

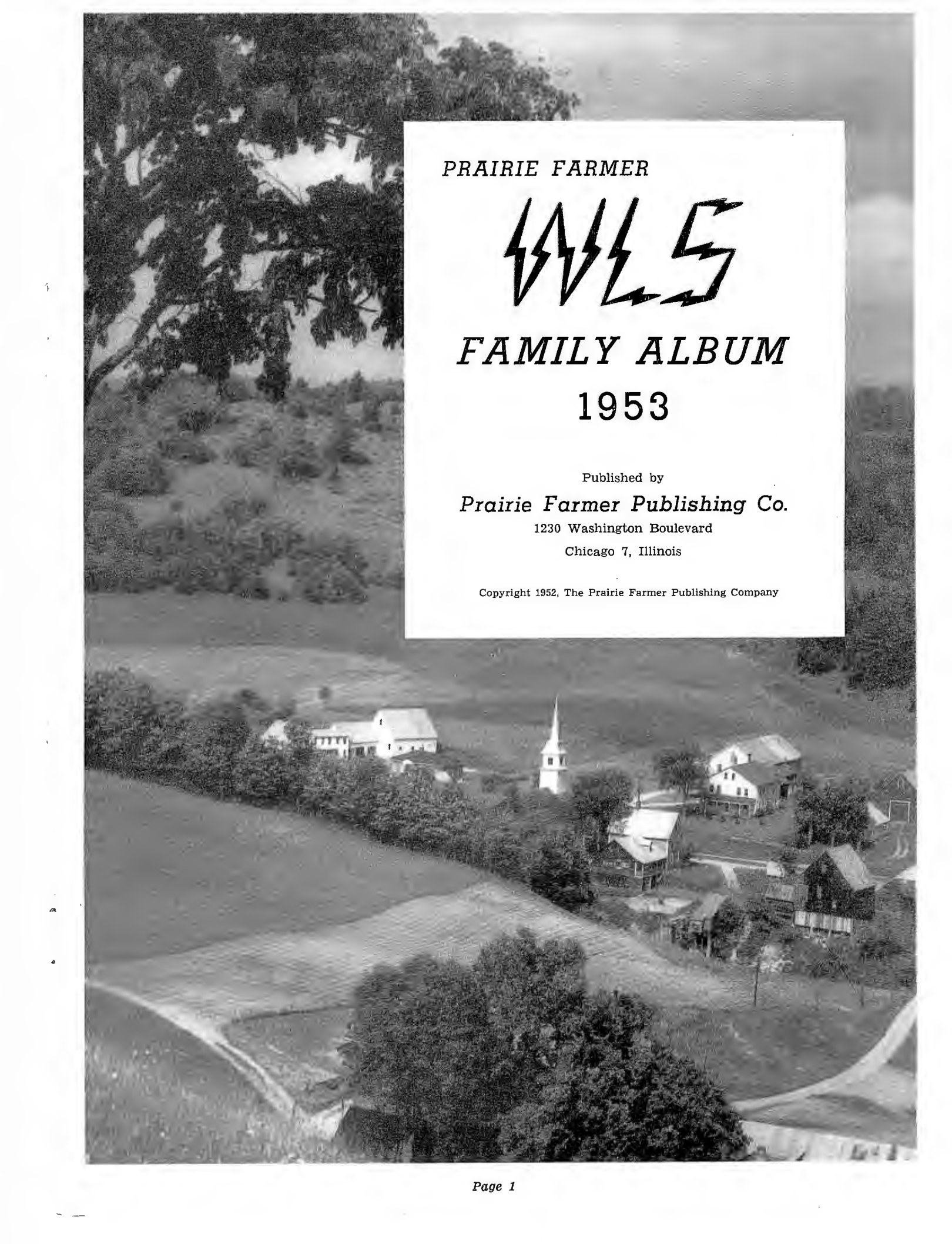
PRAIRIE FARMER

WLS

Family Album

1953





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1953

Published by

Prairie Farmer Publishing Co.

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JOSEPHINE WETZLER was born at Peoria, Illinois. In childhood, spent much time on a farm, rode horseback, fed pigs, helped in haying, dreamed of owning a western ranch. In grade school she began writing poetry, in high school decided to be an actress, studied violin and speech. Time to go to college, she went to work instead. Married to Thomas Wetzler, civil engineer, she planned to devote herself wholly to their home and three children. But she wrote a children's page in a local newspaper. To help a friend, she made one appearance on radio, was asked to stay two weeks, stayed six years. Came to WLS, wrote many dramatic scripts, until placed in charge of **SCHOOL TIME**. She and Mr. Wetzler have six grandchildren. Her latest ambition, to write books for children.

A NEW FRONTIER IN EDUCATION

THE first issue of *Prairie Farmer*, January, 1841, launched a crusade for improved schools in the newly settled prairie country. A few years later, the first proposal for agricultural colleges and experiment stations was printed in this farm paper.

A dozen decades ago, school curriculum was simpler. The sum of human knowledge was small. Recent generations have brought more advance than all previous centuries. A child in elementary grades today knows answers the wisest savants of a century ago never heard of.

As early as 1925, Radio Station WLS sensed the need of schools, for a supplementary program of interpretation, enrichment, and stimulation. It's "Little Red School House of the Air" became the first program in broadcasting history directed to the classroom. *SCHOOL TIME*, now in its 16th year, is the result of that early experiment.

Of tremendous impact on school children, "Adventures in Freedom" tells in dramatic form the real meaning of American citizenship. This part of the *SCHOOL TIME* curriculum has received high national awards, and enthusiastic praise from teachers and pupils in hundreds of schools.

"The New World of Atomic Energy" was a stupendous achievement. Here was a subject so new and so great that even top scientists had difficulty explaining it. Josephine Wetzler, aided by highest atomic authorities in the world, after an entire year of intense study, produced on *SCHOOL TIME* a program series which won acclaim from distinguished scientific authorities and educators. Some of the programs of this series, "The New World of Atomic Energy," were reproduced on many radio stations throughout the nation. Boys and girls, listening, acquired an accurate understanding of this far frontier in scientific discovery.

In music, biography, literature, current news of the world, work of similar magnitude is being accomplished. Teachers say that because of the powerful stimulus of this daily *SCHOOL TIME* program, children do better in their other studies. New horizons are opened, and mothers, listening at home, are better able to keep in touch with the discussions of their children.

SCHOOL TIME, presented on WLS for 16 years as a public service, has been scouting out the trails for this new and challenging frontier of education. We are grateful for advisory help from top school authorities, and proud of the honors given to this program.

This is the work directed by Josephine Wetzler.

DEDICATION

A WOMAN of far vision, combining understanding, sympathy, imagination, and tireless energy, she lives in a world of wide horizons, teaches in a school room as vast as the flight of the kilocycles. She has been able to see eye-to-eye with little children, to bring out the drama in common things, to put thrilling vitality into facts usually considered dull and uninteresting. Her zeal toward education truly represents the century-old idealism of *Prairie Farmer-WLS*.

To Josephine Wetzler, Educational Director of *Prairie Farmer-WLS*, we dedicate this Album.

A black and white portrait of President James E. Edwards. He is an older man with glasses, wearing a suit and a striped tie. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a gentle smile. The background is dark and out of focus.

PRESIDENT JAMES E. EDWARDS

Mr. Edwards heads both The Prairie Farmer Publishing Company and Agricultural Broadcasting Company, owners of WLS. He is also Chairman of The Burrige D. Butler Memorial Trust of Chicago, Illinois.

Prairie Farmer is unique in being the

oldest farm paper continuously published in America. Started in the year 1841 by a small organization of farmers, it has continued for 111 years in intimate contact with practical farm problems. Many of the progressive ideas in agriculture have been printed first in this paper.

Nearly half a century ago, when advertising was of uncertain character, Prairie Farmer announced a policy, unusual at that time, of making certain that all advertising in its columns was reliable. Circulation is highly concentrated, more than 400,000 mostly in the richly productive states of Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin and Michigan. Four field editors travel constantly in the four states. The editorial staff works closely with WLS, and "Prairie Farmer Air Edition" is heard every week day on radio. By the Will of the late Burrige D. Butler, a substantial part of any annual profits goes to the Chicago Community Trust, for charitable and educational purposes. All officers and managers, both of The Prairie Farmer Publishing Company and its wholly owned subsidiary, Agricultural Broadcasting Company, are active workers, either in the publication or in broadcasting.



Fred W. Orlemann, left, is Treasurer and Business Manager of Prairie Farmer, a director of both Prairie Farmer and WLS, and a Trustee of the Burrige D. Butler Memorial Trust of Chicago. He has had many years experience in all phases of the publishing business. Also has done much of the planning for "No-Worry" Tours.



George R. Cook, above, is Treasurer of WLS, a director of both companies, and a Trustee of the Burrige D. Butler Memorial Trust of Chicago. Works on many problems of daily management, and especially keeps a close watch over the Eighth Street Theatre where the National Barn Dance is held. Native of Missouri. Dreams of owning a water-mill to grind grain in the Ozarks.



Glenn Snyder, above, is General Manager of WLS, Vice-President of Agricultural Broadcasting Company, and a director of both companies. Regarded as one of the highly successful radio station managers. Previous experience, farm paper advertising.

John Allen, Assistant Treasurer of WLS (right) is a wizard with the complicated job of keeping business accounts, and would be popular even if he didn't happen to be the man to write pay checks.



Ruth Luce, has been secretary to Mr. Snyder for more years than she or we will tell, and she always smiles just as sweetly as this.

Editors of Prairie



Editor in Chief, Paul C. Johnson, left, with his secretary Margaret Connell. Mr. Johnson is a director of both The Prairie Farmer Publishing Company and Agricultural Broadcasting Company. Besides the constant responsibility of directing editorial policy and plans, and appearing at least once a week on radio, Mr. Johnson is President of the American Agricultural Editors' Association, and Vice-President of the American Country Life Association. Was farmer, newspaper editor and publisher, and college professor before coming to Prairie Farmer.

A challenge to every member of the editorial staff is the slogan:
**"PRAIRIE FARMER READERS ARE THE BEST INFORMED
AGRICULTURAL PEOPLE IN THE WORLD"**

Science Editor Ralph Yohe, with camera and typewriter, travelled extensively in Europe in 1952, studying agriculture in strange places.

Ralph Yohe, shown with his secretary Helen Page, is an Illinois farm product, graduate of the College of Agriculture. As Science Editor, he keeps up with all new experimental results, especially as related to practical farm operation. Answers a vast number of letters from readers. Has made two extensive trips to Europe and the Middle East, reported once a week on WLS as "Footnotes to Farming."



Farmer

Gladys Skelley, Home and Family Editor, shown with her secretary, Marianne Fingl. Gladys was a country school teacher, then reporter on a daily paper, before coming from Iowa to Prairie Farmer. Is President-Elect of the National Farm Home Editors' Association. Heard every week on WLS.



James Thomson, Managing Editor, with secretary, Jean Quigley. His the brow that wrinkles, getting out big issues, his the pencil that cuts out whole lines when the copy is too long for the column. Was with Illinois Agricultural Association.

Four Field

Bertsch, Indiana

At the left, Maynard Bertsch, Indiana Field Editor of *Prairie Farmer*, with his family. They are Mrs. Bertsch, son Larry and daughter Linda. Maynard has his office in the Administration Building on the State Fair Grounds at Indianapolis, and from that central location he travels out in all directions to cover the State of Indiana. He must be familiar with such diverse kinds of farming as dairying for city milk supply in the northwestern counties, growing of fancy pastry wheat in the southwestern "pocket" area, the tremendous acreage of commercial tomato production in the central counties, or the growing and distilling of mint oil in the northern and eastern sections. He also keeps in constant touch with experimental work at Purdue University, and with the 4-H Clubs, Future Farmers, and Rural Youth. Reports for "Field Editors Roundup" on WLS every Tuesday evening.



Vining, Michigan

Keats Vining, Michigan Field Editor of *Prairie Farmer*, works out of Grand Rapids. He is well equipped for this kind of work, having spent many years as a county agricultural agent. In recent years he has written a great deal for newspapers, and also has a local radio program of farm news and gossip. In Michigan there is a great diversity of farm interest. Most famous is fruit production in the southwestern counties and in the Grand Traverse area, although Michigan also holds the title of greatest producer of navy beans, and has a substantial amount of dairying and beef cattle production. This picture was taken at the entrance to Camp Vining, a 4-H Club camp named in honor of the work done by Keats Vining for the young people of his state.



Editors Report

Loui, Wisconsin

Della Loui, Wisconsin Field Editor, works out of Madison. Few people know the state as she does, both as to farms and people. She drives thousands of miles to keep informed, to report to *Prairie Farmer*. One of very few women to be awarded the State Farmer degree of the Future Farmers of America. Special hobby interest, horses and dogs.



Albrecht, Illinois

Dick Albrecht, Illinois Field Editor of *Prairie Farmer*, is one of the best informed men in the country on soil and crop management, latest knowledge of fertilizer, and land use. Came from an Illinois farm, graduate of Illinois College of Agriculture. Favorite method of writing an article, get all available experimental data, then visit a lot of practical farms to see how it has worked out. Shown here examining experimental oats being threshed out. Dick's the one without a hat.



Wally Nelson, funnies

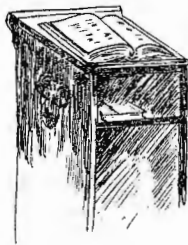
Here we have the man who draws those characters in the back of *Prairie Farmer*, Slim and Spud and Runty the Pig. Wally Nelson, (right) is a farmer in Wisconsin, does his drawing partly as a hobby. However you may be sure he knows the situations he creates on paper. He and Mrs. Nelson have three children.



A youth dreams, a man sees fulfillment



Two pictures of our pastor, Dr. John Holland. The upper picture was made in 1905, when he was ordained in the ministry. The lower picture was made 47 years later, late in 1952. As an Iowa farm youth, John Holland felt that he was definitely called to Christian ministry, in which he has served more than 47 years. He has been with Prairie Farmer-WLS since 1933, pastor of The Little Brown Church of the Air. Mrs. Holland was an Illinois farm girl and they have been married 44 years. He has written a vast amount for publication, including eight books. Heard every Sunday morning, and daily on Dinnerbell and Evening Vespers.





Program powerhouse

Left to right are Harold Safford, Program Director of WLS, Mrs. Safford, Mrs. George Biggar, and George C. Biggar, Director of the National Barn Dance. Mrs. Safford and Mrs. Biggar are sisters. The radio experience of these two men, combined, makes well over half a century, for both of them started when broadcasting was very new. Incidentally, both are agricultural college graduates. Safford, still very young when he came to work for WLS, had been leader of an orchestra, and had been city editor of one newspaper, managing editor of another. As Program Director, he is able to understand any problem that arises, because he has handled every branch of the work. George Biggar was the first conductor of Dinnerbell Time, edited the first WLS Family Album, published in 1930. He is always watching for promising talent, brings out many new ideas.



Practical neighborliness

Al Boyd, shown at the left, has a variety of jobs around WLS, but one is the supervision of the Christmas Neighbors Club. Contributions coming in the month of December are used to purchase many items of special equipment for hospitals, orphanages, and other child care institutions all over the middle west. Thousands of listeners have a part in this work of practical neighborliness.

Betty McCann, right, keeps all the records of the Christmas Neighbors' Club, knows exactly what each institution on the list has received in the last 10 to 15 years. She also sends acknowledgement of every contribution. Prairie Farmer-WLS pays all incidental costs.



Traffic

Grace Cassidy, above, handles what we call "traffic." That is, she knows, at any moment, what program, what talent, what copy, and what studio is supposed to be used. Unless you have had some experience with it, you can hardly realize the thousands of such details that arise constantly. Started with the station almost at its very beginning, 29 years ago.

Production

At the left, an unposed snapshot of Captain Stubby and Production Chief Bill Nelson. Stubby has a problem about something in the way the program is laid out, wants to be sure he understands. Bill Nelson, with his helpers in production, get programs on and off, supervise rehearsals, take the blame if anything goes wrong.





They watch for your letters

Every time you write a letter to anyone at WLS or Prairie Farmer, Chicago 7, Illinois, it first passes through the fingers of one of these girls. They don't read your letter, except when necessary to make sure which department or person it is intended for. Their job is to move it accurately and swiftly. In order to do this, they must keep informed from day to day about any sort of special offers that are being made over the air. Both Prairie Farmer readers and WLS listeners have always been great letter writers, and it is not unusual for these girls to handle many thousands of letters in a day. While doing it, they keep a record of where the letters are from, and they sort letters as fast as you could deal cards from a pinochle deck. From left to right, Mamie Harper, above, Mildred Burton in charge, Ingeborg Bunge. Below, Emma Olsberg.

They make dates

There is a very great and constant demand for WLS talent to appear at all sorts of local entertainments. To make arrangements for such appearances, the WLS Artists Bureau has the facilities, knows all the details. They have vast experience in planning such entertainments. At the right, above, Georgia Smith, Richard Ferguson, Camile Sullivan, George Ferguson. Seated, Earl Kurtze.





GREATEST FOOD PRODUCING

Rich soil and skilled farmers of the Prairie Farmer states, as pointed out by Advertising Manager Vern Anderson, make this the greatest food producing area in the world. Mr. Anderson, (left), is a Director of both Prairie Farmer and WLS, and a Trustee of the Burrige D. Butler Memorial Trust of Chicago. Other members of the Advertising Department, left to right, Walt Brian, Dick Scrymiger, Ben Van Cleave, W. G. Brookman, Herbert Horn (classified),

Paul Scotte. (Van Cleave since replaced by Bob Birk.) These men keep familiar with latest developments in equipment and farm supplies. The Advertising Department conducts many surveys, follows closely the work of the Editors. Below, handling many details, seated left to right, Dorothy Kriz, Carol Solomon, Betty Guettner; standing, Marilyn Michalek, Ruth Phare, Sally Kolicius, Pearl Ruck de Schel.

AREA IN THE WORLD



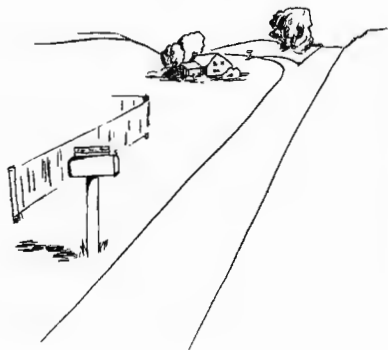
More than 400,000 mail boxes

It is significant that in the area known as the greatest food producing area in the world, *Prairie Farmer* is read by more than 400,000 farm families. It has served this area for 112 years, and it is no idle slogan when we say, "Prairie Farmer readers are the best informed agricultural people in the world." W. E. (Bill) Renshaw (right) as Circulation Manager, makes certain that the paper reaches all these mail boxes. Bill practically grew up with *Prairie Farmer*, knows the geography and people of these states intimately. Formerly wrote many articles for the paper. Flies his own plane, and was one of the organizers of the Flying Farmers. One of the best known and best loved men among middle west farmers.



Left, a small corner of the filing system with records on all subscribers. Standing, Ann Erhardt in charge of filing, left Helen Zitek, right Celia Uritz.

Below, circulation details, Richard Lange. Standing, left to right, Helen Lantz, Frieda Hackl, Esther Wagner, Renate McKenzie, Marie Thompson. Seated, Mary Caringello, Muriel Anderson, Delores Minaltoski.



RECORDS

You never hear them on the air, nor see their pictures in *Prairie Farmer*, but these four do essential work in keeping of records in the business office. The three girls, left to right, Terry Mathes, Sharlene Cohen, and Gertrude Grosskopf. The man, Richard Birdsong.

PROTECTIVE UNION

Operation of *Prairie Farmer's* Protective Union, which has given service for many years, requires a great deal of detail work, and much correspondence. These three, below, have handled much of that work. In charge, Mollie Feldman, lower left. Standing, Bea Schwartz; right, Esther Schneider. The Protective Union has saved hundreds of thousands of dollars for *Prairie Farmer* readers.



Above, James E. Edwards, Jr., whose business training adapts him as a co-ordinator of activities between various departments of *Prairie Farmer*.



The American system of free radio, with neither government subsidies nor political censorship, requires commercial business. These provide it for WLS. Left to right, front, Mary Lou Kelley, Violet Lane, Charles (Chick) Freeman in charge, Betty Guintier, Maryan Gans. Rear: A. N. (Pete) Cooke, Joe Kaspar, Warren Middleton, Ray Betzinger, J. D. Hill, John Drake.

Editor

Kathryn Brady, right, is Continuity Editor, which means that she must make sure the right words, with the right meanings, are written on the script that goes to the announcer. This may be either for commercial or non-commercial copy. Native of Missouri, graduated in Wisconsin, seasoned by much writing for magazines and advertising agencies. Mostly we call her "Kay."



Writer, etc

Al Rice, below writes a great deal of copy in the continuity department, especially related to the National Barn Dance. He is also a member of the Maple City 4 (see Page 25), has been a band leader, and is an accomplished musician. Helps with the great amount of planning required for many programs.



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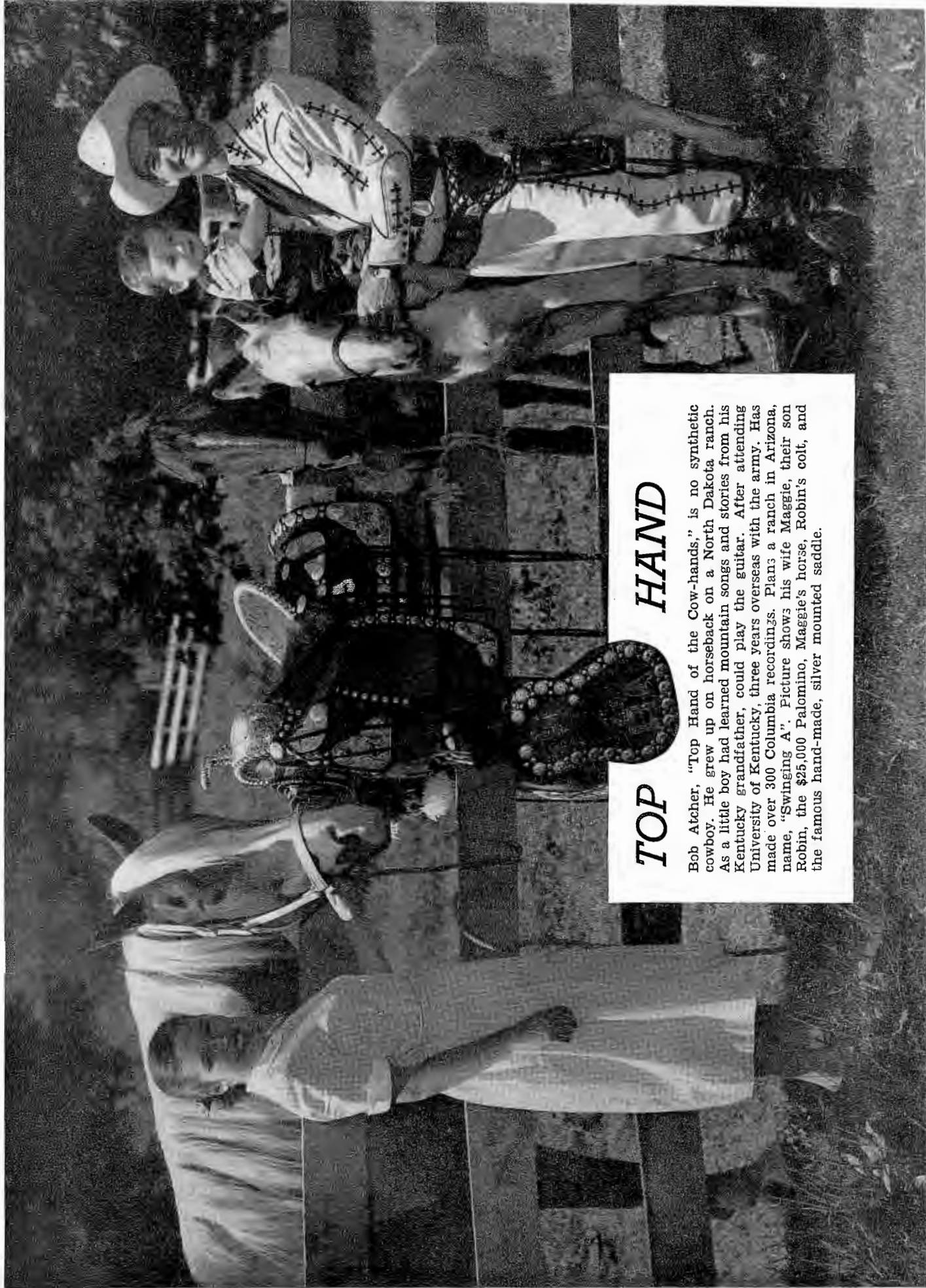
Bill Small, left, is a student of various sociological subjects, but here he helps look up facts, write copy for various WLS programs.





Blue Ridge Sweethearts

Scott Wiseman grew up on a mountain farm in North Carolina. Forty miles around on the other side of the mountain, lived Myrtle Cooper. The two never met until they were assigned to work together on the National Barn Dance. In 1934 they became Mr. and Mrs. Scott Wiseman, otherwise Lulu Belle and Scotty. Shown here picnicking on their farm, back in North Carolina. The years have brought them Linda Lou and Steve. They have been in seven movies, Scotty has written a number of hit songs, and Lu has chewed a prodigious amount of gum. They now appear daily with Martha Crane on Feature Foods.



TOP HAND

Bob Atcher, "Top Hand of the Cow-hands," is no synthetic cowboy. He grew up on horseback on a North Dakota ranch. As a little boy had learned mountain songs and stories from his Kentucky grandfather, could play the guitar. After attending University of Kentucky, three years overseas with the army. Has made over 300 Columbia recordings. Plans a ranch in Arizona, name, "Swinging A". Picture shows his wife Maggie, their son Robin, the \$25,000 Palomino, Maggie's horse, Robin's colt, and the famous hand-made, silver mounted saddle.



Golden throat

Dolph Hewitt is introduced as "the boy from the hills of Pennsylvania." He did, in fact, come from a hill farm in that state, and learned the first of his music at some of the old country gatherings. Dolph sings a great variety of songs, is one of the finest of yodelers, and is perhaps at his best in sentimental ballads. Shown here with his wife, Ruth, who was formerly a member of a radio singing team, the Johnson Sisters. The other sister is now Mrs. Jimmy Hutchinson. (See Page 34.) The Hewitt boy is "Chuckie." They live in a suburb west of Chicago.



The Hewitts have a big garden, and Ruth "puts up" a tremendous lot of food from it, frozen and canned.

Below, a snapshot taken during the National Barn Dance, Dolph at the microphone joining in for accompaniment.



Our little *MELODY MISS*

Phyllis Brown began singing as soon as she could talk, doing solos at the age of three. Born in Chicago, by high school days she was in the glee club, one of a duet that entertained at many school and social affairs. A couple of years of guitar lessons, and she sang folk and western songs on a radio amateur show, took second place. On a TV amateur show she took first place. This was in 1948, and a WLS scout had heard her sing. That year she made her first professional appearance on WLS, from the stage of the Eighth Street Theatre. She's 5 feet 3, likes horseback riding, swimming. Is engaged to a young man now in uniform. Heard daily on the Red Blanchard Show, also on Dinnerbell and on the National Barn Dance.



Donald (Red) Blanchard



We know that Red Blanchard was born on a farm near Pittsville, Wood County, Wisconsin. From then on, details are doubtful, for he tells a fabulously different story every time. When quite young he began making music. Was a member of the famous Rube Tronson band, heard years ago on WLS. He served in the South Pacific during World War 2, and after his talent as an entertainer was discovered, was sent to many camps, where he sang and told jokes. Several years ago he was elected honorary mayor of Pittsville, also Chief of the Fire Department. Does astounding musical feats with homemade instruments including a guitar that flies to pieces as he plays. Shown with his wife Sally, son Donald Junior, and baby daughter Colleen Donna. Heard daily at 7 AM on "The Red Blanchard Show" and on the National Barn Dance.



Singing Sisters

Donna and Colleen are called the Beaver Valley Sweethearts because they came from the small town of Beaver Valley, Pennsylvania. Sisters, but not twins, Donna at the left, Colleen at the right. There were seven children in the family, so everybody had to help. These two began singing together as they washed dishes, ages about 8 and 10 years. Their up-bringing was very strict. After they had won an amateur contest and appeared on several radio stations, they worked awhile with a dramatic company. But mother was always close by. It's convenient now, for Grandmother helps look after the children, Donna's Bobby, 2½ years, and Colleen's Thora Lee, 3 years. Red and Sally Blanchard (facing page) named their little daughter Colleen Donna, after these girls. The "Beavers" as they are called around the studio, are having outstanding success with their sweet harmony on RCA Victor records. Two charming girls, as nice as they sound.



Song and a story


Pruth McFarlin, one of the truly great tenor singers of this generation, has been heard by millions of listeners. During World War 2, he sang at many military camps, sang for the late Franklin D. Roosevelt. Has appeared in scores of churches, and is heard on WLS every Saturday. At the age of two years, he was one of 90 children at Pensacola, Florida, struck with polio, and one of only two who survived. Achieved a fine musical education and has made a great success, although he has never walked.



A Trio of Musicians



Howard Peterson, organist, his wife known as Avis Leone, and their daughter Melody, all musicians. Howard has composed some excellent march music, often plays special arrangements on School Time. Mrs. Peterson has often been heard as a singer. Melody likes to play the piano, together with her father at the big organ. Howard plays accompaniment for Pruth McFarlin's singing.

A black and white portrait of an elderly woman with short, styled hair. She is wearing a patterned, possibly crocheted, top with a large white flower pinned to her left shoulder. The background behind her is a solid yellow color.

*melody
and harmony*

Although Grace Wilson has been singing on WLS for 29 years this April, she continues to hold audiences spellbound. It's partly her choice of sweet old songs, and partly the deep sentiment of her singing. Often teams up with the Maple City 4, below.



Claimed to be the oldest male quartet continuously singing for radio, the Maple City 4 is still heard on the National Barn Dance every Saturday night. They started on WLS more than 25 years ago, taking their name from

LaPorte, Indiana, known as "The Maple City." In the picture, left to right, they are, Pat Petterson, Al Rice, Chuck Kerner, and Fritz Meissner. They can break in on any tune, with or without a key.

Words and

For those moments in which an announcer is speaking into the microphone, he is, in effect, the entire radio station. The work of the management, the business staff, continuity, production, and a corps of engineers is all for the purpose of sending his words through the air. Realizing this, no experienced announcer approaches the microphone without respect for the magnitude of his job.

A great deal of study is involved, for giving an announcement is much more than mere reciting of words. He must understand, in order that listeners may understand.

Upper picture, Jack Holden, his wife Christine, and their son John. Christine will be remembered as "the little Swiss Miss," heard for some years with her yodel songs. Jack has been with WLS more than 22 years.

Lower picture, Hal Culver and his wife Margaret at their fireside, their son David and the two dogs on the floor. Hal has been heard on many different programs, from 5 AM to Saturday midnight. A few years ago he had a regular program of song.



Voices

The five men on this page, like the two on the facing page, have been in your home many times. We appreciate your hospitality to them.

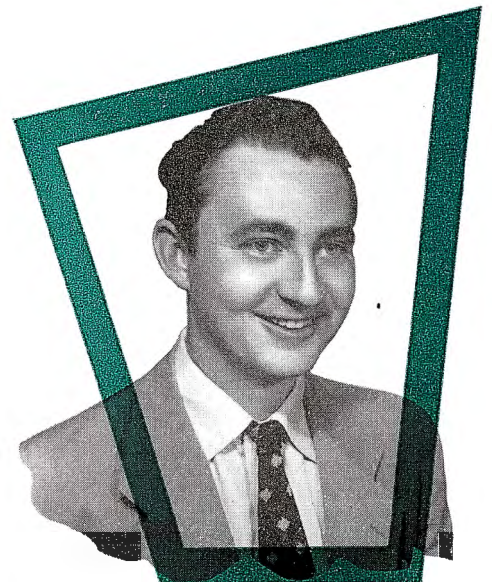
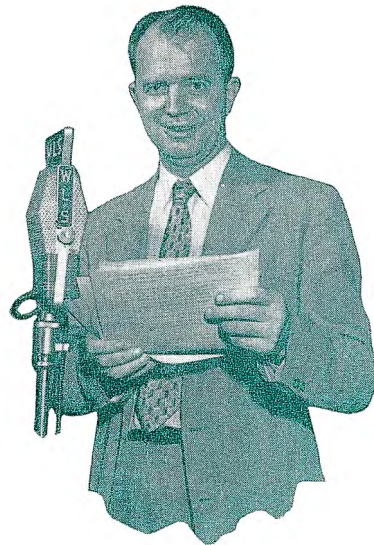
New scientific discoveries make a problem for radio men, for they must learn the pronunciation of all the new eight-cylinder words. The campaign in Korea has made a similar requirement.

Jack Stilwill, top, has had a great deal of experience in every phase of broadcasting. Heard on many programs, including the National Barn Dance.

Al Tiffany, at the right, announces numerous programs, sometimes counsels on advertising and selling plans. Formerly heard on various farm programs.

John Baker, center, gives the news program for School Time and also on Sunday morning. During the week, works for the Department of Agriculture.

Bill Duane, shown lower left with his family, gives the news at 5:45 each weekday morning, and announces other programs. His wife is Helen, and their daughters, Kristen and Elizabeth.

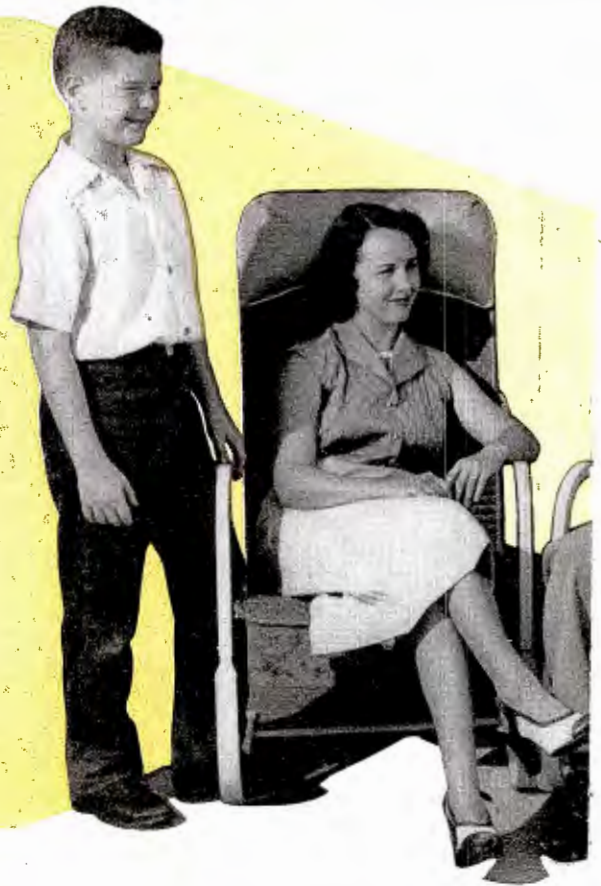


Jim Johnston, with WLS a year and a half, handles the evening program starting at 6 o'clock. Former member of the Air Force, he was born at Moline, Illinois, has had a variety of experience in announcing and dramatic work.



Mirth and Melody

In all radio, there is no other musical group like Captain Stubby and the Buccaneers. The outfit got started when five farm and small town boys were in the Navy together. They played a variety of instruments, liked to sing and entertain. Because of their talent they were sent to various parts of the world to entertain service men. They do uproarious comedy, but their singing of hymns is one of the classics of radio. They have made many Decca records which have been highly popular. At the right, Captain Stubby (Tom Fouts) with Mrs. Fouts, Tommy 11, and Connie 6.



At the left, Tiny (Dwight) Stokes, Mrs. Stokes, Larry, 10 and Debra, 5. Tiny has the very unusual and beautiful tenor voice.

Below, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Kay and their daughter Peggy, age 4. Pete is a new member of the group this year. Has directed his own band, and has special ability with piano and accordion. The Buc's have their own arrangements of many songs.





Above, Jerry Richards, wife Ginnie, and son Ronnie, 10, get ready to listen to the latest Decca record by the Buccaneers. Jerry was a farm boy from near Freeport, Illinois; plays the clarinet.

Most of the Buccaneers have some special interest in handicraft, and like to build things. They live out where they can have large vegetable gardens, to keep them from getting homesick for the farm. Below, Sonny (John) Fleming, is discussing a matter of craftsmanship with son Michael, 13, while Mrs. Fleming reads to daughters Sandra, 11, and Carol, 7.



Below, Bill Morrissey, veteran of Chicago Stock Yards, reports the live stock market directly from there each day. Thousands of live stock producers wait for his broadcast before deciding about a shipment of cattle or hogs.



Larry McDonald, above, with his wife, daughter Judy, son Tommy, and the youngest, Laurie Jean. Mrs. McDonald was a farm girl from Stark County, Illinois. Larry gets up daily around 3 AM, is at the studio to start the "Hi Neighbors" program at 5. After the news at 5:45, he has the Farm Bulletin Board at 6, and is heard again on "RFD 890" from 11:50 AM until 12:30. Has a host of listener friends, likes to get letters from them.



FARM PROGRAMS

F. C. Bisson, right, below, has been broadcasting the grain market report on WLS for more than 25 years. This station was one of the first to set up regular market service, 29 years ago.



Lloyd (Doc) Burlingham, left, is heard daily with crisp commentary on "This Farming Business." It is always wise and sometimes witty, based on wide sources of information and a vast personal experience. Lives on his farm, "Green Pastures on the Kishwaukee" in McHenry County, Illinois, raises Guernsey cattle.

Dave Swanson, right, is manager of the Chicago Producers Commission Association, one of the best informed men on live stock marketing. Heard every Saturday, on "Trends and Possibilities of the Live Stock Market."





Arthur C. Page, Farm Program Director, is Associate Editor of *Prairie Farmer*, Secretary of both The *Prairie Farmer* Publishing Company and Agricultural Broadcasting Company, and a Trustee of the Burrige D. Butler Memorial Trust of Chicago. Has been in editorial work 40 years, conducted *Dinnerbell* for 22 years.



Romaine Benner, secretary of the farm program department, is in the studio for every *Dinnerbell* program, keeps records on people who appear, and what they say, on various farm programs. Directed photographers in making pictures in this Album.

Carl F. Neumann, below, with Mrs. Neumann and daughters Melba, 14, Martha, 10, and LaNell, 6. Came from Oklahoma, 1952, and is Live Stock Editor of *Prairie Farmer* and Assistant Farm Program Director of WLS. Graduate of Oklahoma A. & M., 12 years as county agent, several years as live stock buyer at Oklahoma City.





"News Room, WLS"

Ervin Lewis, above, with Mrs. Lewis and their son Jeff, on the front porch of their home. Ervin was born in Oklahoma, attended Knox College at Galesburg, Illinois. Besides regular news broadcasts, he is heard in a morning spot at 7:45, "People and Places in the News." Mrs. Lewis is an experienced teacher.

The year 1952 was a difficult one for news broadcasters. While there was an abundance of headline news, much of it was of partisan character. The news man had to use great care to be objective, to give listeners an accurate and complete report of facts, without letting his news be slanted toward one side or the other.

The first regular newscast of the morning is put on by Bill Duane (see Page 27) at 5:45 AM. At 6:45, Robert Lyle (right) comes on. This makes Bob leave home long before daylight in the winter months. Shown here also, Mrs. Lyle and their two sons Hunter and Robert. Bob, an experienced sports reporter, became especially enthusiastic last year when his own son began to make touchdowns in high school football. He has years of experience in general news broadcasting.

WLS takes pride in the accuracy and completeness of its news reports.



"Please take an A"

Always before going on the air, each instrument in the orchestra is tuned to an "A." Here Director Herman Felber is showing a genuine Stradivarius violin made in the year 1726, worth many thousand dollars.

Below, the members of the Orchestra. Some have been here many years. All are musicians of exceptionally high talent, most of them teachers outside of studio hours.

Left to right, seated: Emilio Sylvestre, clarinet; Ted Morse, trumpet. Standing, Henri Waxman, violin; Walter Lewis, flute; John Brown, piano; Tom Moore, trombone; Charlotte Chambers, violin; Lou Klatt, trumpet; Margaret Sweeney, harp; Roy Knapp, percussions; Samuel Axelrod, violin; Joe Rullo, trumpet; Theodore DuMoulin, cello.



TUNES,

TONES,

At the right, Rocky Porter, singer and song writer. Since this page was made up, he has left WLS, gone to a radio station in Tennessee, nearer his native home in the South.

Jack Taylor, below, with his wife and their son Danny. Jack is a veteran of many years on radio, now one of the wheelhorses with the Rhythm Riders. Usually plays the string bass.



Above, Wally Moore of the Rhythm Riders, with Mrs. Moore, Colleen, 4, and Connie 2½. Wally sings, plays guitar, sometimes violin.



Right, Rhythm Rider Jimmy Hutchinson, "Lightnin' Fingers" on the banjo, with his wife and their son Steven. Mrs. Hutchinson is a sister of Mrs. Dolph Hewitt. (Page 20.)

ACTION

Jimmy James, right, talented and ingenious musician who devotes his boundless energies to making people laugh. Plays banjo or any other instrument that's handy, recites, does pantomime, all with uproarious effect.



"Skeeter Bonn," actually Junior Lewis Boughan, his wife and sons Ricky and Randy. Born on a farm in Illinois, overseas in the Navy 27 months; mail carrier, Canton, Illinois, then worked in a big tractor plant at Peoria. Went to Iowa radio station as a folk singer, came to WLS, May 1952.



Max Thompson, above, has the highly responsible job of standing by in the transcription room with recordings, either commercial or otherwise.



John Dolce, left, premier square dance caller, instructs "The Calico Kids" from Elmwood Park, Illinois.



"It's been a long, long time"



Old time listeners will remember Ford and Glenn, especially for their singing of "Lullaby Time" about 27 years ago. Above, the way they looked then, dressed for a children's celebration. Below, Ford and Glenn in 1952.



A big birthday cake climaxed the 28th birthday celebration of WLS in April, 1952. In the picture above taken on stage at the Eighth Street Theatre, you can pick out many long time friends. Ford and Glenn officiating, aided by Grace Wilson, Lulu Belle and Uncle Tom Corwine.



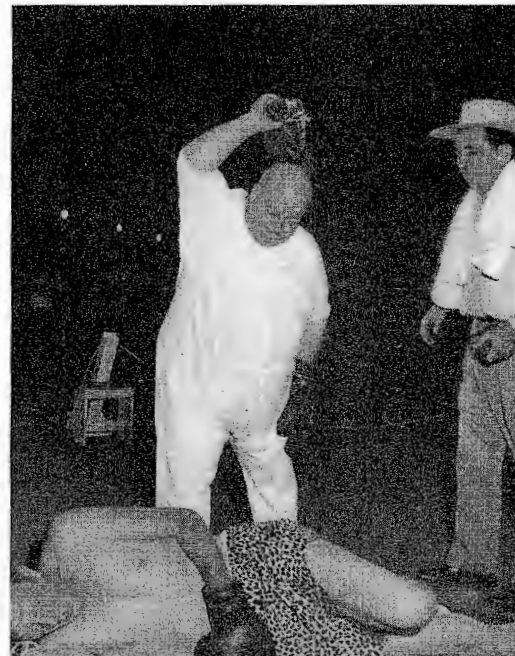
William Beery of Elgin, Illinois, was 100 years old in April, 1952, and on that day he sang a solo on Dinner-bell Time. With him in the picture, Arthur Page and Dr. John Holland.

Hewitt

W L A C - T.V.
Nashville
Tenn

The show goes on

At the right, the Virginia Hams make uproarious fun—Otto, Jimmy James, and Cousin Tilford.



The picture of Uncle Tom Corwine at the left was taken shortly before his death, at age 83, in October, 1952. He was the greatest trouper of them all, beloved by everybody, happy to his last moment.



Ford and Glenn, returning after more than a quarter century, rehearse their old "Lullaby Time" song for the 28th anniversary celebration of WLS, as Program Director Harold Safford looks on.

Youngster Phyllis Brown looks on in wonder, as Harold Safford and Uncle Tom Corwine go through some of the routines of the old "WLS Showboat" for the 28th anniversary Barn Dance program.

Unheard on the air, the Production Man carries heavy responsibility for every program. His the important task of making it work out right. Left, Bill Joyce, veteran of many rehearsals and a vast amount of readjusting programs to fit the time.



Ray Ferris and his wife Lyla Lou. Although Ray is "production" now, was formerly a singer, and has written some songs. Has conducted hundreds of auditions in search for new talent.



Above, Jimmy Gross, who plays steel guitar on the National Barn Dance and on other programs. Also is heard with his own one-string "talking guitar," which he has named Cedric. Between program schedules on WLS, Jimmy is a student of forestry at Purdue University.

Above, Augie Klein, wife Mary Jane (DeZurik), and children Janice, Richard and James. Augie and his accordion fit in anywhere, and his skilled playing enriches many a musical number on the National Barn Dance, and on other programs. Many will remember Mary Jane as one of the original "DeZurik Sisters," a gay yodeling team.

A snapshot (right) shows Bob Atcher at the center stage microphone, Eighth Street Theatre, as instrumentalists gather around to back him up. This is the way things work, on the National Barn Dance.



*Details,
too, must
be accurate*



Above, Ozzie Westley, Libby Kirk and Hazel Moore of the Music Library, must OK every piece of music before it is used. Westley, in charge, helps in planning many musical programs.



Right, Henrietta Stricker's work is in preparation and checking of copy for accuracy before it is turned over to an announcer for use on the air. Requires sharp attention.



Right, Rita Choice is at the Information Desk in the Little Theatre outside Studio A. She greets visitors, takes down names, addresses, special items of interest.



Mary Reckards, above, works in Traffic, nerve center of daily operations.



Marian Zivan, right, is secretary to George Biggar, Barn Dance Director. An interesting job.



Mildred Fredrickson, left, handles details of WLS payroll.

Below, Angie Totaro, secretary to Josephine Wetzler, helps with many School Time matters.

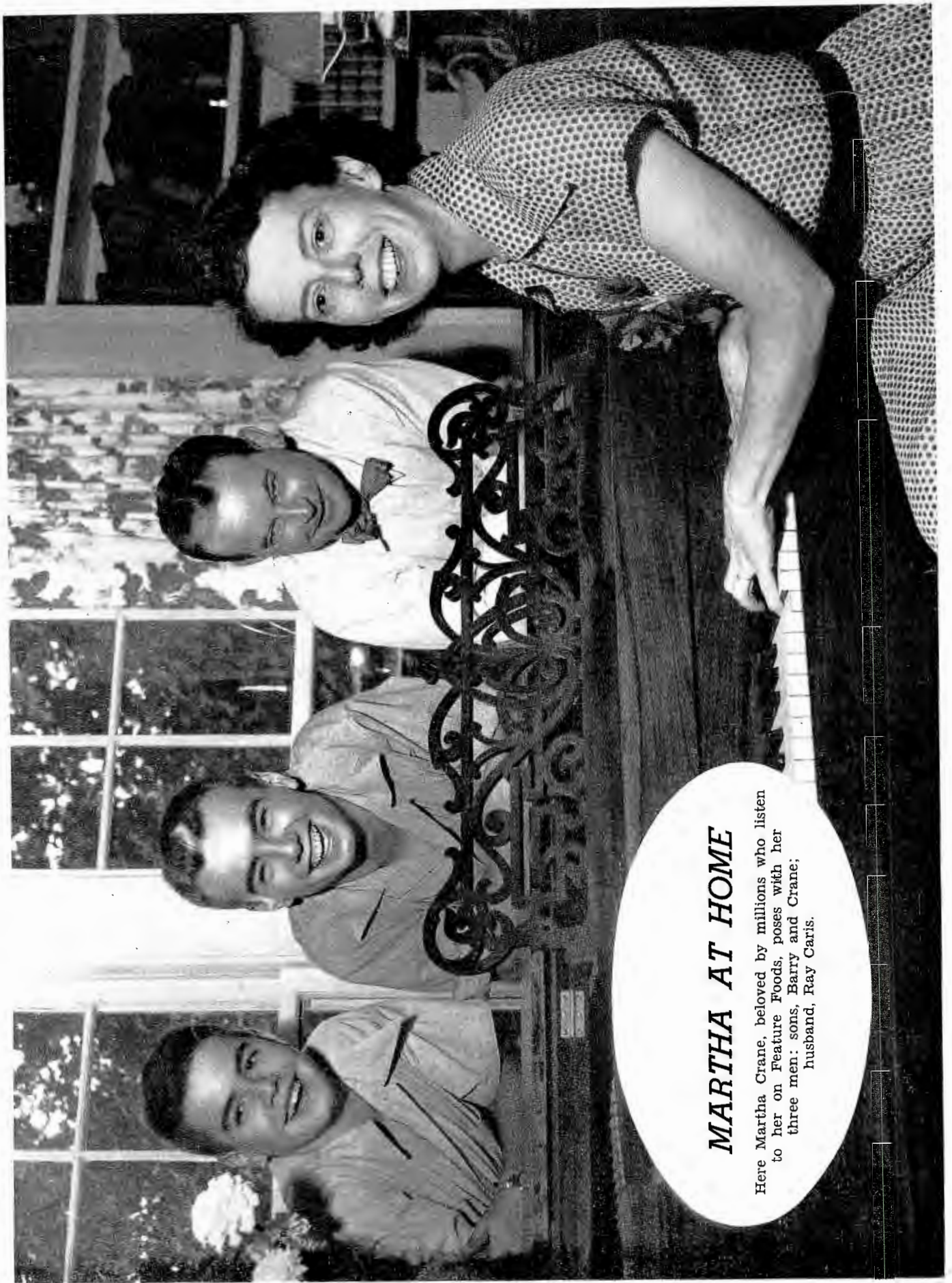


Ella Cole, left, works on copy preparation, where there must be no mistakes, either of mis-spelled words, punctuation marks, or missing paragraphs.



Katherine Hockstad, left, formerly Harold Safford's secretary, temporarily away, comes back for special assignments like helping with Album mail.





MARTHA AT HOME

Here Martha Crane, beloved by millions who listen to her on Feature Foods, poses with her three men: sons, Barry and Crane; husband, Ray Caris.

Uncle Ezra toots the Hebron whistle

The small town of Hebron, Illinois, almost burst its vest buttons in 1952 when the basketball team from its small high school won the Illinois state championship. Uncle Ezra (Pat Barrett) shown nearest the microphone, as president of the Fire Department, blew the town fire siren long and loud. Brought the team and their coach for a WLS broadcast. Claims their strength comes from drinking milk.





At the left, the Toby Nix Family. Toby's name is really Ewing Nix, and he plays violin with the Rangers. He came from Southern Missouri, his wife Ruby from New Mexico. As you can see, they plan to carry forward the musical training with their son Fred.

Many young musicians who aspire to a place in radio, do not understand the broad requirements of this kind of work. Even a high degree of technical skill is not enough. There must be a broad knowledge of music available for instant use, flexibility of style to adapt to needs, and a personality that can fit pleasantly into a group. Particularly in the case of singers, a performer who is technically inferior may have great appeal to the audience and therefore may make a great success. The listeners have the final say, and they know what they like.

*It takes lots
of practice*

*This makes
a tall story*

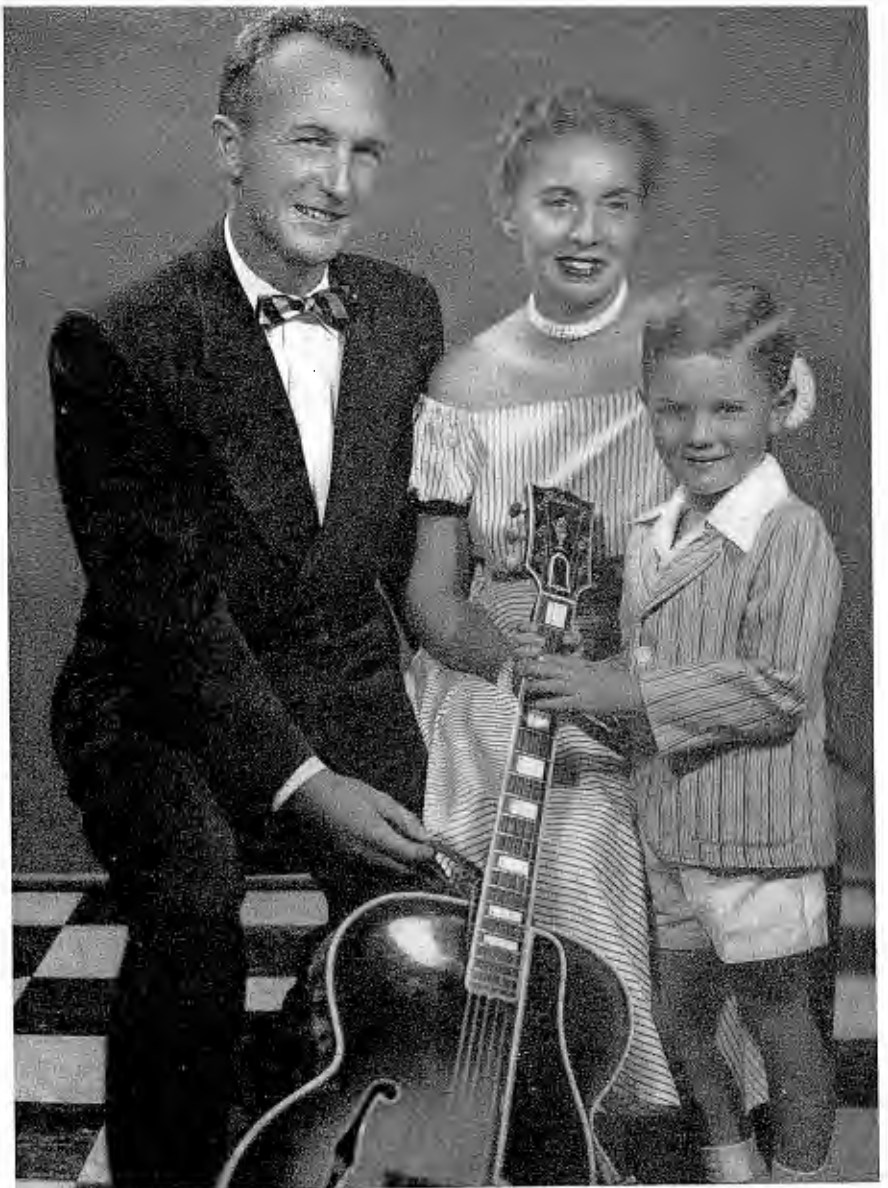
The Holly Swanson family take their croquet seriously and have fun doing it. Shown here, Mr. and Mrs. Swanson, sons Richard and James, and daughter Barbara. Holly, known on the National Barn Dance as Cousin Tilford, is very tall, and so is his whole family. He has the ability of making people laugh, especially when he sings along with Lulu Belle or with the Virginia Hams. At other times, plays bass with the Rangers and in the Orchestra. Had to build his own house, with doors high enough to walk through.



Need a song?

Write it!

Verne Fiedler, right, is usually heard with the WLS Rangers, playing guitar, but he may be heard in almost any musical situation on WLS. Shown here with Mrs. Fiedler and their son David. They are neighbors to the Swansons about 25 miles southwest of Chicago. Verne does a lot of special arrangements of music, and seems always to be listening for those extra little combinations of harmony. It was quite natural for him to take up music, for grandfather, uncles, mother and father all played various instruments and sang, using everything from violin and harmonica to drums. Verne started with violin lessons when six years old. He has written some popular tunes and songs.



Ray Klein Quartet

No, they don't actually play or sing as a quartet, but the Ray Klein family is a happy four. In the picture, Ray, his wife Eva (DeZurik), son Ronnie, and daughter Yvonne. Ray practically cut his teeth on an accordion, for his big brother is Augie, who also plays this instrument, and his uncle is Lou Klatt of the orchestra, who used to manufacture them. Ray had been with WLS a long time, but late in 1952 moved his family to California because of the climate.



Arkie and Vera

There couldn't possibly be another person in radio like Arkie, the Arkansaw Woodchopper. Shown here with his wife Vera, and so far as we know, you never saw a picture before, showing him at the organ. Arkie came from the Missouri Ozarks, and has been with WLS many years. He started as a singer of folk songs and a square dance caller. Now acts as Master of Ceremonies on part of the National Barn Dance, and has a daily forenoon program of his own, "Arkie's Coffee Time." Is a skilled auctioneer, and one of the happiest and most sagacious men in all radio.

Tennessee comics

Here are those boys from "Hoot'n Holler" Tennessee. Reading from left to right, Jethro and Homer. Their real names, found only on pay checks, are (Homer) Henry Doyle Haynes, and (Jethro) Kenneth Charles Burns. Homer's father was a baker in Knoxville, Tennessee, but on Sunday he led the choir, mother played piano and all four children sang. Jethro's father had a sawmill. Homer was 9, Jethro 14, when they started singing on the local radio station, for \$3 a week. Both served in the army, World War II. Whatever they sing, it never sounded that way before. They have written some songs, made a number of successful records. Heard on the National Barn Dance every Saturday night.





Chief Engineer Thomas L. Rowe and his wife are shown here as smiling grandparents. The three grandchildren, left to right, Marcy Jane Lyle, Richard Thomas Rowe, and Cathy Ann Lyle. It is natural that listeners think of radio in terms of programs, and of people you hear. Few realize what a vast engineering problem is involved in sending out speech or music. Tom Rowe, comparatively young, is one of the "old" men of radio broadcasting. In his 'teens a "ham" operator, he spent some years at sea, chief operator for a large salvage company. Started with WLS over 28 years ago. Everybody calls him "Chief."

Kilocycles and Decibels



Studio operator Bill Keller, right, has much experience and unusual genius for electronics work. Has built some very small transmitting and receiving sets. Like most radio engineers, has a "ham" station of his own.



Above, Charles Nehlsen, usually called "Nelly," who spends much of his time supervising the making of recordings. Originally a recording had to be made on a disk or "platter," and many are still made that way. However the tape recorder now gives such perfect results that it equals the natural voice in quality. Words or music are impressed on the tape by magnetic effect, with no mechanical change. The use of recordings gives much greater flexibility in program planning. Nehlsen, a precision worker of great skill, listens to hours of speech and music every day, but is one of the quietest men in the place. Shown here monitoring a control-room tape recorder.



Above, Homer Courchene, chief engineer at the transmitter. He is the same Homer as in the sign-off phrase of many years ago, "All right Homer, pull the big switch and let's go home." Has plenty of problems, especially when tons of ice form on the big mast and there's a high wind blowing.

Many wires in "wireless"

The WLS transmitter and associated equipment, located about 35 miles southwest of Chicago, is so large and complicated that it would take this entire book to give a complete description of it. Every word, every note of music from one of the studios, must pass through here, stepped up with fifty thousand watts of power, radiated out from the great mast. Shown here, Ernest Serena, standing, Clarence Wise, seated at the control console. Total operating staff at the transmitter, ten men.



Above, Dale Shimp, wife Margit, and their 3 year old daughter Sandra. Dale handles any sort of control job, often goes out for "remotes." His wife, (who is more decorative) came from Sweden, where she supervised a corps of seamstresses who made clothing for the women of the royal family. She made the dress she's wearing, too.



This picture of Chuck Ostler looks a bit blurry because it was taken through two thicknesses of plate glass. Chuck is in the control room, stage of the Eighth Street Theatre, monitoring the National Barn Dance. He must watch several microphones at the same time as he follows the program.



Bill Nolan, at the right, may be handling the studio control panel on the program you are listening to right now. Every operator carries heavy responsibility for proper program broadcasts.



Vern Fulton, left, has been seen by many as he sets up equipment for a "remote" broadcast. Has listened to so many farm programs, thinks maybe he'll get a farm of his own some day.

Two from Plum Tree Farm

Al Boyd started at WLS a good many years ago, first as a messenger boy, advancing to do many of the jobs others didn't want to do. In recent years his most conspicuous work has been handling details of the Christmas Neighbors Club. Through this work, the contributions of Prairie Farmer-WLS readers and listeners have supplied a great many needed articles to several hundred hospitals and orphanages. If you ever listened to "Stumpus,"

Al was somewhere in the background with the planning. When you sent a dime for the "Surprise Flower Garden," or ordered tulip bulbs, he had made the arrangements. Mrs. Boyd, better known as Rita Ascot or "Aunt Rita," (see Page 49) has been heard on a great many WLS dramatic programs, and for some years on network features. Most recently she has been heard every Thursday on "Adventures in Freedom," a WLS School Time feature. (See Page 3.) The Boyds live some forty miles from Chicago, on Plum Tree Farm, where Rita likes to putter in the garden.



From darkness he brings light

Lester McFarland has always been without sight, but he has been blessed with great talent and understanding. With complete confidence he picks up guitar or mandolin, or sits down to the piano or at the console of the great studio organ. Sunday mornings he sings a program of hymns, playing his own accompaniment. Incidentally, Mac has what is called "perfect pitch." People write to say that he puts something extra into their beloved hymns, perhaps because he is translating darkness into light. Shown with him, Ruby his wife, and two of their children, Larry, 15 and Carol, 12. Those who have previous Albums will remember another—Kenneth. Well Kenneth is a tall young man now, and he was busy with his job when this picture was taken. Mac is usually heard on the National Barn Dance, as well as on Sunday morning. His cheerful disposition has been an inspiration to many of the young WLS artists.



Neighbors listened

A program very popular with WLS listeners in 1951, and until it was discontinued in 1952, was the "Purina Party Line," given every Saturday noon. Direct telephone calls were made from the studio to listeners, by the conductors, Rita Ascot and Jim Ameche. In this picture, the celebration of one full year, complete with birthday cake, and with various people who helped put it on. Seated at the table, Rita Ascot (see Mrs. Al Boyd, Page 48) and Jim Ameche. Standing, left to right, Bill Small, continuity writer, Vern Fulton, engineer, Hal Culver, announcer, and Ray Ferris, producer.

A Queen smiled

George Biggar places the crown of victory on the head of Donna Jean Martin of Xenia, Illinois, chosen from many contestants as Illinois State Fair Barn Dance Queen. All over the state, young women with musical talent entered the competition, and three were selected as finalists. Besides Miss Martin, there were Wanda Dailey of Rockford, and Evelyn Cox of Jacksonville. The final choice was made on the State Fair Barn Dance, with an audience of more than 12,000 people, and with some substantial checks as awards. As you can see, Donna Jean plays the accordion.





Thanks from the veterans

For their work in the "Here's to Veterans" program, stars of the National Barn Dance received citations from the Veterans Administration. Shown here, left to right, front row, Bob Atcher, "top hand of the cow hands"; Captain Stubby of the Buccaneers; George C. Biggar, director of the National Barn Dance; Robert D. Beer of the Veterans Administration who presented the certificates; Lulu Belle and Scotty. Back row, Sonny Fleming, Jerry Richards, Augie Klein, and Tiny Stokes, all except Augie from the Buccaneers.

Network listens

Last May our Beaver Valley Sweethearts, Colleen and Donna, were invited to take part in the famous Breakfast Club, conducted by Don McNeil on the ABC Network. They did well, as we knew they would. Pictured here with Don McNeil.



Fair visitors stop by

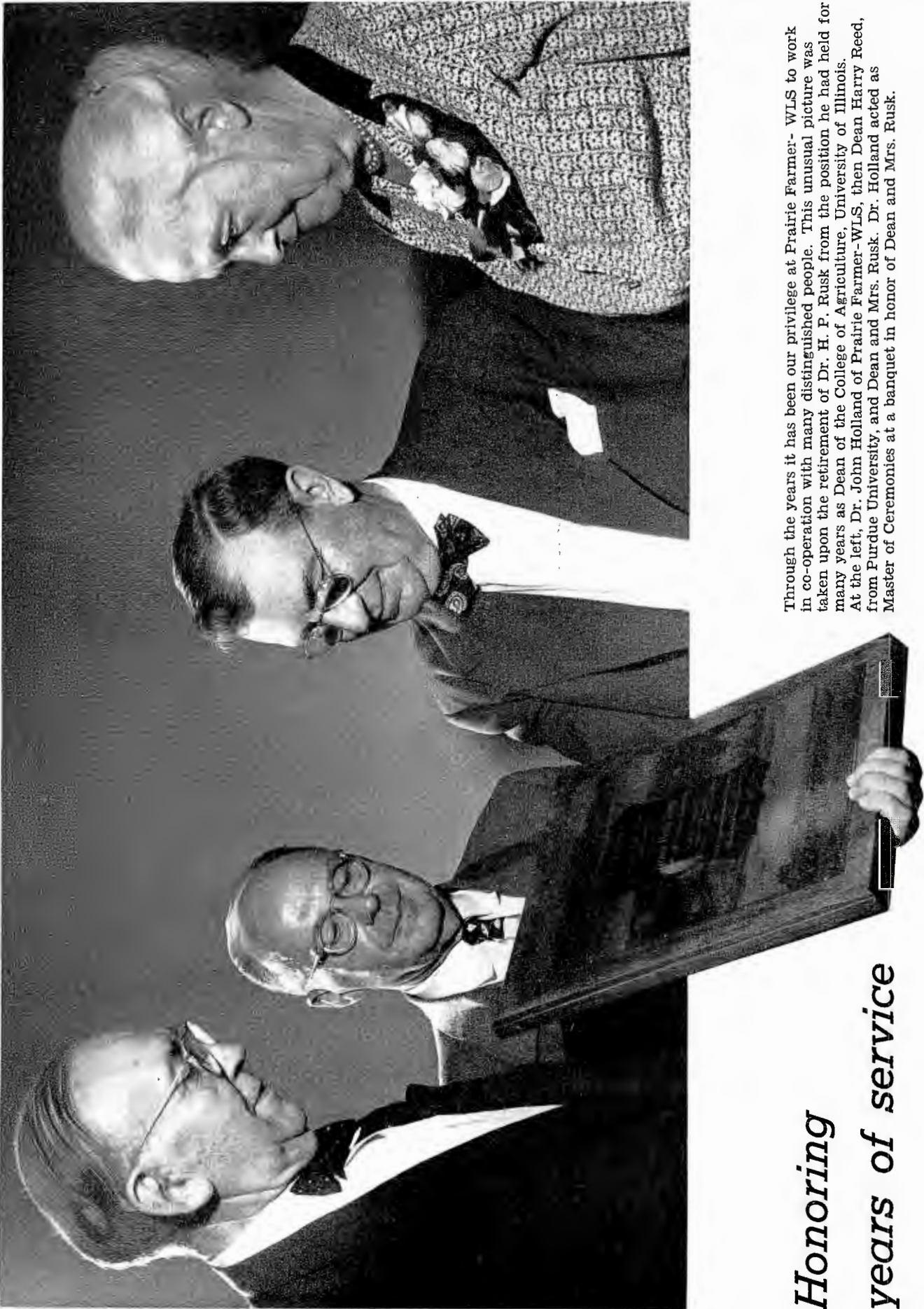


Hostess at the 1952 Illinois Centennial State Fair, Marlene Born of Will County, Illinois. Her title, "Miss Illinois Centennial State Fair." Escorted here by Program Director Harold Safford, and Director of Agriculture Roy Yung, to greet 12,000 people at the National Barn Dance.

Two lovely girls came to visit the Dinner Bell Program, Beverly Ann Steffen, "Alice in Dairyland" from Wisconsin, and Carol Gahm, "Illinois Dairy Belle" from Illinois. They had an important part in promoting publicity of dairy interests at their State Fairs.

At Harvard, Illinois Milk Day, the Queen and her attendants. WLS has broadcast this event for many years. Seated in the center of the stage, 1952 Queen Pat McFarlin, beside her, five attendants. Which was to be Queen was not known until announced on WLS broadcast.





Through the years it has been our privilege at Prairie Farmer-WLS to work in co-operation with many distinguished people. This unusual picture was taken upon the retirement of Dr. H. P. Rusk from the position he had held for many years as Dean of the College of Agriculture, University of Illinois. At the left, Dr. John Holland of Prairie Farmer-WLS, then Dean Harry Reed, from Purdue University, and Dean and Mrs. Rusk. Dr. Holland acted as Master of Ceremonies at a banquet in honor of Dean and Mrs. Rusk.

Honoring years of service



Bells in all languages

George Biggar, Director of the National Barn Dance, is making a collection of cowbells from all over the world. Dewa Singh Sarna of the famous Sarna company which sells bells all over the world, came out to tell about the bells of India on Dinner Bell Time. George found some unusual cowbells to add to his collection. He plans to have a permanent collection of such cow bells on exhibition at the Eighth Street Theatre.



Workers must eat

On the occasion of the National Barn Dance at the Illinois Centennial State Fair, Program Director Harold Safford (right) worked almost day and night. Captain Stubby came along, had to share his sandwich.

Indiana farm friend

Hassil Schenck, (right) president of the Indiana Farm Bureau, is well known on WLS microphones. Pictured here as he was speaking at the Indiana State Fair. Prairie Farmer and WLS co-operate with all farm organizations.





Illinois

At the Illinois State Fair, thousands came to enjoy entertainment in the big Prairie Farmer-WLS tent. They had fun, met a lot of our folks, ate their baskets of lunch at the tables.

Smiling Friends

*"A merry heart
doeth good
like a
medicine"*



Indiana

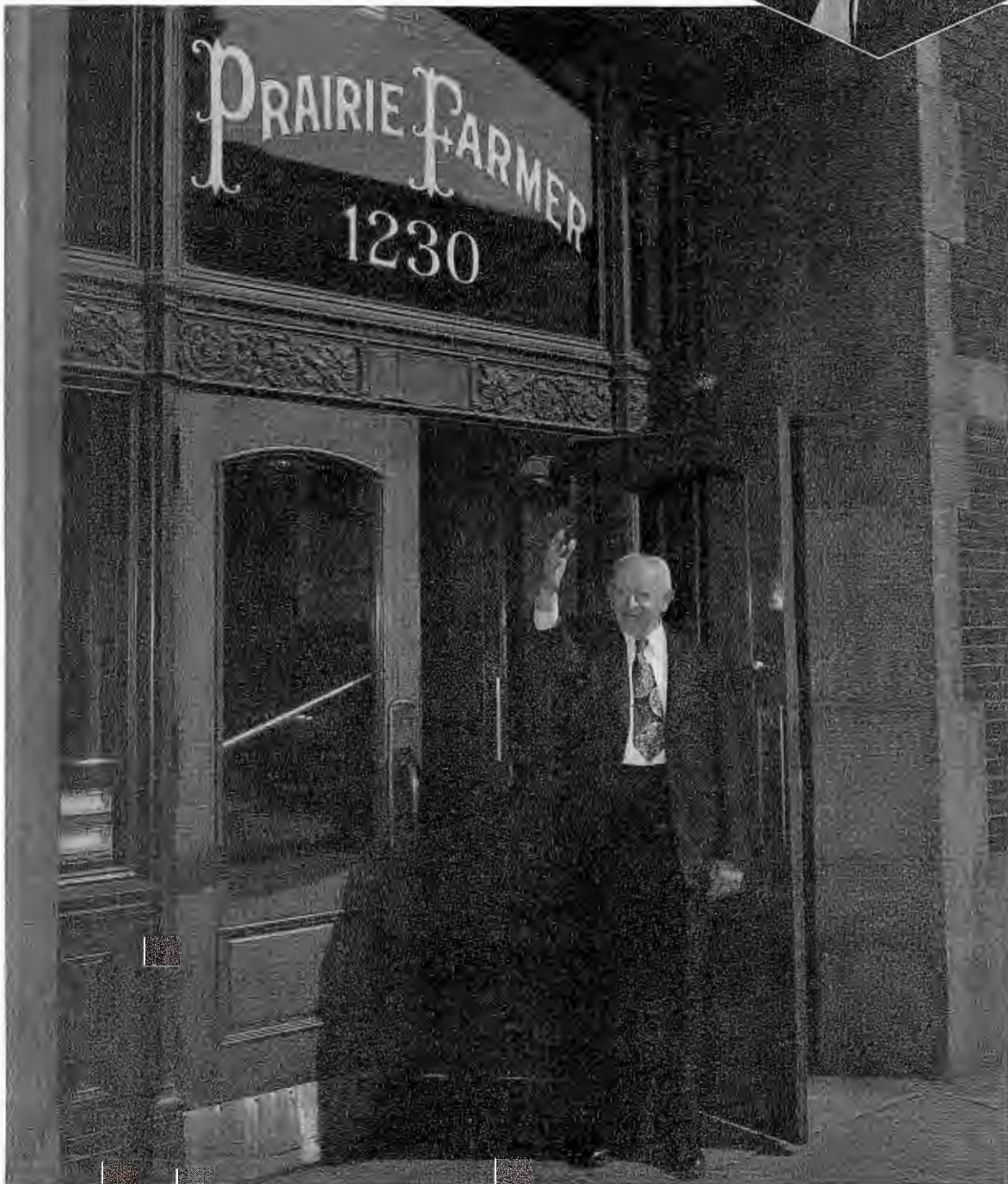
At the Indiana State Fair (above) Red Blanchard had just told a joke when this was snapped. Only a small part of the crowd that came several times a day.

Harvard, Illinois

For years WLS has broadcast from Harvard Milk Day. Some of the grandstand crowd at the 1952 event, following the big parade.

Goodbye Now

Our greatest desire has been to give friendship and trustworthy service to readers of *Prairie Farmer*, listeners to WLS. At the right, Ann Miller at the telephone switchboard, greets folks on the second floor of the *Prairie Farmer* Building. Below, doorman Henry Prince waves goodbye, says "Come Again!"



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