

Video May Be Miracle, But It's Not Modern



Variety Show "Country Hoedown"

Young (19, tall (6'4")) Tommy Hunter is proving a favorite with viewers of CFCY-TV's Saturday night western-music series, "Country Hoedown". Tommy plays guitar with King Ganam's Sons of the West and shares the vocal spotlight with Lorraine Foreman, Tommy

A new variety show "Country Hoedown" will make its first bow on Canadian TV screens this summer, and will be seen on CFCY-TV Saturday evenings at 9:00 p.m. A.S.T. "Country Hoedown" stars one of Canada's most popular western fiddlers, King Ganam and the "Sons of the West," familiar to Canadian audiences by their appearances on radio and through their RCA Victor recordings. The show is MC'd by Gordie Tapp, who has appeared on such well-known TV shows as "Cross-Canada Hit Parade," and "Pick the Stars," and whose radio series "What's on Tapp?" in which Gordie keeps up a steady flow of music, rags, satires on the local scene, and impersonations, has been going strong for seven years. **FEATURED VOCALIST** The featured girl vocalist on "Country Hoedown" is lovely Lorraine Foreman, talented brunette from Vancouver. Immediately after her television debut on "Pick the Stars," Lorraine was booked for a guest appearance on "The Jackie Rae Show," and later on "Holiday Ranch." Currently she is featured singer in the plush Imperial Room of the Royal York Hotel in Toronto. Also discovered on "Pick the Stars" was handsome young Tommy Common, a tenor who brings to "Country Hoedown" a pleasing singing style and an ingratiating personality. He began his professional career at the age of 11 on CBS Radio's "Microphone Moppets." Rounding out the cast are three pretty, red-heads from Toronto, the Hames Sisters, who have been attracting a good deal of attention through their work in supper clubs and on CBC-TV. This summer, besides appearing weekly on "Country Hoedown," the Hames Sisters will be singing with Art Snider and his orchestra at Wasaga Beach, a summer resort north of Toronto. "Country Hoedown" is being produced by well-known CBC-TV producer Drew Crossan.

The modern miracle of television may be a miracle but it isn't modern. In fact there is a school of thought that holds television to be even older than the 19th century. A man writing "4,000 Years of Television" can prove that the discovery of the rock crystal lens in Assyria around 2,000 B.C. was the actual foundation of modern television.

Discoveries that made telegraph and radio, even the telephone, possible were also essential to TV. Scientists in many lands have contributed their bits toward the development of TV, and like other forms of radio, television was made possible by electrical discoveries dating as far back as the 18th century.

But TV required additional discoveries which would turn electrical impulses into a picture on a screen.

The first solution to this problem was found in the photo-electric cell in which a sensitized surface sets up a feeble electric current when light strikes it, the intensity of the current conforming to the intensity of light.

The Swede, Baron Joens Jacob Berzelius, isolated the non-metallic element selenium in 1817. Later it was discovered that the substance conducted electricity better in the light than in the dark.

In 1873 a young Irish telegrapher named Young, working with the New Trans-Atlantic cable, put two and two together and was able to make a photo-electric cell with selenium which would stabilize the uneven signals which were coming over the cable.

CREATE IMAGE In the 1870's an American, G.R. Carey, hot on the idea of building a camera containing many tiny photo-electric cells, each connected with a cell in a receiver. When the light passed through a lens and hit the individual cell in the camera its partner in the receiver would light up, and the result would be an image. The principle is similar to that of the human eye.

The idea of transmitting motion pictures by wire was advanced in 1880 by a Frenchman Maurice LeBlanc. His theory was that motion could be suggested if a rapid series of still pictures were transmitted. The idea underlines both the movies and TV of today.

A German, Paul Nipkow, actually succeeded in the 1880's in building a scanning disc for sending crude images electrically over a wire. Pierced by a series of holes, it broke the image down into tiny sections when it was revolved rapidly.

Shortly before 1900 the cathode ray tube was invented, as opposed to mechanical television, was laid. A screen at one end of the tube covered with fluorescent material would glow at any spot struck by a stream of electrons directed at it from another part of the tube.

Vladimir Zworykin, Russian-born electronics research scientist, is called the "father of modern television." He obtained a patent in the United States in 1923 on a vacuum tube, based on the cathode ray tube, which could scan an image electronically.

"ICONOSCOPE" It was when Zworykin perfected the "iconoscope" which would transmit electronically instead of mechanically, and Philo Farnsworth, another researcher, built the "image dissector" which broke up the televised subject into numerous parts, that television as we know it today was born. Later Zworykin developed the "orthicon" camera, whose sensitivity eliminated the need for glaring lights in the TV studio.

It was 38 years ago this spring that Guglielmo Marconi, the Italian genius of the wireless, made his prediction that some day visible telephony would become practical.

Thousands still living recall the storm of ridicule that met this announcement—for had not men of science agreed that light rays could not be trapped and piped around corners, even though Einstein had shown that under certain conditions they could be bent.

Actually television—as we term visible telephony today—does not transmit light rays. It translates them into a series of electronic signals and recreates these signals into a reproduction of the original image on the receiving end.

A vast number of signals must be transmitted in an infinitely small space of time to make this process work, and for that reason mechanical means could never take the place of the electronic system.

The world's first regularly scheduled telecasts started in May of 1928 from General Electric radio station WGY, in Schenectady, N.Y. By the end of 1931 there were five experimental stations in the United States. All used mechanical scanning which gave only a and two together, and able to make a photo-electric cell with selenium which would stabilize the uneven signals which were coming over the cable.

ENGLAND FIRST England was the first nation to see all-electronic transmissions. Regularly scheduled telecasts began there in 1936.

In June of the same year Radio Corporation of America distributed a number of receiving sets throughout New York and started relaying signals from atop the Empire State Building.

Six months later American Telephone and Telegraph Company's coaxial cable between New York and Philadelphia was tested with success.

The start of the New York World's Fair on April 30, 1939, out television sets on sale to the public. NBC started a 15-hour weekly schedule of all-electronic telecasts in New York. Stations in Chicago and Los Angeles followed suit.

The next significant development came when Columbia announced development of color television. Another came on July 1, 1941 when the Federal Communications Commission of the United States authorized full commercial television.

But the progress of TV came to an abrupt halt in 1942 when the F.C.C. and the U.S. War Production Board jointly issued a freeze order ruling out new construction except when certified by military authorities.

The order stopped TV expansion until the end of the war.

During the war TV was used on a small scale in New York to train air raid wardens and to entertain wounded servicemen in hospitals. In 1944 NBC announced plans for a nation-wide post-war TV network.

The first big audience to be claimed by a television event was the Joe Louis-Billy Conn heavyweight championship fight on June 22, 1946, when 100,000 watch-

ed the battle by means of video. The Associated Press inaugurated televised news in December, 1947, when it started a daily news-reel service on TV and the end of the year the F.C.C. announced their 17 TV stations on the air, 55 construction permits approved and 66 applications on file.

In the fall of that year, the industry announced there were 500,000 receiving sets owned by the U.S. public, and about the same

time the F.C.C. imposed a freeze on licensing new television stations pending further study of allocation problems.

Coverage of the big United States political conventions was the big TV news in that year, and in the fall of 1949 the World Series was telecast for the first time.

SENSATION

Not until March, 1951, however, did television create its biggest

sensation. This came when the Kefauver crime committee hearings in New York were put on the air by TV. The telecasts were said to have drawn a 100 per cent audience.

Finally television reached a climax in the United States when on Sept. 4, 1951, the first coast to coast live telecast was made when President Truman addressed the Japanese Peace Conference in San Francisco.

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Writing For TV Requires High Skill and Speed

Writing for television is a craft which requires skill and speed of the "highest order."

Yet, TV probably offers one of the finest fields today for the writer with ideas and ability.

TV consumes ideas and material at a tremendous rate — with a constant demand from directors and producers for new ideas and more material.

That is where the necessity for skill and speed comes on the scene. The TV script writer faces the same fundamental problem as the writer for motion pictures and plays.

But he doesn't have the opportunity — or the time — to take weeks or months rewriting and polishing each script.

QUICKLY AND WELL The TV writer must write both quickly and well. As a result most of the successful TV writers have come from the field of radio, where the assembly-line method of production resembles the problem in television.

The new writer — one without experience in other fields — often gets an opportunity start on the TV ground floor since he has no pre-formed writing habits and, another important factor, can be hired for less money than the long established writer.

Writing for TV calls for visualizing the scene you are preparing — giving full consideration not only to the plot, but the limitations associated with telecasting in relation to radio.

IN PICTURE TERMS In other words one must think — and write — in terms of TV pictures first and dialogue second. The best place to learn such picture writing is undoubtedly in the field in which it is essential — television.

Yet, TV has a place for the writer with talent — but only if that talent is combined with the ability to adjust normal script writing procedures to the unique and demanding needs of the medium.

"No household gadget has done as much for television as to re-establish the family circle that gathered around the pot-bellied stove in grandfather's day," according to Charles Aldredge, head of a Washington research firm which studied the effect of TV on 400 set-owning homes in the nation's capital.

Experts have this tip for TV set owners who want to keep their receivers looking like new. Dust or polish your set with the grain of the wood, never against it. Rubbing wood across grain makes scratches show up more easily.

since that time until now it is one of TV's top programs. The 1949 television linking of the East and Midwest in the United States employed some 5,000 miles of television channels to connect 14 major cities.

"Dragnet" Will Be Presented Each Tuesday

Dragnet, the tense dramatic show that has become one of television's most popular features, is now brought to CFCY-TV audiences every Tuesday evening.

Based on actual cases from the files of the Los Angeles Police Department, Dragnet deliberately avoids blood-and-thunder heroics, and concentrates on reproducing the authentic flavor of big-city crime detection.

Much of the success of the Dragnet show is the result of careful background work on the part of Jack Webb, the star of the show. Webb plays Sergeant Friday in the show and masterminds behind the scenes. He started in Los Angeles as a radio announcer, where he did movie bit parts. He chanced to meet a detective who was serving as a technical adviser in films, who complained that far-fetched crime shows did not please real-life policemen.

Webb then accompanied this detective on many calls and as a result built the background for an authentic police show.

Out of his experiences grew the radio program "Dragnet" which was first aired in 1949. It became a television series in 1951 and has consistently grown in popularity.

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