

Obituary



Edward W. Kellogg

Edward Washburn Kellogg died May 29, 1960, at the age of 78. He retired as a research and development engineer at the Radio Corp. of America in 1948, but continued active as a consultant at his home in Haddonfield, N.J. He was an Honorary Member of the Society.

A man of great ability, energy, inventiveness and enthusiasm, he was active in the Society for many years and made many important contributions to its progress. He authored many technical papers, more than 20 of which were published in the Society's *Journal*. His work was recognized by the Society by presentation of the Journal Award for the best technical paper published in 1935, "A Comparison of Variable-Density and Variable-Width Systems," and the 1937 Progress Medal Award for his work in sound reproduction. His most recent paper, "A History of Sound Motion Pictures," was published in three parts, in the 1955 June, July and August issues of the *Journal*.

Born at Vineland, N.J., he received his education at Phillips Andover Academy, Princeton University (where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa), and Cornell University. He taught for a time at the University of Missouri, and later at Texas A&M, and Ohio University. Although he was trained in civil engineering, his opportunities and interests led him into other technical fields where he did his major work in the areas of electro-acoustics, mechanical and electrical engineering, photography and optics, to the end of greatly improving sound reproduction in the radio, phonograph, and motion-picture industries.

After joining the General Electric Company's research staff in Schenectady in 1917, where he first worked on submarine detection during World War I, he became co-inventor with Chester W. Rice in 1925, of the dynamic cone loudspeaker which has since remained the basic sound reproducer of modern audio communications and entertainment. The electrical phonograph pickup developed by him the following year was also a basic and enduring improvement that prepared the way for better quality in this industry. With the coming of the sound motion-picture art in 1927, Mr. Kellogg was concerned from its beginning with every aspect of the problem of providing high-quality sound in return for the loyalty of the public expressed at the boxoffice. This included work on sound recorder and reproducer mechanisms, theater speakers, recording and reproducing optical systems, sound printers, and on the many photographic problems peculiar to the sound film. His effort and originality are attested by the grant of 107 patents on work he did at the General Electric Company, and at the Radio Corporation of America which he joined

in 1930, and which bestowed on him the RCA Award of Merit in 1947.

He was a charter member of the Acoustical Society of America and the American Physical Society, and of the American Society of Inventors. In 1949 he received the "Modern Pioneer Award" of the National Association of Manufacturers.

Mr. Kellogg was a faithful member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Moorestown, N.J., and since his retirement had authored an article entitled, "An Engineer Looks at God's Handiwork," which has been broadcast at various times by station WFLN (FM) in Philadelphia.

Throughout his long and fruitful career Mr. Kellogg was driven by a real passion for improvement in the quality of recorded and reproduced sound, and freely lent his genius and his encouragement to the making of advancement whenever and by whatever means it might appear possible. For example, in his study of the fundamental character of waveforms of certain sounds in speech, he taught himself to speak phonetically backwards. He verified his accomplishment (to the amazement of his colleagues) by an entirely intelligible reverse playback of his recording. His career brought him many interesting experiences and gave much inspiration to the people who had the good fortune to work with him. Although he was serious and always sincere his wit and humour often proved a surprising ingredient in the solution of problems with which he became associated.

Among his most interesting experiences was the construction of apparatus for the successful reproduction of a sound record that had been made on a glass plate by Alexander Graham Bell. Bell's methods of making the record had been primitive but ingenious, but neither he nor anyone else had ever heard the result of his work. At that time, photoelectric cells and vacuum tube amplifiers did not exist and they were indispensable to reproducing the record. Mr. Kellogg and his associates succeeded in understanding almost the entire message that Bell had recorded, although the quality of the sound was extremely poor.

As an example of his wit and humour, Mr. Kellogg was once faced with an awkward question at a Society Meeting when he was asked why a new magnetic film-motion stabilizer which he had developed and was vigorously advocating was so much better than the oil-damped stabilizer that his company had been enthusiastically promoting. The answer to the question, he said, was that when the magnetic flux leaked out of the new stabilizer it did not have to be wiped up with a rag. After this remark had been fully savored by the meeting its regular business proceeded without further delay.

Mr. Kellogg will be deeply missed by his close associates and his many acquaintances, but his influence continues on, and many enduring memories remain in compensation for his loss.

(Edit. Note: This obituary was graciously contributed to the *Journal* by associates of Mr. Kellogg.)

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