five dollars and twenty cents. Hardly a bargain. Your WAC daughter can buy a leather handbag for you, but it will cost her around thirty-five dollars. And, if your husband wants to, he can buy up enough lambskins to make a coat. The skins aren't rationed, although the finished product is. The raw material will set him back about twenty-five dollars, and he'll have a very serious mailing problem on his hands.

Somehow, that reminds me of Barnaby in the comics. This morning he passed along his mother's request for an ermine coat for Christmas to his fairy godfather, and they're off to the woods to shoot an ermine.

When you were a little girl, were you ever in disgrace because you slammed a door or stepped too heavily when your mother had a cake in the oven? The cooking experts say that isn't nearly as apt to cause disaster as careless measuring, for instance. Too much sugar in proportion to other ingredients may cause a cake to fall. Too much leavening may also be responsible. Be sure, too, the cake is done before you remove it from the oven. For any new cooks listening, the experts say these are the tests for doneness. When the cake begins to shrink very slightly from the edge of the pan, it's done. Another test is to insert a toothpick into the center of the cake. If it comes out clean, the cake is done.

Do you know you can use (120-WORD COMMERCIAL ON SWIFT'S LARD HERE).

We come now to our special requests for today. Different listeners are calling for these things: a one-door wardrobe for a girl's bedroom a brass firescreen for the fireplace a round dining table of any description roller skates, all sizes. If you can help with any of these requests, give me a ring, Wabash five-one-four-eight. Or drop me a card Bess Lyman, in care of Station WINN, Louisville, zone one.

Now for the things offered today. Here's a prewar doll house, with four rooms of furniture, four dollars a boy's blue and tan checked sport jacket, size twenty, five dollars a boy's size eight ice skates, five dollars a woman's black fitted coat, size thirteen, five dollars and

a size sixteen, new style black coat with fur collar, five dollars. Call or write me, if you'd like to know the name of the owner in each instance. This telephone number, Wabash five-one-four-eight. If you're writing, address me in care of Station WINN Bess Lyman, in care of Station WINN, Louisville, zone one. In my tour of the town yesterday, I saw some one-dollar items of interest to shoppers. They were children's bedroom slippers, all sizes; and darling, little one-piece hat and scarf sets in various colors. One hat was pillbox style, another jockey style, and so on. I'll gladly tell you where I saw these excellent values if you'll get in touch with me. Until tomorrow, now, here's to a happy day to you all and this is goodbye.

MUSIC: THEME: UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: Bess Lyman, "Lady Lookout," invites you back tomorrow at eleven-thirty for another chat about beauty, children, homemaking, all the interests that make up your busy woman's day.

MUSIC: THEME: UP AND OUT:

Comment: The objective of this program was, of course, to provide women with worthwhile information (a task when you must do it five times a week). Sources for the news of interest to women were the regular Associated Press news releases, plus publicity from the many services throughout the country. From this material, the better stuff was selected and rewritten to fit the idiom of the shopper. The "special requests," things wanted by listeners, ranging from roller skates to fireplace screens, and the "things offered," varying from a doll house to a woman's black fitted coat, became important interest-builders on this program. The shopping tips with special reference to individual items in individual stores made a good impression with the store managers, but their main purpose was to save the listeners time in finding scarce items. There were four commercials—one by transcription—all of them national advertisers, all that the 15-minute period could carry and remain entertaining. Note that the three *live* commercials are carefully woven into the *pattern*, heightening listener receptivity. The secret of this well prepared program: organization of material, the antithesis of slap-dash program building.

Script: *Darragh Aldrich Show* (Participation and merchandise quiz)

Here is another *participation* show conducted by an engaging personality, Darragh Aldrich, novelist, who gives views and conducts interviews. Musical numbers (not shown in the section of the script reproduced here) are songs by Two Boys and Two Girls, and piano numbers by the Twenty Flying Fingers of Ramona Gerhard and Bea Bailey. The interview section:

DARRAGH ALDRICH SHOW
(Calling All Women)

Presented over Station WCCO
Minneapolis-Saint Paul
3:30 to 4:00 p.m. five days a week

ALDRICH: The most exciting things are always happening in radio. For instance about two years ago I discovered a story in the news room sent over from Oran about a French boy who as a homeless urchin had attached himself to our army especially one particular master sergeant and at the risk of his life had saved the ammunition dump on our airfield there from being blown up by the Nazi planes When I told that story on the air, I added that I certainly would like to know that boy But after all Africa was rather far away. It still is but the boy is here in the studio today with the Master Sergeant who befriended him and now is his adopted uncle. But we'll let them tell the story. I am Calling All Women to meet Master Sergeant Douglas Scott of Gray's Bay, Minnetonka and the 97th Bomber group, and his protege, Georges Paul Vincent of Oran, North Africa better known as Johnnie Sergeant Scott better known as Doug or Scotty please tell us how you became better acquainted with Johnnie.

SCOTT: (HOW HE WANDERED INTO CAMP AND HOW HE LOOKED AND WHAT HE DID AT FIRST TO ENDEAR HIMSELF TO THE "BOYS." TOOK HIM IN DESPITE ARMY RULES. GAVE HIM A G.I. UNIFORM AND GOT G.I. PAY FROM THE BOYS. OFFICERS WINKED AT INFRACTION OF REGULATIONS BECAUSE EVERYBODY LIKED JOHNNIE. WHEN YOU RETURNED FROM A MISSION, YOU FOUND JOHNNIE

RUNNING ERRANDS, HELPING WITH REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE, TEACHING FRENCH WITH SOME ITALIAN AND ARABIC. GENERALLY USEFUL. THEN YOU TWO BECAME PALS AND HE WORKED ON YOUR SHIP. GREAT LITTLE BUDDY NOW BUT HAD BEEN SO SPOILED BY LACK OF DISCIPLINE THAT YOU HAD TO)

ALDRICH: I wish you would tell us the story of how Johnnie saved that ammunition dump at the risk of his life. He just pooh-poohs the whole thing.

SCOTT: (TELL THE STORY, GIVING JOHNNIE FULL CREDIT)

ALDRICH: Well, when the time came to go over to Italy, what became of Johnnie?

SCOTT: (TELL HOW YOU TOOK HIM ALONG AS MEMBER OF GROUND CREW)

ALDRICH: And he tells me that he went right through activities in Italy with your bomber group until V-E Day. But how did you manage to get him over here, smuggle him?

SCOTT: No, everything was very much G.I. It took me two years and a half to get everything straightened out before he came here with a passport, visa, and a sponsor. Also, I managed to get him a job with the merchant marine to work his way over so every condition of entering the country regularly was fulfilled. He wants to become an American and he has begun the right way.

ALDRICH: You mention that he has a sponsor. Tell us that story.

SCOTT: Well, when I decided to bring Johnnie over, I wrote my sister here about him. She wrote back that she would be his sponsor and would probably adopt him if I could get him here. Now she is as devoted to Johnnie as I am and that will go through so I'm likely to be his legal uncle, which suits both of us.

ALDRICH: Thank you, Master Sergeant Douglas Scott, for telling us your side of the story; but, as you haven't told us about yourself, I should like to add that you have been in the army for four years, before Pearl Harbor, enlisting when trouble loomed ahead spent some time in the northern part of this hemisphere, helping to map out an air route through Newfoundland, Labrador, Greenland, to Europe, which our military planes have used steadily. Then, when the real trouble started, achieved a rainbow of ribbons, eleven battle stars, and a presidential citation. Now, Johnnie, aren't you pretty proud of your big pal?

JOHNNIE: I sure am.

ALDRICH: That sounds more like an American than a French boy.
Evidently your pal has taught you English. What else?

JOHNNIE: Arithmetic and spelling.

ALDRICH: How old are you now, Johnnie?

JOHNNIE: Seventeen. I was fourteen when I met Scotty and began working on B-17's.

ALDRICH: What were you doing before you went with the army bomber command? Had you had any schooling?

JOHNNIE: Yes, Mrs. Aldrich. I went to French school in Oran but I had had no home since my father died. My uncle took my mother who was sick into his home, but I didn't like him and couldn't get along with him so I ran away when I was twelve and lived in the streets. I slept where I could. I had one shirt and one pair of pants.

ALDRICH: Where did you get anything to eat?

JOHNNIE: I stole most of it. I had a job with a printer that paid me the equivalent of fifteen cents a week American money but I couldn't live on fifteen cents a week.

ALDRICH: It's not exactly union wages. And so you wandered into the American camp probably to get a square meal. How long was it before you met Scotty?

JOHNNIE: (STATE TIME)

ALDRICH: How did you like the G.I. uniform?

JOHNNIE: I liked it much better than these civvies I have on now. These are loose. I liked the uniform because it was tight and buttoned up.

ALDRICH: But the boys over here are all wearing clothes like those. That's a very smart outfit. What do you think of the way the girls dress over here?

JOHNNIE: I don't like them in shorts. It doesn't look right, and girls of sixteen are too young to wear lipstick and make-up. They don't do that in Oran.

ALDRICH: Afraid you'll have to get used to it here, Johnnie, because our very nicest girls do it. Now let's get back to the American army in Oran. How did you happen to choose Scotty when there were so many to choose from?

JOHNNIE: (TELL WHAT IT WAS THAT DREW YOU TO HIM ESPECIALLY.)
Then he asked me if I wanted to work with him and I told him I did. He wrote to his sister about me, so he could bring me home with him on his furlough. Then he fixed it through the State Department here and in Tunis.

ALDRICH: But you aren't going on to the Pacific with him?

JOHNNIE: No, I'd like to but I guess I'll stay here and go to school. I want to go to Central High School in St. Paul.

ALDRICH: How about your credits that is, your grades?

JOHNNIE: I have enough for first-year high school in some subjects but not enough in others. Our schools are not the same in Oran.

ALDRICH: How do you like America as a place to live?

JOHNNIE: It's better even than I thought it would be. Everybody is so comfortable. Plenty to eat plenty to wear nice things in your homes. Much better than any other country I have seen. It is nothing like North Africa or Italy. Everybody is so kind, too. On the boat coming over they were nice to me. And, then the ship's officer called Scotty's sister by phone from Norfolk when we landed because Scotty couldn't come. I telephoned her from Chicago what train I would be on.

ALDRICH: Well, you seem to know your way about.

JOHNNIE: That is because of Scotty. He gave me all the directions. He stayed to put me on the boat at Naples before he flew over in a bomber.

ALDRICH: Thank you, Georges Paul Vincent, alias Johnnie, for being our guest and telling us this interesting story. You are exactly the sort of boy I thought you would be and we are all proud to have you come of age as an American citizen. Come and see us again, Johnnie. Good luck and goodbye, Johnnie and Doug.

JOHNNIE: Thanks, Mrs. Aldrich, goodbye.

(END OF INTERVIEW. THE MERCHANDISE QUIZ FOLLOWS.)

A merchandise quiz

On the above program there is a radio merchandise quiz, one of the many variations of the "Can you answer this?" pro-

gram pattern. Four sacks of merchandise, donated by advertisers using the station's facilities, are distributed daily, Monday through Friday, to members of the studio audience who answer the questions correctly. You will note that the questions are not *too* difficult. In addition, there is a corsage awarded to the holder of the admission ticket bearing the same number as the one on the corsage. The quiz section, without the ad libbing by the announcer as he awards the prizes, follows.

ALDRICH: Four sacks of merchandise are waiting for four lucky guests and the Bachman corsage with two movie tickets is right here in the box ready to be presented to the holder of the corsage number on her ticket. So, on your way, Paul (TO PAUL WANN, THE ANNOUNCER HANDLING THE QUIZ).

1. How can you prevent glasses or glass teacups from breaking when you pour very hot water into them?
(Answer: Place a silver spoon in the glass or cup.)
2. When you take cakes out of the oven, what can you place them on for a few minutes to make them easy to turn out?
(Answer: Place them on a wet cloth.)
3. In these camping days, what is a good way to keep cream sweet without ice?
(Answer: Wrap cream bottle in a wet cloth and set in shade. The evaporation will keep it cool.)
4. How can ice cubes be used in beauty treatments?
(Answer: Put them in a thin muslin cloth and rub over face after using a hot pack.)

Comment: This is a half-hour program with three attention-getters: Mrs. Aldrich herself, the people she invites to appear for interviews, and the merchandise quiz which attracts a studio audience. You will note that the interviewee's part of the interview is not complete. His answers, however, when not written in full, are indicated by helpful suggestions in the script, these suggestions being based on an interview conducted previously and, if necessary, a rehearsal beforehand. Sometimes the most interesting person gets so befuddled before the mike

that he forgets his story. The method of handling as shown in the script keeps the interviewee *on the beam*; it also means less script writing and saves time for the program conductor.

Outline: *Montana Boosters* (Dude ranch participation)

Montana Boosters is the title of the next program under discussion. Once each week, it has been produced by the Z-Bar Network, for six months of each year for the past nine years. Though a participation show, it is not a woman's program; rather, it is presented by the network to heighten the pride of Montanans in their native state and to quicken interest in the state by outsiders. The outline of the pattern follows.

THEME: "IN OLD MONTANA":

ANNOUNCER: The "Montana Boosters" are on the air

MUSIC:

ANNOUNCER: (COMMERCIAL—LIMITED TO 50 WORDS FOR EACH SPONSOR)

MUSIC:

ANNOUNCER: (50-WORD COMMERCIAL)

MUSIC:

DRAMATIZATION: (FACTUAL, FREQUENTLY ADVENTURESOME STORY, TAKEN FROM HISTORY OF MONTANA, OR STORY OF A VACATION CENTER SUCH AS A DUDE RANCH, OR OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE STATE. DRAMATIZATIONS ARE TRANSCRIBED BEFOREHAND, AND ONE IS USED ON EACH PROGRAM. LENGTH: 15 MINUTES:)

MUSIC AND COMMERCIALS TO COMPLETE ONE-HALF HOUR:

Comment: Resort centers are the usual sponsors; they tie into the program closely by means of souvenirs or gadgets of a different form each year. During the course of each program, the announcer explains that participating sponsors have supplies of these souvenirs, or they may be obtained by writing to any one of the three stations of the network (KGIR, Butte; KRBM, Bozeman; or KPFA, Helena). Each sponsor also has a counter display furnished by the stations, made up of the souvenirs. The network management explains that it does not realize any profit on the program; all revenues go into souvenirs and in the purchase of time on out-of-state stations, which time is used to further publicize Montana's advantages.

Script: *Bulletin Board* (Radio's rural newspaper)

There is opportunity for radio to give a community good news service in the dissemination of local happenings, the trivial but important activities of its area, that correspond to the items in the personal columns of the rural weekly. Such a program bears the name *bulletin board* in studio argot. It may be individually sponsored, but it likewise could carry the commercial announcements of several sponsors. The program that follows is individually sponsored.

NORTHWEST BULLETIN BOARD

(Presented over Radio Station WDAY, Fargo, N. D.
9:15-9:30 A. M. three times each week)

Script by Charles Ford

SPONSOR:	Cass County Imple-	MUSIC: Theme:	"PEOPLE LIKE YOU"
	ment Co.		
CAST:	Announcer		"POINCIANA"
	Narrator: Charles		"BEYOND THE BLUE HORI- ZON"
	Ford		"SMILES"
SOUND:	Fanfare		"LONG LOST SUNRISE"

SOUND: FANFARE NO. 1033-V:

ANNOUNCER: This is the "Northwest Bulletin Board":

THEME: "PEOPLE LIKE YOU": UP FOR FIFTEEN SECONDS: FADE FOR:

ANNOUNCER: The Northwest Bulletin Board is a public-service feature designed especially for people like you. This program is presented with transcribed music three times each week by the Cass County Implement Company, dealers and distributors of Massey-Harris and Huber farm machines, 201 Northern Pacific Avenue, in Fargo.

THEME: UP FOR FEW SECONDS: THEN OUT:

FORD: Hello, everyone and good morning! This is Charlie Ford, your Northwest reporter, and the Tuesday program of the "Northwest Bulletin Board" fifteen minutes designed for your listening enjoyment and information. You'll hear,

during the next quarter hour, the radio roll call of new Northwest babies, the latest agricultural information, and bulletins of events taking place in Northwest communities. The Cass County Implement Company presents the bulletin board as a service to you and your community. We invite schools and churches, clubs and civic groups, and persons in charge of local happenings to publicize their activities on these broadcasts. There is no charge. Just send complete information to the Northwest Bulletin Board, WDAY, Fargo, North Dakota. It's music now and the orchestra of Vincent Lopez with Lopez at the piano playing "Poinciana."

MUSIC: "POINCIANA":

ANNOUNCER: (COMMERCIAL) Farmers, Huber Peacetime Grain Separators have been recognized for years for their dependable, clean, and fast threshing. Out of the war effort has come a new Huber separator. Engineering experiences and many tests during the recent threshing season have made possible the new Model A Roto-Rack. Proper speeds of the whole separating unit have been scientifically engineered along with the diameter of the cylinder the number of teeth on the cylinder and concaves the number of square feet of rack surface. These and many more highly important features make for faster and cleaner separating. You will want a new Huber Grain Separator for your next crop. And you can get it as shipments are now on their way from the Huber factory to the Cass County Implement Company, 201 Northern Pacific Avenue, in Fargo. See the new Huber Model A for better, more economical threshing Our next music, "Beyond the Blue Horizon."

MUSIC: "BEYOND THE BLUE HORIZON":

FORD: This is the radio roll call of new Northwest babies! On each of these programs we salute the new babies who have been reported to us. The Cass County Implement Company awards each new boy and girl a certificate for a lovely 8 by 10 size photograph to be taken free of charge at the Scherling Photo Studios, 1131½ Broadway, in Fargo. To enter your new baby in this roll call, simply send the name, date of birth, and parents' names and address to Charlie Ford, "Northwest Bulletin Board," WDAY, Fargo. This month, December and January babies are eligible. Now here are the new babies on this morning's program: Barbara Ann Erickson was born January 4th and her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Erickson live at Fertile, Minnesota Paul Cyrus Sannes was born December 5th to Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus

Sannes also of Fertile, Minnesota. Patricia Arlene Swavely is the December 29th arrival at the home of Pfc. and Mrs. Lester Swavely, Jr., Alexandria, Minnesota. Judith Victoria Bina was born December 6th to Mr. and Mrs. Ernest E. Bina, Lankin, North Dakota. Julie Ellen Verkuehlen was born January 8th to Mr. and Mrs. Victor Verkuehlen of Montpelier, North Dakota. And Duane Oliver Letness is the new son born to Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Letness of Hendrum, Minnesota. Best wishes to these new Northwest arrivals and to their parents our congratulations!

MUSIC: "SMILES": UP AND MAINTAIN FOR ABOUT THIRTY SECONDS: THEN DOWN:

FORD: Send the name, date of birth, and parents' names and address of the new Northwest babies to Charlie Ford, Northwest Bulletin Board, WDAY, Fargo. They'll be entered on the radio roll call and awarded a free certificate by the Cass County Implement Company for a beautiful Scherling Studios photograph. All December and January babies are eligible for this month's radio roll call; next month, January and February arrivals will be included in the Northwest Bulletin Board's radio roll call!

Now from the communities in our listening area, here are the bulletins of events to take place: The Interdenominational Leadership School, under the auspices of the Fargo-Moorhead Council of Christian Education, will be held in the first Baptist Church in Fargo each Tuesday from 7:30 to 9:30 P.M., beginning today, and will continue through February 27th. Classes include youth at worship, teaching intermediates, use of the Bible with children, introduction of the Bible, church and family life, and evangelism in the church school. Competent leaders in each field teach the classes. Remember, they start tonight at the First Baptist Church here in Fargo.

Thursday evening, January 25th, the Ladies Guild of St. Cecilia's Church at Sabin, Minnesota, is giving a card party and dance at the Sabin Community Hall. Lunch will be served. Card playing will begin at eight o'clock. So take in the dance and card party to be held by the ladies of St. Cecilia's Church at Sabin, Minnesota, Thursday evening.

Tonight down at Stirum, North Dakota, there are going to be a couple of interesting basketball games. The Stirum Hall will be the scene of a game between the married ladies and the single ladies of that community and another in which the married men play the single men. Pie and coffee

will also be served. All proceeds of this event go to the infantile paralysis fund. Superintendent R. A. Barker is in charge of the arrangements. "Join the March of Dimes" by turning out for these basketball games tonight at Stirum, North Dakota.

A week from today that's next Tuesday, January 30th the Verona Civic Club, Verona, North Dakota, is sponsoring a dance to be held in the Verona Gymnasium. There'll be good music and a hot lunch. All proceeds will go for the benefit of the March of Dimes Infantile Paralysis Fund. Plan now to attend this dance, sponsored by the Verona Civic Club, next Tuesday at Verona, North Dakota. Tuesday, January 30th, Company M of the Minnesota State Guard is sponsoring the President's Birthday Ball at the Moorhead Armory to help fight infantile paralysis.

Old-time music, as well as today's popular tunes, will be furnished by Bill Tripp and his orchestra, starring Dorothy Tripp, vocalist. Be sure to attend this benefit dance, next Tuesday night at the Moorhead Armory.

We invite schools, churches, clubs, and civic groups to use the facilities of this radio program to publicize their activities. Just send the complete information to me at WDAY. There is no charge for this service. We'll have the agricultural information and news in just a few moments. Meanwhile, let's take time out to listen again to Vincent Lopez and the orchestra playing "Long Lost Sunrise."

MUSIC: "LONG LOST SUNRISE":

FORD: And now, here's some factual information of particular interest to our Northwest farmers. The seed catalogs have arrived. And it's time to consider ordering seeds and garden supplies. Choose varieties recommended for your area, says the South Dakota extension service. Consult your county agent if in doubt. Reports from the USDA show plenty of garden supplies. But order seeds early! Fertilizer should not be difficult to get. Insecticides can be had. Gardening tools are victory models but will serve the purpose. Prospects are encouraging. Start early and buy carefully and you should do all right on garden supplies.

Things would be a lot better for the poultry industry if the periods of egg production could be leveled out. As it is, farmers are constantly at the mercy of buyers during flush spring production. During the season when laying hens are less active, producers enjoy a better position. All this, of course, is an old story to poultrymen. But a recital of these facts brings us around to USDA efforts to bring things into

better balance. The agency is urging poultrymen to accept earlier delivery of baby chicks than usual. By doing so, they would have pullets ready to lay in the fall and early winter, when egg prices are much better than in the spring. That is, if feed and shelter conditions are such as to inspire Biddy to do her stuff out of season.

ANNOUNCER: (COMMERCIAL) Well, there's quite a lot of talk about the so-called shortage of repair parts for farm machines. Somebody says there is and then somebody says there isn't and the first fellow says you're one, too, and so it goes. Well, we've been telling you to get repair parts for your Massey-Harris and Huber farm implements, not so much because there's a shortage now but because there may be when you really need those parts. So, if you haven't already fixed up your machinery for spring work, it might be a good idea to do it this winter. Get your replacements for all Huber and Massey-Harris implements at the Cass County Implement Company, 201 Northern Pacific Avenue, in Fargo "People Like You" is the appropriate title of the music coming up now.

THEME: "PEOPLE LIKE YOU": UP FOR FEW SECONDS: THEN FADE FOR:

FORD: And that, friends, is this morning's Northwest Bulletin Board. This program is presented as a public service by the Cass County Implement Company and returns Thursday at this same time. 'Til then, this is Charlie Ford, your Northwest reporter, saying "so long" to people like you!

THEME: UP AND OUT:

ANNOUNCER: Music on the "Northwest Bulletin Board" was transcribed. (Aired 1/23/45)

Comment: Casual reading gives one the impression that this program does not carry much of a wallop, but put yourself in the home of a listener in the WDAY area in the Red River Valley. The mother of a new baby certainly would be listening, to say nothing of the father. And the Ladies' Guild of Saint Cecilia's Church at Sabin would remember the boost in attendance the announcement gave their card party and dance. Moreover, basketball fans at Stirum probably packed Stirum Hall to see the women's teams play. But this assembling of countryside news is not easy; it requires constant digging by the program conductor. If he lets down in his efforts to keep

people sending in their news, his program quietly folds up because listeners find nothing in it to listen to. The program will vary, too, from day to day, in newsworthy content despite the best efforts of the staff. It is always dependent on the happenings of the countryside. The conductor and his aides, however, must dig up as many interesting and unusual items as possible.

A program of this type can be used likewise on a station serving a predominately urban area, providing similar alertness is maintained in feeding newsworthy and informative material into it constantly. This particular script might be termed in Red River Valley parlance "fair to middling."

CHAPTER

17

Children's Programs

*The most priceless possession of the
human race is the wonder of the world.*

—KENNETH GRAHAME

Radio, by its very vastness, its ability to reach and appeal to millions of listeners—young listeners, mark you—offers opportunity to serve these new generations gloriously, or fail them grievously. Keep this fact in mind in considering this important subject of children's programs, a field that is crying out for new program patterns, new writers, and more original work. Moreover, no phase of radio writing more sharply reveals the need for high competency, for vast comprehension, and for appreciation of intangible but permanent values such as wonder. These values, constant through time, are among the *humanities*, the foundations of culture now being rediscovered and, in the case of colleges and universities, added even to vocational courses from which for too long they have been omitted.

The objective of a children's program

What is our objective in a children's program? Whom are we writing and producing it for? The child, but unfortunately he is frequently overlooked.

Parents and educators want one thing in a program; the radio showmen another. The commercial sponsor naturally has a say. What does the child, the reason for the program,

get out of this? Usually, he gets a compromise, and not a very good one. One can rack up as many objections to noncommercial or so-called educational programs for children as he can for commercial offerings, so let no one feel completely satisfied or absolved.

For, when you omit showmanship or entertainment appeal, your listeners tune to some other program which has it; when you omit influences constructive in a child's life, influences that may be portrayed with high effectiveness in radio, you bypass a service to society that radio should be constantly performing.

Where educators and parents fail is in making the moral lesson in a radio program so outbalance good entertainment that the result is as dry as a religious tract, barren for the absence of the white light of wonder.

Conversely, we cannot sacrifice moral and ethical values, or the common sense of good taste and common decency, or we play traitor to the child, eager to know those things which are good from those things which are false.

Study the programs on the air

The first thing to do in equipping yourself to write children's programs is to familiarize yourself thoroughly with the programs already on the air and the children's books in the nursery, home, and public libraries.

The network programs, reflecting a great deal of study in the effort to present something satisfying to all interests (a most difficult job, let's concede at the outset), include *Lel's Pretend*, *The White Rabbit Bus Line*, *The Little Blue Playhouse*, *Land of the Lost*, among others. In addition there are on the air, regionally or locally, offerings that through individual genius (never confined to New York, or Hollywood, or the metropolis alone) may be every whit as good.

Too many amateurs with a yearning to write children's programs and too many skilled writers who turn to this field do not *know* their audience. Therefore, if you have no children of your own, or have not worked with them, be sure to get acquainted with kids, those right in your block or down the

road. Get to know them. Try to get them to talk freely to you. It is not easy. Only rarely does an oldster get behind the screen the child constantly places between himself and his seniors.

Recall the books you read as a kid

Also try to recall the books you used to read as a kid, what you liked, what you did not like; in so doing, there will come to mind certain ones you may have been forbidden to read. You read them, however, even though you had to hide them in a bureau drawer or under the mattress of your bed. Search out, if you can, the quality, the appeal of the books that were on your household's approved list, and those that were not. In the author's experience, no character left a more lasting impression than Frank Merriwell, a juvenile hero found in *Tip Top Weekly*, a pulp magazine. His name, by the way, has become on sports pages a synonym for opportunistic perfection.

A boy's way (or a girl's) has not changed materially since you were a kid yourself. Therefore, you will find the review of radio programs, of books in libraries, and your own reading habits in kid days helpful in creating programs.

The program's requirements

Whatever your subject, the following essentials well can be kept clearly in mind. Your program—

1. Must be written for the child, not the sponsor, commercial or noncommercial, not to satisfy particular whims that contravene common sense.
2. Must never talk down to the child. He may know more than you. You must win his confidence before he will concede you can tell him anything.
3. Must contain wonder: including chivalry and adventure.
4. Must be built of image-provoking words and sentences, out of which the child can build his own scenes and characters.
5. Must have action (movement) and this may mean noise, much noise.
6. Must be aimed at a definite age group, for an objective

shifting from one age to another frequently will make the lines of your dialogue absurd.

1. The child is your audience

The child is your audience. Keep him, not the sponsor's service or product, constantly in mind as you create your program, or series of programs. A child is unfailingly candid; if you know him well enough, he will tell you what's missing in your program, so you will do well to try out your pet ideas on him by reading your script aloud to him first. Be prepared to modify your idea that a child should have what you think he should have. It may be so at variance with what he wants, so burdened with the *good* lesson, so insipid and bloodless that no real boy or girl should be expected to listen. However, a radio program can be informatively entertaining; but it requires skill as you will quickly discover, to inform and be interesting at the same time.

The child is the most important factor, but there are other factors: parents, educators, sponsor. Any compromise with these oftentimes conflicting interests and concerns which undermines what is rightly due the youngster is not good. On the merchandising-advertising side, which is the particular concern of the commercial sponsor, any activity engendered by the commercial phases of the program, such as collection and presentation of box tops for prize awards, should be carefully considered in all its possible repercussions. Parents, educators, and the children themselves should have opportunity to be heard before such an activity becomes an announced part of the program. The wise sponsor will have a survey to determine public opinion made by one or another of the organizations set up to do such work before committing himself to a merchandising or advertising program that is questionable in its effect on children or parents or educators. Such an investigation can be conducted locally or nationally to fit the sponsor's needs.

The best children's programs are those in which the sponsor fits his product or service into the pattern of good taste, neither pre-empting air time nor hindering the entertainment for young Americans.

2. Never *talk down* to a child

Talking down to a child is one of the first errors the novice makes. The child resents it immediately. The other extreme is academic formality. Use the familiar style of common speech; but save colloquialisms for the dialogue and the characters. The familiar style carries warmth and intimacy; it quickens understanding and engenders confidence because the child feels you are speaking *with* him, not talking *at* him. Without confidence on the part of your audience, your program will quickly *fall on its face*.

3. Wonder

Wonder is found in the great stories of all ages. In radio the better children's programs always contain this bright, eternal allure. Sara Teasdale put it beautifully when, in her poem, entitled "Barter,"¹ she described

..... children's faces, looking up
Holding wonder like a cup.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to define wonder; you cannot buy it or corral it, but it can capture you. Some men and some women laugh at it, but you know when you have it in a radio program by the way the faces of children light up, or the faces even of supposedly life-hardened oldsters if they think no one is looking at them. Once upon a time in a fable, Carl Sandburg defined romanticism as opposed to realism. It will do very well as an approach to a definition of wonder for each requires belief: belief in something ever intangible, ever priceless.

"There was a man who did not find in his house all he desired. One day he came in to find his wife working with a workbasket full of bright silk threads. He caught up a handful. He held them tight for a moment. Then he opened his hand. The

¹ Teasdale, Sara, "Barter," *The Collected Poems of Sara Teasdale*, page 115. Copyright, 1937, by The Macmillan Co., New York, publishers. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

threads became hundreds of brilliant butterflies, flying joyfully about the room. The man watched them. Then he opened his hand, gathered them all in, tightened his hold. They became silk threads; he returned them to the workbasket and if you can believe that," Sandburg concluded "you are a romanticist."²

One evidence of the persistency of wonder is the hardihood of *the little people*, the elves, the gnomes, and the other fairyfolk who make themselves at home even in an air-minded age. Consider the gremlins, the little troublemakers of our own time, of this very air and its planes. (See the script, *Larry Gray and the Gremlins*, later in this chapter.) Men who live close to eternity and men of the *long view*, no matter how few or how many their years, are prone to believe in the little people, give them any name you wish.

Yes, wonder is always alive in the world, as Kenneth Grahame so fittingly put it in the quotation at the opening of this chapter. Note, for example, the way a child will follow with his eyes not only a plane across the sky but a streamlined train from afar, or any piece of mechanical apparatus in action. He, too, would like to work wonders as he sees machines doing. To his horizon's brim, his is a world filled with airplanes, ocean liners, railway trains, bulldozers, tractors, anything that moves or thrills. It is another phase of wonder. You will find it likewise in *Alice in Wonderland* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*; in Christopher Morley's *Thunder on the Left* with its Martin, the eternal child; in Lord Dunsany's *The Wonderful Window*; in Don Byrne's *Messer Marco Polo*, and many other treasurable volumes. Note how frequently the spirit of chivalry and the spirit of adventure are its good companions. For confirmation, read or reread these and other books before writing anything for children. Here is a quotation from only one, *The Wonderful Window*:

When Mr. Sladden glanced through his new window, it was late in a summer's evening [He] rubbed his eyes, then rubbed the window, and still he saw a sky of blazing blue, and

² From *Modern American Poetry* (page 237), edited by Louis Untermeyer. Copyright, 1936, by Harcourt, Brace & Co., publishers. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

far, far down beneath him, so that no sound came up from it or smoke of chimneys, a medieval city set with towers; brown roofs and cobbled streets, and then tiny white buttresses, and beyond them bright green fields and tiny streams. On the towers archers lolled, and along the walls were pikemen, and now and then a wagon drew up to the city from the mist that was rolling with evening over the fields. Sometimes folks put their heads out of lattice windows, sometimes idle troubadors seemed to sing, and nobody hurried or troubled about anything. Airy and dizzy though the distance was, for Mr. Sladden seemed higher above the city than any cathedral gargoyle, yet in one clear detail he obtained a clue: the banners floating from every tower over the idle archers had little golden dragons all over a pure white field.

He heard motor buses roar by his other window, he heard news-boys howling.

Mr. Sladden grew dreamier than ever after that And when it seemed that for him alone those golden dragons had fluttered, he came to love them as an exile in some desert might love the lilies of his home or as a sick man might love swallows when he cannot easily live to another spring.³

4. Images needed

The program that appeals to a child is one that gives his imagination the stuff out of which it can make lovely images; any good children's story must contain a host of such suggestions. A child demands concrete things. Images are that; they are something he can see, especially if he is permitted to build them himself. Another example from the written lore: it is the second paragraph in the story *Mary Poppins* by P. L. Travers:

And sure enough, if you follow exactly the directions of the policeman at the Crossroads, you will be there, right in Cherry Tree Lane. It is where the houses *run down* one side and the Park *runs down* the other, and the Cherry Trees go *dancing* down the middle.⁴

³ Lord Dunsany, "The Wonderful Window," *The Book of Wonder*, pages 77-78. Publishers, John W. Luce & Company, Boston. (Copyright, 1918, Boni & Live-right, Inc.)

⁴ Reprinted from *Mary Poppins* (page 3) by P. L. Travers. Publishers, Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., New York, 1934.

The three basic elements are present here for the scene. All detail is left to the reader to fill in. There are few better illustrations of what to put in and what to leave to the imagination in radio writing. Incidentally, there is lively action, too. Note the verbs.

5. Action vital

It is axiomatic that anything that becomes static in radio goes dead. But, in children's programs, the warning in that axiom is intensified, for a kid's life is a whirl of action. Every child is movement personified. "He's never still a minute" is every parent's constant plaint. Your own characters, therefore, should be moving about; they should always be doing something themselves, not talking about doing something. In that action, they make noise. In real life, children make you cringe sometimes because of the bedlam they produce at play. They love noise because to them it means accomplishment. Are you going to put a lid on it, are you going to have them at gentle, or quiet play in your program? You cannot write or present a children's program and do it in whispers. The listener to a kids' program does not think it too noisy, although his father or mother may. But sometimes the producer, overlooking the fact that radio always amplifies, goes to the opposite extreme and fills the living room with so much bedlam that the words cannot be sorted out of the noise. Your job is to so balance the action and the sound (noise) in your show that they do not compete.

6. Aim at a definite age group

Broadly speaking, there are three main divisions in children's stories: nursery stories, adventure stories, and sports stories. However, this is not breaking the field down finely enough. You should aim your story, whatever its subject, at a definite age group. Keep that particular age or bracket of ages constantly in mind and save yourself and your listener considerable befuddlement. As an example: *The American Boy* magazine always aimed its stories at a boy of 14, a 9th grade kid.

The age was unvarying. It was the age given in instructions to radio writers in an advertisement for radio scripts in *Writer's Digest* in 1938-39.

Of course, kids of decidedly varying ages may be attracted to your program. They will be so attracted for various reasons: importantly the leadership qualities displayed therein which they may desire to emulate. (See the danger of distortion or perversion of the young and eager mind!) Well and good, if you so attract them with entertaining, character-building script, but do not *scatter your shot*. Keep your aim true: a definite age bracket.

And this is also important: Keep your dialogue, and that means the viewpoint of your character, true to the age of that character. If the girl heroine is 12, do not have her talk as a 6-year-old. If your boy hero is 14, he should be given lines that sound like a kid of 14.

Therefore, the ages of your characters, your hero or heroine, if juvenile, should be stated or indicated clearly in the opening of your program. If it is an extended series, it is not necessary to repeat those ages in each script; they may be recalled profitably in the dialogue, however, as opportunity offers.

Do not level your story at a child too young, one incapable of sustained listening. Such sustained listening, say to a football game, will begin at 5 to 6 years. However, a child of 3 will occasionally pick from the radio's chitter-chatter words that will make him laugh, phrases or sentences that, because of rhythm, will attract his attention, perhaps a bit from a singing commercial or two. For an example of the latter, see the *Chiquita Banana* script among the examples presented in Chapter 5.

The stories read to a child

The first thing read to a child is nursery jingles, the Mother Goose rhymes that have stuck in your memory through all the years. It is the rhythmic beat in them that appeals. (Let no one ever say that appreciation of poetry is not inherent in the human race.) The youngster may not know the words, but the sounds fall pleasantly on his ears, rhythmically pleasing and

satisfying. They are his first encounter with what the Greeks called *onomatopoeia*, i.e., the words are imitative in origin.

Next in the stories read to the child in the nursery will come such books as the *Pokey Little Puppy* (the titles are chosen at random; they are not offered as a list of necessarily recommended books), followed by *Little Black Sambo*, the *Little Red Hen*, *Uncle Wiggly*, and similar creations.

Why cannot fairy tales be gayer?

Then will come the fairy tales, and these stories, at least to date, perhaps because of the dearth of other and original material, are largely used in radio programs for the bracket of younger listeners, that is, kids in the first, second, and third grades, their ages ranging from 6 to 8. This group is capable of sustained listening, provided the material is good enough to hold their attention. Keep in mind that these children can enjoy hearing a program *more than once*, just as they have had particular stories read to them over and over since they first began to understand words.

Interest in sports will crop up at 6 years, but the element of wonder will be of first importance; these are the years immediately preceding the more violent epoch and the more violent action of hurly-burly adventure. Fairy tales contain wonder, but they also include the stories of the Brothers Grimm, tales to which many parents, educators, and psychologists object, but which have been provender sometimes very horrible, and unmoral if not immoral, for children for generations. If we must adapt things for radio instead of creating them, why not go to work excavating Guy Wetmore Carryl's bright revisions of the original Grimm tales? He called them *Grimm Tales Made Gay*.

Nila Mack, director of children's programs, including *Let's Pretend*, for the Columbia Broadcasting System, happily converted the Rumpelstiltskin yarn of the Brothers Grimm to radio. But note how she did it: she added eight characters to the original five: a councilor, two pretty girls, a page, a horse, a baby, and two riders. She turned the king into a comedy character: he forgot even the name of his kingdom! The

councilor became a very helpful stooge. Winifred's final lines, explaining how the dwarf disappeared, follow: ⁵

WINIFRED: Oh, my husband, we had a caller and he was so angry when he found you were not home, he stamped on the floor until it collapsed and he disappeared into the earth.

KING: Who was it?

WINIFRED: His name was was Rumpel Rumpelstiltskin.

KING: It's just as well, I never could have remembered it, anyhow.

MUSIC: UP AND OUT:

Wonder-filled things happen nowadays too

But, a princess is only one of the means by which beauty and loveliness and chivalry may be conveyed to children. The elimination of the cruel tyrants, the ugly dwarfs, and the dirty witches will strengthen the child's liking of the world he is born to. Programs well can deal with the *now*, this world as it is today, a world teeming with interest and wonder. For an example of a simple story told entertainingly about denizens of the world which we know, for children of the first radio listening group, see the *Mr. Mouse and Mr. Rabbit* script entitled "I'll Never Be Late Again" that follows in this chapter.

At 9 years, the boy can become a Cub Scout; a girl can become a Brownie Scout at 7. A boy enters gymnasium classes about this time, and his zest for sports and participation in them is increasing daily. Also, he enters the realm of greater adventure beginning with the fourth grade, and radio offerings such as *Superman* and *Dick Tracy* will attract him, along with the *Lone Ranger* (now in its fourteenth year on the air).

How thrilling should a program be?

This brings up the question: how thrilling should a program be? One hears frequent objection to scripts deemed to be

⁵ Reprinted with permission of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc. Copyright, 1947, by Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc. Original radio adaptation by Nila Mack.

"too hair-raising." Here it takes clear thinking in considering the material at hand, the program you have before you. To criticize constructively a children's program, or any radio program for that matter, one must make himself completely familiar with it. As a writer, you will encounter criticism that does not derive from actual listening but is a passing along of comment picked up mayhap over the bridge table, or handed down from some organization's head office. If you know your medium, you can effectively answer this kind of comment.

If Junior cannot sleep nights, is it altogether because he listens to a radio program? Doesn't he get excited over anything else? What is his emotional stability? There is no defense for the children's radio program that gives the young listener horror in excess, or morbid suspense, or, by indirection, portrays methods of committing crime. Poor taste in subject matter, poor writing, and poor production all can contribute to a poor program. Critics should understand these factors and point out where the fault is. However, let us not go to the other extreme of presenting namby-pamby stuff to juvenile America. A boy's imagination is one of his precious endowments, and his love of adventure is something to be proud of. Let us take a red-blooded middle way; let us understand our kids; likewise, let us understand this business or art of writing children's programs so well that we can create programs that will appeal entertainingly without curdling impressionable minds through departures from common sense. Let us also be so skilled that we can transmit informative material entertainingly: in other words, make it "easy to take." Crime plots cannot be considered good radio fare for children, but neither is a game of *Authors* or other gentle card pastime an adventure for a young American. Youth must have excitement; it craves it; therefore, it is up to the script writers to provide it wholesomely and constructively through good script. One adventure program, out and out adventure encountered in the author's experience, centered around a cowboy and his nephew and niece touring the world, collecting animals for a circus. Did they kill those animals? No, they were trapped or caught; nary a creature was killed. Was there any commendation for this humane pattern? Not a peep, so far as the files show. But it was a

good, lively show, despite absence of gunplay. And it had noise in it, and that noise accentuated the thrills.

In general, there is no need of arming any juvenile hero, in other words, having him *tote a gun*. With so many choices, there is no need to portray that kind of adventure, even though it be in behalf of the *just cause*, with the *crime does not pay* approach. If the juvenile hero were old enough to carry a gun—and he is not—the example set for the younger kids who listen to the program would be bad. Gunplay has become increasingly a part of the kid's life. Who has not seen the retail store broadsides on which a "holster set" with "six-shooter pistol" is suggested as a Christmas gift?—and priced at less than a dollar! But can the stalking of human prey with a gun lead anywhere but to juvenile disaster? There is a place for firearms in a boy's life: it is in company with his dad or other grown-up on hunting expeditions, whether for gophers, or pheasants, or larger game. But such adventures along the game trails are far different from pistol-packin' bouts with bad men, imaginary though they may originally be.

Adult mystery shows attract children

And then there is the problem of mystery shows designed for adults that attract adolescents. At least one newspaper clipping attests *Mother Blames Radio for Boy's Extortion Demand*. The boy, 11 years old, in company with another boy, aged 13, tossed a note demanding \$10,000 through the window of a home. The boy told his mother he got the idea from a radio program. "I don't know which one," the mother is quoted as saying, "he listens to all of them unless I turn them off."

This case in point brings in two important factors: parental responsibility, and social responsibility on the part of the radio industry.

If a kid centers his attention on mystery or crime stories, whether on the air, in the movies, or in the magazines and newspapers, what may be expected? Isn't it up to parents to provide and promote diversification in a child's activities so that his interests do not become centered on those things which are not good? Not alone is it a part of the parents' job to keep

a kid from doing something he should not do, but even more important, it is their responsibility to put things in his way that he will enjoy doing, and that will contribute to well-rounded development.

As for the responsibility of the radio industry, William S. Paley, chairman of the Board of CBS, put it this way:

To ban the mystery show from radio would, in my opinion, be an unsound and repressive step in the face of the wide appeal which this type of fiction provides in books, magazines, and movies, as well as on the radio. Our problem is to present mystery drama in such a manner that we can't be accused of contributing to a very real national problem [juvenile delinquency]. The solution does not lie in the number of such programs or even in the time in which they are presented—for almost as many adolescents tune in after 9:30 P.M. as before—but rather in the method and formats which are used. The real problem lies in the writing. It is evident that mystery programs which create self-identification of the listener with the criminal, rather than with those on the side of law and order, should be avoided. We must examine "who-dun-it" programs one by one and turn a deaf ear to any promises of increased ratings at the expense of social responsibility.⁶

The worker in radio knows how frequently critics, talking loosely, level their strictures at "children's shows" when they actually are referring to mystery shows, not written for children or juveniles, but which attract them, as a book for "adult reading" will likewise make Junior curious.

However, this does not absolve the radio writer from his responsibility to the listener. This obligation always rides the roller of your typewriter.

By the time a boy has reached junior high school, that is, the seventh grade (12 years), he probably is deeply interested in Scouting or similar organizational activities, such as woodcraft, camping, and hiking, so the field for radio programs never shrinks, but always broadens as the child's interest enlarges. There are many local programs fostered by youth organizations and good scripts for such shows are always in demand.

⁶ Paley, William S., *Radio and the Critics*, an address delivered before the twenty-fourth annual convention of the National Association of Broadcasters at Chicago, October 22, 1946.

When your young man or woman reaches high school (the senior high ages average 15, 16, and 17), radio programs such as *Henry Aldrich* and *A Date with Judy* may have become well-established in their households, the listener appeal embracing not only high school youth but the parents as well. Conversely, adult radio fare is "regular listening" for youth in this bracket.

Characters that are forever young

In summation, then, your field begins with programs for children as young as 3, and it ends with scripts for adolescents. Further, you may wish to keep your characters forever young. That is not what happens in *One Man's Family*, a program dealing with American parents and their "amazing offspring"; in it, the youngsters grow up. However, Judd Mortimer Lewis gave us an example of the static age in *Jubilee's Pardner*, a feature that appeared daily in newspapers throughout the country for twenty-five years. It was the story of Thomas Aristides, the 9-year-old pardner and Jubilee, his dog. None of the characters ever grew up. Times changed, autos came, airplanes, but Jubilee and his pardner remained eternal dog and eternal boy. It was written in diary form. One incident will have to suffice as a sample. Aristides always pulled Jubilee up by a rope to sleep with him at night. The boy would let the dog down again in the morning. Aristides said he always knew how cold it was because Jubilee would not let go of the rope. "When I let him down this morning," said the boy, "his bustle landed in a puddle of water."

The job ahead

After these recent years of war, it is the duty of parents and educators to get the child as well as themselves back into the normal ways of peace again, for to an American, at least, war is not a natural but an abnormal state. Good children's programs can help tremendously. Radio offerings that were oftentimes cheaply supernatural no longer need be so, for much that we used to think was supernatural is becoming a part of the daily life of men. Developments in aviation, in electronics, and in

the use of atomic energy can be turned into excellent material in the ways of peace among children.

What do we know about democracy?

And there is the ever-present need of explaining our country, this democracy, to the new generations coming on. Have we, as writers, been building into the minds of young Americans the stuff of democracy that well can be a bulwark of faith in later years? If so, then we should redouble our efforts, for there is much still to be done; the need is mounting daily.

Getting along with people

Moreover, certain broad and constant problems in life, that have no bearing on atomic energy or parachute drops or radar, present themselves invitingly to the well-equipped and interested writer. For example, the child's most acute, most painful problem is how to get along *with* people, at school, in the home, in his daily life. (For that matter, a great many oldsters would like to know the solution, too.) Then he is keenly interested in doing things for himself. He does not like to have every move planned. He wants to use his imagination, for rightly, he believes that he, too, is an individual, just as important as mama and papa. He wants to use a hammer, or chalk, or paint brush, or broom, or doll, or a typewriter, or his dad's safety razor. He likes hobbies, though he may not call them that. He likes to collect things. Look at what he has in his playroom; what he has in his pockets (placid little toads are mere items in this vast category); what he has at his work bench.

One summer the author had a hand in a Sunday afternoon radio show that portrayed a series of excursions into the countryside. It was a nature study club but, of course, it wasn't called that for that would have driven the kids away. Cash, not merchandise, prizes were to be awarded at the close of the season. These prizes were for the best collections of leaves, pebbles, butterflies, flowers, grasses, whatever a kid wanted to collect. Birds' eggs were not included. The program taught how trees, for example, might be easily identified, and common flowers

and other flora. A good many kids did much listening to the program and some parents liked it. Others complained that their youngsters bothered them with questions they couldn't answer and didn't want to take the trouble to look up on a Sunday afternoon. Of course, when a parent doesn't know the difference between a geranium and a sunflower, or a jenny wren and a hoot owl, or, for that matter, a plane's propeller and its rudder, and doesn't help the kid to find out, do not blame radio altogether for the state of the nation.

The children's program! a challenge

The fields above indicated are suggested as additional to normal adventure stories and are important for writers. So study the opportunities awaiting you in a kid's world. See what you can do. It's challenging, a greater challenge perhaps than in any other field of radio writing. And don't forget that a child laughs, gleefully, frequently if he gets a chance. Do not have the assumed seriousness of a mortician in creating your stories; let bright laughter play among the keys of your typewriter.

Programs for pre-school children

A suggested pattern for a 5- to 10-minute program for pre-school children follows. It requires the services of a narrator, who could hold the little show together and play or direct the playing of the recorded music. The narrator necessarily must have a voice that will attract youngsters, and if he has the dramatic ability to do impersonations, even in a limited way, it will heighten the interest.

THEME: "THE MULBERRY BUSH" (a good "rally" song, though you might wish to change "morning" to "evening" in the text.)

NARRATOR: (Introduction, explaining who she—or he—is, and naming the program, then going quickly into the first rhyme, "Hey Diddle Diddle" or whatever is selected*)

MUSIC: "THE FARMER IN THE DELL"

NARRATOR: Nursery rhyme: "Jack and Jill"

MUSIC: "JACK AND JILL"

NARRATOR: Pat-a-cake rhyme.

MUSIC: PAT-A-CAKE SONG.

NARRATOR: (Picks up the same song and asks the listener to join in.) "That's all, for this time, but I'll be back tomorrow for another dance 'round the mulberry bush."

THEME: "THE MULBERRY BUSH"

The alternation of rhyme and music will tend to maintain the interest of the young listener. Into the pattern, the alert narrator can fit any nursery rhyme or jingle, ancient or modern. The little tunes that the kids of the neighborhood happen to be singing—and they may be quite original—should be incorporated frequently.

For kindergarten children, the program can be "stepped up" to include bits of drama by enacting some of the nursery rhymes, or modern but short incidents out of the daily lives of the youngsters, or affecting their lives.

Time of presentation is important. Especially would harassed mothers appreciate such an offering from the radio late in the afternoon, preceding the child's bedtime. A local station that did not have network commitments at that hour would be more likely to have such time available.

Script: *I'll Never Be Late Again* (For listeners, 6 to 8 years)

Here is a program for little shavers, the listening group in the age bracket of 6 to 8 years.

I'LL NEVER BE LATE AGAIN

Script by Grace Krausy

CAST:	Announcer	Rustle of claws on coffee-
	Narrator	pot
	Mouse	Crackle of lunch paper
	Rabbit	Grating of coffeepot on
	Ma Rabbit	gravel
SOUND:	Grass blowing	Whirring of pheasants
	Piano	rising
	Screen door	Steps
	Solid door	Bird and insect sounds

Crackling of underbrush
Clatter of tinware
Graniteware coffeepot
 with hinged lid
Meadowlark
Varied owl hoots

Rush of air
Music: Theme
 Incidental

MUSIC: THEME: UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: "The Children's Hour" of Station _____.

MUSIC: THEME: UP AND OUT: LIGHT, LIVELY MUSIC UNDER:

NARRATOR: Good afternoon. Today our story is about a Rabbit, a Rabbit who decided, for good reason, that he never would be late again. Rabbit lived in a small town where the fields came up almost to the doorstep of the people's houses His good friend, Mouse, lived there too One day, one sunny summer day, Mouse came over to Rabbit's house.

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER:

SOUND: SOUND OF GRASS BLOWING:

MOUSE: (FADE IN) I don't know but he really should be ready. He must be ready. I've given him hours to do his morning chores. It's too nice a day to stay inside; the sun's out and the wind's perfect. He should get up early enough to do his chores, but he's so lazy. I do hope

SOUND: BEGINNER PRACTICING PIANO:

MOUSE: Flax seed and blue grass! He's practicing! Now we'll never get off and back by sundown Rabbit! Rabbit!

SOUND: STOP PIANO:

RABBIT: (OFF MIKE) Yes? Who's that?

MOUSE: It's me. Mouse!

RABBIT: (OFF MIKE) Come on in and wait.

SOUND: SCREEN DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES: GRASS OUT:

MOUSE: You're playing the piano and we're late.

RABBIT: Ma's in the kitchen making a lunch for us. She said she'd make a big one if I played this piece.

SOUND: PIANO BEGINS AGAIN:

MOUSE: But, Rabbit, you should've practiced before. It's late already this morning.

RABBIT: A little later won't hurt.

MOUSE: We have to be back before dark or the owls'll catch us.

RABBIT: Stop fussing. We'll be back. Now sit down. I told Ma I would, so I have to finish

MOUSE: Aren't you scared of owls? They'll catch us if we're out at night.

RABBIT: Aw owls aren't that bad.

MOUSE: They caught my brother Willie last week!

RABBIT: I'm almost through.

SOUND: OPEN AND SHUT KITCHEN DOOR: WITH STEPS:

MA RABBIT: That's a fine Rabbit. Hello, Mouse.

MOUSE: Good morning, Mrs. Rabbit.

SOUND: PIANO STOPS WITH SIMPLE MELODRAMATIC CHORD:

RABBIT: (WITH CHORD) There, I'm done!

MA RABBIT: Good! And here're your sandwiches.

RABBIT: Okay, Ma.

MOUSE: Thanks, Mrs. Rabbit.

RABBIT: Let's get going.

SOUND: SCREEN DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES:

MA RABBIT: Be good boys and have a fine time!

MOUSE: Sure, we will.

RABBIT: (OFF MIKE) 'Bye, Ma, 'bye.

MA RABBIT: Goodbye. Watch out for owls! I hope those two behave themselves. Rabbit's lazy and Mouse is scatter-brained.

SOUND: MENACING MUSIC STARTS UNDER:

MA RABBIT: If they're not home by dark, the owls will surely get them. I shouldn't have let them go!

MUSIC AND SOUND: MUSIC: UP: SEGUE INTO LIGHT TUNE: SEGUE INTO GRASS, BIRD, AND INSECT SOUNDS: DOWN AND UNDER:

RABBIT: (SINGING) I'm singing and I'm hopping and I'm hopping all the day. I'm singing and I'm hopping and I'm happy through the day The air's fresh, isn't it, Mouse? The little white pebbles to dance over, and the grass smells new and green.

MOUSE: It is green.

RABBIT: It makes me want to hop and hop and hop

MOUSE: You're hop-happy.

RABBIT: No! Yes, but it's fun.

MOUSE: How much farther do we go?

RABBIT: Just a little. Up the next hill along the fence row, down the other side; left, over the clay bank, and we're there.

MOUSE: My tail is so long it makes me tired.

RABBIT: You ought to have a bobbed one like mine.

MOUSE: Nope.

RABBIT: Why not?

MOUSE: Then I'd have to get long ears like yours. My ears are fine the way they are.

RABBIT: And so're mine. (SINGING) Hoppity hop hop hop we go. Hoppity hop Look, Mouse!

MOUSE: (SOFTLY) An orange and velvet butterfly!

RABBIT: Let's catch it.

MOUSE: Let's not.

RABBIT: Let's. You stay here and I'll go behind. Give me a horse-weed leaf so I don't hurt it.

MOUSE: Here's one.

RABBIT: Now you wait here and make a big racket when I call.

SOUND: CRACKLING OF UNDERBRUSH, FADING OUT:

MOUSE: It'll be afternoon by the time we get there, and then we have to pick out what we want. And we can't go home as fast as we've come, all loaded down.

RABBIT: (LOW AND OFF MIKE) Sss Mouse! There he is, on the milkweed. See him?

MOUSE: Yuh.

RABBIT: (OFF MIKE) Okay. Ready. Go!

SOUND: UNDERBRUSH CRACKLING: YELLING:

MOUSE: I got him. Here!

RABBIT: This way!

MOUSE: Look out!

RABBIT: Mouse!

MOUSE: Oh!

RABBIT: Oh, Mouse!

SOUND: SILENCE EXCEPT GRASS:

MOUSE: He got away.

RABBIT: He was awful pretty, orange and black.

MOUSE: I had him. I'm sorry, Rabbit.

RABBIT: Let's get going. We'll never come to the dump ground of the Big People.

MOUSE: I wonder why Big People call it a dump ground so many wonderful things there.

SOUND AND MUSIC: OUT GRASS: MUSIC UP: HOLD: AND OUT INTO CLATTER OF FALLING TIN:

RABBIT: Yai! Whoop!

MOUSE: Look out, Rabbit!

RABBIT: The enamel kettle is slippery! Yai uh!

SOUND: SOFT THUD ON HOLLOW METAL SURFACE:

MOUSE: Where're you now?

RABBIT: Over here. I've found something! Come and look at it.

SOUND: HINGED COVER OF GRANITEWARE COFFEPOT GOES OPEN AND SHUT:

MOUSE: My, but it's big!

RABBIT: Isn't it super? No rust, all gray enamel and slick!

MOUSE: What did it used to be when the Big People had it?

RABBIT: An old-fashioned coffeepot. Why, just look, it's wide enough inside even for you and me both.

MOUSE: Big People throw away the funniest things.

RABBIT: They're terribly wasteful, Ma says Mouse, this is what we're going to take home from the Big People's dump ground.

MOUSE: But it's so big do you think we can do it?

RABBIT: Sure. Lend a hand. We'll push it out.

SOUND: BANG OF COFFEEPOT LID:

RABBIT: (GRUNTING) Shove to this side ugh ugh push whah! We can't get it. It's too big.

MOUSE: Is there any other way?

RABBIT: Not that I can think of. Let's eat lunch and think. Now what did I do with those sandwiches?

MOUSE: I'm hungry enough to eat this coffeepot. It must be hours since we left home. The sun's after noon.

RABBIT: They must be somewhere here.

MOUSE: Please!

RABBIT: I had them when we came over the clay.

MOUSE: Did you look where you entered the dump?

RABBIT: No, I'll look there.

MOUSE: On your left. . . . maybe they're

RABBIT: (OFF MIKE) Here they are!

MOUSE: Bring 'em over here

RABBIT: Have some.

SOUND: CRACKLE OF LUNCH PAPER:

MOUSE: (MOUTH FULL) That coffeepot is a find.

RABBIT: (CHEWING) We'll make a clubhouse out of it. We'll make a foundation so it won't roll, and the spout can be our chimney.

MOUSE: But it's stuck here.

RABBIT: You're a killjoy

MOUSE: I know what. We'll get some morning glory vine and tie it to the handle and both pull. Pulling will get it out, and we can use weed stems for rollers.

RABBIT: Will morning glory work?

MOUSE: Ought to. We'll try it Look for some morning glory plants.

RABBIT: Here's a good thick vine.

MOUSE: It's too green; it'll break. Get one a little wilted and tougher.

RABBIT: This one do?

MOUSE: Seems all right. Tie it tight, good and tight on the handle, while I Ouch! Leggo my tail!

RABBIT: Sorry

MOUSE: Oh oh oh ohhhhhh.

RABBIT: It didn't hurt that much.

MOUSE: You should know better. My tail doesn't look like a morning glory!

RABBIT: (LAUGHING) I'm sorry.

MOUSE: It isn't funny

RABBIT: There. Is the knot tight enough?

MOUSE: Let's see it's all right.

RABBIT: Morning glory was a smart idea.

MOUSE: Ah genius at work!

RABBIT: But I was the one who tied it.

MOUSE: Mminmm. Yes.

RABBIT: We did it together.

MOUSE: I guess so. My pop says two heads are better than one!

RABBIT: Could be.

MOUSE: Sure.

RABBIT: Now pull the two vines together. Ngh!

SOUND: TINNY GRATING AND SHORT METALLIC THUDS:

RABBIT: Not moving yet!

MOUSE: I've got this vine firm you got the other one?

RABBIT: Yep

MOUSE: We'll give a big jerk. Now one, two, three, ngh!

SOUND: BIG CLANGING AND BANGING AS COFFEEPOT BOUNCES DOWNHILL:

RABBIT: (SHOUTING) Get out of the way!

MOUSE: Leggo!

SOUND: FINAL BANG: SILENCE:

RABBIT: It's kind of dented.

MOUSE: It's out of there.

RABBIT: Does the cover work?

MOUSE: It looks all right.

SOUND: COFFEPOT LID OPENS WITH GRATING: TINNY RUSTLE OF CLAWS:

MOUSE: Fine.

SOUND: CLANG SHUT OF LID:

MOUSE: (INSIDE COFFEPOT) Inside the coffeepot. It's neat. Come on in!

RABBIT: Says who?

SOUND: OPEN COFFEEPOT LID:

MOUSE: I found it.

RABBIT: You did not. I did. Come on out!

MOUSE: Well, I'm in here first, and there's plenty of room.

RABBIT: I said come on.

MOUSE: I won't.

RABBIT: Come on

MOUSE: Na-ah-ouch, ow, my tail. Leggo! You needn't be so rough.

RABBIT: Who was it worrying how late we'd be this morning? Look at the sun now! And we have this big coffeepot to drag home.

MOUSE: Oh I forgot (SOFT) Do you think the owls'll catch us?

RABBIT: Nah! It's the middle of the afternoon. Go ahead. Grab hold of the morning glory and pull!

SOUND AND MUSIC: SLOW GRATING: MUSIC UNDER:

RABBIT: We're moving! Pull!

MUSIC AND SOUND: UP MUSIC: HOLD: SEGUE INTO GRASS SOUNDS: UNDER:
FAINT MEADOWLARK CALL:

RABBIT: Stop, Mouse. We're on top of the hill.

MOUSE: So what?

RABBIT: The sun's going down. Isn't the color super?

SOUND: WHIRRING OF WINGS:

RABBIT: We scared that pheasant; look at him. Flying right into the sunset.

MOUSE: Sunset. Say, that means it's just about evening.

RABBIT: The red and gold of that ball of light make me want to be grown up, and make music. Or sing like (SIMPLE TUNE):

Look at the sun, Mouse, look at the sun.

Purple and crimson, day is done.

Look at the sun, lovely sun, glorious shining sun.

It makes me want to do something wonderful.

MOUSE: Shut up. It's all swell and pretty, but words can wait. It'll be dark, night, and the owls'll be flying What are we gonna do?

RABBIT: Oh, duck under some grass.

MOUSE: Snap out of it! Grass won't stop owls. We gotta do something else. I want to live.

RABBIT: Owls are hungry.

MOUSE: I know they have to eat, but they're not gonna eat me for supper at least, I hope

SOUND: LOUD WHIRRING OF WINGS:

MOUSE: What's that?

SOUND: MORE WHIRRING OF WINGS, OFF MIKE:

RABBIT: Pheasant.

MOUSE: Whew!

RABBIT: We scared them.

MOUSE: They weren't as scared as we!

RABBIT: The whirring they make is pretty loud.

MOUSE: Owls don't make any sound owls float on the winds of the dark, silent as terror; their eyes see into the earth and over it; there's no hiding from them.

RABBIT: Their feathers are soft and gray as fear.

MOUSE: Owls plunge quiet down the night air making no sound but the faint whinging of the air against their bodies. You never hear them till it's too late.

RABBIT: Fright is a flame in the heart.

MOUSE: And then the claws have you. (SOFTLY) Owls make a terrible whoot! if they miss you.

RABBIT: Scaly steel talons, relentless, ravenous.

MOUSE: Then you're dead. There's no more living, no green grass to walk on, no bright wind to feel my brother died that way. Rabbit, I'm frightened.

RABBIT: (SOFTLY) Nothing more of the earth.

MOUSE: Golly, what do we do?

RABBIT: Hurry. Maybe we can make it home.

MOUSE: If we run for it, we can. Come

RABBIT: I won't leave this coffeepot behind.

MOUSE: What?

RABBIT: I won't.

MOUSE: You won't leave this coffeepot. He says he won't leave this coffeepot. There are owls that'll eat us up, and it's so late we can see the first star, and he won't leave this For the green catfish and the love of Pete!

RABBIT: Help me pull.

MOUSE: You stubborn You'll kill us!

RABBIT: Pull.

MOUSE: Oh (SOFTLY) I'm going to die.

RABBIT: Pull.

SOUND: SLIDING OF COFFEEPOT ON GRASS UNDER:

MOUSE: The stars are out. There's no hope left

RABBIT: Shut up! We will draw the owls with such a chatter
It isn't dark enough yet for them anyway.

MOUSE: (TEARFULLY) Rabbit

RABBIT: We'll stop at the top of this rise

SOUND: STOP SLIDING OF COFFEEPOT:

RABBIT: There. We can see home from here.

MOUSE: But it's too far, and it's dark!

SOUND: OWL'S FAINT HOOT:

RABBIT: Listen!

SOUND: OWL'S FAINT HOOT:

MOUSE: He missed somebody.

RABBIT: Owls hoot when they miss.

MOUSE: He'll come here. What do we do?

RABBIT: There, there, Mouse Mouse, see here

SOUND: COFFEEPOT LID OPENS:

MOUSE: (SOFTLY) Rabbit!

RABBIT: We can get in here, and the walls will keep the owl out!

MOUSE: Rabbit, you're wonderful!

RABBIT: Now get in, and I will, too, and we'll be safe!

SOUND: RUSTLE OF CLAWS ON TIN: RUSH OF AIR LIKE AN AIRPLANE DIVE:
COFFEEPOT LID CLANGS SHUT WITH SHORT CLANG: RUSH OF AIR:
METALLIC THUD AND SCRABBLE OF OWL'S CLAWS: LOUD SUDDEN
HOOT OFF MIKE: RUSH OF AIR FADES:

MOUSE: Gosh!

SOUND: RUSH OF AIR UP: METALLIC THUD AND SHORTER SCRABBLE OF
OWL'S CLAWS: LONG HOOT: RUSH OF AIR FADES:

MOUSE: (SOFTLY THROUGH FOLLOWING) Two of them.

RABBIT: We were just in time.

MOUSE: This coffeepot

SOUND: TWO LIGHT RAPPINGS ON COFFEEPOT:

MOUSE: is a marvelous thing.

RABBIT: The Big People throw away the funniest things.

MOUSE: They do but I'm glad they did. Will we have to stay here all night?

RABBIT: Likely, but we're safe. Ma'll be worried. She said be home early.

MOUSE: We shouldn't have wasted so much time.

RABBIT: Or started so late this morning. I should have practiced my piano lesson before.

MOUSE: It turned out all right this time

MUSIC: UNDER:

RABBIT: Yes but I promise myself I'll never be late again.

MUSIC: UP: HOLD FOR FEW SECONDS: THEN UNDER:

NARRATOR: And he never was late again In the morning, they pulled the coffeepot home and Ma Rabbit and Mouse's mother and father all cried because they were so thankful to see the two come home safe. The coffeepot was made into a little clubhouse, and every time Rabbit saw it, he said, "I'll never be late again," and he never was. He became a musician, and they all lived happily ever after.

MUSIC: UP: CROSS FADE INTO THEME AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: You have been listening to "The Children's Hour" of _____, your own radio station. Today's story, "I'll Never Be Late Again," was an original script written by Grace Krausy. In the cast were _____. Sound was by _____ and the show was produced and directed by _____. Your announcer has been _____.

THEME: UP AND UNDER:

Comment: This program will answer the demand of those who are a little tired of princesses and kings and all their trappings:

a wonder-packed adventure of a mouse and a rabbit at the town dump and in the fields near-by. Every child has seen Mr. Rabbit, and, more fleetingly, Mr. Mouse. More than likely, he has heard if he has not seen an owl. And, of course, he's familiar with the city or town dump (where the coffeepot was), for that's the place "to find things." The adventure, trivial as it may seem on typewritten pages, is exciting to youngsters. The author skillfully employs sound to heighten the suspense. Here the whir of the Owl's wings can become very ominous, indeed. The script requires an earnest, sympathetic sound-effects man to make it "come off" well. The author has described the special sounds carefully in the script, but in production she should give the soundman every helpful suggestion, so that he can interpret as faithfully as possible the wind in the grass, the clang of the coffeepot lid, the scratching of claws, and other details. An overdose of sound would make the program appear to emanate from a boiler factory.

The hard-boiled observer—mayhap he hasn't any kids of his own—may say this script is too *précieuse*. The answer is that the selectivity of kids is wondrous fine. Seldom do oldsters ever perceive what children perceive; too frequently adults blunt instead of sharpen that instinctive discrimination.

The material that went into this story was near at hand: a rabbit, a mouse, a town dump, a discarded coffeepot, and an owl. The owl brought the whir of conflict into the scene. And what a refuge the old, gray-enameled coffeepot turned out to be!

Mark you how "the little things" that James Stephens wrote so feelingly about, the little things that "run and quail" did not "die in silence and despair." And note the ease of presentation, for impersonation is simple in radio against a stage presentation's welter of props and trappings.

Script: *The Land Where Balloons Grow* (For 6- to 8-year-olds)

The use of adaptations for radio should be discouraged, but in Carl Sandburg's *Rootabaga Stories* is material, rich image-provoking material that could be broadcast consistently and repeatedly. Stories from this series have appeared from time to

time on the air, but the entire body of them built into a radio series by competent writers should be a part of the standard catalog of children's programs on any radio station. They could be broadcast repeatedly, each time probably to a larger audience.

THE LAND WHERE BALLOONS GROW

Adapted from Carl Sandburg's *Rootabaga Stories*⁷
by Virginia Harris

CAST: Announcer
Quish
Quee
Conductor
Balloonman

SOUND: Whish and whoosh, rum-
ble and clatter of train
in progress
Train whistles
Bell rings
Voices of people leaving
train
Running feet
Feet crunching on gravel
Feet climbing ladder

MUSIC: Theme: "TURKEY IN THE
STRAW"
"FLIGHT OF THE BUMBLE-
BEE"
"OVER THE RAINBOW"

MUSIC: THEME: "TURKEY IN THE STRAW" (ACCORDION):

ANNOUNCER: Yesterday we started for Carl Sandburg's "Rootabaga Country." Remember? Carl Sandburg is the man who believes all boys and girls should live in the country, even if they have to imagine it, that is, if they aren't lucky enough to actually live there. We were on a train with Quish and Quee when all of a sudden another train was coming toward us on the same track we were on. But before we get ourselves back on the train, let's get in the proper spirit with some music.

MUSIC: "FLIGHT OF THE BUMBLEBEE":

ANNOUNCER: Now we're back on the train with Quish and Quee!

SOUND: WHISH AND WHOOSH AND RUMBLE AND CLATTER:

QUISH: It passed us! Look, Quee!

QUEE: You mean, it went right over us!

⁷ Sandburg, Carl, *Rootabaga Stories*. Copyright 1922, 1923 by the publishers, Harcourt, Brace and Company. Adaptation reproduced by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company.

QUISH: And nothing happened!

SOUND: WHISTLES OF BOTH TRAINS, ONE RECEDING IN THE DISTANCE:

QUISH: I know. We're in the Over and Under Country. You've heard of that, I'm sure. It's where Nobody gets out of the way of Anybody else. They either go over or under. Think I'd like to live there.

QUEE: You usually act as though you do.

SOUND: TRAIN WHISTLE:

QUEE: Look, Quish! Oh, look out of the window! It's the country where balloons grow. See all the balloons hanging down from the sky.

QUISH: Gee! The air is thick with them.

SOUND: TRAIN WHISTLE: BELL RINGS: ENGINE BEGINS TO SLOW DOWN:

CONDUCTOR: (CALLING) Balloonville. All off for Balloonville.

SOUND: VOICES OF PEOPLE LEAVING TRAIN:

QUISH: This looks like an interesting place. I'd like to see more of it.

CONDUCTOR: You can. We're going to be here twenty minutes while we take on water. Would you two like to walk up and down the station platform and maybe buy a balloon or two?

QUEE: You bet. Let's, Quish. That would be lots of fun.

QUISH: Twenty minutes, did you say?

CONDUCTOR: That's right And mind you watch the clock in that church tower over there.

QUEE: Oh, we'll be back in time.

QUISH: Come on, Quee, or you'll waste all of the twenty minutes talking.

QUEE: I'm coming.

CONDUCTOR: I'll help you down these steps. They're pretty high for small people.

QUEE: Thank you.

QUISH: (CALLING) Hurry!

SOUND: RUNNING FEET:

QUEE: (PANTING) Aren't those balloons lovely?

BALLOONMAN: Hello, there. Is this your first trip to Balloonville?

QUISH: Yes, Mr. Balloonman. We've never been here before.

BALLOONMAN: But tell me who you are.

QUISH: I'm Quish.

QUEE: And I'm Quee.

QUISH: Why aren't you in the park today?

BALLOONMAN: I should be, but I sold all of my stock yesterday and had to make a hurry trip out here to pick up a new supply.

QUISH: Looks as though there's going to be a lot of them.

BALLOONMAN: Yes, it's been a pretty good crop. Would you like to see the harvesting?

QUEE: Oh, yes.

BALLOONMAN: There's a field in back of the depot.

QUISH: Let's run around and see it.

SOUND: FEET CRUNCHING ON GRAVEL:

QUEE: Oh, see the balloons, red, blue, and yellow balloons!

QUISH: White, purple, and orange balloons.

QUEE: Peach, watermelon, and potato balloons.

QUISH: Rye loaf and wheat loaf balloons.

QUEE: Link sausage and pork chop balloons.

QUISH: All the kinds of balloons there are in the whole world.

QUEE: And they float on strings so fine I can hardly see them.

QUISH: And fill all the sky.

BALLOONMAN: There come the balloon pickers, walking on stilts.

QUEE: And see the baby pickers on baby stilts picking the baby balloons that grow close to the ground.

QUISH: Say, do you suppose we could pick a couple of balloons?

QUEE: Oh, do you suppose they'd let us? I'd like to try it.

BALLOONMAN: I'm sure it would be all right. There are some stilts leaning against the depot. Pick out your sizes.

QUEE: Quish, we'll have to hurry. We've just got five minutes left.

QUISH: I'm going to use this pair of high red ones. How do I get on?

BALLOONMAN: Climb that ladder there that's alongside the stilts. Then just step on.

QUISH: Here I go.

SOUND: FEET CLIMBING LADDER:

QUEE: Be careful, Quish. Those stilts are too high for you.

QUISH: They are not! I'm an old hand at this. Just watch me.

QUEE: I'm coming, too. But I'm going to use these little blue baby stilts.

SOUND: FEET CLIMBING LADDER:

BALLOONMAN: I'll steady the stilts for you There, now you're all set. Start picking, but watch your step. Remember you're on stilts.

QUEE: Oh, this is fun! But I can't reach that red balloon that I want. (CALLING) Quish, please get the big red balloon for me.

QUISH: All right. See all the ones I have. Hold them while I help you. You're a slowpoke on those baby stilts.

QUEE: (LAUGHS) Oh, see that baby picker that fell off his stilts. The handful of balloons he was holding kept him in the air until he got his feet in the stilts again.

SOUND: TRAIN WHISTLE:

QUEE: Hurry, Quish, hurry! Please help me down, Mr. Balloonman.

BALLOONMAN: All right, now just jump.

QUEE: They're gone. Oh, what'll I do? I've lost all of Quish's balloons. Oh, look at them floating way, way up there in the sky.

SOUND: TRAIN WHISTLE:

QUISH: (SCREAMING) Ohhhhhhhhh, I'm falling!

QUEE: Oh, are you hurt?

SOUND: TRAIN WHISTLE:

QUISH: No, the ground is soft. Run, Quee, run tell the conductor to wait for us.

BALLOONMAN: Run or you'll miss your train.

SOUND: TRAIN BELL RINGS: FEET RUN ON GRAVEL:

CONDUCTOR: (CALLING IN DISTANCE) Alllllllll Abooooooooard!

SOUND: TRAIN WHISTLE:

ANNOUNCER: There go Quish and Quee for today. Our time is almost up. Before we say goodbye, we're going to let you hear our accordion man play "Over the Rainbow."

MUSIC: "OVER THE RAINBOW":

ANNOUNCER: Do you suppose Quish and Quee will catch the train? If you tune in tomorrow at four o'clock, you'll hear more of the adventures of Quish and Quee in the Rootabaga Country. The Rootabaga Country holds great things in store for the boy and girl whose imaginations can take them away from the crowded town. Remember that tomorrow at this same time, we shall bring you more of the adventures of Quish and Quee. Until that time, goodbye.

SOUND: TRAIN WHISTLE:

MUSIC: THEME: "TURKEY IN THE STRAW": UP AND OUT:

Comment: A visit to the Land Where Balloons Grow, and a chance to climb upon stilts and to pick those balloons! What fun! And what a heap of images are piled into this comparatively brief script!

A very little of Mr. Sandburg's delightful work goes a long way in a radio program. Therefore, do not cram too much material into 15 minutes; if you do, you will overload it, jumbling your images. The above sketch is just one scene—one only—while the train stopped at a railroad station and Quish and Quee got off to see the Balloon Country. The original incident required only one and one-half pages in "Rootabaga Stories." In this case, the adapter, to round out the 15-minute period, included two appropriate musical selections; but ordinarily chil-

dren do not easily forgive you for padding a program. Rightly, they see no reason for such padding.

Script: *Larry Gray and the Gremlins* (For youngsters up to 12 and 14 years)

If you do not believe in fairies, in this case, gremlins, you cannot create such a program as the following. The author, in life, is a father who visits the never-never land with his children. Thrills are produced without gunplay or undue stimulation.

LARRY GRAY AND THE GREMLINS

Script by T. M. Raynolds

CAST: Announcer

Larry
Molly
Tucker
Bolo
Pilot

SOUND: Airplane motor

Helmet snaps
Click
Window shade
Telephone bell
Landing wheels
Street noises

MUSIC: Theme: "ENTRANCE OF THE LITTLE FAUNS"

MUSIC: THEME: "ENTRANCE OF THE LITTLE FAUNS": 20 SECONDS: FADE FOR:

ANNOUNCER: Hello, boys and girls. This is the story of "Larry Gray and the Gremlins." I'm sure most of you who are friends of Larry must be air-minded, just as Larry is. You probably can recognize most all of Uncle Sam's fighter planes from the ground, too. And I'll bet you also know a good breakfast food when you taste it. (COMMERCIAL) Once you've tried it, you'll say the same as Larry:

LARRY: Gee, Mom, I'd like another bowl of (————)-Wheat, please.

CHANT: (————)-WHEAT!

ANNOUNCER: The last we heard from Larry he was breaking in on a radio program, with the help of Bolo, the gremlin, so that he could tell his cousins, Molly and Tucker, that he was safe. Now we're in their house, but the time is just a minute or so before Larry goes on the air from up in the plane. Molly is saying:

MOLLY: Larry's late today. It's time for "Aunt Jane's Story Hour" already and he should have been here twenty minutes ago.

TUCKER: Well, I'll turn on the radio, and if Larry doesn't hurry, he'll just have to miss Aunt Jane's story for today.

MOLLY: I don't think he really cares so much for Aunt Jane's stories anyway, except when they're about fliers and

TUCKER: Listen. There it is.

RADIO: This is the story of Little White Polar Bear

TUCKER: And still no Larry

LARRY: (THROUGH RADIO HIS VOICE SOUNDS SLIGHTLY NASAL) This is Larry Gray, calling my cousins, Molly and Tucker. I am okay. Do not worry. I am up in an airplane headed for England. That is all.⁸

MOLLY: That is all? That's enough, if you ask Say, he was talking right over the radio.

TUCKER: What! How could he be? He said he was speaking from a plane. Oh, it's just another one of his jokes.

MOLLY: You're right, Tuck. Let's not be fooled again. I bet he's hiding somewhere outside with some trick outfit that he wired up to our radio set.

TUCKER: He'll bust in pretty soon all out of breath with some story or other. We'll just pretend we didn't even hear him.

ANNOUNCER: Well, isn't this a fine thing? Larry's cousins don't even pay any attention to his message about where he is. They're surely going to wonder about him, though, if he doesn't show up in time for dinner. Meanwhile, let's go back to the plane and see how Larry and Bolo are getting along.

SOUND: AIRPLANE UP FIVE SECONDS AND FADE TO HALF VOLUME:

BOLO: Well, now that you've told your people where you are, I hope you're satisfied.

SOUND: AIRPLANE FADES TO BACKGROUND:

BOLO: They won't believe it, anyway. I never saw any creatures like you humans for not believing things.

⁸ Of course, Larry transgressed radio law and the FCC regulations, to say nothing of the amenities of the air, in "cutting in" on a standard wave band where he had no business to be.

LARRY: Why, we believe anything we can see is true.

BOLO: But you can't see half say, that reminds me. You've got my see-alls on, haven't you?

LARRY: I guess if I didn't have them on, I wouldn't even be here.

BOLO: You most certainly would not!

LARRY: Really, I'd forgotten all about them in the excitement and everything; but, now that you mention it, they are hurting my head something awful.

BOLO: My tools are back in the tail of the plane. Come on, take my hand, and we'll go out and get in again back there. The air pull is mighty strong. All set?

LARRY: All set.

SOUND: MOTOR BECOMES LOUDER:

BOLO: Here we go. Careful, now, when you climb over that enclosed cockpit. There, isn't this just like walking on a sidewalk down there on the ground?

LARRY: The walking is the same. But no sidewalk I ever saw could fly. Gee, this is swell. I can see lights coming on for miles in every direction.

BOLO: Yes, it'll soon be dark and then we can get down to business. Better take my hand again. We're going inside.

LARRY: Okay, Bolo. (OFF MIKE) Gee, I wish there was some way I could stop him.

SOUND: VOLUME DOWN LOW:

BOLO: Here they are. My tools, I mean right where I left them.

LARRY: I don't remember that you had any tools with you out on the street.

BOLO: Of course not, I put them on the plane when I first reported for this flight. Now, snap open that helmet.

LARRY: All right.

SOUND: SNAPS POP LOOSE:

BOLO: Now, the headstrap on this see-alls is made just like a window shade so it will keep getting tighter all the time. That way the see-alls won't slip off our streamlined heads.

LARRY: But I don't see how that

BOLO: Never mind, Larry, you don't have to see. Now when I press this button to release the spring, you pull back on the see-alls and that will unwind the strap.

SOUND: CLICK FOLLOWED BY WINDOW SHADE SOUND:

LARRY: Oh-h-h, boy! That feels better. Gee, am I glad to get them off! But say now I can't see you any more or much of anything else, it seems. Can't you fix them so they just stay the same size and let me wear them some more?

BOLO: Oh, I suppose I could, though it doesn't seem wise. But remember, I'm only lending them to you for a while.

LARRY: Yes, I understand you don't really seem to need them, at that. Can you see everything without them?

BOLO: Practically. But don't go getting any notions into your head. When I'm doing close work like taking out thousandths, I really need them.

LARRY: Taking out thousandths? What in the world is that?

BOLO: Oh, you know how they make airplane motors so there's only one or two thousandths of an inch between the working parts? Well, sometimes we simply take out a thousandth here and there and then the motor gets so hot that the pilot has to land. Here, try these on.

LARRY: Thank you, Bolo. They fit me fine, now. It's fun up here in the air I like it.

BOLO: Fun, is it? Well, don't forget we have work to do. We have to pixicate this airplane and we'd better get going. Now take this pair of cutters and cut all the wires you can find on the radio set. That will blank out the directional beam. Then come back here and I'll show you what we'll do next.

LARRY: No, Bolo, I won't do it. I said I wouldn't help you pix this plane and I'm not going to.

BOLO: You needn't be afraid. The pilot can't see you; I've fixed you up so he can't.

LARRY: I know that Now, Bolo, it isn't because I'm afraid. You're asking me to destroy property and I'm not going to do it. Besides, the pilot said he was ferrying this ship to England and they need all they can get over there.

BOLO: Well, maybe you're right. Still, we've got to do something for amusement. Say, I know I'll show you a new cat's cradle. It's a special one that only gremlins know. Here, hold out your hands.

LARRY: Now, that's more like it. Sure, I'd like to know a new cat's cradle. It'll be something to show Molly and Tucker from this airplane ride.

BOLO: All right. Stick up your thumbs. We anchor the cradle to them, like this. Then we lace the string around this finger, then this one and on down until all your fingers are secured together. See?

LARRY: Yes, I do so far.

BOLO: Now turn your thumbs outward as far as you can.

LARRY: Like this?

BOLO: That's the idea. Is that as far as you can turn them?

LARRY: Yes, hurry up. I can't hold this position very long.

BOLO: I'm hurrying. You see, I just make the string fast around this thumb so and then around the other like that. Now, can you move your hands at all?

LARRY: I should say not!

BOLO: That's fine. In fact, that's splendid. Now stand aside, please. I have a lot of work to do.

LARRY: You mean ?

BOLO: Of course, I'm going ahead. That's what I was assigned to this flight for, and now I'll pix it by myself.

LARRY: You cheated me, Bolo. You let me think

BOLO: Not cheated, my young friend. I just outsmarted you this time well, first my cutters. I'll be back in a jiffy, just as soon as I've disabled the radio. Hm-m-m, sounds like the pilot is singing again. Well, he'll change his tune before very long.

PILOT: (TO TUNE OF "HELL OF AN ENGINEER") Here flies a devil daring ferry pilot sort of guy.
There's not a thing up in the air that he's afraid to try;
He'll fly a ship to Jupiter, and if you feed him well,
He'll fly that baby up a tree or fly it down a well.

LARRY: I wish I could shout to the pilot and warn him, but with this can't-see-me over my head he couldn't hear my voice. Oh, gee, if I could only think of something to do.

PILOT: What in blazes has happened to that radio now? First it gives out with bedtime stories and now it has shut down completely. I'll bet there's a gremlin stowed away somewhere on this kite.

BOLO: See, Larry. He's beginning to wake up. Won't do him any good, though. See this tool, Larry? It's especially built for the job I'm doing now. Watch, I slip it under the control cable like this. Then, very gradually, so he won't notice anything, I draw this hook back between those two rollers not far, just an inch or so, but enough to shorten up this control cable that leads to the rudder.

LARRY: But that will make the plane go off to one side, won't it?

BOLO: That's the idea, Larry. You do catch on quickly, don't you? And now I give the handle a quick turn, slip the little clamp on the cable, tighten it up, release the tool and back it goes into the box.

SOUND: CLICK (RELEASE): CLANK (BOX):

LARRY: That's a mean trick. But I s'pose you're proud of it.

BOLO: Proud? I most certainly am. Didn't I design that tool myself? It's my masterpiece, that's what it is. The masterpiece of Master Gremlin Bolo. You notice I don't pix the ailerons don't even touch them. To do that would make the plane bank and the pilot would know right away something was wacky. As it is, we're just skidding sideways, ever so little, and the radio beam won't tell him anything because I first pixicated the radio set.

LARRY: You think of everything, don't you, Bolo?

BOLO: We surely do. Why, you'd be surprised at the lengths we go to. Every time a factory starts producing a new airplane we have to design a whole new set of tools for pixing it. First we have to get the blueprints of the plane

ANNOUNCER: While Larry sits there, his fingers painfully tied together with the thumbs turned out and down, Bolo, the gremlin, talks on and on, bragging about how thoroughly his "pixing" is done. Let's go down to earth for just a moment, to see how things are going at the home of Larry's cousins, Molly and Tucker.

SOUND: TELEPHONE BELL:

MOLLY: The phone! That must be Larry now Hello
Oh, hello, Aunt Mary No, we haven't seen Larry at all
this afternoon Mrs. Thompson called and told you?
Well, we heard the same thing over our radio, but we thought
it was just a joke of Larry's Do you suppose it could
really be true? Well, anyway, he said very plainly that
he was perfectly safe and for us not to worry No, I don't
suppose that really helps any, does it? Well, we'll surely
let you know the minute we hear anything G'bye, Aunt
Mary.

TUCKER: What is it, Molly? What'd she say?

MOLLY: Jerry Thompson heard the very same thing that we did. As
soon as Mrs. Thompson came home, Jerry told her and she
called Aunt Mary right away.

TUCKER: Gee, then he must have really been talking from an air-
plane. But how could he get there?

MOLLY: I don't know, but I do know that Aunt Mary is awful
worried. She's afraid he's been kidnapped.

ANNOUNCER: While, back in the airplane, the pilot still doesn't know
that anything is wrong except that he can't make his radio
work.

PILOT: Well, at last there's Chicago. I was beginning to think
someone had moved it into Ohio somewhere. Wait a min-
ute. Am I going screwy? That isn't Chicago at all
it's well, I'll be eternally fried in fat. It's Wichita,
my home field.

LARRY: Bolo, did you hear that? We're back at Wichita. We're
home.

BOLO: Of course, we are. That's why I tied that cable up short,
so we'd fly in a circle. I'm much too busy these days to go
gallivanting off across the ocean.

PILOT: Well, I may as well land and find out if I still have a job.
Believe me, I'm going over every inch of this airplane, too,
before I start out again. I'll bet a month's pay there are
gremlins at the bottom of this whole mess!

LARRY: Boy, is he burned up! I'd hate to have him catch me here.
Won't you untie my hands now, Bolo?

BOLO: Sure, I will. Don't worry now. He can't see you. We'll slip outside and jump off the tail section just as soon as she comes to a stop. There, how does that feel?

LARRY: Oh, boy, that's better. My fingers are sure numb, though.

BOLO: They'll be all right tomorrow. There, he's cutting the motors.

SOUND: MOTORS GUN A COUPLE OF TIMES AND STOP:

BOLO: We're almost there.

SOUND: JAR OF WHEELS OVER GROUND: STOP:

LARRY: Now, it's stopped rolling.

BOLO: Take my hand, Larry. Out we go. Watch your step. It may be icy. Now, jump down there!

LARRY: Solid ground does feel pretty good at that. I guess I didn't really want to go to England today, anyway not without a bag packed or anything. Well, goodbye, Bolo. I suppose I should thank you for the ride, but I can't say I enjoyed it, all tied up that way.

ANNOUNCER: So Larry finds his way out to the street, going through several big sheds with no one even saying "hello."

SOUND: STREET SOUNDS: STREET CAR, HORN, ETC.:

LARRY: Boy, I was lucky to get out of the factory without anybody seeing me. Well, what do you know? I've still got Bolo's can't-see-me on. No wonder And the see-alls, I've got those, too. I forgot all about giving them back and I guess Bolo didn't think to ask me for them. Gee, I'm hungry! I wonder if there's any dinner left at Molly and Tucker's.

ANNOUNCER: Say, boys and girls, Larry is surely going to have an exciting story to tell his cousins. But I wonder if they'll believe it. Anyway, we hope there'll be some dinner left for him. But, if there isn't, I know he'll be mighty happy to fill in with two or three big bowls of (————) Wheat and milk and sugar. Because you know (————) Wheat is not only a grand tasting breakfast food, it's also chockful of real nourishment. It's got vitamin B-one and G and also contains calcium, phosphorus, and iron, which you fast-growing boys and girls need lots of. Until tomorrow, then

.....

CHANT: (————) WHEAT!

MUSIC: THEME: FORTE TO FINISH:

Comment: Read in connection with the 5-minute script of similar title in Chapter 7, this script reveals only one of the many extensions of the area of wonder that came in when man learned to fly. The make-believe is brought in early; its premise is set up clearly for the listener to accept. This tends to prevent obnoxious questions creeping into the listener's mind which might cause ridicule later. Note there is no *talking down* to the kids; rather there is essential comradeship. In script like this, the writer must watch, and very closely, the morals of the gremlins; never should their activities be set up for emulation. Larry's moral attitude (the kids would not call it that of course) must be maintained by lines in the dialogue such as appear in this particular episode. But here again care must be taken not to turn your hero into a juvenile evangelist. Bolo's voice should always be screened into, perhaps, a dead-pan flatness. It must not be a voice of this earth, nor must it have too much dignity. You will observe that these characters, even the gremlins, have *substance*.

Script: *A Day Camper's Siesta* (Documentary)

This program, a Girl Scout presentation, is for 12- to 13-year-old girls, although Brownie (the youngest) Scouts and prospective members would be interested, too. In presenting group programs of this kind, you usually will have a pool of likely talent from which to make selections, so it is not so necessary to hold down the number in the cast. In this case, there are 12 characters, but half of them are men, so you may have to pull in some fathers who have mike presence and as much natural talent as possible.

A DAY CAMPER'S SIESTA

(A Girl Scout Program, presented over the
University of Minnesota Radio Station KUOM)

Script by Teresa T. Powell

CAST: Announcer Day Camp Leader, Boots Girls: Shirts, Dix, Rags, Legs Chief Cloudman, Indian Chief Mrs. Stevens, pioneer about 1850 Captain Tapper, ferry- man about 1850 Charlie Hoag First man Second man Third man	SOUND: Noon whistle Horse whinny Indian powwow Galloping horse Wolves howling Boat horn Running footsteps
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MUSIC: "O BEAUTIFUL BANNER"
 "COME OUT, THE SUN IS HIGH"
 "WAYFARERS' GRACE"
 "PEACE I ASK OF THEE, OH, RIVER"
 "TAPS"

ANNOUNCER: (COLD START) What makes a city grow? The people, of course! A city, a country, a world is no better than the people within it. You children of today will be the citizens of tomorrow Scouts make good citizens

G.S. CHORUS: RECITE IN UNISON: "On my honor, I will try:
 To do my duty to God and my
 country,
 To help other people at all times,
 To obey the Girl Scout Laws."

ANNOUNCER: Yes, being a Girl Scout is a serious business, but it's fun, too Have you ever wished you could be two places at once? At camp and at home, for instance? You can do just that Girl Scouts who like camping and the outdoor life can enjoy them right here in Minneapolis. Imagine camping in your own home town! That's what Day Camping offers and Minneapolis has four Girl Scout Day Camps located in different parts of the city. The Park Board has very generously offered these four beautiful sites to Minneapolis Girl Scouts so that they can enjoy the benefits of nature study and outdoor living within the city

THEME: "O BEAUTIFUL BANNER": 15 SECONDS UP, UNDER AND OUT:

ANNOUNCER: Because the first Day Camp at Glenwood Park was such a great success last summer, the Minneapolis Girl

Scouts opened up a new Day Camp at Minnehaha Falls. This year two new Day Camps will be launched, one at Columbia Park and one at Riverside. What is a Day Camp? Just what the name implies. The girls go out to the camp site each morning for a whole day out-of-doors and return home each evening. They have five days of real camp life, including cook-outs. It is the next best thing to a continuous camp experience. Day Camp begins with a flag-raising ceremony followed by the singing of songs. The girls then break up into patrols for the day's activity. And now for our play "A Day Camper's Siesta." The flag ceremony at Minnehaha Day Camp is over and we hear the girls singing

MUSIC: "COME OUT, THE SUN IS HIGH":

SOUND: NOON WHISTLE:

ANNOUNCER: The noon whistle already? That's the way time goes at Day Camp when each Scout has a caper to perform

MUSIC: "WAYFARER'S GRACE":

ANNOUNCER: (BREAKING IN) The girls are singing a grace before lunch

SOUND: (OFF MIKE) LAUGHTER: CONFUSION: SNATCHES OF CONVERSATION:

RAGS: Good fire, Dix

LEGS: Catch that cheese, oh too late

SHIRTS: Good day to be on cleanup no dishes

RAGS: Water pail empty again?

LEGS: Aren't you a shopper?

SHIRTS: (ON MIKE) What's in the feed bag, Dix? I'm starved after that exploratory hike

DIX: Angels on Horseback

SHIRTS: HMMMMM I know Cheese wrapped up in ham and broiled

DIX: Your green stick for broiling is in the crotch of that oak tree

SOUND: CAMP FIRE CONVERSATION COMES ON MIKE:

SHIRTS: Wonder why they call these "Angels on Horseback"?

RAGS: That's easy Can't you see how fast they're going?

LEGS: But, Boots, what I can't figure out is which is the angel and which is the horse?

BOOTS: The cheese must be the horse it's underneath.

DIX: Imagine a horse named cheese!

SHIRTS: You girls who plan to hike this afternoon, don't miss seeing the Stevens House. My grandmother was one of the school children who helped pull it out here to Minnehaha from its original location

LEGS: Where did it used to be?

BOOTS: Down where the Great Northern baggage room is It was the first house on the west side of the Mississippi. They could hear the wolves howling outside their door.

RAGS: Here at Minnehaha they've hidden it in shrubbery to suggest the wilderness of its original site

DIX: This is a wonderful way, girls, to learn facts for our Community Life badge

SHIRTS: And is it fun! Those early settlers were such exciting people Mrs. Stevens, Captain Tapper, the ferryman Chief Cloudman, the Indian (YAWN) Am I tired! Guess I ate too much

LEGS: What surprises me is that Minneapolis is such a young city

DIX: That's right 78 years is young for a city

BOOTS: They called the first settlement Cheeverstown, you remember. That was on the east side of the river and later it became St. Anthony. In 1872, the east and west sides joined, and Minneapolis as we know it now was on its way. Zip just like that it grew

RAGS: Just think, a hundred years ago there were Indians living in Minneapolis Cloudman was the chief of the Dakota tribe that lived on the shores of Lake Calhoun

BOOTS: They called it Lake Mendoza then Minnesota wasn't even a state until 1858

LEGS: We're the 32nd star on the American flag

DIX: Even when you read the facts, it's hard to realize I can't believe that our homes haven't always and always been just like they are now.

RAGS: Always and always is a long time, Dix. Even Minnehaha Falls hasn't always and always been just where it is now.

BOOTS: That's right, girls Over there across the Deer Pen are the remains of an earlier St. Anthony Falls. Of course, that was hundreds and hundreds of years ago

RAGS: Minnehaha Falls used to be over where Fort Snelling is now scientists think

LEGS: I suppose Shirt's grandmother helped move that, too or was that before her time?

SOUND: LAUGHTER:

BOOTS: Long before her time, Legs, but isn't there a bit of moving you could do now? That water pail needs refilling and that's your caper for today, isn't it?

DIX: Wouldn't it be fun to own a magic carpet that could take us back to early Minneapolis 75 or 100 years ago?

LEGS: I'd like to visit at the Stevens' house and see how they lived alone on the west bank of the river. It surely was a nice house to be the first on this side of the Mississippi

RAGS: With a start like that, it's no wonder that Minneapolis is known as the city of beautiful homes.

BOOTS: If we could go back 75 years, we probably wouldn't believe what we saw. We'd think we were dreaming

DIX: Speaking of dreaming. That's what Shirts is doing

RAGS: Let's put a carrot in her hand

BOOTS: Let her alone. She's woofed

LEGS: Let's sing her a song to sleep on. That sit-upon isn't over-stuffed

MUSIC: "PEACE I ASK OF THEE, OH, RIVER":

SOUND: INDIAN POWWOW: TOM-TOMS: DRUMS BEATING: GRUNTING, YELLING (AS IMAGINED BY A GIRL OF 12), HORSES WHINNY: POW-WOW STOPS:

CHIEF CLOUDMAN: Shhhhhh! Look, White Crow, who lurks there behind the mighty oak?

SOUND: HORSE WHINNIES:

SHIRTS: This is it, Cheese Whoa! This is Lake Calhoun in 1834 Hi, Chief Cloudman!

CHIEF CLOUDMAN: Welcome to Lake Mendoza, Shirts! Long time where you been, White Shirts?

SHIRTS: At the laundry, Chief. Say, what's cooking?

CHIEF CLOUDMAN: (WITH DISGUST) Cooking? That is squaw department We have heap big powwow we braves after that we eat.

SHIRTS: You didn't catch, Chief I mean, why all the excitement? It looks like a barber's holiday all those toupees hanging from the trees

CHIEF CLOUDMAN: You don't catch, White Shirts They first-class Chippewa scalps This heap big powwow celebration

SHIRTS: No kidding! I thought you were a friendly tribe

CHIEF CLOUDMAN: Most of time friendly We Dakotas, but these ninety scalps they had it coming. They kill nephew of Red Bird. We get even

SHIRTS: Well, a real live Indian powwow How quaint! Begin again, will you? I could try something like this for my dramatics badge I'll take notes

CHIEF CLOUDMAN: O.K. Wait a jerk. I sharpen my tomahawk for the scalping. I do extra special first-class neat job of it

SHIRTS: Jeepers, Cloudman. Let's skip that. I'll try massacring music for the scalping part for effect. Go on from where you left off

CHIEF CLOUDMAN: Without a scalp, no good powwow! I know, I loan you a scalp How you like this heap big fella one?

SHIRTS: Don't you have any choice of colors?

CHIEF CLOUDMAN: Genuine prewar Indian scalps come only in black

SHIRTS: Prewar? Oh, I thought maybe it was WPB regulations O.K. I'll take a black one. On with the show

CHIEF CLOUDMAN: Round up, braves! Toes in! Feathers up! On your mark. Get set! Go!

SOUND: POWWOW STARTS UP TO FULL AND FADES INTO HORSE GALLOPING AND WHINNIES:

SHIRTS: Whoa, there, Cheese!

SOUND: HORSE WHINNIES:

SHIRTS: That must be it, Cheese, the Stevens house. Let me look at my time. It's just about 1850 and this is the only house on the west bank of the Mississippi

SOUND: WOLVES HOWLING:

SHIRTS: Wolves! Creepers! I hope they've used up all their red points. Giddap, Cheese. Make a dash for the house
I see someone at the door

SOUND: GALLOP SLOWS DOWN TO TROT: THEN STOPS:

SHIRTS: Yoo hoooo! Mrs. Stevens!

MRS. STEVENS: Sakes alive, Shirts Come in out of that boiling sun. I didn't expect you at the meeting

SHIRTS: Having a meeting again today, Mrs. Stevens?

MRS. STEVENS: The Cheeverstown Ladies Observatory of Manners today Tomorrow I'm having the Antimacassar Club in

SHIRTS: No wonder your house is known as the center of culture

MRS. STEVENS: Do come in, Shirts! It's so hot out today

SOUND: HORSE WHINNIES AND STAMPS AROUND WILDLY:

SHIRTS: Whoa, there! Cheese! Get out of Mrs. Stevens' petunia bed. Whoa, I say. Cheese! I can't stop her, Mrs. Stevens she's running all over your garden. Cheese.

MRS. STEVENS: Poor thing Your horse has melted away in this heat

SHIRTS: I might have known Cheese would do that. Now, how will I get back?

MRS. STEVENS: There's always Captain Tapper's ferry

SHIRTS: Oh, but it won't always be here, Mrs. Stevens. I'll have to hurry if I want to ride on it. The suspension bridge will be built in 1855. Goodbye, now, and thanks a lot.

SOUND: RUNNING FOOTSTEPS:

SHIRTS: Captain Tapper! Captain Tapper! Are you going my way?

CAPTAIN TAPPER: There's only one way to go in this country, Shirts
..... that's ahead

SHIRTS: Lucky for me I'm going ahead, too

CAPTAIN TAPPER: Well, why don't you toot the horn?

SHIRTS: That's right I remember your ad in the St. Anthony Express (my grandmother has a stack of those old newspapers) "Captain Tapper will be in attendance at the sounding of the horn which can at all times be found in his boat." Here it is let's go.

SOUND: BOAT HORN TOOTS:

CAPTAIN TAPPER: Ship ahoy Bo'sun, all aboard for Cheeverstown! Also known as St. Anthony. At exactly 5 minutes 30 seconds after 12, we are leaving the shores of the Classic Plain of All Saints

SHIRTS: Can't you step on it a bit, Captain, I'd like to get to Cheeverstown in time to see the Red Line and the Blue Line Stage coaches. Things change so fast in this settlement.

CAPTAIN TAPPER: You're telling me! Before you know it, zip Minnesota will be a state.

SHIRTS: And then zip the east side of the Mississippi, St. Anthony, will be a city

CAPTAIN TAPPER: Another short zip 1867 and the west side will become a city Minneapolis

SHIRTS: Two long zips ahead and you'll have 1872 when they join together.

SOUND: BOAT HORN TOOTING:

CAPTAIN TAPPER: What's the idea of tooting the horn?

SHIRTS: This is my stop, Captain Tapper I want the time they decided on the name for our city

CAPTAIN TAPPER: Straight ahead, Shirts Remember, there's no going back here

SOUND: HORN TOOTING:

CAPTAIN TAPPER: (OFF MIKE) Captain Tapper at your service

SOUND: HORSES: HEAVY WAGONS: UNGREASED WHEELS: SOUNDS OF EARLY TOWN: VOICES, ETC.:

FIRST MAN: That's Charlie Hoag's fancy schooling for you. What an idea for a lumbering town! Calling it a name like Minneha-polis. Nobody will want to do business in a town they can't spell or pronounce.

SECOND MAN: Albion or Lowell, seems to me, would be more fitting

THIRD MAN: What's p-o-l-i-s got to do with lumber and flour? Minnehaha's not so bad, but polis! Bah!

CHARLIE HOAG: Look here, fellows. Some day this is going to be the biggest city on the Mississippi. It's up to us to choose a name that has dignity and beauty

SECOND: Hire a hall, Charlie Hoag!

THIRD: Tell it to the Marines, Charlie

FIRST MAN: Polis? What's purty about that?

CHARLIE HOAG: Polis is Greek for city and Minnehaha is Indian. It means curling or laughing water. The city of laughing water is a wonderful name for a wonderful city!

SECOND: Minneha-polis Sure is Greek to me

HOAG: But if we leave out the "h" and call it Minneapolis, everybody will catch on. Before long, Minneapolis will be known all over the East!

SHIRTS: And the West, Charlie Hoag and the North and South Thanks for sticking to your guns, Charlie. We still love the name, Minneapolis, in 1945 and we're proud

SOUND: FADE UP LAUGHING OF GIRLS: MIXED CONVERSATIONS:

RAGS: Wake up, Shirts. We're going over to Fort Snelling. You'll be left behind if you don't shake a leg

SHIRTS: (YAWNS) I was coming to that would have been there by now (YAWNS AGAIN)

BOOTS: Come on, Shirts, you've been dreaming

SHIRTS: Well, toot the horn. There's no going back in this country.

MUSIC: TAPS:

ANNOUNCER: That was a sample of the fun at Day Camp. Of the enthusiasm of the girls for knowing and doing worth-while wholesome things that make for good citizenship. Maybe you're wondering why the girls didn't have a leader. They did, it was Boots. You just didn't recognize her. You see, at camp a leader becomes just one of the girls. She, too, receives a ridiculous camp nickname and she enters into the spirit of whatever the girls want to do. It's their fun she's sharing, and their interests she's leading into a useful and happy future. Would you like to register for one of the Day Camps? There's still time but you'd better call the Girl Scout office tomorrow. Main 5-2-7-5 to make your reservations, or Cedar 0-3-1-1 The phone numbers again: Cedar 0-3-1-1, or Main 5-2-7-5. (Aired 6/25/45)

THEME: "O BEAUTIFUL BANNER":

Comment: This is a documentary script, that is, it is built out of documents, out of authoritative historical information, into form for radio presentation. It shows that: (1) a documentary script can be entertaining while providing information; (2) you do not need a subject of world-shaking importance to make use of such a form.

The first essential in putting together a documentary script is research: that means work, a great deal of it, for the facts that you want have a stubborn perversity: they never are presented in the books, magazines, newspapers, or other records in quite the way you want them: you have to turn them to your use, being careful to avoid distortion. All this applies in the script before us.

The *progression* looks simple: Girl Scouts, interested in community history, talk over historical facts (a Community Life badge is the reward for knowing something about their home town). These facts are entertainingly woven into the conversation of the girls at lunch. This could have been continued for the remainder of the script, but the hazard of too much information and too little entertainment was great. The author caused one of the girls to fall asleep—a reasonable thing to do after lunch—and in her sleep many more historical facts are woven into dream dialogues with a Dakota Indian chief, a pioneer woman, and an upper Mississippi River ferryman. The result is a *glorified* documentary script.

Especially note the sparkle of the dialogue with the Indian chief: how present-day American slang is made to infiltrate his speech, though he stalked this land more than 100 years earlier.

The objection may be raised that these particular dream scenes are not authentic; that these dialogues with the three persons above mentioned never actually occurred. But the basic facts are unchanged and stand forth in the dialogue: the Indian encampment on the shores of a lake that now is a white man's municipal bathing beach, the first white man's house on the west bank of the river, the ferry that used to ply between the two towns now merged into a metropolis.

Also note carefully how these three pioneer characters and the communities they lived in were introduced to the listener most authentically in actual noon lunchtime conversation of the girls, before the dreamer had gone to sleep.

The music from the Girl Scouts songbook is, of course, especially appropriate.

The sound effects such as the wolves howling, and the Indian powwow should be professionally done with serious realism.

A script such as this is worth rebroadcasting at reasonable intervals by the organization whose cause it furthers; also rebroadcasting would be additional and merited recognition of the author's work.

A network program for boys

The next synopsis and script are from the *Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy*, series. This program, one of the oldest juvenile serials on the air, has been running for fifteen years. Following a summer vacation in 1946, the serial returned to the air on September 2. The date is important for it marked the inauguration of the episodic form. The pattern previously had been one of *continuing* action, similar in technical handling to the continuous story form of radio serials for grown-ups.

In this episodic form, there is a new Jack Armstrong adventure every six weeks. On the basis of five programs a week, thirty 15-minute programs would introduce, develop to a climax, and end each adventure.

Two writers were employed, Paschal N. Strong and James

Jewell, also producer. Each wrote an episode alternately. The first episode, "The Adventure of the Devil's Castle," was written by Strong. The next, "The Warning of the Burmese Cat," by Jewell. The episodes had no bearing one on the other; each was entirely distinct. This treatment is used to *eliminate attenuation*, thereby overcoming that thinning of the plot and enforced employment of illogical situations that are always among the hazards for any serial too long drawn out.

Writers of radio serials for adults, especially new writers, should study this development carefully in their efforts to set new patterns that will hold the interest of the continued story, yet overcome its time-proven weaknesses.

The episodic treatment—long used in the *Vic and Sade* programs—permits the writer to use the same characters, but it relieves him of many of the absurdities of cliff-hanging climaxes. It also permits him to keep his story more intimately in step with the concerns and worries of his community, his country, and the world; in other words, life in the immediate now. (The first *Jack Armstrong* adventure reproduced here has to do with application of atomic power.) And the brevity of the episode—six weeks compared with six years or more in standard serials—is another factor in quick shifting from one problem to another as the exigencies of the times demand, or the opportunity permits.

The first Jack Armstrong episode was "thought through" first and corraled on paper by the author, Paschal Strong. The "story line" established the limits of the episode, and outlined the problems that would be introduced, the *major conflict* and the lesser ones stemming therefrom that kept the plot boiling, and the kids listening.

Many writers fairly bubble over with outlines and synopses and ideas, but falter and fail in turning their embryonic brain children into reality: drama in this instance. That is the hurdle which must be taken if you ever are to become a writer.

Note the important ingredients that go into the story: the locale, a "lonely scientific retreat," an eerie, out-of-this-world atmosphere accentuated by a fanatical leader (the hermit) and his band of followers; the hazards of fire and water; and a murder early in the episode. The *conflict* is obvious: posses-

sion of the scientific apparatus perfected by the good scientist, which apparatus is sought by a former colleague who turns out to be the villain of the piece.

Synopsis: *Adventure of the Devil's Castle*

The synopsis presented in its entirety follows:

In answer to an urgent wire from a famous but eccentric scientist known to Vic Hardy, Jack Armstrong, Vic, and Billy visit his solitary scientific retreat, a castlelike stone house standing above the waters of a large power reservoir in the mountains above Pittsburgh. The house, known as the Devil's Castle, was built long ago by a coal magnate on the site of his exhausted coal mine. To the mountaineers of the region the building is a sinister house of evil inhabited by a scientist in league with the devil. This feeling is encouraged by a mountain hermit who lives in a near-by cave directly on the waterfront, and who has organized the mountaineers into a fanatical group. The feeling is further spread by queer electrical phenomena which appear over the ancient building as the scientist performs his electrical experiments.

The story opens with Jack and his friends arriving late on a dark and stormy afternoon at the hermit's cave where they must abandon their car and proceed on foot to the Devil's Castle. The hermit meets them and warns them against intercourse with the devil's emissary, but they proceed nevertheless. The Devil's Castle, as they approach it, bears out all the wild tales they have heard, with strange lights flickering inside it. But when they reach the house, as the storm breaks, nothing greets them but a pistol shot and darkness. Breaking in, they discover the body of the scientist, recently murdered, among the wreckage of his laboratory.

Dictograph record re-creates crime

A search failing to find the murderer, they return to the body. A clue left by the dead man points to a concealed microphone wired to a hidden dictograph. Playing back the record, they hear a conversation between the murderer and his victim which

re-creates the crime and shows that the scientist had perfected what he called a cosmo-tomic generator—a device to utilize cosmic rays to release the *electrical* atomic energy of matter. It is composed of two principal parts: a magnetic concentrator which concentrates and focuses cosmic rays, and the energizer which uses these rays to release electrical energy in the form of continuous high-voltage discharge, capable of being regulated and competing with high-power commercial generators.

In reconstructing the crime, it appears that the murderer had found only the energizer and was trying to force the scientist to reveal the whereabouts of the magnetic concentrator when the arrival of Jack and his friends, announced by an electronic burglar warning, had caused him to murder the scientist and flee with the energizer.

Before dying, the scientist had managed to whisper a few words of directions to Jack and Vic in the microphone, but had evidently expired just as he was about to name the murderer. While awaiting the police, Jack searches the place and finds the magnetic concentrator and sufficient technical papers to give a clue to the construction of the energizer. The police arrive with the scientist's attorney, who agrees to comply with the dying man's instructions to turn everything over to Jack and Vic to complete his work.

Is murderer living in the house?

Jack and Vic decide to stay there and try and reconstruct the energizer. Knowing that the murderer will return in an effort to steal the magnetic concentrator, they keep a constant alert with the electronic burglar alarms. Certain incidents at this time seem to bear out the hermit's warning that the house is haunted by the devil, and when the murderer does return, he mysteriously does so without setting off the electronic alarms. While he does not find the magnetic concentrator, he manages to destroy the papers concerning the energizer before he is discovered. He escapes in the dark after a struggle and disappears, again without setting off the alarms. Is he in fact living in the house all the while?

With the loss of the papers, Jack gratefully accepts the offer

of assistance from a Professor Rowers (apparently a name more forbidding on the ear than *Morley* which was used originally in the synopsis), who has worked with the murdered scientist in his earlier experiments. But when Rowers arrives, Jack detects a slight similarity between his voice and the voice of the murderer on the dictograph record. Until he is surer of Rowers, he refuses to reveal the hiding place of the magnetic concentrator. Shortly after this, the hermit arouses his mountaineer sect to destroy the Devil's Castle on the grounds that it is occupied by followers of the devil who are planning to destroy the world with an atomic bomb. The fanatics set fire to the place, forcing Jack to get the magnetic concentrator out of hiding. Rowers then reveals himself as the murderer, and in the excitement of the fire gets the drop on Jack and his friends. He secures the concentrator, and forces them into the tower of the house, a tower which has now become a deadly fire trap.

Clue to underground exit

With full tower observation, Jack still cannot see Rowers escape from the house, and concludes that an underground exit must exist. He and his friends break out of the tower, search the basement amid fire and smoke, and discover the concealed exit, an old mine shaft that has obviously been rigged up for recent use. This explains much that has happened before. They follow Rowers down the shaft and find themselves in an abandoned coal mine. They finally emerge in the hermit's cave, and discover that the hermit is an accomplice of Rowers, planted there to keep track of the murdered scientist's progress. Jack and his friends overcome the two, but before they can escape with the complete cosmo-tomic generator, the fanatical mountaineers arrive at the cave's entrance and Jack and his friends are forced to retreat back into the mine, leaving the heavy generator behind them.

The mountaineers follow and trap them in a blind heading. A small cave-in threatens death to their leader, but Jack and Vic are able to save him at great risk to themselves. As a result, they are able to convince the others that they have been duped by the hermit. They follow Jack back toward the cave

to get their revenge (and the cosmo-tomic generator), but an unreconstructed fanatic precedes them and warns the hermit, who with Rowers manages to block the heading permanently. Jack and his friends and mountaineers are trapped, and Rowers tells them that he's going to drown them all by shutting off the sluice gates and crest gates at the power dam and letting the reservoir rise.

The invention given to UN atomic commission

Jack and Vic escape through an old ventilation shaft, which caves in before the rest can follow, and rush to the dam. They arrive after Rowers has held up the dam crew and closed all sluice and crest gates, also blowing the transformer which brings in current so that the gates cannot be opened. Jack and Vic overcome Rowers and the hermit, and in a desperate effort to save Billy and the mountaineers they set up the cosmo-tomic generator, which Rowers and the hermit have brought along. (This is worked out in a split script which brings in the predicament of Billy and the mountaineers as the water rises.) The generator works, the gates are closed among spectacular electrical discharges, and the story ends with Jack deciding that the invention will cause such an industrial upheaval that it had better be turned over to the UN atomic commission for disposition.

The script itself

Now, the script of the fourteenth program in the sequence of thirty 15-minute shows. It is not the most action-packed of the series, but it gives you in narrative form Jack's deduction that Professor Rowers is the villain of the piece, the murderer of the scientist, Dr. Seybold. And in the action itself, the boys come face to face with the villain.

Script: *Jack Armstrong, The All-American Boy* (Adventure story for boys from 5 to 15—peak interest bracket 8-10)

JACK ARMSTRONG ⁹

(Fifteen-minute program presented
over ABC Network five days a week)

Script by Paschal N. Strong

CAST: Jack Armstrong	SOUND: Door closing
Billy, pal	MUSIC: Organ: Theme
Vic, pal	Dramatic chord
Rowers, scientist	Mystery and suspense
Sergeant, state trooper	Dramatic tag

(OPENING COMMERCIAL)

ORGAN AND VOICES: Jack Armstrong Jack Armstrong
Jack Armstrong

BOB: The All-American Boy!

ORGAN: THEME:

BOB: Wheaties "Breakfast of Champions" bring you the
thrilling adventures of Jack Armstrong, the All-American
Boy!

ORGAN: THEME OUT:

BOB: Today we're saluting a baseball champion a hard-hitting
first baseman who's thirty-two years old today.

Who am I talking about, you ask? Well, I'm referring to
Nick Etten of the New York Yankees a fellow I think
you'd like to know.

Nick is a quiet sort of a guy not one to push himself
forward. But at the same time, he does a terrific job. In
fact, Nick is the only first baseman since Lou Gehrig's day
who has held this job with the Yankees for two full seasons.

Now, Nick, like so many champions, is a Wheaties eater.
And here's what he says about the famous "Breakfast of
Champions":

"When breakfast time comes around, just bring on the milk
and the fruit, and the Wheaties, Breakfast of Champions,
and I'm ready to go!"

So, why not take a tip from Nick Etten? Build your break-

⁹ Reproduced with "story line" by permission of General Mills, Inc., the
sponsor. Agency, Knox Reeves, Advertising, Inc.

fast around big bowls of those flakes of one hundred-percent whole wheat, with plenty of milk and fruit.

Try 'em, won't you? That General Mills product—Wheaties, the "Breakfast of Champions."

(LEAD IN)

ORGAN: DRAMATIC CHORD:

ANNOUNCER: And now, Jack Armstrong in "The Adventure of the Devil's Castle."

ORGAN: MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE:

ANNOUNCER: In the laboratory of the Devil's Castle, Vic Hardy and Billy are staring at Jack with amazement. For Jack has just told them that he knows who killed the brilliant scientist, Dr. Seybold. Many startling things have happened since they found Dr. Seybold's body slumped over his desk in that lonely stone house in the Pennsylvania mountains, the house which a fanatical hermit calls the Devil's Castle. First, they found the hidden dictograph which told how the crime was committed. They discovered that Dr. Seybold had perfected an outstanding device to use cosmic rays to unlock the electrical energy of the atom, and that the murderer had stolen half of the device but couldn't find the other half. Jack and Vic found the other half, and have it well hidden. But then Dr. Seybold's body disappeared before the police arrived, and was later discovered in the hermit's cave by the lake. Dr. Seybold's lawyer, Mr. Kent, arrived, and later Professor Rowers, who offered to help Jack reconstruct the missing half of the atomic device. And then the wild hermit came up with his superstitious mountaineers in a vain effort to destroy what they thought was the devil's workshop. But right now, a bit dazed from recent events, Jack and Billy and Vic are alone in the electrical laboratory, and Jack has sprung his great surprise. Listen:

BILLY: Jack! Did you say that

JACK: I said I know who the murderer is, Billy. And he'll be here in just a minute.

VIC: All right, Jack. Who is he?

JACK: Professor Rowers, Vic.

VIC AND BILLY: Professor Rowers!

JACK: That's right. And the lawyer, Mr. Kent, is his accomplice.

BILLY: Well, great whales and little fishes! I I can't believe it, Jack. And here we were, talking to him just before the hermit arrived.

JACK: That's right. I wasn't sure until the hermit got here. Then, when Professor Rowers wouldn't stay to meet the hermit, I knew.

VIC: Are you just guessing, Jack? Or do you know?

JACK: Let's call it an educated guess, Vic.

BILLY: Well, go ahead. Tell us how you found out. And quick before they come down from the tower.

JACK: You remember, Billy, there was something familiar about Professor Rowers. You noticed it too. We couldn't quite place it, but

BILLY: But it was as though we had met him before.

VIC: That's odd, Jack. I had that queer feeling too. But I didn't mention it. After all, Professor Rowers telephoned from Pittsburgh the morning after the murder.

BILLY: And I know I never met him before to-day.

JACK: You met part of him last night, Billy.

BILLY: Part of him?

JACK: Yes his voice.

VIC: Jack do you mean that his voice is the same voice as the one on the dictograph record?

JACK: That's right, Vic. It's the same voice we heard talking to Dr. Seybold just before the shot was fired.

BILLY: But but that voice was smooth and drawn out, Jack. Professor Rowers speaks with short, jerky sentences.

VIC: Of course, he might be disguising his voice now.

JACK: Not now, Vic. He disguised it when he killed Dr. Seybold. He had worked with Dr. Seybold before years ago. He hadn't planned to kill Dr. Seybold at first. He wore a mask and disguised his voice so Dr. Seybold wouldn't recognize him.

VIC: Hmmmm. I do recognize a slight similarity between the two voices, Jack, as I remember them.

BILLY: But but he came back and stole the dictograph record, Jack. He's destroyed it by this time. We can never prove it's the same voice.

VIC: Just a minute, Jack. There's something wrong with the picture. He couldn't have come back and stolen that record. We know he was in Pittsburgh about that time. We checked on the telephone call.

JACK: That's right, Vic. That's where Kent comes into the picture. He stole the record. He came in with the police, remember. He discovered about the record, in fact, he played it back. So he destroyed it after we went to bed.

BILLY: Then he he was the one who tore up the study looking for the magnetic concentrator.

JACK: It had to be he, Billy. That's how I connect him with the case.

VIC: All right, Jack. Let's check your theory with the facts that we know. The body disappeared just before the police came. Rowers could have taken it away.

JACK: He took it through the underground coal mines to the hermit's cave.

VIC: All right. Maybe he wanted to throw suspicion on the hermit. After that, he would have to get back to Pittsburgh.

BILLY: He had plenty of time to do that. He didn't telephone until early this morning.

JACK: That's right. Said he saw in the papers about the murder and wanted to help us with Dr. Seybold's invention.

VIC: Hmmm. And it was Mr. Kent who vouched for Rowers. Said he was a good friend of Dr. Seybold's.

JACK: Well, he used to be. But they parted company years ago.

BILLY: But where does the hermit come in, Jack?

JACK: That's where I'm guessing, Billy. We know that the hermit is a fanatic, but he's sincere. My guess is that Rowers has planned this thing for years. When he parted company with Dr. Seybold, he knew that the doctor might succeed. He had lived here with the doctor somehow he discovered the old underground exit to the coal mine and the cave.

BILLY: But I don't see how the hermit

JACK: I've found out that the hermit only moved into that cave two years ago. That probably upset Rowers' plans to get into the house through the cave from time to time. But he made the best of it. He posed as a religious man. He told the hermit that evil was loose in this house. He probably convinced the hermit that Dr. Seybold was trying to destroy the world with an atomic bomb.

VIC: Hmmm. That could be. And he hoped to throw suspicion on the hermit by taking the body to the cave.

JACK: But then he couldn't afford to let the hermit see him in this house. The hermit would know he was a fake.

BILLY: Now I get you, Jack! That's why he made some excuse and left this room when you said you'd bring the hermit in.

JACK: That was all I needed to make sure, Billy.

VIC: I believe you're right, Jack. But we haven't a shred of evidence. If the police get hold of him, we'll never find where he's hidden that energizer. And we've got to find it.

JACK: No use even telling the police, Vic. They'd laugh at us. Rowers has a reputation as a well-known scientist. We've got to keep this to ourselves for a while.

BILLY: You mean, we've got to work with those two murderers, and pretend they're our friends, and

JACK: That's just what I mean, Billy. It'll be a game of wits between us. We're after that energizer which Rowers has, and he's after that magnetic concentrator which we have.

VIC: Jack is right, Billy. It's going to be a dangerous game. But whoever wins will have the complete cosmo-tomic energizer.

JACK: And if they win, they can't dispose of it in this country. They'd have to do it abroad.

VIC: And some foreign country having all the electrical energy they want for nothing. We'll be reduced to a pauper country.

BILLY: Golly! We are playing for big stakes! Jack, I don't understand one thing. Why is the lawyer, Mr. Kent, mixed up in this with Rowers? He's got power of attorney for Dr. Seybold. He could demand that we give over the concentrator.

JACK: Right. But then he couldn't use it for himself. He's in cahoots with Rowers because they've got to get the device without anyone knowing that they have it.

VIC: We've got to plan our campaign, Jack. First of all, we've got to find out where Rowers has hidden the energizer.

JACK: Correct. And that'll be a tough job.

BILLY: Why, it might be right here in the Devil's Castle.

VIC: Or it might be anywhere in the old coal mine under the house.

JACK: And he might have taken it to Pittsburgh after he killed Dr. Seybold.

BILLY: We could hunt for it for years!

JACK: We've got to find it quickly, Billy. Or he'll beat us to the punch.

VIC: Here's what we'll do, Jack. I'll arrange to have the police sergeant come in and tell us that his men have found the energizer.

BILLY: But what good will that

JACK: I get you, Vic. Rowers will find that hard to believe. But he'll be worried just the same.

VIC: He'll be so worried that he'll go back to where he hid it, just to make sure it's still there.

BILLY: And if he goes to Pittsburgh, we'll know he took it home.

JACK: Listen! I think I hear Rowers coming down now.

VIC: I'll go and find the sergeant, and ask him to break in on us with the news.

JACK: But don't tell him why.

VIC: I won't. We'll have to dig up more evidence before we tell him about Rowers. (GOING) I'll go now.

BILLY: Jack, I don't know if I can talk naturally to Rowers . . . when I know he's the murderer.

JACK: You've got to, Billy. If he suspects that we know about him, it'll make our job a lot harder.

BILLY: Yeah, and he'll bump us off at the first chance. (DOWN) Here he comes now, Jack.

JACK: (UP) Hello, Professor Rowers. Feel better now?

ROWERS: (COMING) Much better. Wonderful thing, mountain air. Hermit gone, I see.

BILLY: (SOTTO VOCE) It is the murderer's voice, Jack!

JACK: (WRYLY) Yes, the hermit is gone, but not forgotten.

ROWERS: Eh? How's that?

JACK: He destroyed the secret drawings.

ROWERS: Destroyed the drawings! Can't believe it!

BILLY: Well, he did, just the same. He snatched them off this table and threw them into the fireplace.

JACK: He did it so quickly we couldn't stop him.

ROWERS: Terrible. Quite a fanatic, the hermit.

JACK: So now we can't reconstruct the energizer. Unless you know enough to build one without the drawings.

ROWERS: Difficult. Very difficult. Dr. Seybold worked for years. Only one thing to do.

JACK: What's that?

ROWERS: Catch the murderer. Catch the murderer and find the energizer.

BILLY: You're right, Professor Rowers. We've certainly got to catch the murderer.

ROWERS: Could be the hermit, you know.

JACK: Yes, it could be.

ROWERS: After all, found the body in his cave.

BILLY: Do you think he's the murderer, Professor Rowers?

ROWERS: Don't know. Seems likely. Queer sort of fellow.

JACK: But he wouldn't have stolen the energizer.

ROWERS: Who knows. Wants to destroy it. Suggest we look in cave.

BILLY: (SLYLY) You wouldn't want to come with us, would you?

ROWERS: Hardly think so. Matter for police. I say, Mr. Armstrong or Jack. Don't mind my calling you Jack, do you?

JACK: All my friends call me Jack.

ROWERS: Good. Proud to be your friend. I say, Jack, if you'll show me the magnetic concentrator, may help. May get

some ideas for the energizer. After all, did work with Seybold, you know. Years ago.

JACK: I'd rather not just now, Professor Rowers. Too dangerous for you.

ROWERS: Dangerous?

JACK: I'll say. Don't forget the murderer is still around loose. And he may be right here in the Devil's Castle.

ROWERS: (STARTLED) Eh? How's that?

JACK: He may be hiding here in the house. After all, he seems to know this place like his own home. He'll kill to get that energizer.

BILLY: (INNOCENTLY) And you're much too valuable to the country, Professor. We couldn't possibly risk your life until we catch the murderer.

ROWERS: Ridiculous. If I'm to help, must insist on seeing concentrator.

JACK: I promise you can see it, Professor Rowers, just as soon as we catch the murderer.

BILLY: (SOTTO VOCE) And a lot of good that'll do you, Professor.

ROWERS: Can't agree, Jack. Must see it now. Hate to do it, but will ask Mr. Kent. He has power of attorney.

JACK: Not power of attorney over the police, Professor Rowers. And the police are taking care of it. By the way, where is Mr. Kent?

ROWERS: Oh, roaming around somewhere.

BILLY: (SOTTO VOCE) Yeah, looking for the concentrator.

JACK: Here comes the sergeant now, Professor Rowers.

BILLY: And here's Vic too, Jack! Say, he looks as though he has important news!

JACK (UP) What's up, Vic? You look pleased as Punch.

VIC: (COMING) We're getting somewhere, Jack. The energizer has been found.

ROWERS: (STARTLED) The energizer! Found? Why, why that's wonderful!

BILLY: (SOTTO VOCE) Boy! That threw the Professor for a loss!

VIC: Tell us about it, Sergeant.

SERGEANT: Not much to tell. I had my men looking, here and other places. One of them found it.

ROWERS: But I say! He wouldn't know what it looked like.

SERGEANT: We got a description of it from the drawings.

ROWERS: Where did they find it?

SERGEANT: Right where the murderer hid it. And I'm not telling anything more until we pick him up.

ROWERS: Then, then you don't know who he is yet?

SERGEANT: Not yet. But we'll find him.

ROWERS: Splendid. Jack, when you get the energizer, let me know. I can help set it up.

JACK: But aren't you staying here until we find the murderer, Professor?

ROWERS: Waste of time. Matter for police. Go back to Pittsburgh until you're ready for experiment.

BILLY: Aw, don't go back to Pittsburgh, Professor. Wait till we catch the murderer.

ROWERS: Sorry. Important matter to attend to. Take Mr. Kent with me. He wants to get back, settle the estate, you know. (GOING) But I'll come back soon.

SOUND: DOOR CLOSING:

JACK: (DOWN) Boy! He couldn't wait to get away!

SERGEANT: Now look here, Mr. Hardy. I did what you asked me to. What's it all about?

VIC: We'll tell you later, Sergeant. It's nothing you can act on now.

SERGEANT: (DOUBTFULLY) Well, if it weren't for the reputation you and Mr. Armstrong have

JACK: When we can prove who the murderer is, Sergeant, we'll tell you at once.

SERGEANT: All right. I'm going to the hermit's cave. I've got some questions to ask that guy. (GOING) He knows something he won't tell.

VIC: We're getting places, Jack. We know that the energizer is in Pittsburgh.

JACK: Right. Rowers is going back to check on it. We'll follow him in and see where he's hidden it.

VIC: And I'm going to be armed, Jack. If he finds us in there, he'll know we're on to him.

JACK: I'll say. He'll have to kill us then. Come on, Billy, let's get our things. We're going to march right into the lion's den!

MUSIC: ORGAN: DRAMATIC TAG:

(LEAD OUT)

ANNOUNCER: Right into the lion's den! And you can bet that there is going to be plenty of fireworks in that particular den when Jack and his friends arrive. You won't want to miss it, so listen in, all of you, to the next thrilling episode of "The Adventure of the Devil's Castle," with Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy!

(CLOSING COMMERCIAL)

JIM: This is Jim Butterfield, and I'm wondering are you satisfied with the progress you're making in sports? Are you sold on the game of football or baseball you're playing? Or do you figure, with some expert coaching, you could play a heck of a lot better?

Well, look. If you want coaching, I'd advise you to find out about the Wheaties Library of Sports. These seventeen books are especially written for kids like us. They're full of action pictures, and hot coaching tips on almost every major sport, tips that will help you play a better game.

It's a swell deal, this Wheaties Sports Library. What's more, it ties right in with the Breakfast of Champions idea that eating right, and the right kind of exercise, are mighty important in helping you and me grow up strong and healthy.

Now, eating right means putting away three good meals a day, starting with a nourishing breakfast. Say, one built around big bowls of those whole wheat flakes, Wheaties, with lots of milk and fruit.

As for the right kind of exercise well, you'll read about the Wheaties Library of Sports on your orange and blue package of Wheaties Breakfast of Champions.

Why not check up on the Wheaties Sports Library today?

MUSIC: THEME:

JIM: This is Jim Butterfield

ANNOUNCER: (CUTS IN FAST) and Bob McKee

JIM: for General Mills, makers of Wheaties, Breakfast of Champions who invite you to listen again tomorrow to another exciting episode of Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy! (Broadcast 9/19/46)

Comment: Fifteen years on the air should add up to something fairly well in line with what a kid wants in a radio program. A survey showed that 62 percent of this program's listeners are in the group from 5 to 10 years, with 38 percent in the 11- to 15-year bracket.

Kids, it is needless to repeat at this stage of this chapter, live in a whirl of adventure, actual and imaginary. They play "games"; it may be stalking redskins, though this is not as popular as it used to be; they hunt lions, for all kids like to befriend or track down animals; and every now and then they transform themselves into G-men to track down Willie the Wumpus; or they may turn themselves into gangsters and battle the cops. The gangster business stems from gangsters who flourished and left their mark on the young generation; furthermore World War II brought warfare sharply into the consciousness of the kids and they took it up in earnest, so all these activities may be found on any normal youngster's agenda for a hurly-burly 12-hour day.

Perhaps the first consideration in sizing up *Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy*, as a radio serial for juveniles is: Does it hold up for emulation unworthy qualities of leadership?

The boys, led by Jack, find themselves in an unusual situation to make a lively story, but there never is any watering down of evil, or minimizing of that which is right.

Is this adventure likely to send a child to bed with his hair on end?

It demands thought and effort to give a child something different from the day's normal fare; but it must do this, or he will not listen. Normally, he is likely to put it with his other "adventures," vicariously undergone though they are. Healthful diversification in his day's activities contributes to his developing *experience*.

There is a murder in the *Jack Armstrong* story, the evil scientist kills the good one, but it has been committed just as the boys arrive, so their cue is to find out *whodunit*.

The author resorts to narration as he has Jack deduce from the evidence the identity of the murderer. It is quite like the deductions that accompany adult detective and mystery stories, only these deductions usually come toward the close of the program, the lead character fitting the pieces of the crossword puzzle involving the criminal neatly into place. In the script we have just read, this deduction—it comes midway of the entire episode, it will be noted—takes up half of the 15-minute program. Because it is narration, in other words *talk*, it does not have the life that dramatic action has, but even Sherlock Holmes *explains* things to Watson. The latter half of this fourteenth program is direct action, action *in the now*, with the boys in face-to-face conversation with the murderer.

Do boys such as these get into adventures such as this? Is this a believable story?

It does not need to be, in the strictest sense. First of all the story must hold interest by providing something different from normal routine; it must be entertaining. That's what adults demand in fiction, too.

Further, it is well to note the timeliness of the plot, which has to do with atomic energy. The dialogue does not go deeply enough into the mechanics of the two principal machines—both have important parts in the plot—to cause quibbling, and for the same reason it does not bore the kid who is not mechanics-minded. Nevertheless the machines, besides being good props, actually *work*, at least in the story. And that is where a bit of social consciousness and service to society is tied in. The invention, Jack decides, would cause such “an industrial upheaval” that it had better be turned over to the UN Atomic Commission for disposition. For the writer it is a neat *out*; as a lesson in co-operation in “One World” politics—though the kids might not call it that—it hits a good mark.

The commercial

Who listens to *Jack Armstrong*? A survey made by the sponsor shows that kids from 5 to 15 years old listen, but that the largest percentage is in the 8 to 10 year group. In detail, the listeners grouped as follows: 5 to 7 years, 27 percent; 8 to 10

years, 35 percent; 11 to 13 years, 25 percent; 14 to 15 years, 13 percent. To put it another way, 62 percent of the listeners are between 5 and 10 years old, with 38 percent in the 11- to 15-year bracket, as previously noted.

That range of 10 years presents a problem in determining the objective of the commercial. It is clear that an appeal aimed at the 7-year-old is going to sound too young for the 14- or 15-year-old potential champion, proud of his years. The problem is met by directing respective commercials from day to day at one age group after another: if a Monday appeal was meant for the youngest kids, then Tuesday's might be directed at the oldest boys. What remains constant, of course, is the merit of the cereal, for a kid of any age.

The principal voices in the commercials are Bob McKee, regular announcer, and Jim Butterfield, junior announcer, a teen-age boy who talks to the youngsters in their idiom.

Interest is heightened by reference to the birthday anniversaries of champion athletes, particularly reigning favorites. Sometimes this salute is made directly applicable to all the kids whose birthdays fall on the day the commercial is given in this wise: "Is this your birthday? Well, it's ——— too," and the name of the particular athlete is given, whose birthday is actually on the same day.

Thus, with the athlete duly identified, the way is opened for easy introduction of his endorsement of the product advertised. It is the testimonial form of advertising, time-honored through many years of use, given up-to-the-minute appeal because of the popularity with the kids of the "champion" giving the endorsement.

In the script before us, the final argument in the opening commercial is: Take a tip from Mike Etten. Eat the cereal yourself. That's what he does.

The closing commercial brings in the voice of the junior announcer, Jim Butterfield, who talks with the kids about the library of sports, seventeen books in all. The cereal package itself carries the details about the library and the way the respective books, containing tips on how to play a better game, can be obtained.

One of these books is entitled *Let's Dance*, which may seem considerably removed from the gridiron or the baseball field,

yet the average kid would "give his eye teeth" to dance well. The junior announcer naturally carried the lead in acquainting the listeners with the offer. He told them about the contents of the book, how the various dance steps were detailed in diagrams and how the book could be obtained: a box top and 10 cents.

Note that very wisely the juvenile appeal of the program is maintained in the closing lines given by the junior announcer, the invitation "to listen again tomorrow to another exciting episode."

A network program for younger kids

Let's Pretend, Nila Mack's nationally recognized contribution to children's radio entertainment, celebrated its sixteenth anniversary August 17, 1946. This once-a-week (Saturday morning) show was an institution in the American home long before it got itself a sponsor. Its forte is make-believe, skillfully done dramatizations of fairy tales and folklore, each broadcast opening with the audience being whisked (by intriguing sound effects) to never-never land.

There is always a participating audience in New York where the show is produced, an audience that makes its buoyant presence known in any listener's living room. The kids in the audience range in years from 3 or 4 to as old as 15 years. But the major age group for whom the show has greatest appeal and to whom the program, including the commercial, is directed, is 6 to 12 years. This of course does not mean that other kids, including a liberal representation of elders, do not listen, but children below 6 years may falter in sustained listening, and children above 12 frequently emerge from the Cinderella stage with a loud whoop of derision.

Nila Mack says that among ten stories that "are universal favorites with children, *Cinderella* is far and away the most popular." The others, not in particular order of preference, are: *Sleeping Beauty*, *Jack and the Bean Stalk*, *Puss in Boots*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Rumpelstiltskin*, *Snow White* (or *Snow Drop*) and *the Seven Dwarfs*, *Snow White and Rose Red*, *The Little Lame Prince*, and *Hansel and Gretel*.

This is weighty evidence that there is nothing to date so good

as a time-honored folk tale or fairy story for kids, even in America which got its start thumbing its nose at royalty.

Script: *The Nuremberg Stove*

The script of *The Nuremberg Stove* has been selected for reproduction here, for reasons that will appear in the comment to follow. By popular request, and commendably, it has been broadcast more than the customary once, the most recent presentation being on December 8, 1945. It is unnecessary to point out that the same old Bavarian capital was the scene of the trial and execution of the Nazi war criminals in our time.

THE NUREMBERG STOVE¹⁰

(Twenty-five-minute program presented
over the CBS network on Saturday mornings)

Script by Nila Mack

CAST: August Strehla	SOUND: Dog barks
Karl, father	Door opening and shutting
Dorothea, sister	Rooster crow
Albrecht, brother	Clock striking four and twelve
Gilda, baby sister	Creaking well chain
Christof, another brother	Sleigh bells and horses' hooves
Woman at the well	Stove scraping and bumping
Steiner, a merchant	Train speeding
Fritz, his helper	Feet on wooden floor
Dresden Shepherd	Footsteps
Dresden Shepherdess	Whiz-bang
Copenhagen Porcelain Princess	Paper rattling
Dutch Jug	Cloth ripping
Hirschvogel, the stove	Iron stove door opens
King	Echo chamber
Announcer	

¹⁰ Reprinted with permission of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc. Copyright, 1947, by Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc. Original radio adaptation by Nila Mack.

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MUSIC: Theme
"NIGHT IN SPAIN"
BRAHMS' "LULLABY"

ADAMS: Cream of Wheat the Great American Family Cereal presents "Let's Pretend."

(STANDARD INTRODUCTION AND OPENING AND MIDDLE COMMERCIALS OMITTED IN THIS SCRIPT. SEE CHAPTER 5 FOR COMPLETE COMMERCIAL CONTENT OF SIMILAR PROGRAM.)

ADAMS: Once upon a time in a land that used to be, there was a little boy who loved beautiful things. His family was poor but they had one prized possession, a genuine Hirschvogel stove. As our story begins it is after supper in the cozy kitchen of the Strehla home. The children are gathered around August, the favorite brother, while they toast themselves before the warm glow of Hirschvogel, the beloved antique stove

MUSIC: OUT:

(BEGINNING OF FIRST ACT)

CHRISTOF: Now then, August it's after supper. You promised you'd tell us a story.

GILDA: And draw a cow for Gilda.

AUGUST: (LAUGHS) All right, I'll draw your picture, Little Eyes like Forget-me-nots, and tell a story at the same time. How's that?

ALBRECHT: Sit with us, Dorothea.

DOROTHEA: I can't, Albrecht. I must put Papa Karl's soup on the back of the stove. I wonder what keeps him so late!

CHRISTOF: Now come on, August. Tell us about Hirschvogel.

AUGUST: What do you want to know first?

CHRISTOF: First how the stove got his name.

DOROTHEA: (LAUGHS) He's told you a million times, Christof.

CHRISTOF: But I want to hear it again.

AUGUST: And I love to tell it. All right, Christof. Hirschvogel was a famous potter and painter who lived in Nuremberg and he was known all over the world for the beautiful stoves he made. You see the initials on the stove right there

CHRISTOF: I see them H.R.H. 1532.

AUGUST: Yes, he marked all his stoves like that. For if Hirschvogel, here, could only talk he could tell us of all the millions of people who have depended on him for warmth and comfort. When he brings summer to us all through the icy winter

ALBRECHT: Kings and princesses, do you think?

AUGUST: Of course.

CHRISTOF: The crimson stockings of cardinals, maybe?

AUGUST: And gold-broidered shoes of duchesses too!

GILDA: (YAWNS) And brownies and fairies, August?

AUGUST: Who should say no, Forget-me-not Eyes? After all, there must be fairies or how else could Grandfather Strehla ever have had the luck to find Hirschvogel?

GILDA: August! (YAWNS) Write Gilda a a (GOES TO SLEEP)

AUGUST: (LAUGHS) Write Gilda a lullaby. Dorothea, she's fast asleep.

DOROTHEA: I'll take her, August. Those blue eyes are fast shut. Come along to your cradle, baby.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS:

ALBRECHT: Go on, August. Who are the four golden kings on each corner?

AUGUST: Well, let me see That one was probably Charlemagne. And facing him there with the golden shield that's the good King Arthur at the far corner that's John the Good. And the last one that is Richard the Lion Heart.

CHRISTOF: I love the panels of enamel with their holly and roses and laurel. What do they mean, August?

AUGUST: The panels represent the ages of man. There's the child see the next is the young man then comes the father and last this one with the laurel wreath and mottoes that's the old man.

ALBRECHT: And the golden crown, 'way, 'way up on the top with the jewels who did that belong to?

AUGUST: Well, let's say tonight, that it's August Hirschvogel's own crown that some great and good king gave him for making such handsome and perfect stoves.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS:

DOROTHEA: Albrecht Christof time for bed.

ALBRECHT: Oh, no, Dorothea we want to hear more about Hirschvogel.

DOROTHEA: But not tonight, Albrecht. Your bed is waiting for you.

CHRISTOF: We'll talk about it tomorrow, August?

AUGUST: Indeed we will. As much as you like. Good night, Albrecht.

ALBRECHT AND CHRISTOF: (AD LIB) Good night.

DOROTHEA: I wonder what keeps Papa Karl. He is very late tonight. I hope nothing has

SOUND: DOOR OPENS WIND BLOWS DOOR SHUTS WIND STOPS:

DOROTHEA: Oh, there you are, papa. I am glad you're home.

AUGUST: I'll help you with your coat, papa. Oh, you are cold.

KARL: It's bitter out tonight and the hearts of men are as cold as the snows of the Tyrol.

DOROTHEA: Why, what's the matter, papa? Has anything happened?

KARL: Besides the butcher, the grocer, the miller hounding me for money? Yes much has happened.

AUGUST: Sit here by the stove, papa. We will bring some nice hot soup to you, and Hirschvogel will warm you.

KARL: I don't want soup.

DOROTHEA: Oh, but you must eat, dear Papa Karl. Really you must. No matter how worried you are.

AUGUST: What has happened, papa?

KARL: (PAUSE) I have sold Hirschvogel.

AUGUST: (A SLIGHT PAUSE) Sold Hirschvogel.

DOROTHEA: Oh father the children And in midwinter.

AUGUST: It isn't true it can't be true.

KARL: It is true and would you like to know something else that is true? The bread you eat the meat in the stew the roof over your heads none of them is paid for. Two hundred florins won't take care of all of it but it will help and so Hirschvogel will be carted off tomorrow morning.

DOROTHEA: August darling don't look like that.

AUGUST: (IN TEARS) Oh, papa you cannot mean it. You cannot sell our comfort our very life. Oh, papa, give them back the two hundred florin I beg you, on my knees. (SOBS)

KARL: You are a fool. Get up the stove is sold and goes to Marienplatz tomorrow at daylight.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS:

AUGUST: (SOBBING) He can't he can't sell you, Hirschvogel he can't tear the sun out of the heavens like that he can't.

DOROTHEA: Oh, darling August don't. You'll burn your lips if you kiss the stove get up, darling come to bed you'll be calmer tomorrow.

AUGUST: Leave me alone. . . . I shall stay with Hirschvogel go away.

DOROTHEA: But it will soon be cold, dear the fire is dying.

AUGUST: It will never be warm again never never. . . . never (SOBS FADE OUT)

SOUND: ROOSTER CROW: CLOCK STRIKES FOUR: ROOSTER CROWS FAINTLY: THIS IS FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY THE SOUND OF CREAKING WELL CHAIN AT THE PUBLIC WATERING PLACE:

OLD LADY: Well, neighbor August, you're up early. . . . 'tis scarcely light enough for me to see to draw the water from the well.

AUGUST: I have not slept all night, Madam Otho.

LADY: What ails thee, neighbor.

AUGUST: My father has sold the blessed Hirschvogel and today within the hour they will come to take my friend away (SOBS)

LADY: Sold Hirschvogel? Then he must have gotten a fine sum for it. 'Tis a magnificent stove that

AUGUST: He has sold my whole world for two hundred florins.

LADY: Faith now, and the man's a fool to let a masterpiece like a genuine Hirschvogel go for that why didn't he trade with an honest dealer if he must sell it?

AUGUST: One shouldn't sell a living thing for money. (SOBS)

LADY: Poor laddie you're young to have this sorrow. Come now, listen if I were you, I'd do better than cry I'd go with it.

AUGUST: (BRIGHTENING) I go with Hirschvogel But how can I?

LADY: Well, 'tis not for me to say but there is plenty of room inside the stove for a tiny lad like you.

AUGUST: And perhaps I could find a way to buy it back.

LADY: Who knows Look, here is a loaf of bread and a sausage I was taking home I'll give them to you, August and I'll leave the rest to you.

AUGUST: Oh, thank you, Madam Otho (FADES) Thank you.

MUSIC: "NIGHT IN SPAIN":

SOUND: SLEIGH BELLS AND HORSES HOOVES ON SNOW FADE IN AND STOP:

STEINER: Whoa (CALLS) Karl Strehla Strehla we've come for the stove.

SOUND: DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING:

KARL: (OFF MIKE) Aye 'tis ready come along.

STEINER: I've brought along Fritz to help lift it. Come on Fritz.

FRITZ: Yes, Steiner.

DOROTHEA: Oh, Papa Karl must they take it?

KARL: Aye and let me see now 'tis better to get it out quickly.

DOROTHEA: Papa, where is August?

KARL: I can't be bothered with a lad who cries all the time.

DOROTHEA: But papa all night long he lay on the floor by Hirschvogel sobbing his heart out.

KARL: (WEAKENING) Yes, I know I heard him Oh, Steiner, would you I mean would you take back the two hundred florins and let the stove stay?

DOROTHEA: Papa.

STEINER: (LAUGHS) Oh now, what foolishness a bargain's a bargain and you got more than a fair price no indeed come on Fritz we've wasted plenty of time lift 'er up there.

FRITZ: Hold it a minute.

SOUND: STOVE SCRAPING AND BUMPING AS THEY PICK IT UP:

FRITZ: All right.

STEINER: Open the door, will you, Strehla?

SOUND: DOOR OPENS:

FRITZ: Easy there take 'er over a little little more.

STEINER: Watch these steps, Fritz

SOUND: STOVE SCRAPES:

FRITZ: Easy now, it's heavy.

STEINER: (FADING) Better back 'er up a little.

FRITZ: Turn your end around for the sleigh.

DOROTHEA: Goodbye, kind friend.

STEINER: (OFF MIKE) Get up get up

SOUND: SLEIGH BELLS AND HORSES HOOVES START AND FADE OUT: A SLIGHT PAUSE: TRAIN SPEEDING ACROSS COUNTRY: FADE:

MUSIC: PLAY OFF:

(MIDDLE COMMERCIAL: AN EXAMPLE OF THE VARIOUS AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION GAMES THAT MAKE UP THIS COMMERCIAL IS GIVEN IN CHAPTER 5.)

ADAMS: And now, back to the story of "The Nuremberg Stove."

MUSIC: ESTABLISH:

ADAMS: In spite of little August's adoration for the Hirschvogel stove, his father sold it to a dishonest dealer in antiques. Having wept all night, August is nowhere to be found the morning the dealer comes for the stove. It is taken by sleigh,

then by train to the dealer's store. It is now near midnight as Steiner and his helper arrive at the door of the old curiosity shop.

MUSIC: OUT:

(BEGINNING OF SECOND ACT)

SOUND: SLEIGH BELLS AND HORSES HOOVES FADE IN:

STEINER: (OFF MIKE) Whoa

SOUND: HORSES STOP:

STEINER: Thank heaven we're home.

FRITZ: (OFF MIKE) I never saw the old curiosity shop look so good.

STEINER: (OFF MIKE) Unlock the door, Fritz one more minute and our job will be through.

FRITZ: (NEARER MIKE) All right

SOUND: UNLOCKS DOOR: DOOR OPENING (NEXT SPEECH IN MIKE): WIND RECORD UP AS DOOR OPENS:

STEINER: (OFF MIKE) Come on, give me a lift with old Hirschvogel.

SOUND: STOVE SCRAPES:

FRITZ: (OFF MIKE) All right! Gotter?

STEINER: Yep go ahead.

SOUND: DOOR SHUTS: FEET ARE HEARD, AND BUMPING AND SCRAPING OF STOVE:

STEINER: Easy there

FRITZ: (OFF MIKE) Where shall we put it?

SOUND: FEET HIT WOODEN FLOOR OF SHOP:

STEINER: Put him over there between the old Dutch clock and the Chinese idols careful don't stumble over that Chinese Dragon

SOUND: STOVE CLUMPS AS IT SETTLES:

STEINER: There

FRITZ: I'll say there shall I unwrap it?

STEINER: Just take off that front covering.

SOUND: PAPER RATTLES AND CLOTH RIPS:

STEINER: Oh, Fritz (A PAUSE) we have something precious here.

FRITZ: Steiner is it such a fine stove?

STEINER: Fine? Wonderful! Fritz, my boy here is the finest thing of its kind in the world (LAUGHS) and wait till the king sees it.

FRITZ: It goes to the king, then?

STEINER: Aye, my lad, and for a fabulous sum, too. But come, it's nearly twelve o'clock tomorrow we set sail at dawn for Bavaria, our final destination, come (FADE) let's get home and get some sleep.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS:

STEINER: Lock the door of the shop

SOUND: THIS BUSINESS BELOW OCCURS IN ORDER NAMED: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS AND LOCKS: SLEIGH BELLS FADE OUT: MUSIC: CLOCK STRIKES TWELVE: WHIZ-BANG: VOICES AD LIB RELIEF AT BEING FREE:

SHEPHERD: At last twelve o'clock, and the old curiosity shop belongs to us. Good evening, Dresden Shepherdess.

SHEPHERDESS: Good evening to you, Dresden Shepherd.

DUTCH JUG: I thought that old neighbor of mine would never strike the hour.

PRINCESS: What's the matter, Dutch Jug.

DUTCH: It seems such a long time before I can speak with you, Copenhagen Porcelain Princess.

PRINCESS: (LAUGHS) Don't forget "of Saxe Royale" my friend.

DUTCH: (LAUGHS) Always a stickler for your full title, eh, Princess?

PRINCESS: I'm as proud of my ancestry as anyone in the shop, Dutch Jug good evening, Jade Dragon.

DUTCH: How is our representative from China tonight.

VOICE: I am very well, thank you.

ALL: (AD LIB GREETING)

SHEPHERDESS: Did you notice the beautiful Hirschvogel stove that came in a moment ago?

PRINCESS: I did he's beautiful, isn't he?

DUTCH: No finer workmanship in all Holland than that.

DRAGON: Or in China.

SHEPHERDESS: Or Dresden.

SOUND: STOVE DOOR OPENS:

AUGUST: (TIMIDLY) Hello!

ALL: (GENERAL AD LIB)

SHEPHERDESS: Why, what in the world?

SHEPHERD: It's a boy a little boy in the old Hirschvogel stove.

PRINCESS: What, fancy that!

AUGUST: Oh, please may I come out? (AD LIB) You sound so friendly
—and I'm so thirsty I can't stand it much longer.

SHEPHERDESS: Of course you may come out. Poor lad, he's faint
from thirst.

SHEPHERD: You, China Jade Dragon, help me open this window
. . . . we can get snow from the window sill.

SOUND: WINDOW OPENS:

SHEPHERD: There you are. Clean sparkling snow.

AUGUST: Thank you, oh, thank you, little Shepherd.

PRINCESS: Are you very hungry, little fellow?

SOUND: WINDOW SHUTS:

AUGUST: Not so very, thank you. You see, I had some bread and
sausage but I couldn't get out to get any water. Oh,
this tastes good. Where am I? Please?

SHEPHERDESS: You're in the famous old curiosity shop of Marien-
platz.

AUGUST: What beautiful things you all are. But tell me, how is it
that you people can speak?

SHEPHERD: You see, after midnight all the genuine antiques in the
shop come to life.

AUGUST: Oh, then if that is true, why can't my beloved Hirschvogel
speak to me?

VOICE: (SLIGHT ECHO CHAMBER: DEEP MAJESTIC VOICE) I can, while
we are here, my little August.

AUGUST: Hirschvogel! My friend! Oh, how wonderful to hear your voice!

VOICE: We were made by artists of integrity, and high ideals. Their love of God shows in the perfection of their creations. You, little friend, love me because in your childish way, you love art. You, like the masters of old, scorn sham and haste and imitation. All your life, my son, you must remember this night. You were named for August Hirschvogel. Be like him always, my little friend.

AUGUST: Oh, dear Hirschvogel, I love you so. Must I leave you?

VOICE: I think not. Tomorrow we go to a famous person with an understanding heart.

AUGUST: Oh, then may I go with you?

VOICE: Since you came this far. Then we shall see. Now, the witching hour is nearly ended. The time for speech is short. You are tired and you must rest.

PRINCESS: Little Swiss Music Box Lady, rock your melody cradle for him.

MUSIC: BRAHMS' "LULLABY" MUSIC BOX: SEGUE TO ORCHESTRA, BRAHMS' "LULLABY": FADE OUT:

LADY: Your Majesty! Your Majesty!

KING: Yes, Lady Joan. What is it?

LADY: It's here, Sire. The Nuremberg stove. They're bringing it up the palace steps now.

KING: Excellent.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS BUMP IN:

STEINER: (GRUNTING) Where shall we put it, please?

FRITZ: Easy, Steiner.

KING: Here. Put it in the corridor.

SOUND: STOVE BUMPS AND SETTLES:

KING: Quickly, unwrap it.

SOUND: PAPER RATTLES: CLOTH RIPS:

STEINER: There you are, your Majesty.

KING: Ah, wonderful! It is perfect! H.R.H. 1532. And look, Lady Joan the gold figures the crown at the top the enamel panels and the door itself, how beautifully

SOUND: IRON STOVE DOOR BEING RATTLED AND OPENED:

AUGUST: (SCARED BUT LOUD) How do you do!

ALL: (GENERAL HUBBUB OF EXCITEMENT)

KING: Well upon my word! A child, a little boy in the stove!

STEINER: Look here! You! When did you get

KING: Wait a moment, merchant! Well, youngster. What are you doing here?

AUGUST: Oh please, sire, I've come all the way with Hirschvogel. Please don't send me away now.

KING: My child, come here. How came you here, hidden in this stove? Don't be afraid, but tell me the truth. I am the King.

AUGUST: Oh, dear King. Hirschvogel belongs to us. My father sold him I couldn't bear to part with him. Hirschvogel loves me, he does indeed!

KING: (VERY GENTLY) What is your name?

AUGUST: August Strehla, sire.

KING: How much did your father get for the stove, August?

AUGUST: For two hundred florins, sire, he sold my life.

KING: I see You you merchant who sold me the stove.

STEINER: (FRIGHTENED) Yes, your Majesty.

KING: You bought the stove for two hundred florins?

STEINER: Y-yes, sire. In a way

KING: And then you asked me two thousand ducats!

STEINER: Well, you see, it was this way

KING: Yes, I see so the first thing we do is this. See that you return to the Tyrol, pay Herr Strehla two thousand ducats, less the two hundred florins he received.

STEINER: Aye aye

KING: And also that you take him a stove to replace this one.

STEINER: But your Majesty, I wouldn't

KING: One more word from you, and you get what you really deserve now go.

STEINER: I'm going er come on, Fritz.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS RUN OUT: DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES:

AUGUST: Two thousand ducats. My father will never have to work again.

KING: Does that please you?

AUGUST: Yes, dear King. But, would you please let me stay here, with Hirschvogel? I don't mind work if I can be near him Please, your Majesty, please.

KING: Rise up, little man. Kneel only to your God; tell me what do you want to be when you grow up?

AUGUST: A painter dear King. I wish to be like the Master, Hirschvogel.

KING: Very well, August you may stay you will take lessons from the greatest painters we can find. And if, when you have come of age, and have done well and bravely, as you did in following your treasure here, then I will give you Hirschvogel for your very own.

AUGUST: Oh, dear King Hirschvogel told me that night in the old curiosity shop we were going to a person with an understanding heart.

KING: Hirschvogel Told you that?

AUGUST: Yes, sire, truly he told me that.

KING: (LAUGHS VERY GENTLY) And who shall say, then, that he did not? For what is the gift of truly great artists if it is not to see visions, to feel color to hear symphonies in sound, that we others, cannot hear.

MUSIC: CUE:

(END OF SECOND ACT)

SOUND AND MUSIC: APPLAUSE AND MUSICAL TAG:

ADAMS: ¹¹ And now, before we introduce today's cast, here's a message from Uncle Sam about a vital problem that concerns us all. We want to do our part in protecting our country from the ruinous inflation caused by rising prices, and a good place to start fighting inflation is in the grocery store! Your friend, the grocer, has posted his list of ceiling prices where you can see them. So study that list and be sure that you are paying no more than ceiling prices for the food you buy. Help your grocer, and he'll help you fight inflation. We're all trying to hold prices down. For years you've been buying that good Cream of Wheat, both "Enriched 5-Minute" and "Regular," for less than a penny a bowl. And that's all it costs you today! Remember

MUSIC: THEME SONG: LAST TWO LINES ONLY:

For all the family's breakfast
You can't beat Cream of Wheat.

ADAMS: The "Pretenders" for today were (NAMES OF PLAYERS AND THEIR ROLES). The music was conducted by Maurice Brown. The story of "The Nuremberg Stove" was dramatized and directed by Nila Mack. If you live in or near New York and you'd like to see the "Pretenders" in person, write to Cream of Wheat, CBS, New York, to get your free tickets. And now stay tuned for "The Billie Burke Show" and the "Theatre of Today" and next Saturday be sure to join us when Cream of Wheat will take you on another thrilling trip to the land of "Let's Pretend" to hear by popular demand, Nila Mack's original Christmas story, "The House of the World."

SOUND AND MUSIC: THEME AND APPLAUSE:

ADAMS: This is Bill Adams saying, remember to eat Cream of Wheat, the great American family cereal. This is CBS, the Columbia Broadcasting System.

(Broadcast 12/8/45).

MUSIC: FADE THEME 20 SECONDS:

Comment: Even those with only a meager love for adaptations would graciously bow to the contribution to good children's entertainment Nila Mack made when she put this story on the

¹¹ This closing announcement is retained here as an example of participation in a nationwide movement, this movement in particular being the fending off of inflation. Note how the retailer was tied in: "Help your grocer and he'll help you fight inflation." The closing of the show itself also is given.

air. It is one of the pieces worthy of exposition in any medium.

The background of the story is interesting. It appeared in book form—at least, between one set of covers—in 1892, though the tale probably had been in Bavarian folklore for generations or centuries. The writer was an Englishwoman with the Gallic name of Louise de la Ramée (from her French father), but she wrote under the pen name of “Ouida.”

She was a leisurely writer, back-tracking and pausing to look at the flowers and the trees and the buildings and the people along innumerable little byways, as she told her tale. It is ten full pages before the reader learns that the stove, *Hirschvogel*, “rose eight feet high . . . with all its spires and pinnacles and crowns,” and the entire story takes up 66 pages in her narration.

Whichever version was used, the problem confronting Miss Mack was not easy: she had to retain the charm of a story of a little boy who loved beauty, and she had to do it in approximately 20 minutes “after commercial.” Out of the welter of words that the original tale rests in, Miss Mack saved not only the plot but also the shining beauty of the yarn.

It is well to note several changes in the content made to fit the story to an American radio audience: Karl, the father, is made less of a weakling; in the adaptation he even tries to cancel the deal and retain the stove. Also, beer, as much a part of the Tyrol and of Bavaria as the landscape, has no part in the adaptation. In fact, the listener is not advised that the father enjoys it. In the original, little August, a boy of 9 years, is introduced lugging home a jug of it, careful not to spill any on the way. And the seemingly long railroad journey, that gave Ouida opportunity to stretch out the yarn, is omitted in Miss Mack's version. This, of course, expedites the transfer of the stove from the Strehla home to the king's palace.

What is perhaps the greatest charm of the piece? Probably the boy hiding himself *inside the stove*. That is what kids like to do: crawl into small places, and make believe, for example, they are inside a little house of their own. Leave a packing carton on the back steps and see how much fun a kid will have with it. If it's big enough or he is small enough, he will spend two or three hours in a house of make-believe he has created

out of that paper box. So little August, hidden in the beautiful stove and making a journey to a king and great good fortune, attracts the young listeners and a great many others who, fortunately, have remained kids all their lives.

Modern listeners of any age have an aversion to moral admonitions that jump out at you at the end of a story vaingloriously announcing, "See, I am *the moral* of this piece; be sure you understand me." They frequently discredit normal native reasoning. Here, the moral is palatable. And in these days of a reawakening of the humanities, it is important to note that the child hero is not dissuaded in his wish to become an artist; rather, he is encouraged to do so by a man who appreciates beauty.

Neither the name Hirschvogel nor the stoves he created are fiction, for Augustin Hirschvogel was a potter and an artist, who, with the admirable skill of a sixteenth-century craftsman proud of his work, made stoves that were "true works of art."

This image-filled story that Miss Mack has made to fall so graciously on the listening ear should be broadcast more frequently for the delight of all of us kids. It is a vital exposition of basic values needed now in a muddled world.

CHAPTER

18

*Poetry for the Radio*¹

Poetry is a projection across silence of cadences arranged to break that silence with definite intentions of echoes, syllables, wave lengths.

CARL SANDBURG²

This chapter is not for the few; it is for those who write poetry, for those who produce it on the air, and for the many millions more who like poetry and listen to poetry programs.

Never in man's singing history have poets had a like opportunity to have their lines heard by so vast an audience. Shakespeare would be making the most of it were he here today. His stage truly would not be one small theater, but the whole world. What beauty he would create out of the basic spoken word, with none of the artificial make-believe of the theater to get in his way—for, mark you, surely many never realized the depth of beauty of the Shakespearean line, its power, its perfection, until it filled the quiet of our living rooms, shorn of distracting stage devices, stage artifice, and tights that wrinkle at the knees.

But modern poets and modern poetry lovers have this opportunity that Shakespeare did not have. We have this wonder called radio—how great a wonder only dimly do we realize even

¹ The discussion in this chapter appeared originally in less extended form under the title "Poetry for the Microphone" in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, March 21, 1915, Vol. 28, No. 12, page 20.

² This is Rule No. 1 among Carl Sandburg's "ten definitions of poetry" as given in: *Good Morning, America*, copyright 1928 by Carl Sandburg. Publishers, Harcourt, Brace & Co. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

now. We have this thing that can take our lines for the listening ear to outpost and hamlet and town, over steppes and jungle and prairie, wherever man is keeping soul and body together, taking it to millions. And those millions apparently like it for itself and for themselves. Certainly never in all the centuries since man first began putting his best words into their best form, namely, poetry, has the art received so much impetus as in the past twenty-five years, the period that spans radio's existence. Radio can do even more for poetry: it can provide it in increasingly "acceptable doses" to a constantly enlarging audience as it has answered the natural hunger for music. In this, let us remember the humanitarian values of existence, and their need, sharp and clear now after being neglected for too long.

Radio perfect medium for poetry

Carl Sandburg, strumming his "gee-tar" and chanting of a "sky of tomorrows," is this century's spitting image of the medieval minstrel poet, who went up and down the Old World countryside playing and singing. Now, today, the minstrel takes to the air and not only a nation, but the entire globe might be listening, for radio is the perfect medium for taking poetry in all its real and living values into the habitations of man. Why? Because the human voice is carrying it, the human voice alone, as, from the beginning, it was meant to do. The real test of a poem is: Can it be read aloud? Only then can the full beauty of words fitly chosen and fitly spoken be presented and appreciated. Words for themselves alone, words that reveal the well-knit phrases, the recurring lines, and individualities of the writer, these are some of the things radio can bring to us.

Contributions of Archibald MacLeish

Archibald MacLeish used to take a half hour off from a desk in wartime Washington to contribute to our understanding of America and these Americas by his participation in the series of programs he built out of the old chronicles of this hemisphere. This series, entitled *The American Story*, was presented over the NBC network during the war and later was repeated as the

war with Japan ended. True, these were not poems, but they did reveal rhythmic prose in the MacLeish-created narrator's lines, and the beauty of the words, when spoken, of the old chronicles themselves.

The same poet in the prewar decade did the first verse plays written especially for radio: *The Fall of the City* and *Air Raid*, both produced by the Columbia Broadcasting System, the former on April 11, 1937, and the latter, on October 27, 1938. Later, in the gray spring of 1941, MacLeish was one of *The Free Company* which presented over CBS a notable series of radio plays definitive of America. His contribution was *The States Talking*. All of these poems of Mr. MacLeish have since been printed and have become standard pieces that had their beginnings in radio.

That same summer, on July 14, 1941, NBC presented over its (then) Blue Network Stephen Vincent Benét's *Listen to the People*, a dramatic argument that "people oughtn't to be pushed around." These were some of the poetic highlights as America prepared for World War II. Then came the war, and, for D-Day and the invasion of the Normandy coast, Edna St. Vincent Millay had a poem ready. Broadcast by NBC, that poem, *Poem and Prayer for an Invading Army*, went into living rooms throughout a nation that was literally hanging over its radios in those hours of overwhelming suspense and courage and faith that on the calendar made up June 6, 1944.

Norman Corwin achievements

Norman Corwin has won a rightful place in any comment on radio poetry. It is unfortunate that more writers have not turned to radio as wholeheartedly as he has done. Moreover, in the creative field of radio, perhaps no writer has had happier blessing from a network to do what his genius inspired him to do. He sometimes commits the error of attempting to do too much in too little time, but millions have heard his programs over the CBS network during the years he has been creating original scripts for radio. Many of his programs are poetry. On the other hand, he himself characterized as a "non-poem" his contribution for V-E Day, May 8, 1945, the day Germany's

surrender was announced. It was entitled *On a Note of Triumph*. However, if not a poem, only a poet—and Corwin is that—could have written it. In celebration of the end of the war with Japan, on V-J Day, he presented another original piece entitled *14 August*. Corwin³ is to be commended because from the very first, he has been alert to broaden the manipulative use of the medium, quick to turn its possibilities to advantage for the listener and the writer.

This is not a history of radio poetry, but all of these programs and others are worth study by the poet interested in writing for radio. A special reading list of radio poetry presentations in book form is a part of this chapter.

Poets have an opportunity in radio that should spur them into enlightening and entertaining activity. What if your work never gets beyond the local station, never reaches network presentation; it still can be worthy; it still can be good. Some examples of work of this kind are also part of this chapter. Where poets fail is that too frequently they are deaf to the fact that radio and its use of the spoken word is the *ideal* medium. They do not write *for it*.

Radio poetry conversational

The question undoubtedly is in your minds: what is it that radio poetry must have? It's conversation predominantly. It's people talking with one another, using words easy to say, easy to understand, and often beautiful to listen to. Not that every word in the poems is easy to say, or easy to understand, or beautiful to hear, but that is the objective to keep in mind when

³ That Corwin has been influenced by Carl Sandburg's work, including *The People, Yes*, is set forth in an article by Cameron Shipp in the magazine *Coronet* in which Sandburg's evaluation of Corwin's work is also shown. This evaluation—in the form of a fan letter—is in part as follows: "You [Corwin] assemble, orchestrate, time and chime. To have the technique, and then have something of history, past and present, to shape and utter with it, so it haunts listeners with big meaning, for this hour, that is being alive."—"Corwin of the Airwaves," *Coronet*, December, 1945, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 32-40. For adverse comment on Corwin, see "Easy Chair: Corwin's 'On a Note of Triumph'" by Bernard De Voto, *Harper's Magazine*, July, 1945, Vol. 191, No. 1142, pp. 33-36.

working up a poem of your own for radio, selecting one for radio presentation, or producing a program of poetry.

It was Coleridge who defined poetry as "the best words in their best order." That definition fits happily into the major premise of this chapter, as well as this book; words should be selected with singular precision for use on the air. Poets never had a greater challenge than they have in radio to prove their ability to choose the right word, that, and no other. And if you, reading these lines now, are a poet, then be prepared to discover the ego-deflating reality that more than one poem of yours, poems you yourself value highly, are quite non-understandable or very empty when read on the air. The radio may reveal to you that a poem, while it may look very attractive typographically on a typewritten or printed page, has no intrinsic worth when it has to stand on its syllables alone. In radio it is not so important what the beautiful blonde wears before the mike; it is what she says that counts, and if she cannot say anything, if her words are without feeling, then there's nothing for her but Hollywood, or for your poem but the wastebasket.

A test for poetry for the air lanes

One test is to select, say, six or eight poems by writers whom you like. Try them out before the mike in an audition. Can the audition audience understand what the poem is about? If not, be kind to the listener and the muse and substitute something that is understandable. A poem can be good and still be unsuitable for the air lanes. If it is too compact, too involved, too *précieuse*, too "special," do not disturb it in its proper abiding place: the book that contains it.

Let us remember, in writing poetry for radio use, that people do not ordinarily speak in rhyme, but they can and often do speak in rhythm, that is, musically, whether they realize it or not. For proof, listen to conversation, conversation in which you have no part, or to conversation in a language you do not understand. Note the flow and ebb of it, the musical hum that may arise even from a table of bridge players (if sufficiently remote).

The normal recurring rhythms of ordinary speech may be-

come cadenced loveliness, the lovelier for its irregularities, the unexpectedness of its inflections, its grace notes, its full stops. Interior minor melodies may play here and there through our lines as we pursue the major theme to as much of a crescendo or as fine a dying fall as we can turn. This is poetry, and it can be great poetry.

To prove to yourself whether you have written poetry, or whether the example before you is poetry, type it out, line after line, across the page without regard to its original line lengths. See how inconsequential, perhaps even obnoxious, your pet end-of-line rhyming words become, even to distortion of your thought or the straining of it into opacity.

Poor prose disguised as "poetry"

On the other hand, take a free verse poem posed on a page in visual ecstasy, at least to the writer. When your typewriter stretches taut that line of words across the page, the test may shatter the poem, for it removes the mechanical props, and the debris that is left may be only poor prose, or simply a welter of words.

Radio, which is the spoken word, which is the test of poetry, knocks the visual props from under mechanical verse. It makes poetry depend on its inherent worth, the music inside the lines, lines that fit the speaking voice, that do not cause choking in utterance, that are good to listen to, comfortable to say. In this spoken word of radio rests the opportunity to catch at times the lyric, at other times, the majestic beauty of conversation. When we do, we have poetry, purer than any supported by artificial rhyme or visual aids.

In any study of poetry written especially for radio, you will find the repetitive line recurring, though rarely at a fixed time, nor as an imperative refrain. The line may make the meaning clearer, for all the world like going back and re-reading a certain passage, but always with beauty, for the rhythmic beat becomes additionally cumulative in the listener's mind. Such lines given to a chorus also may be rephrased by the use of different words, remaining, however, still repetitive.

Repetition not bad writing

This repetition is not bad writing. It is one of the artistic devices, old in literature, that make for good radio writing. If a phrase is worth hearing once, it may fall even more graciously on the ear when heard again; then it gives the listener opportunity to more thoroughly savour the rhythm of the line. The repetitive line is not original with radio; you find it, for example, in intricate French verse forms and in the Hebrew psalms. Its use merely confirms the soundness of the judgment of the worthy poets, some of whom are mentioned here, who use it in good radio.

Poets should make good script writers, not alone in poetry, but in prose because their training has been in selecting the right word and only that. They must early develop, in degree greater than a writer in any other medium normally develops it, that selectivity which is a necessity for good radio prose. You do not have to be a poet to write radio script, no, indeed, *but* you will be a better script writer if you use the discrimination of a poet in selecting your words.

Publication of radio poetry

In your radio poem is published in book form, insist that it be printed in radio script style, the identical way it appears on your script paper, with character column at left. This column, of course, would include the words *Sound* and *Music*. Explanations of the latter naturally would be carried in the body of the script. Note carefully the excellence of Mr. MacLeish's explanation of sound effects and of music in, for example, *The States Talking*, and in his more recent *The American Story*. The explanations make good reading in themselves.

The first edition of Mr. Corwin's *On a Note of Triumph* omitted this basic setting of radio literature. These omissions disappointed the person familiar with radio script; he felt that he had been cheated. He did not feel at home. Nor did printing the spoken word in varying sizes of type compensate for the lack; this caused wonderment in the mind of the aver-

age reader who knew nothing about radio script and for whom it was intended to be clarification. To put one of the finest examples of radio writing in smallest type seemed absurd; especially certain lines written long before the V-E Day program was produced, but made a part of *On a Note of Triumph*. Read them aloud. See if you do not experience that hard-to-define quality which is good radio writing. Here are the lines:

The stone beneath our feet was good French stone.
 The wind that drove the rain was a west wind over the fields
 of France.
 The sky was a French sky; the rain was a French rain.
 Only the bullets were German! ⁴

In putting your poetry on the air, use sound effects or music, or both to heighten the beauty of your words, not to pad them out or gloss over the weaknesses in structure (the latter is frequently apparent in run-of-the-mill radio dramas). The poet is very likely to have a definite kind of sound effect in mind and a definite kind of music. The wise production man will consult him for helpful suggestions.

The salesroom and poetry

Anyone who is radio-wise knows that poetry in a commercial station's salesroom is anathema. Its reception varies from graceless tolerance to apoplectic aversion. And it must be admitted that poetry programs never lead popularity polls as now measured. However, the appeal of poetry is never dead; instead it's perennially persistent and therefore aggravating. The fact that a spot or two of poetry frequently appears in a program reflects this compromise with an art so ancient that the Muse, knowing how closely the spoken word and the radio are allied, must smile at the futile contention.

As for the specific argument that "there's no money in it!"

⁴ Corwin, Norman, *On a Note of Triumph*, lines 12-15, page 33. Copyright 1945 by Norman Corwin. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Simon and Schuster, New York.

Mr. Corwin explains in his Foreword that certain "bracket passages" (and this is one) are "asides not hitherto attached to the text."

—is good poetry ever profitable? Publishers of the thin little volumes carrying from decade to decade meritorious contemporary verse also agree that poetry is unprofitable. Rarely in a given generation does an Edwin Arlington Robinson do a *Tristram* and achieve eleven or more reprintings in a single year!

Yes, let's send the sales staff out on less troublesome assignments, and turn our attention to the program director or production manager. To him should be offered good material for sustaining programs. Furthermore, it is unnecessary to point out that a station can serve both the Muse and the FCC in a poetry program, for it's a cultural presentation in the public service. This is the practice on a limited number of commercial stations today.⁵ There could be more of them, for a program of poetry can succeed on a small station as well as a large one. Those who enjoy good verse will find it out and dial it in.

Educational stations have always programmed poetry, but they could do much more pioneer work in presenting the work of younger writers or writers new to radio but mature in years and ability.

Wherever produced, whether on a commercial or noncommercial station, a poetry program will flop if it lacks genius. Mechanical perfection is not enough; a good voice is not enough; such a program requires understanding, understanding that can be communicated and shared *with the listener*. In other words, the reader of the lines must like poetry, and his job of reading it. In fairness, this is frequently the reason a long-standing program suddenly ceases: the man (or woman) who had been giving poetry warm and intelligent interpretation leaves for another job.

Now the assignment and the list of books for special study, before we take up examples of radio poetry:

⁵ Among established programs of poetry is the commendably listenable *Moon River*, created and first broadcast by WLW, Cincinnati, October 27, 1931. Its theme poem, "Moon River," that opens and closes the 25-minute period, has become familiar verse in countless homes. The program pattern skillfully blends organ music, vocal selections by a women's trio, and poems (usually three) by the narrator in mood-maintaining sequence. The fifteenth anniversary was commemorated in a one-hour show October 27, 1946. The program broadcast nightly at 12:05 a.m. EST also is carried by WINS, New York.

Assignment

Let your artistic conscience and your genius be your guide.

Special study and reference list

Study of the following works—by no means a complete list—will be found helpful in gaining understanding of the special requirements of radio poetry, requirements that, as explained in the previous discussion, usually are automatically met in good poetry.

Benét, Stephen Vincent. "John Brown's Body" and ballads and tales from *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Farrar & Rinehart, New York, 1942.

———, *We Stand United*, including "They Burned the Books," "Listen to the People," and "A Child Is Born," Farrar & Rinehart, New York, 1945.

Corwin, Norman. *They Fly Through the Air with the Greatest of Ease*, Vrest Orton, Weston, Vt., 1939.

———, *13 by Corwin*, including "Radio Primer," Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1942.

———, *More by Corwin*, including "Long Name None Could Spell," "Psalm for a Dark Year," and "Samson," Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1944.

———, *On a Note of Triumph*, Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York. Copyright 1945 by Norman Corwin.

MacLeish, Archibald, *Fall of the City*. Farrar & Rinehart, New York, 1937.

———, *Air Raid*, Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1938.

———, "The States Talking" from *The Free Company Presents*, Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1941.

———, *The American Story* (ten broadcasts), Duell, Sloane & Pearce, New York, 1944. (For general informative value as well as prose rhythms.)

Sandburg, Carl. *The People, Yes*, Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1936.

Whitman, Walt, *Leaves of Grass*, Grosset & Dunlap, New York, [n.d.], or other convenient collection, such as:

———, *Leaves of Grass*, Heritage Reprints Series, Heritage Press, New York, 1943.

———, *Leaves of Grass*, Modern Library, Inc., New York, 1944.

Much of the poetry that follows was written especially for radio. All of it is suitable for radio presentation and most of it

has been so presented. In reading these selections, note the opportunity radio provides for the interest-impelling and artistic use of verse-speaking choirs or choruses.

Script: *Prelude for Posterity*

First is a protest against totalitarianism, against dictatorships and all that they have brought upon us, uttered before America was at war. The program was presented on Radio Station WLB in 1941, but the poet, another spokesman for her time, saw the deluge coming and wrote about it, with the "long view."

PRELUDE FOR POSTERITY

(As broadcast)

Script by Florence V. Hastings

CAST: Announcer
1st male voice
2nd male voice
Chorus

MUSIC: Theme: First Movement
from César Franck's
"SYMPHONY IN D MINOR"

ANNOUNCER: The WLB Workshop presents "Prelude for Posterity,"
a radio mural painted in words by Florence V. Hastings
"Prelude for Posterity"

THEME: FIRST MOVEMENT: CÉSAR FRANCK SYMPHONY:

1ST MALE VOICE: You you who will live one thousand years
from now feel wind and rain look up to sun and
stars what shall I tell you? Where is a bridge of words
to span the chasm of one thousand years?

THEME: UP 30 SECONDS AND FADE:

1ST MALE VOICE: What shall I tell you?
One thousand years is a short time.
Twenty years is a long time a very long time.
Do you know this, as other generations have known it?
Twenty years is a long time?

2ND MALE VOICE: One thousand years is a short time.
Reckoned out in fossils bits of bronze
An arrowhead

A dead glacier, opaque and hueless, receding two inches,
three inches a year.
One thousand years is a short time.

CHORUS: One thousand years is a short time.

THEME: UP AND FADE:

NARRATOR: What shall I tell you?

Of war?
Youth mechanized to a heartbeat.
Greybeards peering through spectacles.
Musty smell of parchment.
Treaties, traditions,
And surly, savage peace spaced in between
With time enough to erect crosses,
Time enough to write books,
Time enough to lay a wreath at the foot of a stone.
One thousand years is a short time.

CHORUS: With time enough to erect crosses,
Time enough to write books,
Time enough to lay a wreath at the foot of a stone.
One thousand years is a short time.

THEME: UP AND FADE:

NARRATOR: What shall I tell you?

Of boundaries?
There are no boundaries.
Planes flashing silver across an evening sun
Flying oblique piercing lines patterned to mock the night,
Space lifting its voice to a microphone, soft whine of words,
Persuasive words,
Vindictive words,
Compassionate words.
These have outmoded boundaries.

CHORUS: Persuasive words,
Vindictive words,
Compassionate words.
These have outmoded boundaries.

NARRATOR: Yet, straight, black lines are heavy on our maps:
Surveyor's transit, toil, blood, human life.
Straight, black lines heavy on our maps:
Hatred, envy, greed.
Black lines coiling with the curve of rivers,

Black lines twisting with the tortuous mountains,
Black lines heavy on our maps.

What shall I tell you?

Of nations?

The colors of men are black, and white, and brown, and red,
and yellow.

The races of men are many.

No people are wholly good or wholly evil.

We have some knowledge.

We have nothing.

CHORUS: We have some knowledge.

We have nothing.

NARRATOR: Man does not know himself, his fellow man:

Laboratories, altars, IQ's, lynchings.

Fragments pieced out of chaos hold no force

To weld our segments of divided thought,

No voice yet to speak across our world these words:

"My brother."

What shall I tell you of beauty?

We sense dimly that this long journey shuffling to a star

Is curved to the ascendance.

One thousand years is a short time

Reckoned out in fossils, bits of bronze, an arrowhead.

Yet time enough to lift the eyes,

Time enough to slough off chains,

Time enough to glimpse mistily a far horizon.

One thousand years is a short time.

CHORUS: Yet time enough to lift the eyes,

Time enough to slough off chains,

Time enough to glimpse mistily a far horizon.

One thousand years is a short time.

THEME: UP FORTE TO FINISH:

ANNOUNCER: You have been listening to "Prelude for Posterity,"
a radio mural written by Florence V. Hastings, presented by
the WLB Workshop from the WLB studios on the campus of
the University of Minnesota.

Comment: Here you find the repetitive line, so useful to the
radio writer, so helpful to keep the listener "on the beam" of
thought. In this script, it is "One thousand years is a short
time." Properly, it is a direct statement without equivocation,

without qualification. Note that it is given to the chorus or verse-speaking choir as a refrain. A verse-speaking choir can usually heighten the majesty of your lines, provided you put into those lines words that can be spoken comfortably and can be heard with clear understanding. These words can be so spoken.

Script: *Review of Anthology of Poetry*

The following script is a review of an anthology of poetry, condensed to some extent from the original version.

REVIEW OF ANTHOLOGY OF POETRY⁶

(Presented over Radio Station KSTP)

CAST: Announcer
Marjorie Ellis McCrady
Luther Weaver

MUSIC: Theme: "INVITATION TO
THE WALTZ"

MUSIC: THEME: "INVITATION TO THE WALTZ":

ANNOUNCER: The "Woman's Page of the Air" with Marjorie Ellis McCrady presented by the Minneapolis Journal.

MCCRADY: We're going to place a wreath on the altar of Apollo, the god of poetry, today, and we're going to do it with sprays from the new anthology of Minnesota poetry, poems by Minnesotans, that has been compiled by Mrs. Maude C. Schilplin of Saint Cloud. Luther Weaver's going to help me. As a poet, he is familiar with the first edition of Mrs. Schilplin's anthology that came out in 1934 Now, four years later, he brings additional background to the job and, by the way, he has had poems in both editions but

WEAVER: But so have 303 other poets, Marjorie Ellis McCrady at least, in the new edition I'm here because I got in the way of your phone call and it's fun to discuss things

⁶ Reproduced with permission of the Times Publishing Co., publishers of *Minnesota Verse, an Anthology*. Maude C. Schilplin, copyright-owner, and the *Minneapolis Star*.

with you, whether it's poetry, or the increase in Minnetonka's or White Bear's mosquitoes. First of all, let's give thanks to this valiant St. Cloud woman, Mrs. Maude Schilplin, not only for putting the first Minnesota anthology together but because, four years later, she has the courage to come out with another, a bigger anthology there was no admission charge for either one

McCRADY: All of it by Minnesotans, Mr. Weaver?

WEAVER: All of it the Twin Cities and Minnesota stay in character, in the tradition of the old French voyageurs Minnesota's a crossways of a world, in this case, a world of poetry. Do you know how many poems there are in that book?

McCRADY: No, did you count them?

WEAVER: No, but the valiant secretary in my office did. There are nine hundred seventy poems in that anthology four times as many as in the first collection; but, of course, quantity is not an indication of good poetry

McCRADY: No?

WEAVER: No what is important is that the worth of poems that appeared in the first anthology gets confirmation in the way they continue to sing in the new book take "On the Train—March" by Henry Adams Bellows

McCRADY: Who? Henry Adams Bellows? Why, why, he's

WEAVER: The radio man didn't you know he had committed poetry it's true the same Henry Adams Bellows who was a member of the Federal Radio Commission, once general manager of Station WCCO and former vice-president of one of the major networks. He could turn a singing line listen, I had the page open a moment ago, yes, here it is "On the Train—March."

God! What a country:

Flat, rusty, desolate fields,

Flecked with puddles of dingy snow,

Houses unpainted haphazard in a wilderness of man's making,

Breeders of creeping madness;

Towns—cities perhaps—

Made of factories, freight yards, hovels and churches;

And all—fields, people, towns—

Utterly flat and dreary.

Wait. When next you come
Spring will have whispered the fields to life;
Foliage will have cast its mystery about the wan houses,
God's trees will hide the churches;
And in people's eyes
Will shine a light, such as shone from Moses' face of old;
And, like him, unaware
Of the myriads that turn to them for help,
And go thither to their labor.

McCRADY: There's a poem that will survive.

WEAVER: Yes, every spring adds vigor to it.

McCRADY: Mr. Weaver, it seems to me that poets frequently turn to radio like a duck to water

WEAVER: That's true enough, and the reason is this: good poetry is written to say aloud radio script is nothing other than the spoken word If this sounds like a discussion of radio script, it really is a very natural thing for me to be doing But let's get back to these Minnesota bards, palpitant, I know, to be dissected

McCRADY: Yes, what do Minnesota poets write about?

WEAVER: The lap of lakewater is in the book, and the smell of the pines, black pines silhouetted against an orange sky, and the shivering cry the loon makes across the moon, and gulls, there are flocks of them in the book the state's official bird, if you leave it to the poets Yes, the lake country is unmistakable Farm motifs are few The economic problems, industrial and labor, are touched on even less War, the great war, leaves an unmistakable gash, and the depression hobs up, but depression isn't new to a poet he's usually in a depression he thrives when things are depressed Ever realize, that these dreamers get along very well when things go wrong, but folk who have forgotten how to dream decide much more frequently than poets that life's not worth the candle.

McCRADY: You said farm motifs are few in the anthology tell us about the few.

WEAVER: Well, there's a farmer down on an eighty near Blue Earth who's in the book on merit Listen here's Albert Eisele's "Harvest Love Song" Albert Eisele as a farmer he works all year round, as a poet he writes one poem a month:

Golden now the grain,
 Bring the binder here;
 Oil each wheel and chain,
 Golden now the grain.
 On! and on again,
 Sing to whirr of gear,
 Golden now the grain,
 Bring the binder here.

Long the windrows wend—
 Anne will be your prize:
 She waits at the end,
 Long the windrows wend.
 Toil! then back unbend,
 Gaze in shining eyes,
 Long the windrows wend—
 Anne will be your prize.

..... and listen to another, the author, June Rachuy, now in Chicago

He came in, dirty, sweaty, from the fields,
 And took her in his arms and kissed her lips.
 He soiled her freshly laundered dress, and left
 A smudge upon her cheek. She scolded him,
 Yet would have wept had it been otherwise.

MCCRADY: It's apparent that the Minnesota pastoral scene has human beings in it, women who wear aprons, and do not walk daintily among daffodils

WEAVER: Yes, and in it, too, are men who sweat, and possibly swear

Another poem, completing a kind of farmyard trilogy from the anthology This one's by Raymond Kresensky Mrs. Schilplin found him in Iowa, but he used to teach school in Minnesota the title, "Fading Picture."

Did you know the pastures?
 Did you know the lane
 Where the cattle walked
 In the dripping rain?

Did you see the cattle
 And the child with laughter
 Coming up the lane,
 A dog following after?

Then paint the picture
 And describe with the pen,

For this thing will never,
Never be again.

McCRADY: Minnesota poets they don't all write about lakes
. . . . and they don't all write about farms

WEAVER: You're quite right I find that Minnesota poets are
cosmopolitan they go traipsing off to Oxford, put a
punt in the water and dream and write that's what
Austin Faricy did He admits he was very unskilled at
avoiding the weirs, but, sings he,

Somehow the errors
Made us dearer
To each other,
Witness as they were that we were young and mortal,
Amid this pitiless enduring youth
Of spring and Oxford.

McCRADY: Someone surely must have sung of the prairie, didn't he?

WEAVER: Yes, a host of them For one, there's Blanche Ander-
son, coming to the Twin Cities from a South Dakota town
with a Dakota wind still drumming in her mind See
if you can see these "Far Horizons."

Because I could not name you this small bird
Or pin that flower upon a Latin word,
Because this tree or that I could not name,
You held my love of nature up to shame
Or deemed it missing; I, for whom the sun
Has splashed the sky with sudden color, would shun
To cherish nature in a narrow cage,
Or trip up knowledge on a printed page.
My love is of the senses, not the mind;
It will be nourished while I still can find
Scorched grass beneath my feet, and in my ears
A drumming wind that chants of primal fears.
For I was bred beneath blue curving skies,
And born with far horizons in my eyes.

McCRADY: And hasn't someone written about things sheerly de-
lightful, things that lift themselves out of time?

WEAVER: Indeed, listen to this excerpt from a poem entitled "Blue" ⁷

⁷ From *Blind Man's Stick* by Sister Mariella, O. S. B., College of Saint Benedict,
Saint Joseph, Minn.; copyright, 1938; used by permission of Bruce Humphries,
Inc.

by Sister Mariella anyone who likes Rupert Brooke will thrill to it

Blue is no color; it is delight's soft croon
 Across a mountain lake at noon;
 It is a swift surprise
 Trembling in blue-flags pennant-wise
 Above a marsh; it is the quiet harmony
 Of all domestic things: blue plates
 Clean against enameled racks, and squares.
 Of blue across a bathroom floor,
 And blue-ringed chairs.

MCCRADY: Surely there must be something about flowers for really we must have a spray or two or Apollo will not forgive us we set out to make him a wreath, you know

WEAVER: Well, that's so and here, I'll turn to one I believe he would like. It's "Lilac Light" by Marian Thompson Van Steenwyk.

In the strange gloom of new leaves along the avenue at twilight,
 The jungle of the trees shadows dusky verandas,
 Where women in aprons fold their arms and look out
 Inscrutably in the gloom, at the figures of children playing
 Their eyes are dark and secret as their dark houses behind them,
 And the lavender lamps of the lilacs are the only light
 For the passerby traveling the unfamiliar street.

And let's lift a stanza from Joseph Warren Beach's "Songs for Dagmar"

I know that you are there, my dear, soft-voiced, slow-syllabled, beyond the roses and azaleas. I hear the falling of your voice like water upon water. I listen for your laugh, which is like the wind's in the poplar, and for your long silence, like the silence of the pinewood. And I am busy, too, paying the minted coin of thought and friendship.

And, now, Mrs. McCrady, you have been very kind. You have listened to a great deal one more bit we'll turn the pages to enchantment, Larry Ho's "Enchantment." It is worth remembering it goes like this:

I read in Isaac Walton's book
 And suddenly the world was spring
 And sun and flower and singing bird

And dreaming hill and brook were blent
Into some lovely English word
Like Surrey, Sherwood, Kew or Kent

McCRADY: No more? is that all?

WEAVER: No more, and that is all and I've had to overlook so many sturdy singers but I want to thank you, thank you much. It has been good fun. Let me quote Jeanne Kerridge Fischer as we fade out

Three things have I learned
Through fantasy and bitterness of years,
The graciousness of God,
Loneliness of heart,
Futility of tears.

McCRADY: Thank you, Mr. Weaver, and let me invite all our listeners to join us again tomorrow at this same time.

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard the "Woman's Page of the Air" conducted at this time daily by Marjorie Ellis McCrady and brought to you by the Minneapolis Journal. Until tomorrow then, at this same time

MUSIC: THEME: UP AND OUT:

Comment: To put together such a review and not distress a host of poets by not mentioning them is impossible, especially when the anthology contains 970 poems as this one does. However, if you are sufficiently "hard-boiled," it is comparatively easy to select poems that will read well, and that will create rememberable images in the mind; that was done in this instance: eleven poems in all. This number fit the allotted time. Try them out yourself; read them out loud. You'll find those are clearest in which the short, concise, straight-hitting Anglo-Saxon words predominate. This presentation was made without any music background whatever. Music would have heightened the mood; it would also have slowed up the program.

Script: The Singing Wind

The following radio delineation is prose that frequently rhythms over into poetry, a field in which amateurs do a great

deal of wallowing, not alone in radio but in other media. Talent is necessary, a highly sensitized feel for the right word, to maintain unity of mood, and to keep that mood from slumping into sentimental drool. The writer had never been in a South Pacific jungle; nevertheless, few listeners would question her authoritative handling of the bloody locale.

THE SINGING WIND

(Presented over Radio Station WLB June 7, 1945)

Script by Ruth D. Capps

<p>CAST: Announcer Narrator Soldier Doctor</p>	<p>MUSIC: Theme: White Knight Movement from Deems Taylor's "THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS"</p>
<p>SOUND: Riffle of notes on wood winds</p>	

ANNOUNCER: And God made the wind to pass over the earth and the waters were made calm.

THEME: "WHITE KNIGHT": UP 20 SECONDS: THEN FADE FOR:

ANNOUNCER: "The Singing Wind," a radio delineation by Ruth D. Capps James Hanley is the narrator.

MUSIC: UP AND DOWN AS INDICATED UNTIL CUED OUT:

NARRATOR: Whence came the wind? Where did it spring to life? that no one knew, just suddenly it was there, a singing human wind. Perhaps it started over the rim of the world, where unseen hands had pushed aside for one brief hour the dark pall of night to let it flow across a sad, unhappy world. No, no one knows Just suddenly it was there, gentle and singing, across the world it came.

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER FOR:

NARRATOR: Sultry and dark the jungle lies, breathless There is the smell of rotting leaves and death Even the night creatures are dull with sleep, their usual cries plaintive and quivering in the damp, still heat On a stretcher the American boy lies, face turned to the sky, where stars wheel in the tropic night.

MUSIC: OUT:

SOLDIER: (FILTER) Funny how near they look. Could almost reach up and touch them. A star would be a nice souvenir to take home shining and bright as a new penny.

NARRATOR: Again it comes in crashing, surging waves the pain that rips and sears a flooding tide The stars blur and dance a crazy pattern of weaving light. Now they crash down to earth, only to flee back into the sky to become pin points of lights. The heat the suffocating, blanketing heat like being wrapped in cotton soft, smothering cotton. And then the pain again, persistent and drumming. The pain the heat the pain the heat.

SOUND: RIFFLE OF NOTES ON WOOD WINDS:

MUSIC: UP BRIEFLY AND UNDER:

NARRATOR: Then suddenly it comes, cool and singing It sifts through the palm trees and they stir. It pushes against the ferns, breathes softly through the grasses. Gently it touches the youthful, sweating brow, that of a child, tossing and feverish in his crib. A gentle presence stands beside him stroking back the damp hair from his forehead. He sighs again

SOLDIER: (FILTER) Coolness. Feel the cool green depth of the water in the swimming hole. Open your eyes and watch the fish glide by. Flowing coolness. Lie on your back and feel the rushing touch of the wind from the sea.

NARRATOR: The cotton-wool blanket is gone now, the pain in his shoulder is dulled the boy sleeps, and dreams fitfully of home. The wind passes on

MUSIC: UP AND FADE UNDER FOR:

NARRATOR: There in the jungle clearing stands a hut. Quiet is everywhere, and breathless heat. Inside the hut where it is dark and still, a young girl lies, her gaze, unseeing, fastened on the interwoven palm fronds that make the thatched roof there above her head. Straight and narrow on her crude bed she lies so quiet that she almost seems to be asleep but in her staring eyes there is a mute and helpless terror. Tortured eyes see again bestial horrors, and her ears hear piercing screams. The little monkey men are there their slant eyes glitter with cruelty and lust. Little Arro, the plump sweet baby of Messa, has a glittering bayonet

thrust through his little body. His mother, screaming, struggling, scratching, lies at last a huddled bloody heap, struck down by a rifle butt. The young girls scream. There is the loud, cruel laughter of the monkey men louder louder louder. Her own scream echoes in her ears, and through her mind. This shattering horror will live with her until she dies. The heat presses down. The heat and horror lie like a great weight upon her. She can scarcely breathe

SOUND: RIFFLES OF WOOD WINDS:

MUSIC: UP BRIEFLY AND UNDER FOR:

NARRATOR: Then suddenly the dry palms rustle in the thatching and it is there It hums and sings and coolness floods the little hut. The girl sits up and listens to the singing The terror leaves her eyes and she walks slowly to the door. The whole jungle is astir with the gentle music of the wind the clean, sweet wind. Lifting her arms high above her head as if wading into deep, strong waters, the girl steps forward into the tide. The wind flows strong and cool around her body. Its melody sweeps through her mind and heart and she is clean and strong again and unafraid. The wind passes on

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER FOR:

NARRATOR: There in the stifling heat, the surgeon stands, deft fingers working carefully, nerves taut. Nurses, with tired eyes stand by alert to catch a murmured word or brief command. The heady smell of ether fills the air. Bright lights shine down upon a sheeted figure. This is a battle against death; silent, it must go on, unceasing, unrelenting. It demands all that a stout heart knows of courage and all that a keen mind and sturdy body can give of vigor. The glaring lights are hot and the heat of the jungle presses in. The surgeon's steady hand trembles and anxious eyes watch over white masks, but now his fingers grow steady again and work in skillful silence. The heat presses all day they have worked, this valiant staff, worked and sweated under a tropic sun. At last the job is done and he strips the gloves from his hands and walks slowly to the door to look out into the jungle, sleeping in the heat.

DOCTOR: (FILTER) Rest, rest To sink down and sleep, undreaming for hours. To forget all the frightfulness. These boys, so young. I wonder where Bill is is he all right?

Seems so purposeless. The great plan, whatever it is
I must go on. I must. Where will I find the strength?

NARRATOR: The weariness and sadness seem a part of him. He will never be free of them again. They're a part of his soul and heart and mind. He stands eyes closed, his spirit reaching, groping, reaching for support and strength, beyond his own, as men have done since the beginning of time.

SOUND: RIFFLE OF NOTES ON WOOD WINDS:

MUSIC: UP BRIEFLY AND UNDER FOR:

NARRATOR: Then suddenly he hears the singing of the wind and feels the coolness on his brow. He opens his eyes and looks out into the jungle. It stirs and seems to come awake and the song of the wind flows around him and enters into his very being. The heavy burden on his heart slowly lifts and his soul sings with the wind, and through his mind sweep the words of the song. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest" And there as he stands in the jungle with the stars wheeling overhead and the wind singing, the great pattern is clear again and he is strong The wind passes on.

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER FOR:

NARRATOR: Alone in the green, moist jungle he lies He is mortally wounded, this warrior. The drowsiness of death is upon him. No longer the torturous and grinding pain wracks his vigorous youth. The battle is over and finished and won, for him. Who is this warrior who lies here alone? It is the boy who a few months ago, pleaded with parents for the family car, to take his girl to the movies who sat at the corner drugstore sipping a chocolate soda. We cry out in protest and pain for him, this boy whose life had just begun. We grieve for his mother for his father. We weep for all parents everywhere. Here in the teeming jungle, we cry aloud in despair for the world in which we live And our cries are echoed from the earth's end Like a pebble dropped in a silent pool, our cries start waves of echoes returning, until the whole jungle seems awash with the crashing sounds of grief.

SOUND: RIFFLE OF NOTES ON WOOD WINDS:

MUSIC: UP BRIEFLY AND UNDER FOR:

NARRATOR: Then softly pushing through the sounds of grief, it comes The wind is singing softly in our ears with

quiet strength it lifts and holds our spirits. It sings of how this youth has grown in strength, and courage, and bravery, beyond belief to this man of great stature and nobleness. How strangely beautiful it is, that from this horror and beastliness of war, has sprung such glorious fruit. That the strength and courage of these shining young should be the force that stems the tide of ugliness and sweeps the world clean for coming generations and, as it sings, the tears dry in our hearts for can we weep for this boy who is now a part of all the beauty and all the nobleness that is the eternal and real? the things that are not understood because we cannot touch them with our hands.

MUSIC: UP BRIEFLY AND UNDER FOR:

NARRATOR: And so the singing wind has come and gone, leaving the quietness of peace behind whence it comes, no one knows but in its midst, it carries the gentleness of healing it comes with solace and hope. Perhaps it still is there singing over the rim of the world Perhaps if we but lift our thoughts and hearts, we can still hear it there, singing of peace. May all the people everywhere have listening hearts to hear the singing of the wind.

MUSIC: UP AND OUT:

ANNOUNCER: You have been listening to "The Singing Wind" by Ruth D. Capps. James Hanley was the narrator.

Comment: The narrator in this script has a job, a real job, for he must help the author maintain a point of view. Undoubtedly, the author held the script to one voice to keep close control over the mood; but in doing so, the difficulty of maintaining a constant point of view was multiplied. Positive clarity, that is, who is talking, and where he is doing the talking and for whom, always essential in radio, is a double must in radio monologue. In this program, the additional voices, of the soldier and the surgeon, were necessary. They were filtered as indicated.

In demanding of one voice what this script requires, it must be remembered that too many soft-spoken (pear-shaped) vowels will ruin it just as easily as theatrical ranting. As to the music, it is not always that one can find music that fits as well as the selection used in this script: "The White Knight" from Deems Taylor's "Through the Looking Glass" suite. The author did

not have this particular selection in mind when she wrote the program; it was substituted with trepidation but found quick acceptance.

Script: *Southwestern Moods*

Poetry will always find an audience or the audience will always find your poetry program, despite the paradox: the worthier the verse, the less the fan mail. Poetry could be a part of any radio day, on any station, commercial or noncommercial. Under adequate direction, a program of poetry can give decided impetus to poets interested in radio. The script that follows is one from a series of programs presented over KVOA at Tucson, Arizona.

SOUTHWESTERN MOODS

(Presented over Radio Station KVOA,
July 13, 1945)

Script by Nellie C. Olson

CAST: Announcer
Nellie C. Olson, Narrator

MUSIC: Theme: "BLANKET ME
WITH WESTERN SKIES OF
BLUE"
"PAINTED DESERT LULL-
ABY"

Handel's "ARIOSO"
"BEFORE YOU"
"MEDITATION"
"DUST OFF THE MOON"

MUSIC: THEME: "BLANKET ME WITH WESTERN SKIES OF BLUE": UP 30
SECONDS: FADE:

ANNOUNCER: We present "Southwestern Moods" with Nellie C. Olson as narrator, a quarter hour of verse on Arizona and the Southwest, with transcribed melody. We bring pictures of morning over the Santa Ritas, noontide heat on the desert, and a sorrowing cowboy pictures that portray varying Southwestern Moods.

MUSIC: UP FOR 10 SECONDS: THEN UNDER:

NELLIE: Margaret Erwin Schevill is well-known in Tucson, for she's a poet, artist, lecturer, and an authority on Navajo Indians. She has a deep appreciation of Tucson and its countryside, as you realize when you read her poems. In one of them, she gives a vivid picture of early morning, when one is awakened by the first cock crow and the light over the Santa Rita Mountains. Now, Margaret Erwin Schevill's "Another Day."

MUSIC: "PAINTED DESERT": UP FOR FEW SECONDS: THEN UNDER:

NELLIE: The old mare lies facing the east.
 Her body is a blot of velvet darkness
 On the pale grey earth.
 The first cock crows.
 The soft light is sliding
 Over the Santa Ritas.
 A bird stirs,
 Sounds a tentative note,
 Joins a gathering chorus.

I watch the miracle of dawn,
 The flowing, immeasurable,
 Glowing triumph,
 The great sunflower opening its petals,
 Slowly manifest above the mountains.
 And I relax in sleep,
 Safe in the certainty of another day.

MUSIC: UP FOR 2 MINUTES:

ANNOUNCER: With hot weather here for this is July, it isn't hard for us to imagine high noon on the desert, as Jennie Harris Oliver does. She makes us feel the suffocating heat, notice the sun-baked earth, and even see mirages, those tricks of nature that put before our eyes mountains, lakes, and cities, where they don't exist. Now "Noon Trail."⁸

MUSIC: "ARIOSO": FOR 10 OR 15 SECONDS: THEN FADE FOR:

NELLIE: It was so still, that silence languished for a whisper,
 It was so hot that pale flame cowered on the mesa.
 A vulture, in the palsied blue above a lone foothill
 Reposed upon its silken couch of ether, dozing.
 And all the twisted desert people mutely smouldered.
 It was so hot—and still.

⁸ From *Red Earth*, Jennie Harris Oliver's complete collection of poems, by permission of the Burton Publishing Company, Kansas City, Mo., owners of the copyright.

It was so clear, that cities swam up out of nothing.
 Tree-shadowed ponds of silvery, lilled whiteness, glistened.
 The mountains, poppy-bosomed on the monstrous hem of distance,
 Withdrew their filmy veils of finest-woven purple
 And leaned their naked shoulders to the raptured canyons.
 It was so clear. So clear!

It was so grim, that danger tottered in its cavern,
 It was so bleached, that whiteness groped its way, snow-blinded.
 Upon pallid rock the lizards, flat and soundless
 Slid slowly eastward toward the promise of a shadow.
 There was no place to kneel in all that shriveled vastness
 It was so white—and grim.

MUSIC: "BEFORE YOU": UP FOR 2:30:

NELLIE: It was about twenty years ago that I met Badger Clark. That was in North Dakota. Though Badger Clark has lived in the Dakotas most of his life, it was Arizona that inspired much of his poetry. Coming to Tombstone as a young man, he played his guitar and sang with other cowboys and invented cowboy songs of his own that men of the range have been singing ever since. In spite of his ranch life, for even in these later years, he has been living on a ranch in South Dakota, Badger Clark doesn't talk like a cowboy. He talks like a New Yorker. Neither did he look like a cowboy when I saw him, with his Van Dyke beard, his gentle, dreamy, scholarly eyes and smile. But, when you read many of his poems, you agree that no other poet has caught the language, life, and thoughts of the cowboy quite so well as Badger Clark. Now "The Lost Pardner"⁹

MUSIC: "MEDITATION": UP FOR 10 SECONDS: THEN FADE TO BACKGROUND:

NELLIE: I ride alone and hate the boys I meet.
 Today, some way, their laughin' hurts me so.
 I hate the mockin'-birds in the mesquite—
 And yet I liked 'em just a week ago.
 I hate the steady sun that glares, and glares!
 The bird songs make me sore.
 I seem the only thing on earth that cares
 'Cause Al ain't here no more!

⁹ From *Sun and Saddle Leather* by Badger Clark, copyright, 1938, by Chapman & Grimes, Boston, Mass.

'Twas just a stumblin' hawse, a tangled spur,
 And, when I raised him up so limp and weak,
 One look before his eyes begun to blur
 And then—the blood that wouldn't let 'im speak!
 And him so strong, and yet so quick he died,
 And after year on year
 When we had always trailed it side by side,
 He went—and left me here!

We loved each other in the way men do
 And never spoke about it, Al and me,
 But we both knowed, and knowin' it so true
 Was more than any woman's kiss could be.
 We knowed—and if the way was smooth or rough,
 The weather shine or pour,
 While I had him the rest seemed good enough—
 But he ain't here no more!

The range is empty and the trails are blind,
 And I don't seem but half myself today.
 I wait to hear him ridin' up behind
 And feel his knee rub mine the good old way.
 He's dead—and what that means no man kin tell.
 Some call it "gone before."
 Where? I don't know, but God! I know so well
 That he ain't here no more!

MUSIC: SEGUE INTO "DUST OFF THE MOON": UP FOR 2 MINUTES:

ANNOUNCER: Our picture of the Santa Rita Mountains, hot noon trails on the desert, and lonesome cowboys, with transcribed melody of the organ, fade like the sunset glow over "A" Mountain, but we'll be back to revive scenes of Tucson, of Arizona, and her Southwestern neighbors, when we return next Friday at 9:15. Be with us then, won't you? Good night.

MUSIC: THEME: "BLANKET ME WITH WESTERN SKIES OF BLUE": UP AND OUT:

Comment: The first two poems unquestionably have the stuff that answers affirmatively the question: can they be read aloud? Image-filled and clear, they give us pictures in enduring phrases for our minds to work on and to enjoy. Of quite a different kind and yet you'll find it, too, has worth if you read it out loud, is Badger Clark's "The Lost Pardner." Rhyming poets can

make slush of life's relationships but Badger Clark seems to overcome by deep human understanding the pitfalls of rhyming dialect verse. The program, well named *Southwestern Moods*, gives opportunity to meet diversity of tastes by diversity of poems; within reason, unity may be sacrificed for listener appeal. The fan mail probably would be greater for the Badger Clark piece.

Script: *Wreath for Apollo*

It is usually better in presenting several poems by one author to attempt something like a sequence of poetic thought and utterance. To grab three unrelated poems from the top of the barrel does not make for unity of effect. See if a unity in approach to a philosophy of living is achieved in the following sequence:

WREATH FOR APOLLO

(As presented, with narrator and verse-speaking choir, at twenty-third audition of Radio Writing Classes, University of Minnesota Extension Division, May 17, 1945)

Script by Luther Weaver

MUSIC: HANSON'S "ROMANTIC SYMPHONY": SUSTAIN TO BUILD MOOD:
THEN FADE TO BACKGROUND UNTIL CUED OUT:

NARRATOR: In this sometimes beautiful, and always tragic spring, this poet at least cannot come trippingly up the lane, his pockets stuffed with lyrics about the birds and the breezes. He cannot do that and feel at home with his conscience, an aggravating thing even in normal times So, the tragic mood is reflected in this "Wreath for Apollo" tonight, a presentation made with the help of a volunteer verse-speaking choir, who have my commendation even before we start The first poem has to do, I think, with the persistency of life amidst death We who have faith can always find renewal and replenishing in the green that refurbishes the willows, even the weeping willows, even in this tragic spring Here it is

MUSIC: OUT:

NARRATOR: This world has seen springs come, springs go,
Green will be the willows.
This spring has seen wars come, wars go,

CHORUS: Green will be the willows.

NARRATOR: Nothing ends, nothing begins,
Time and the flow of it,
Tears and grief of them,

CHORUS: Green will be the willows.

MUSIC: IN AND UP FULL: 10 TO 15 SECONDS:

NARRATOR: "A Spring Inventory," taken while a traffic light was changing:

MUSIC: OUT:

NARRATOR: Stretch this spring upon the rack of your memory,
Review all the sunny hills where the crocus burst in the years
that you have known!
Never in any month of March has the Maid dealt kindlier
with this bit of earth!

CHORUS: Yanks precisely bomb Germanic polysyllables,
And play leapfrog with the Rhine, the Elbe.

NARRATOR: Never in Minnesota's frozen fact, or sky-blue legend
Has the soft wind blown so gently over greening hill and tiring ice.

CHORUS: The flag's a proud thing over Suribachi,
A patriot would put it on a postage stamp!

NARRATOR: We have not had a spring like this before, ever before!
For what reason, Traffic Cop, are we so blessed?

CHORUS: A transport brings the maimed, the sick to port,
Long trains take the wounded nearer home.
The gay young men who stopped Hitler,
Stopped the Japs.

NARRATOR: Against south walls white violets bloom,
And in the country the bluebird sings.
How brave this spring! How unconcerned!

CHORUS: Stretch this time of man upon the rack of your memory:
Never has there been grief so great,
Never spirit so tender.

MUSIC: IN AND UP FULL: 10 TO 15 SECONDS:

NARRATOR: The next poem is entitled "Glory." It closes the sequence.

MUSIC: OUT:

NARRATOR: There was no particular reason I should be across the way,

Tramping around in another man's garden,
Except that peculiar alchemy that gardeners share
Which causes a man to turn thumbs down on stiles,
And melts fences.

But there I was looking at Timeless Courage and Ageless Love:

A gardener old in frame but bright of eye,
Kneeling before a little tree the rabbits had chewed,
Fondling the wounded twigs he had cut to shape again,
Patting thankfully the dark earth round its base,
Letting the young green leaves rest in his hand,
Leaves young and green showing anew their close communion
with the sod.

CHORUS: This tree, young man, will be alive when I am gone:
It will be living after you.

NARRATOR: Down on his knees before me,
Down on his knees at the roots of the little tree:

CHORUS: That will be living after you.

NARRATOR: I, with my back to the sun, I, watching his face,
Every kindly furrow gleaming,
Every little wrinkle glowing
With more of inward fire than western light:

CHORUS: It will be sign and symbol after you,
As it was before your time.

NARRATOR: I left him there on his knees before the little tree,
On his knees facing the western sun,
Like a knight receiving his last, and richest, accolade,
The golden light falling over him like a benediction.

CHORUS: The trees, the old trees and the saplings,
Will remember, will remember after you.

NARRATOR: Back to my little plot, brushed by the wings of glory,
I took something of this knight's Timeless Courage, his Ageless Love.

CHORUS: They will be living,
They will be living after you.

MUSIC: UP TO FINIS:

Comment: These poems, reveal one writer's attitude toward living. Though the war with Japan still was in progress, the persistency of greening willows in the spring, war or no war, cannot be gainsaid. Recognition of the war is found in the next poem "A Spring Inventory, taken while a traffic light was changing." The war, of course, permeated the lives of all of us; the poem reflects only one phase of its presence, a street-corner phase, the reflections of a second or two of time. But a second may be an epoch or an eternity. In the third poem, the pull of the soil, the unfailing sequence of the seasons, the unsorrowing relentlessness of time, come to the fore again to restore a mood set in the opening poem. In final effect, the question presented for remembering was: what's a war, even the greatest blood-letting man ever engaged in, against Time and the ceaseless flow of it. In each poem, repetitive lines, carried by a chorus, were used to heighten its power. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that the poems were written to be spoken, spoken aloud.

Script: *The Little Guy Back Home*

In the next example, one, and only one, poem is used. There is no possibility of a clash of moods.

THE LITTLE GUY BACK HOME

(As presented, with narrator and verse-speaking choir, at 25th semiannual audition of radio writing classes of University of Minnesota, Extension Division, in studios of Station KUOM, May 21, 1946.)

Script by Luther Weaver

NARRATOR: (COLD START) This Wreath for Apollo is another war poem I thought the series was completed, but the consequences, the aftermath of war, are without end perhaps that is the reason this sequence also is interminable The title of the poem is "The Little Guy Back Home" The background music is from Hanson's "Romantic Symphony"

MUSIC: HANSON'S "ROMANTIC SYMPHONY": EXCERPT UP FULL TO ESTABLISH, THEN HOLD UNDER TO CUE:

NARRATOR: Let me thank you for what you did for me.
That, that phrase is what I remember
After the fighting,
And the coming home,
After the black letdown
And the slow climb back
To my old place in a lunch line at noon
And a humdrum job.

MUSIC: OUT:

CHORUS: Let me thank you for what you did for me.

NARRATOR: A little wart of a man uttered it on a windy corner,
An insignificant droop of a fellow,
Harassed by all the worries of his time:
Prices and shortages, tangled living and conflicting thought,
Befuddled over what on earth the mess was all about.
I didn't know either, for like millions of others,
I had had no time to think it through,
And when I did have time, I had to laugh,
Trying to figure out why I had been fighting
When the fight was over!
But there he was, the little droop
With the traffic din all but drowning him out!

CHORUS: Let me thank you for what you did for me.

NARRATOR: Me! If it hadn't been for the kids behind, pushing,
I couldn't have done what I did that day on the Rhine.
I tell you the heroes are the dead men,
The ones who didn't come back!
I couldn't do anything else but snip the wire:
Maybe it did snarl up the Heine's communications,
But had I blundered into a bullet
The whoopla would have gone to some other kid.

MUSIC: IN AND UP BUT ALWAYS UNDER:

CHORUS: Let me thank you for what you did.

NARRATOR: Why, all I did was sweat and swear, and wonder
Who was running 'round with my girl back home.
Me! I was trying to save my own skin,
Dodging from shattered stump to shattered stump,
With a cockeyed Heine in a Messerschmidt
Boring in from up above,
Pouring more stuff down on me than the sky could hold.

MUSIC: FADING OUT COMPLETELY:

CHORUS: Let me thank you for what you did.

NARRATOR: I thought of the little guy first the day they gave me a medal,

With a bunch of brass hats for a backdrop,
The dinky little guy with the quiver in his voice,
And his eyes moist,
Stumbling through the words on a windy corner:
Better than all the backslapping from the patriots at noon,
When the fighting's over
And the luncheon clubs marshal their cheers,
Better than all the memorial arches,
And the bunting faded now,
Better than the honors from the great!

CHORUS: Let me thank you for what you did.

MUSIC: IN AND GRADUALLY BUILDING TO CRESCENDO TO FINISH:

NARRATOR: Coming from a little guy I had laughed at all my life,
A little guy who had to summon all his courage
To get in front of me and stop me on the street;
No other man said it so well,
Not even General Ike with the heart,
The bleeding heart of Kansas in his throat,
And every state's dead in his mind.

CHORUS: Let me thank you for what you did for me.

MUSIC: OUT COMPLETELY:

NARRATOR: It was like the friendly feel of a familiar road,
Like a fire on the hearth as you open the door,
Like the blessing of prayer in a field that the sky meets!

CHORUS: Let me thank you, little guy, for what you did.

MUSIC: IN AND UP FULL FOR 15 SECONDS OR SO, THEN SLOW FADE OUT:

Comment: The effort here is to make the repetitive line, carried usually by the chorus, a part of the fabric of the poem, not words thrown in to give the chorus something to do. It must come in, therefore, as a part of the developing thought, and, in so doing may be less noticeable in its impact as repetition, but more important in its contribution of vigor to the piece. You will note also the reversal of viewpoint in the final chorus line which

voices the narrator's or soldier's "thank you" to the Little Guy—it had been the Little Guy's "thank you" to the soldier all through the poem. The identical words are used but the emphasis is shifted, and the Little Guy is mentioned specifically.

CHAPTER

19

Radio's Opportunities

Section A

The Fields and the Markets for Radio Writers

In this closing chapter, before summarizing the opportunities for radio writers, let's pause and consider the many different ways a radio program gets itself on the air, for radio is many-faceted—just how intricately so is surprising sometimes, even to its veterans. A program may be:

- (1) Written by a station staff writer, produced and broadcast by the individual station. A Veteran's Readjustment program is an example. *Sustaining and suitable for either commercial or noncommercial station, but potentially commercial; that is, a sponsor may like it well enough to buy it. Then it would become a commercial program on a commercial station.*
- (2) Written by an outside writer (free lance) and presented as above.
- (3) Written and produced and broadcast by an individual station for the advertising agency ¹ handling the advertising

¹ The American Association of Advertising Agencies, embracing large and small agencies in many parts of the country, was formed in 1917 by the amalgamation of the New England, New York, Philadelphia, Southern, and Western advertising agency associations. The objective: "to promote the interests and

of a given business in the area the station serves. Though a non-commercial program becomes commercial, the station, having created it, may continue to write and produce it. The agency would supply the commercial announcements. *Commercial.*

(4) Written in the advertising department of the sponsor and produced and broadcast by the local station. Example: Musical Clock program for a department store. *Commercial.*

(5) Written and produced and broadcast by the individual station directly for the advertiser, without use of agency service. Example: Retail-store program where agency service is not available or not desired. *Commercial.*

(6) Written by an advertising agency, produced by the individual station, or by the agency, and broadcast by the station. Example: Program of music or other entertaining content in behalf of a restaurant, or drugstore chain, or other business. *Commercial.*

(7) Prepared in the newsroom of station or network; in other words, a news program. *Sustaining, in either case, if not sponsored. Commercial, if sponsored; the commercial announcements are the only material supplied by the sponsor or his agency.*

(8) Written by a writer on the staff of an educational, cultural, or philanthropic organization, and produced by the individual station, and broadcast as a public service. The tendency in such organizations is to employ regularly one or more radio writers in permanent jobs on their staffs. To give an organization not only air time but to write the program is asking too much of a station. Example: Local Red Cross program. *Sustaining. Suitable for noncommercial or commercial station.*

raise the standards of advertising and of the advertising agency business." The Association, according to its "qualifications for membership," "welcomes to membership any advertising agency qualified to aid [in above objective] by reason of its ability to serve the cause of advertising, its financial soundness, and its demonstrated desire to adhere to sound and ethical business practices."

(9) Written by an outside writer and produced and broadcast by a network as a public service. Examples: *The Fall of the City* and *Air Raid* (both CBS) by Archibald MacLeish. *Toward the Century of the Common Man*, especially written by George Faulkner for the United Nations Flag Day observance June 14, 1942. Stephen Vincent Benét wrote the closing speech for this script. Ten radio scripts by Archibald MacLeish which made up *The American Story*, broadcast by NBC University of the Air. *Sustaining. Suitable for both commercial and noncommercial stations. Such programs often are transcribed and presented or repeated later.*

(10) Written by a network staff writer and produced and broadcast by the network as a public service. The series of plays, 26 by Corwin, written and produced by Norman Corwin for CBS, is an example. *Sustaining. Suitable for commercial or noncommercial station. Often transcribed and presented or repeated later.*

(11) Written and produced over the network by a radio production agency (known in radio as a *package operator* for it may furnish the show complete "from script to applause") for the advertising agency handling the advertising of a given firm on the network. The production agency, of course, uses the network's studios and all other transmission facilities. It may supply any type of show: music, comedy, radio serial (*One Man's Family* by Carleton E. Morse), quiz such as *Information Please* (the production personally supervised by Dan Golenpaul), quiz with audience participating, the several variations of the "give-away" or prize-contest pattern, and many others. *Commercial.*

(12) Written and produced over the network by the radio division of an advertising agency for a given business firm. Any type, as above. *Commercial.*

If the above seems repetitious, analyze it carefully; there is a difference in each group of programs. It is a general break-

down of patterns, and certain programs will not fit exactly into any group, for example, certain discussion-type programs such as *The University of Chicago Round Table* and *Invitation to Learning*. Script is eschewed in each of these programs, but the participants not only are well-grounded in the subject selected for discussion but they are articulate in inviting degree. The former is produced in co-operation with NBC, the latter by CBS.

Further, into each of the above commercial programs must go the commercial announcements. In re-emphasis here, this commercial content needs more brainpower in its creation, more skill in its preparation, and more showmanship in its presentation, than are usually revealed.

Radio a common carrier

You may gather from the above summation that the radio is a common carrier; that is true, because within the bounds of common sense, fair practice, and good taste it will present the program that is given it to present. In so far as the advertising content of a newspaper is concerned, the procedure is similar. The newspaper too is a common carrier; it carries into your home the advertisements that business pays it to carry; and those advertisements must meet the same essential requirements of common sense, fair practice, good taste. Any deviation from those standards by any medium brings veiled or open criticism, its vigor depending on the extent of the violation. To complete this rough parallel, the content of a newspaper (other than advertising) corresponds to the news, the public service information and the entertainment provided by radio; the advertising in the newspaper corresponds to the commercials in radio.

So, part of your task as an embryonic radio writer is to set up a clear objective of the kind of writing you want to do, and where you want to do it. At first you may have to take whatever job presents itself, but in so doing you will be making progress toward your goal. Your experience may well parallel that of a young woman who, possessed of both radio writing and dramatic ability, nevertheless found herself accepting a job in the newsroom of a 50,000-watt station, quite different from

the position she had in mind. She spent a year and a half in that newsroom, and she never will forget it for its enriching experiences: the period spanned the end of World War II and the dropping of the first atomic bombs.

Positions or jobs for radio writers

It is apparent—your radio listening will reveal it to you any time of day or evening—that there are many more business firms using the radio than there are stations, but let us attempt to classify not only business but other opportunities for radio writers (the free-lance field will be discussed later in this chapter).

Advertising departments of business establishments. Here the need varies with the size of the business, but to produce acceptable radio commercials and programs one or more persons who can write for radio are essential. You may be required to “double in brass,” that is, write for more than one medium, if the business is small, but as the need for radio copy grows, you will find yourself producing more and more script, until you have what you want: a full-time job as a radio writer. In larger firms, of course, you are hired to begin with as a radio writer exclusively.

Advertising agencies. Advertising agencies definitely should be on your list of calls. Business fluctuates in any agency, as those familiar with the work will tell you. When business is good, there may be an acute need for writers to meet a particular congestion. In any case, be sure to leave your card, even though they do not ask you to fill out an application blank. If times are not good, and advertising volume is off, your chances of getting a job likewise slump.

Public service organizations. In the field of public service, there are opportunities for radio writers. Each station, by its license, is bound to promote the public welfare. Public service organizations, local, regional and national, have paid public relations or publicity departments; radio is one of the mediums they supply with news releases and information. Public service activities cover a wide range. They may have to do with national emergencies: the Red Cross; with health: tuberculosis,

for example, and the Christmas Seal campaign; with hospitalization insurance: the Blue Cross; with civic charities: Community Chest or Fund; with youth groups: Boy Scouts, 4-H Clubs, Camp Fire Girls; with labor organizations; with management; with co-operative enterprise, and many others. These activities do not always follow the current economic trends. For example, in times of depression, Community Chest activities increase.

Any group using a station's free time should present the best possible program it knows how to produce. It should be so good that the station will invite such presentations, rather than reluctantly put up with inferior offerings. Organizations should use skilled writers to begin with, for public service programs should attract listeners, not repel them; otherwise how is their cause to be served? The propaganda such programs carry, generally speaking, is too thinly veiled; it does not inform entertainingly. The programs should be made much more inviting.

Public relations firms. The purpose of public relations organizations is to create favorable understanding of an enterprise, its products or its services, and its operations, both without and within. In the furtherance of this favorable understanding, radio is one of the avenues used. Therefore, radio writers will be needed in increasing numbers as activities widen in this important field. It cannot be called a new activity for some executives always have seen the need for cordial relations with the public, business associates, and employees. What is new is that today there is more general and more frank recognition by American business of the need for *favorable* understanding.

Publicity organizations. Publicity by one means or another is required for any public event, whether it is a county fair, or a state exposition, or a football game, a convention of businessmen, or a church assemblage. Radio stations should be supplied with "radio copy," that is, news prepared for radio presentation. Skillful preparation means more general acceptance. Radio writers, therefore, are an important cog in such an organization, frequently called a bureau. The work of a publicity bureau often takes it into the field of public service

or public relations mentioned previously. There is no hard and fast boundary.

Radio production firms. These so-called "package operators" have need for programs, and those programs must be written either by members of their own staffs, or outside. They are definitely among those to be called upon or written to.

Transcription producers. The suggestion here is much the same as that given you for radio production firms. Also see the discussion on the *market for free-lance scripts* which follows.

Radio stations. Stations are ordinarily manned by full staffs, but you never can tell what is open until you try. So knock at their doors too.

Network offices. Usually some background of achievement is needed before trying for a job on a network staff; you might, for example, come up by way of an advertising agency, thence to an independent station, thence to the network. But never let the splendor of the reception lobby stop you, if you want a job. Brains command a premium anywhere.

Teaching. In other than universities, it has not been the usual thing for an instructor to be appointed solely to work in radio, yet more positions of this kind rightly are being created. Knowledge of radio writing, however, enables one to start, for example, a radio workshop, while carrying on other regular courses. Full-time positions as coordinators of the radio programs emanating from a community's schools also are opening up; these, of course, require radio experience as a prerequisite.

Markets for free-lance scripts

Radio, strangely, has been weak in making its script or program needs known. The novice does not know where to turn to market his work; if persistent, he accumulates this knowledge, but valuable time is lost.

Meantime, shows that begin to limp and plainly need new talent continue to falter until they quietly die without mourners, at least among the listeners. Stations, networks, agencies, and producers of radio shows generally, well could make their

needs known, not only on the air, but by religious use of writers' magazines and radio trade publications.

This brings us to the free-lance field, inviting if you can make your bread and butter. That is a big *if*, but *if* you persist in writing you are on your way to its solution.

The new writer will find it helpful to familiarize himself with the yearbooks of the radio industry. Both *Broadcasting* and *Radio Daily* are among the radio trade journals that issue them each year. They contain listings of stations, networks, advertising agencies, radio production agencies, and much other information. These yearbooks are likely to be found at your Public Library.

A further source of information is *Variety*, the show business magazine, which publishes from time to time comprehensive lists of current radio shows, the agencies handling them, and much other informative data. *Billboard* likewise carries a wealth of information about radio.

Writers' magazines, with increasing awareness of the radio field and its needs, nowadays carry much more comprehensive lists of possible purchasers of radio scripts than they did two or three years ago. These possible purchasers include, of course, advertising agencies, radio production firms, and the sponsors themselves. Well-established competitions are a part of such listings. Writers unknown to radio frequently get their programs into network production in this way. Why could not the networks, in their own right, conduct more competitions for original radio plays and thereby encourage both new and professional writers to think of radio?

Writers' magazines, however, need more authoritative articles by competent creators of radio programs; there has been too much loose writing that was not well grounded in the business and the art of radio.

Wherever he may live, the new writer should seek out like-minded souls and "chew the fat" with them. Such like-minded people are not likely to be members of your own family: your relatives may ridicule your efforts. Such ridicule should be disregarded. Or you may be damned by overpraise. Writers' groups may furnish you with good outside incentive to writing.

The best incentive, however, is from within. You and you alone are the only one who can decide whether you will become a writer, or merely fritter away the years wishing you could.

So investigate the writing groups that may be meeting regularly and reading material their members have written. In various metropolitan centers writers, by organization, have advanced their own rights as authors and the compensation received for their work.² The author, remember, has rights, not only to the first broadcast he has written, but to each succeeding presentation of his property unless he neglectfully gives it away.

Recognized literary agents, that is, salesmen of your script, have been helpful to many writers. You will find offers of such services in the magazines serving both radio and the general writing field.

Radio production firms. If you have a script or series of scripts, one of the approaches in selling it is to a firm producing radio shows in whole or in part—some of them supply scripts only. You will find such companies listed in the yearbooks above mentioned. It is much easier to sell, not what you want to write, but script that fits the producer's needs.

Advertising agencies. Certain agencies are constantly in the market for scripts. If you have no other means of finding out, after hearing a given program ask the station which agency handles it. Then write the agency asking if it is buying additional scripts. Agencies frequently prefer to have their shows written by free lancers. There are in current use several directories of advertising agencies and the "accounts" or business

² Upon inquiry, the following information was supplied by the Hollywood office of the Radio Writers Guild of The Authors' League of America in a letter from Aubrey I. Finn, executive secretary:

"The Radio Writers Guild of The Authors' League of America is an organization composed entirely of professional writers in the field of radio and includes almost all such writers in its ranks. It was established in 1939 to meet the need for combating the growing evils to which radio writers were subject. Though great advances have been made in eliminating the more glaring injustices, there still remains much to be accomplished before the profession can command the dignity which it deserves.

"The Radio Writers Guild has always welcomed new writers, and it has found that unjust advantage is often taken of the beginner because of his ignorance of the customs and established usages. Certainly, an awareness of the evils in the field and a knowledge that an organization exists which offers aid and advice would be of immeasurable value to the new writer."

firms whose advertising they handle; the yearbooks previously mentioned also list the agencies and their radio advertising accounts.

Transcription producers. Certain firms are engaged primarily in producing recorded or transcribed shows. They sell them, frequently in an extended series of platters, to individual sponsors or their agencies anywhere for presentation on selected stations. This is called in the industry "spot radio." It does not require simultaneous presentation over a given number of stations. The transcribed program can be fitted into open advantageous periods on a series of stations, such periods varying widely as to time of day or evening. (The platters usually are "open end," that is, there is time for the local announcer to come in first with an opening commercial announcement, and to come in at the close with another; sometimes the pattern will permit a middle commercial.) The content is whatever the producer feels can be sold to sponsors all over the country. Mystery plots are frequently used, with the same characters carrying the show through each separate episode. This kind of service seems to be broadening, with brighter material being offered. Transcription firms definitely are an additional market for free-lance script.

Commercial radio stations. The individual station, to date, has not been a primary market for the script of new writers. Each station has a writing staff of its own, and each station expects that staff to turn out what is needed. Further, many programs of a station's daily log, as shown earlier in this chapter, are supplied by advertising agencies. However, if you have a series of scripts you believe worthy of consideration, then make the rounds of the stations, and establish contacts; if one script does not sell, another one may. Quickening criticism of radio fare should put any station manager on the alert for new program patterns and ideas.

Noncommercial stations. The noncommercial station is never crowded with "must" commercial programs; in fact, it carries no commercial programs whatever. It therefore has air time to give to the new and different and experimental. It frequently fosters radio writing (and acting) groups in the area it serves. It provides incentive to the new writer whenever it

presents one of his programs. However, the noncommercial station—and several of them are doing commendable work in helping radio rise to its possibilities—usually is decidedly limited in its budget, and its payments for script therefore are not comparable with rates received from commercial stations. That is the obvious reason one turns to commercial outlets. A writer should be paid for his work. If noncommercial stations are to succeed in fostering radio as an art, they must have more funds with which to do the job.

*Criticism and reviews.*³ Here is a field that should be opening up invitingly: the field of radio criticism and comment in newspapers and magazines. Radio is the poorer because it has grown up with so little criticism. This may sound strange to you who may have a pet peeve yourself, but where do you turn to find constructive criticism of radio? There have been frequent attacks, call them *blasts* if you wish, appearing in magazines. Newspapers frequently pounce upon this or that in radio. But where is any steady flow of understanding comment? Such comment should be as critical as the given situation demands but it should be based on actual listening. That is the weakness of much so-called criticism to date. The playgoer always has looked to the newspaper the next morning to see what the critic said about the previous evening's play. It's an old, old custom. But what listener would think of looking at the newspaper the next morning for comment on a radio

³ **The Fred Allen Show:** In the Fred Allen Show, *The Radio Mikado*, of October 13, 1946 (NBC), Allen as "a wandering sponsor" satirized radio practices and patterns that disturb listeners, including "mournful serial programs"—he did not call them "soap operas"—"early morning comics," weddings on the radio, round-table discussions, giveaway (prize) and mystery shows, and singing commercials. In quiz programs, Allen found the pattern to fall back on when an advertising agency ran out of ideas. He had an agency staff, with "gardenias on straight" and "fraternity pins polished," chanting:

If you want to know who we are,
We're the brains of the radio biz.
When we can't think of anything else
Then we always put on a quiz.

The Henry Morgan Show: On September 13, 1946, the *Henry Morgan Show* opened on the ABC network. Morgan, in radio for fourteen years, had been ridiculing anything and everything about it for a similar length of time. The ABC coast-to-coast program was his first network show. For it, he writes his

show of the preceding evening? There was one notable exception: Orson Welles and the visitation of his Martians to the New Jersey shore. But the question remains valid. Constructive criticism, that radio should have been getting all through its adolescence, has not been of sufficient volume.

The whim of the moment rules in the programming: it may be mystery shows, with salesmen attempting to sell more of them right and left. Or it may be audience-participation shows that may *wow* the sponsor but bore the listener—and the visual audience is infinitesimal in comparison with the listening audience that might be entertained. Or it may be quiz programs or some other time-honored pattern.

Variety has been riding herd on radio for many seasons, but *Variety's* lively criticism goes to *the trade*, the people in show business. The listener too would respond to comment such as the following, taken from an editorial entitled "Poverty of Riches" in the July 10, 1946, issue:

It is because of a lack of foresight in planning and because of the utter absence of either imagination or courage to attempt other than the tried-and-true that this serious situation [a programming cupboard bare of ideas, writers, or anything new in

own scripts, though originally on his 15-minute participation show (*Here's Morgan* on WOR) he used only notes. On the network, he *opened* one show with the invitation to "join us again next Wednesday evening at this same time," ordinarily the final line given at about 8:59 p.m. (EST). Morgan explained that radio is wrong in putting such a statement of time at the *end* of a program. In his next show, he selected from various applicants men and women who could qualify as members of his audience. Both of these openings were *cold starts*: no introduction, no identification until after the little skit was out of the way. On still another show, he introduced the most important commercial with "Here's the longest commercial in radio." (The sponsor, Eversharp Schick razor.)

Morgan is a true radio comedian; he never worked in any other medium. There are few in show business whose background is purely radio. His materials always are radio, from his incorporation of sound effects into his comic lines, to his satires on radio commercials. *Time*, commenting on his first program, said it was "the freshest and funniest new show in years." For extended discussion of Morgan as a radio comedian, see *The Newspaper PM*, November 10, 1946, Vol. VII, No. 123, pages 13-17, and *Time*, September 16, 1946, Vol. XLVIII, No. 12, page 48.

The Bing Crosby Show: Completely transcribed, the *Bing Crosby Show*, sponsored by the Philco Corporation, made its appearance on almost 600 stations, including the full ABC network, October 16, 1946. On network stations, the time of presentation, 9:00 to 9:30 P.M., was the same, no matter in which time zone the station was located. Simultaneous time also was sought on the many

performers], has occurred. For the networks, agencies, and the package operators to be cognizant of the situation would be the first step The groundwork must be relaid to permit a welcoming spot for new entrants in each and every phase of radio.

If the script, and therefore the script writer, has been the weak spot to date, then the same money that's been lavished on 13-week cycles to perpetuate the kind of stuff that's being dished out can be used to better advantage in luring good writing Basically, the fault lies in the dearth of material, and until *proper value is placed on the writer*, and until radio makes it worth while for able writers from other media to join up, there is little hope for radio to emerge from the doldrums. [*Italics have been added.*]

So uncommon has been daily newspaper comment about radio that *Time* gave detailed space in its Radio Department to

independent stations used, but was not always obtained. The entire show was transcribed, the identification being made in accordance with FCC regulations, at the opening and closing. The phrase was ". produced and transcribed in Hollywood." The show itself was Bing Crosby being Bing, quite as in his *Kraft Music Hall* days on a live network program. Transcribing a show in this way relieves the talent of the relentless sequence of rehearsals and broadcast presentations that a weekly schedule of live shows entails. It also presents the problem: is a transcribed program as acceptable to listeners as a live show? Both NBC and CBS have had, as an established long-time policy, a ban against transcriptions. The Crosby transcriptions (the first six were done before the first show went on the air) were made before a live audience in the attempt to prove that spontaneity can be maintained even though a show finally is presented on a platter. The applause in the Crosby show, therefore, is a part of each program as transcribed. *Tide* said, "Almost ten years ago, Chevrolet aired a transcribed series over almost 400 stations. Before the war, Coca Cola's *Singin' Sam* was heard over about 200 outlets from transcriptions. But never before has such a program had a star of Crosby's stature, a promotion campaign approaching Philco's, or used the facilities of a national network." For detailed discussion, see *Tide*, October 18, 1946, Vol. 20, No. 42, page 62 *et seq.*, and *Variety*, October 23, 1946, Vol. 164, No. 7. The point for writers to remember is that, transcribed or not transcribed, radio shows have to be written. The Crosby show writers were Bill Morrow, Al Lewis, and Larry Clemmons.

Advice from Showman Billy Rose: "What do you think the radio scripts of today will sound like in 1975? Or had we better not go into that?" Those were questions asked by Billy Rose in his newspaper column *Pitching Horseshoes* in early November of 1946, in discussing radio comedians. "The boys are trying too hard," he said. "For a change I'd like to hear some programs that go in for horse sense rather than strained nonsense." As an example of lines that "stand up" after almost 40 years, he cited the writings of Kin Hubbard, old-time Indianapolis news columnist, whose "horse sense" showed up in remarks like this: "The safest way to double your money is to fold it over once and put it in your pocket."

the launching of a column of daily radio comment in the New York *Herald Tribune*. This, mark you, was in the issue of *Time* for August 5, 1946, and *Time* has had a Radio Department since April, 1938. The *Herald Tribune* liked its new radio column so well that it began offering it for sale to other newspapers.

Six years ago the author submitted a review of a radio program: *The Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street* (NBC-Blue Network) to one of the quality magazines. It came back promptly; apparently such things were not done on that magazine. The author will try again when radio produces the equal of that priceless burlesque of the stuffed shirt atmosphere of a symphony concert.

Who is not a radio listener?

In considering the attitude toward radio of mediums using the printed word, it must be kept in mind that they are competitors for the same advertiser's dollar. However, absence of radio news and comment from newspapers and magazines has not kept people from listening. Who among any newspaper's or magazine's readers is not a listener?

That is the question the publisher should answer for himself. After twenty-five years, during which comment has developed out of intentional silence to chary admission of its existence, thence to widening acknowledgment of a vital factor in American life, radio, its good programs and its bad, is beginning to get due treatment as news in newspapers, and likewise as an interesting subject in magazines. Highly meritorious exceptions to the above observation serve *only* to bolster the evidence in the overall picture.

For these reasons, here is a field for writers that may require some pioneering but which should be increasingly productive as the field of acceptance broadens.

Whatever comment or criticism you plan to write should be made from the listener's standpoint. For example, you might put together a series of five or ten daily "columns"—200 to 400 words each—and approach editors in your area, or syndicates serving a large number of newspapers. But do not start to

write them until you have thoroughly grounded yourself in what is on the air; in other words, listen and listen carefully before you turn to your typewriter.

You might be able to create a full-time berth for yourself as radio editor on a given publication, provided you wished to leave the free-lance field.

The field of fiction

For writers of stories, here is a comparatively new field: fiction that has its genesis in a radio station. But first get your facts straight, then translate that setting and its activities into words the reader can understand. The millions of radio listeners remain eager to know more about radio and its operation; this hunger has never been satisfied. To know how a radio station is operated, to be familiar with the day and night routine—a routine that is electric, new each day and each night, always in a different way for a different reason—these things would be essential background for writing a good radio story. But your readers would be sharply critical if they find your offering is radio in name only; they will expect you to know more than they do about it; they also will expect you to make that knowledge clear to them. There have been many stories written about newspapers, particularly the reportorial side; the best ones always have been written by men and women who know what a city room is. In other words, they have worked there. Keep this fact in mind in writing a story about a radio station. Further, juveniles would be interested mightily in good radio adventure stories. (Certain additional possibilities are included in the discussion of radio writers' salaries which follows.)

Section B

Present Pay—Future Prospects

The radio industry grew up fast, but it failed to fatten writers pay envelopes as it developed. Right now would be a good time for it to stop in its progress long enough to bring writers'

salaries into line with the importance of their work. Admittedly there are commendable exceptions, but radio today finds itself short of new ideas and new programs because it created no backlog of new writers to draw on as old patterns wore thin and were discarded. New writers have not been attracted in sufficient numbers because radio has not paid enough.

It is true that the radio station itself is not the only source of programs: many of them come from advertising agencies and from radio production operators, but the fact, demonstrated season after season, is that in agencies of supply which feed the common carrier there also is a paucity of new ideas. The following figures are pertinent here:

In 1944 the industry as a whole earned a profit of 222.6 percent (before Federal income taxes) on the depreciated cost of its tangible property; the comparable profit ratio of the major networks companies was 315.3 percent. The proportion of each revenue dollar retained as profit rose from 17 cents in 1937 to 33 cents in 1944; some stations now keep more than half their revenues and spend less than half on broadcast operations. Meanwhile, despite the tremendous increase in the amount spent by advertisers on radio during the war years, the total cost to advertisers of supporting American broadcasting is still only 2 cents a receiver a day, as compared with 3 cents a receiver a day spent by listeners for radio sets, tubes, repairs and electric power.¹

The statement that the listener pays more than the advertiser in support of American radio may cause the objective observer to ask: Why cannot a little more money go into the creating of new, and better, programs?

Radio writers' salaries

What are radio writers paid? A thorough job of assembling such data does not seem to have been done. A tabulation was made by the FCC for the week of October 14, 1945 (quoted in the *AER Journal* of the Association for Education by Radio for

¹ Brecher, Edward M., "Whose Radio," *The Atlantic Monthly*, August 1946, Vol. 178, No. 2, page 47. Copyright 1946. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

March, 1946). It puts radio writers at the bottom of the pile in a compilation of average weekly salaries for employees of nine networks and 876 stations. The figures are: staff musicians, \$81.20; production men, \$62.49; announcers, \$57.79; radio writers, \$47.93.

The pay for writers jumps considerably when the weekly pay is averaged for the nine networks only (ten key stations of networks included). The figures are: musicians, \$137.58; announcers, \$77.00; writers, \$76.73; production men, \$71.54.

As of October 1, 1946, there had been no more recent compilation by the FCC.

Evidently writing gets higher recognition on the network than on the individual station. One wonders, too, how much of this network writing went into good sustaining programs provided by the networks that "got bumped off the air" because of "must" commercial periods on the individual stations. But that hazard increases the obligation of the individual station to provide good local programs through good script, if network sustaining programs are not used live or transcribed.

However, the FCC figures above quoted do not present a complete picture. There are radio writers not alone in advertising agencies and radio production units, but in advertising departments of business firms, in manufacturing and wholesale and retail institutions, likewise in public relations agencies, publicity bureaus, social service offices and many other activities. They write radio script as well as material for printed media. The scale of such salaries is purely conjecture so far as available figures are concerned.

Earnings of free lance writers

How much can I get if I write a half-hour show for one of the programs in the market for script? That is what the radio free-lance writer wants to know. Fortunately there are figures available for many of these programs, and the sponsor, or his advertising agency or radio production firm, upon inquiry will supply complete information. Some of these open-market programs, as they are called, conduct annual contests for script. The *Dr. Christian* program is one. Here the prize money ranges from

\$2,000 for the top prizewinner down to \$50 for the 22-minute script.

Suggestions for making contacts were given under *the market for free-lance writers* earlier in this chapter. Though the following compilation is in no wise complete, it shows approximate rates of pay for several representative shows in the market for scripts. The figures are for each script. All happen to be half-hour shows: *Billie Burke* show, \$200; *The* (Elaine) *Carrington Playhouse*, \$200; ² *Counter-Spy* (plot outlines only), \$100; *First Nighter*, \$150 to \$250; *Grand Central Station*, \$150; *Helen Hayes* (adaptation), \$350 to \$750; *House of Mystery*, \$200; *Skippy Hollywood Theatre* (23 minutes), \$100; *Suspense*, \$200; *Theater of Today*, \$250; *The Whistler*, \$100 to \$250.

In making your contact, first find out what the sponsor or his agency wants, and the rate of pay. Never send a script blind, trusting to luck something good will happen to it. You are likely to get it back unopened.

Release forms for scripts

Many agencies require you to sign a release form before they will look at your script. If this form appals you, remember the agency's side of the situation: it does not wish to be charged with plagiarism. A new author frequently is certain that no other person in the world ever had an idea like the one he is presenting. Actually, it may have cropped up one week or a month or a year before in a script from another quarter of the continent, or it may have been a variation of an old plot that the new writer encountered in his reading long before, a plot that bubbled up out of his "Deep Well" ³ with something new and original added. Professionals will tell you there actually are only two plots in story writing: love and death. On the other

² Named after the writer of radio serials. Though no longer on the air, the program is worthy of mention because of Elaine Carrington's interest in it. As a sustaining program over MBS, it presented each week the script judged best in its weekly contest for amateurs. For the best script of the playhouse season, the prize was \$500. (See *Time*, August 26, 1946, Vol. 48, No. 9, page 56.)

³ Lowes, John Livingston, *The Road to Xanadu*, page 56 et seq., Houghton, Mifflin Company, New York, 1927. (Unequalled as a revelation of the creative process, and recommended to any new writer.)

hand, no writer is eager to sign away his hope in a hereafter. A more equitable handling should be worked out, one that will include recompense for every broadcast of a script.

Another market is that of performance rights *other than the first*. Certain stations find such purchases give them good material at less cost. And it provides the author with additional pay beyond the première performance of his play. Radio, unfortunately, has been reluctant to repeat a good show. This should be overcome.

Script services offer opportunity for additional return on your labors. Northwestern University, for example, operates such a service. Scripts that already have had their first performance are sold on a royalty basis to noncommercial radio workshops and amateur educational groups.

The future for radio writers

If the radio industry continues to develop at anything like the rate of its first twenty-five years, then such expansion should heighten the attractiveness of its future for the radio writer. In this case, some statistics may help clarify the perspective for the long haul in your radio work.

There are more than 1,000 standard broadcast or amplitude modulation (AM)⁴⁻⁵ stations now operating in the United

⁴ Consult your nearest radio station's engineers, or your public library. The electrical transmission of aural and visual waves is discussed in many books and magazine articles.

⁵ Under date of September 26, 1946, the FCC, through its secretary, T. J. Slowie, gave the following summarization to the author:

"At present there are 1,005 standard broadcast stations licensed by the Commission. In addition 330 construction permits have been granted. There is no method for accurately determining the maximum number of stations which can be assigned to standard broadcast as every case is considered individually on its merits and may or may not involve considerable interference, which may or may not be permissible, depending on circumstances.

There are 65 FM stations now operating. Construction permits have been granted for 270 and conditional grants made for 261 more. A tentative allocation plan makes provision for approximately 1,600 Class B (high power and extensive coverage) FM stations and more are possible in many rural areas. Several thousand of the lower power Class A (low power and limited coverage) FM stations are also possible. It appears there may be a demand for approximately 3,000 to 5,000 FM stations within the next few years."

States. Though less than 100 frequency modulation (FM) stations are in operation, there may be 3,000 to 5,000 of them on the air within the next few years.

Both AM and FM stations transmit sound, sound alone.

Facsimile, described by Charles R. Denny, Jr., acting chairman of the FCC, as "broadcasting that will print right into your living room a newspaper complete with photographs and comics" is on the way; any FM broadcaster is a potential publisher.

And what about television which combines sound (FM) and visual impressions. Here pioneers have ten stations, including experimental stations,⁶ in operation, with the estimated television audience for the entire country between 5,000 and 6,000 sets. This of course is just getting the door open, but already there is disagreement over the length of the commercial an-

⁶ The progress of television, as summarized by *Tide* in its issues of July 26 and August 23, 1946, shows the following networks, projected or in operation:

American Broadcasting Co. (ABC): telecasting over five outlets. They are WRGB, operated by General Electric Co., in Schenectady, N. Y., with 600 receiving sets in its area. WABD (DuMont), Manhattan, 3,000 receiving sets. WPTZ (Philco), Philadelphia, 850 sets. W3XWT (DuMont), Washington, D. C., 50 sets. WBKB (Balaban & Katz), Chicago, 450 sets. These 4,950 sets plus 200 or more in the Los Angeles area comprise the television audience in the United States.—*Tide*, July 26, 1946, Vol. 20, No. 30, page 60.

Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS): operating two stations in Manhattan, WCBW (now WCBS-TV) for black and white, and W2XCS for color. The company has made application for stations in Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, and Los Angeles.

Crosley Corporation, Cincinnati: plans a network of three stations, Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus.

Allen B. DuMont Laboratories, Inc.: plans a five-station chain, Manhattan, Washington, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Cincinnati. The stations in Manhattan and Washington (see ABC paragraph) already are operating.

National Broadcasting Co. (full quota of five cities): Station WNBT, Manhattan, and the following cities selected to comprise the chain: Washington, D. C., Cleveland, Chicago, Los Angeles.

Television Productions, Inc. (Paramount): operating one commercial licensed outlet in Chicago, and Station W6XYZ in Los Angeles; plans a third station in Detroit, and fourth in Boston.—*Tide*, August 23, 1946, Vol. 20, No. 34, page 68.

The following figures on television development were supplied by the FCC under date of September 26, 1946: "Six television stations are now in operation and construction permits have been granted for thirty more. Approximately 400 metropolitan-class channels [stations] are available to cities in the first 140 metropolitan districts. The number of community channels available has not been determined."

nouncement that a televised program should carry: should it be 20 seconds, or 180 (3 minutes)? This is just one of the problems the pioneers are wrestling with. Color vs. black and white is another.

Size of the television audience

The audience that, by television, saw the Joe Louis-Bill Conn heavyweight championship match June 19, 1946, was the largest a television program ever attracted. Estimates varied from an NBC figure of 100,000 to an AP approximation of 500,000. A four-city network, embracing the Greater New York area, Philadelphia, Washington, and Schenectady carried the NBC telecast. This mark you, 21½ years after the first radio (AM) feature to be handled on anything approaching a *national network hookup*: namely, the program of the Victor Company on New Year's night, 1925, when "a large number of stations were linked temporarily to the WEAf network to carry the program."⁷

An indication of the newness of television and the interest even in New York, one of the centers of pioneer experimentation in it, is this incident in a CBS broadcast out of New York on Saturday afternoon, August 10, 1946. Charles Collingwood, the reporter, said his broadcast "almost did not go on the air" because the CBS newsroom had a television screen in it, and the men in the newsroom were watching the ball game between the New York Yanks and the Boston Red Sox. (As a matter of record, the Yanks won in the 13th inning.)

New opportunities with new stations

This is an electronic age. The primary interest of every radio writer is: "How will this continuing development affect radio writing and my own efforts in the field?"

Contemporary radio is AM radio, the standard broadcasting

⁷ Hettinger, Herman S., *A Decade of Radio Advertising*, page 107. University of Chicago Press, 1933.

we have grown up with.⁸ Well established though it is, there is constant need of new patterns, new ideas, new blood, not only in stations but in the offices of all the users of this means of communication.

Add to these 1,000 AM stations and the offices that feed programs to those stations, the 3,000 or more FM stations that eventually may come on the air, *and the users thereof*. Is that a field of opportunity for you? FM stations may eventually become as numerous as weekly newspapers; their horizon-to-horizon coverage will vary according to their authorized size. An FM map for the years ahead will show, of course, both commercial and noncommercial stations; especially is it planned to give more educational or noncommercial units opportunity to use the air. All this means a vast increase in the number of jobs for both commercial radio writers and those who wish to explore radio's opportunities as a field of creative art.

One rightly can expect much more experimental work in these new noncommercial stations. One field, for example, would be a seeking out of new ways to make man's speech, his words, in times past as well as now, ever more wondrous to the listening ear. That can be a permanent contribution of radio to man's progress in his pursuit of happiness.

Experimental work in AM radio has not been carried on to the extent that it well might have been. It will be unfortunate if the opportunities for better programming and a heartier seizing of the opportunities for public service are not taken advantage of in these new FM stations.

Those writers who like to work with music will find a tremendous incentive in the high fidelity of frequency modulation. For high fidelity means reproducing the entire scale of musical sounds, or "transmitting the entire musical range which the normal ear can detect, as compared with about one third the

⁸ It is a development of the radio service that began on November 2, 1920, when station KDKA, Pittsburgh—it continues in operation today with the same call letters—initiated the first regular program service by putting the Harding election returns on the air. That year, 1920, is the year to which contemporary radio dates its beginnings. (See Herman S. Hettinger, *A Decade of Radio Advertising*, Introduction, page v. University of Chicago Press, 1933)

frequency range now heard in standard broadcasting.”⁹ The gods of electronics will draw no line between commercial and noncommercial stations; reproduction on one will be just as faithful as on the other.

Television's effect on radio?

What will television do to radio? The entire industry would like to have an answer to the same question. Wouldn't you like to see what the radio is talking about? Wouldn't you like to see the drama as well as hear it? Wouldn't you like to see the baseball game—in television you will always be able to sit behind home plate—as well as have it described?

The natural answer, and also the logical answer, is “Yes.” Television, therefore, is certain to be a mass medium of communication in the United States.

But to the question of when the entire country will be served by television as it is by radio today, the answer is not nearly so clear. Maximum development of television will not come overnight. It may grow up alongside radio, nudging it over until radio becomes secondary. That is not saying radio will be eliminated.

W. C. Eddy puts it this way: “If both systems (television and radio) are to be dependent for financial return on their qualities as advertising media, the one that can sell best will be the predominant art.”¹⁰ He adds, in speaking of the sparsely populated territory between the Mississippi and the West Coast, that “there is little likelihood that a nationwide blanket of television over such an area can be provided in the immediate future.”¹¹

Entertainment and television

One hears daily the comment, “Television will be the greatest advertising medium ever known!” That's the advertising side

⁹ Helt, Sanford: “FM Operation: Its Relation to AM Broadcasting,” *Frequency Modulation Business*, page 10, June 1946, Vol. 1, No. 5.

¹⁰ Eddy, W. C.: *Television, the Eyes of Tomorrow*, page 232. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1945.

¹¹ Eddy, W. C.: *op. cit.*, page 237.

of the forecast. But after the newness has worn off, a sequence of purely commercial demonstrations of houses, girdles, perfumes, underwear, soap, motorcars, airplanes and countless other items that are used in this America will not hold interest. One must go back to the first maxim of radio: there must be entertainment. (Also see Chapter 15.)

In entertainment, television will bring into the living room all the drama, comedy, variety, and music you can take. The limitation will be the human eye. The eye tires before the ear.

Probably few will be interested in watching the coattails of a symphony conductor flap as he leads his orchestra, but many will hang on to every play of a football game. By television you may actually learn who stole the ball at the end of the game or who did pull down the goal posts. But you will not be able to tread the familiar path in the living-room rug that you make while listening to a game relayed by radio. Instead you must watch the screen actually to see what the announcer is describing. With television the audience will have to stay put, at least within range of the screen, and it may be some years before television screens in each room are economically popular. Attention, too, must be paid to the lighting in the room, either daylight or artificial, that it does not lessen the clarity of the image.

Writing for television

One thing is clear, so far as the writer is concerned: radio writing will not do for television. Television requires a decidedly different technical handling. For a rough comparison, make this test. Listen to a movie, or as much of it as you can, with your eyes closed. See if you know what is happening. In so doing you will discover the difference between writing for the ear (which is radio writing) and writing for both the eye and the ear (which is what you must do in writing for television). But out of the lively trial and error period which pioneer television writers now are weathering will come something approaching a workable technique.

And, certainly, as you have found in your experience in radio writing, the use of words that are understandable, comfortable

to say, pleasing to hear, and rememberable in the mind, will not be amiss in television.

Section C

Summation—The Familiar Style

It [the familiar style] is not to take the first word that offers, but the best word in common use; it is not to throw words together in any combination we please, but to follow and avail ourselves of the true idiom of the language.¹

WILLIAM HAZLITT, 1821

Now a summation of this book: What is it you and I have been trying to do throughout these nineteen chapters? We have been attempting to write the familiar style. That experience, that effort, would be *good medicine*, even though radio, crowded by newer developments in electrical transmission, were made obsolete tomorrow, for the familiar style is the idiom of the common man. It is the language he speaks, the language he understands; it is the spoken word.

After that spoken word is caught and held on paper, it is pointed out as an art. And it is an achievement not fully recognized even now by writers, or scholars, or advertising agencies, or sponsors, or even radio executives themselves. As a pertinent analogy, Pearl Buck ² tells us that Chinese scholars in their time, in centuries long ago, did not recognize the Chinese novel, the indigenous Chinese novel that reflected the life of the people in language the people could understand. Yet that kind of story telling and writing is what has survived in China, while the artificial forms the scholars approved withered and were forgotten.

With formal and precise and necessarily cold belaying pins

¹ Hazlitt, William, "On Familiar Style," *English Poetry and Prose of the Romantic Movement*, page 1011. Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago, copyright 1929.

² Buck, Pearl S., *The Chinese Novel*, Nobel Lecture delivered before the Swedish Academy at Stockholm, December 12, 1938. The John Day Company, New York, 1939. ("Full of easy flow and readability," this "amusing" discussion is recommended reading for any creative writer.—Author)

of formal and precise and obviously cold words, pedants seem to have been attacking the familiar style all along the highways of literature. But all along the warm and friendly byways where human beings converse with one another, where the Chinese gathered to listen, and where Plato in his century paused to converse, on down to our own time, to Franklin D. Roosevelt, master of the fireside chat, *who talked with friends in their living rooms*, and to Logan Pearsall Smith, who wrote unforgettable *trivia*, are found men whose speech is remembered—because they wrote and spoke familiarly.

It is good writing in any age

To write as we talk with our friends, with the man on the street, the kid on his way to school, the farmer driving a tractor down on the "lower eighty," especially to write as those who have a sense of humor talk: that is good writing in any age, with or without radio, with or without television. The coming of television does not affect the axiom that the comfortable phrase is the one longest remembered in the mind no matter what medium carries it; in radio script it is the priceless ingredient.

To re-emphasize the point, *the people, yes*: they are your audience. The butcher, the baker, and the banker are people; so are their wives and other members of their households; so are printer and plasterer and prude; so are the farmer, and the fashion designer, and the fellow who likes to do odd jobs in a workaday world. All these and many others, up and down the social scale, are your listeners; and they listen first of all to be entertained; if they are to be informed, that must be done entertainingly.

Your commercial announcement, that paragraph of little words, can be rich and profitable in the impression it leaves in the listening mind. Your drama can be structurally sound and power-filled. Your informational program must be appealing and therefore entertaining, for learning, to be universally acceptable, must be made palatable to the mind.

In such informational or educational service, it is important to realize what radio can do in leading or misleading the people of a nation, or any segment thereof. Our memories still are

fresh with the perversions of nations, including generations of youth, carried out by dictators, which culminated in World War II. Radio was one of their strongest weapons.

Are we, you and I, qualified to use for good the great power that is inherent in the medium? Leaders of state, teachers in the humanities, in the social and political sciences, in the welfare of the young, for that matter all who direct and instruct can use radio for the common good; but they should be listening to it, too, to find out how others are using it, and what they are saying.

Radio's service to the community

Radio has opportunity to stand for something in its community. It may not be permitted to advocate, but it certainly is expected to serve. (A sequence of children's programs for the entertainment of youngsters during a polio epidemic is an example.) That particular zone, as at present formulated, between required *nonadvocacy* and required public service is sufficiently large to permit any station to drop its anonymity and pick up the challenge of community leadership. Some stations already have made commendable progress in this direction. More could do so. Network cultural programs frequently give the cue for an application and extension locally of similar public service. Authoritative script, setting forth the station's objective in a given project, is the readily available answer to: What is your station doing in public service?

An inspiring field

Whatever the form, in each the writer can make use of the wonder of words, their vigor, their beauty. Each form can be the free-flowing American idiom that the nation, or a region, or a community can understand.

An audience greater than any writer ever before enjoyed invites us to get to work, to originate, to put our thoughts into original words and phrases and images. We have the material at hand in this glorious English tongue, rich in Anglo-Saxon root words, good blocks out of which to build good radio script.

Radio is an inspiring field through depression, recession and war boom years, and more than ever in these days of striving toward a lasting peace. It can be bread and butter, and it can be art. Let's pioneer, in writing for it, whatever we do, whichever way we go!

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