

Eric R. Miller
P.O. Box 957
La Jolla, California.
May 15, 1950

Mr. John S. Penn,
WHA Historical Research Project,
Madison 6, Wisconsin.

Dear Mr. Penn:

I asked Terry to broadcast the weather because rural phones were too laborious, and both phones and postcards were too slow when getting warnings out in a hurry.

Weather broadcasts in code at Arlington and elsewhere were going on when I asked Terry.

Weather broadcasts by voice were first given over WHA. This was acknowledged by E.B. Calvert in a survey printed in the "MONTHLY WEATHER REVIEW" an official publication of the U.S. Weather Bureau.

I do not recall the text of early responses, but the code forecasts were displayed on cards furnished by my office in official bulletin holders by the amateur operators who received them. They applied to me for supplies of cards, which was a check on the distribution.

The development of radio was like a boom or gold rush from the beginning. I never heard Terry predict possibilities. There was plenty of interest by "willing and able" university people who took part in Terry's programs. Terry built transmitters out of ordinary apparatus around the laboratory until the Regents were willing to appropriate additional funds, so that his work was not at the expense of the work of other research of the physics department. Davis, the glassblower for example, was available to other members of the department who had previously done their own glassblowing. The Music School and the Agricultural and Extension faculties were specially ardent supporters of Terry's work. Terry and his assistants, especially Bert Miller and Malcolm Hansen were specially active in setting up public address systems and extensions of microphones to pick up concerts, lectures, etc. Ingersoll and Roebuck would be better witnesses than I, since they were behind the scenes, and would know if other members of the team kicked over the traces.

Have you searched files of the Cardinal, local newspapers, QST and other radio publications, Terry's own biographical notes in the successive editions of "American Men of Science" records of the radio inspector, and of the university regents, accountant etc., for items on the history of 9XM and WHA?

Sincerely,

Eric R. Miller

Eric R. Miller
P.O. Box 957
La Jolla, California.
May 27, 1950

Mr. John S. Penn,
WHA Historical Research Project,
University of Wisconsin,
Madison 6, Wisconsin.

Dear Mr. Penn:

The Article by E.B. Calvert, "History of Radio in relation to the work of the Weather Bureau" is in volume 51, 1923 pages 1-9 of the Monthly Weather Review, files of which are in the Weather Bureau Office, North Hall, and in the Wisconsin Historical Society, Document Division. It gives Oct. 1, 1916 and Jan. 3, 1921 as the dates of beginning broadcasts of weather by radiotelegraph and radiophone. Two more possible sources of data on Prof. Terry's work are his "Instructional Report" for each semester and summer session to the University Statistician (if on file) and the Allen Survey of the UW which fine toothcombed the University. ✓ 1915

I hesitate to offer any recollections of early days at WHA because I have been set back in my own historical researches by other peoples aging memories. However here are a few harmless ones:

Terry's first overt exhibition of interest in the propagation of electric waves was when he strung Lecher's wires the length of Prof Snow's big lecture room at the south end of Science Hall, and kept them there for several weeks. You will find these wires discussed in Starling's Electricity and Magnetism 4th Ed. pp 458 and 462.

Terry prided himself on making his own apparatus, and spent a summer making Pyrex tubes for WHA and out gassing them, only to find when put in service that Pyrex would not hold a vacuum. He had to give in and buy factory made tubes.

To make it easy for amateur hams to make receiving sets Terry distributed free of charge galenite (PbS) crystals and wires for "cat whiskers" for crystal sets. Malcolm Hanson designed a crystal set which was manufactured and sold by the Burgess laboratories.

Before crystals were put to work maintaining uniform frequency all broadcasting stations wandered into other stations "air lanes." One of Terry's operators showed me a "fan letter" asking WHA to "Keep its "threshing machine" off the air."

When WHA had not received any fan letters for a week or so the operator invited a popular pianist from WIBA over for an unannounced "visit." Terry was not told, so you can imagine his surprise when he found four sacks of cards addressed to the station next morning demanding more "jazz."