

## 1922—YEAR RADIO'S POPULATION SOARED continued

the entire station, leaving only a piano bench. Somehow they got back on the air eventually. At the time KFAY, as the station was then known, was operated until all the advertising had been broadcast. Then the station was shut down and the staff went out on the street to sell more time. This happened every day. The station's manager, William Virgin died in 1927, when it was taken over by his wife, Blanche Virgin, who sold in 1950 to the present owner, Radio Medford Inc.

When the young KMEO Omaha, Neb. (then WAAW) was moved about four miles in 1931, the Federal Radio Commission said the coordinates indicated a 150-mile move. A Creighton U. professor of astronomy finally coordinated the coordinates to the FRC's satisfaction.

The station went on the air Feb. 14, 1922 licensed to the Omaha Grain Exchange to broadcast on 15 w. This was increased soon to 100 w. *Omaha World Herald* bought WAAW in 1939, changing it to KOWH. National Weekly Inc. bought it from Mid-Continent Broadcasting Co. (now Storz Radio) in 1957, adopting the present KMEO letters.

**KMO Format** ■ KMO Tacoma, Wash., featured news, music and religion from its opening day, April 1, 1922. News was provided by the *Tacoma Times*, co-owner of the station with Love Electric Co. A fortnight after the debut a religious program was broadcast. Three days later city primary returns were put on the air. And on April 26, 1922, a 113-foot mast was installed. The station was heard in Alaska and San Francisco, the *Times* reported.

Carl E. Haymond bought KMO in 1926, installing new equipment. He introduced a merchandise program with

prizes in 1926, bringing calls from all over the Pacific Coast and requiring four extra girls to handle the switchboard. Mr. Haymond sold to Tacoma Radio Corp., present licensee in 1954.

Nobody was excited, not even the



Herbert C. Hoover as he appeared before a KNBC San Francisco microphone in the library of his home at Palo Alto to deliver the final address of his 1928 campaign. His address was carried coast to coast by NBC.

Hale Bros. department store front office, when an ex-naval man named Joe Martineau was given permission to build a station (KPO) atop this San Francisco store. A bit of public service catering to a passing public fancy, the Hales figured. For \$2,400 Mr. Martineau built a 50 w rig and it was licensed April 17, 1922—one of 12 stations in the area all using the same wavelength and sharing time.

**Football Broadcasts** ■ KPO used only live talent, some performers even re-

ceiving fees. Many program "firsts" originated at the station. For several years KPO had exclusive football rights from several universities. Its symphony concerts developed into Standard Oil's *Standard Hour* and school broadcast series. And March 4, 1925 marked the first national hookup for the inauguration of President Coolidge. At that time the *San Francisco Chronicle* became a partner.

In May 1925 the *Chronicle* announced KPO's range was 12,500 miles, "a literal blanketing of the earth's surface with its signals." A photo of Andy Gump was transmitted from KPO Aug. 22, 1925 with the tv system of C. Francis Jenkins whose equipment was on exhibition at the Pacific Radio Exposition.

KPO joined NBC in 1927, with Don E. Gilman named vice president in charge of the western division. *One Man's Family* was one of many famous shows originating at KPO, famed for its development of radio talent. Call letters were changed to KNBC Nov. 23, 1947, NBC having bought the station in 1932.

Fred Christian, an electrical engineer, put together a 5 w transmitter in his Hollywood bedroom and Sept. 10, 1920 was kickoff day for 6ADZ, predecessor of KNX Los Angeles. Mr. Christian received his KNX call in 1921 and moved to downtown Los Angeles. Power went up to 50 w in 1922. KNX shared time with 22 other local stations. Guy Earle, owner of the *Los Angeles Evening Express*, bought KNX in 1924. Mr. Christian now is president of American Electrodynamics, manufacturer of hospital beds.

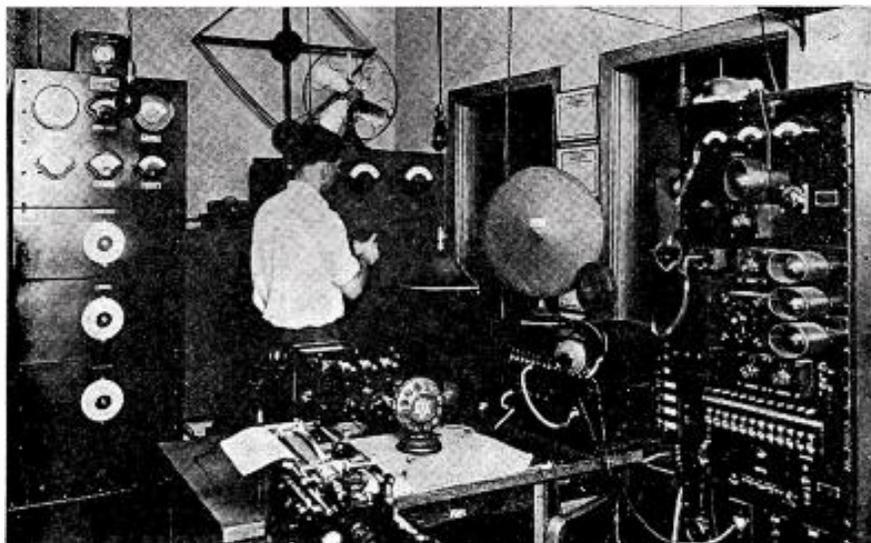
**Fur Buyer Sponsor** ■ The signal of the 1920s was aimed at 11 western states. Mr. Earle recalls an Alaskan fur buyer bought time every winter so trappers in the Yukon and points north could know his travel schedule. The station was sold to CBS in 1936. Mr. Earle still lives in Southern California.

Among Mr. Earle's early executive associates were Naylor Rogers; Edith Todesca, program manager; Wilbur Hatch, conductor; and Paul O'Hara, audio engineer.

Mr. Hatch recalls the celebration when KNX (now 50 kw) boosted power from 500 w to 5 kw and moved to a new antenna site. After the speeches listeners were warned to turn down their volume to avoid damage to sets. This wasn't necessary, it developed quickly, because the antenna hadn't been air checked and only a tiny signal was being fed to the Los Angeles area. Eleven western states had a fine signal. It took two years to solve the problem.

Many of the alltime favorites in radio started at KNX. Conrad Nagel and Wally Reid were among first live actors.

A laboratory experiment directed by



This 500 watt transmitter was used by KNX Los Angeles from 1924 to 1929. The engineer is Paul O'Hara, still with KNX as an audio-supervisor.