

WCCO Radio in 1925

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For those interested in the early history of WCCO radio in Minneapolis, the May 1925 issue of [Radio Age](#) carried a feature on the station as it was 90 years ago. The station had just put into service its new 5000 watt transmitter, what the magazine called “one of the super broadcasting units.” It also noted that the Minneapolis studios at the Nicollet Hotel were “said to be the equal both in equipment and elegance of anything in the country.”

In addition to the Minneapolis studio, the station had just begun construction of a studio in St. Paul, which would probably be “the most unique location of any studios in the world, for they will be in Saint Paul’s handsome new [Union Depot](#) used by nine railroads.”

The transmitter was at the station’s current transmitter location, 18 miles northwest of Minneapolis in Anoka. Special telephone lines connected the studios and transmitter.

The station had come on the air in [October 1924](#), using the equipment of the former WLAG.

How Station WCCO

Super-
for the
NORTH

AS TOLD BY

& Commerce Association. A brief history of how the station came into existence is as follows:

One morning late in July, 1924, the Northwest awoke to discover that it was to be without broadcasting service. This condition was brought about by the closing of the Twin City Station WLAG, operated by the Cutting & Washington Radio Corporation, and the closing of the Dayton Company's Station, WBAH.

Everywhere discussion was rife as to what the solution of the problem should be. This condition continued until August 5, when Washburn Crosby Company submitted a proposal to the Minneapolis Civic & Commerce Association and the Saint Paul Association. This proposal was as follows:

A Co-operative Plan

WASHBURN CROSBY COMPANY offered to buy the physical properties of WLAG and to contribute \$50,000 a year towards the support of the Twin City Station for a three-year period, providing the business men of Saint Paul and Minneapolis together would contribute a like amount for the same period. The station was to be known as the Gold Medal Station, and was to be credited both to Saint Paul and Minneapolis. Washburn Crosby Company also offered, if their proposition was accepted, to immediately place an order for a new 5,000 watt broadcasting equipment to take the place of the old equipment.

The proposition was accepted, and on September 12 the station became a reality. Carrying out the original agreement, Washburn Crosby Company placed an order for one of the new 5,000 watt broadcasting sets, which was designed especially for that territory.

On March 4 the new broadcasting equipment of WCCO was formally introduced to the public when it broadcast the inaugural ceremonies from Washington by remote control.

Wednesday evening, March 4, WCCO opened its new Minneapolis studios on top of the Nicollet Hotel with what was unquestionably one of the finest programs ever broadcast by a radio station. The program opened at 8:00 p. m., with a short talk by Governor Theodore Christianson of Minnesota, in which he outlined the value of radio to the public. The staff of the station was then intro-



Opening a new broadcasting station is a rather strenuous feat. The pair above, Paul Johnson, (seated,) WCCO's announcer, and Harry Wilburn, station manager, were fagged out after five and a half hours of steady announcing. In fact, Paul insisted that the microphone be brought to him. Wilburn tried to oblige.

WCCO—a broadcasting station with a purpose—that's the Gold Medal Station, Saint Paul-Minneapolis. Its purpose is to serve the Northwest, and twelve hours a day, seven days a week, they work at it enthusiastically.

Incidentally, you have probably noted their earnest endeavors in the last week or two, even if you are not a resident of the Northwest, for on March 4 WCCO blossomed out with its new 5,000-Watt transmitting equipment, and also on that evening inaugurated its new Minneapolis studios on top of the Nicollet Hotel.

The new transmitter is one of the super broadcasting units, and the Minneapolis studios are said to be the equal both in equipment and elegance of anything in the country.

New St. Paul Studios

NOT satisfied with this, the management of WCCO announced that they would immediately begin building

studios in Saint Paul. These will probably have the most unique location of any studios in the world, for they will be in Saint Paul's handsome new Union Depot used by nine railroads.

For, you must remember, the Gold Medal Station represents both Saint Paul and Minneapolis. It is not the toy of any group or class, but a big service unit representing two large cities and the huge territory which they serve.

The Gold Medal Station is also unique in the manner in which it is supported. The physical properties, including the transmitting station located on the east bank of the Mississippi, 18 miles northwest of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, the new studios on top of the Nicollet Hotel, and the new studios, construction of which has just begun in Saint Paul, are all the property of the Washburn Crosby Company, who also operate the station jointly with the Saint Paul Association and the Minneapolis Civic

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Power Growing WEST

E. H. GAMMONS

duced over the air. At 8:30 began a musical program which continued for five hours. Included on this were the leading artists, orchestras, glee clubs, and quartets of the Northwest, the band of the famous Third Infantry, oldest regiment in the United States Army, now stationed at Fort Snelling.

Invitations were sent to approximately 5,000 residents of the Twin Cities to attend the opening and view the broadcasts. The result was a tremendous crowd, which jammed the hotel, elevators, hallways, and the studios themselves all evening, and gave ample evidence of the interest which Minneapolis and Saint Paul have in radio.

Towers 18 Miles Away

THE transmitting equipment of Station WCCO is located 18 miles northwest of the Twin Cities on the east bank of the Mississippi. There are the two 200-foot



Carlo Fischer, noted musician and member of Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, likes broadcasting because he can smoke his cigarette and enjoy playing.

aerial towers and the power house Programs are received over specially built telephone wires from studios in Minneapolis and Saint Paul.

The new studios on top of the Nicollet Hotel are housed in a structure built especially for them. There is a small studio for individuals and a large studio for groups. Between them are the announcer's and operators' rooms. Glass panels in the walls of the studios make possible a view of the broadcasting by persons in the reception room and in the promenade along one side of the large studio. These studios are literally "hung in the air," the ceilings being suspended, the floors built upon cork, and the walls deadened by heavy drapes which are adjustable. They are luxuriously furnished and have been pronounced by those who have seen practically all of the broadcasting studios as being surpassed by none.

With "Service to the Northwest" as its slogan, the Gold Medal Station is now ready to provide the Northwest with programs to equal any.

New Director for WCCO

HENRY A. BELLOWS, well known magazine editor and musical critic of the Northwest, will become associated with WCCO soon as director, according to an announcement made by the management.

Mr. Bellows in the position of director will have complete charge of the arrangements for and all the broadcasts from the station.

He is nationally known as a writer, editor and an authority on music. For thirteen years he has been associated with the "Northwestern Miller," Minneapolis, as managing editor, associate editor and director. Prior to that he was editor of "The Bellman."



Visitors at the Minneapolis studios of WCCO on the Nicollet Hotel may view the broadcasting through glass panels, as shown in the photograph. Roominess is one of the outstanding features of this novel station.