Odd Ways of Identifying Stations

By Washington R. Service

BROADCASTING stations are coming to be known by the voices of their announcers, their slogans, and the stunts they perform in order to identify their stations, as well as by the cryptic call letters assigned by the Department of Commerce.

There is little romance or euphony in the letters WSB, but listeners-in are very familiar with the big gong which rings "Bong! Bong! Bong!" to announce the Atlanta "Journal." The unmistakable southern accent of the broadcaster announcing the "Voice of the South" is also an indication that WSB is sending.

As the radio enthusiasts well know, there are a number of other stations using identifying phrases and sounds. For example, the "Courier-Journal" and "Times," WHAS, Louisville, Kentucky, plays a few bars of "My Old Kentucky Home." WDAJ, the Atlanta and West Point railroad station, at College Park, Georgia, has uniquely established its identity by blowing four blasts of a locomotive whistle. When you hear this in your receivers you may be certain that WDAJ is broadcasting. The Naval Station at Anacostia, D. C., NOF, is known by the deep bass voice of the announcer.

It is not only in the Southland that these slogans and phrases have become popular. In the West, for instance, is the Palmer School of Chiropractic, Davenport, Iowa. "This is WOC," the announcer states; "out where the West begins." Another station identifies itself with: "Out where the corn grows tall." The voice of the spokesman at WOH, the Hatfield Electric Company, Indianapolis, might confuse one at first. He has a southern accent similar to that of WSB in Atlanta. The pronunciation of the simple word "and" like "a-yand" would hardly seem to locate a station, but ask any one who has heard "Mister," KDKA, Pittsburgh. They will admit that the drawled "a-yand" is a most positive identification.

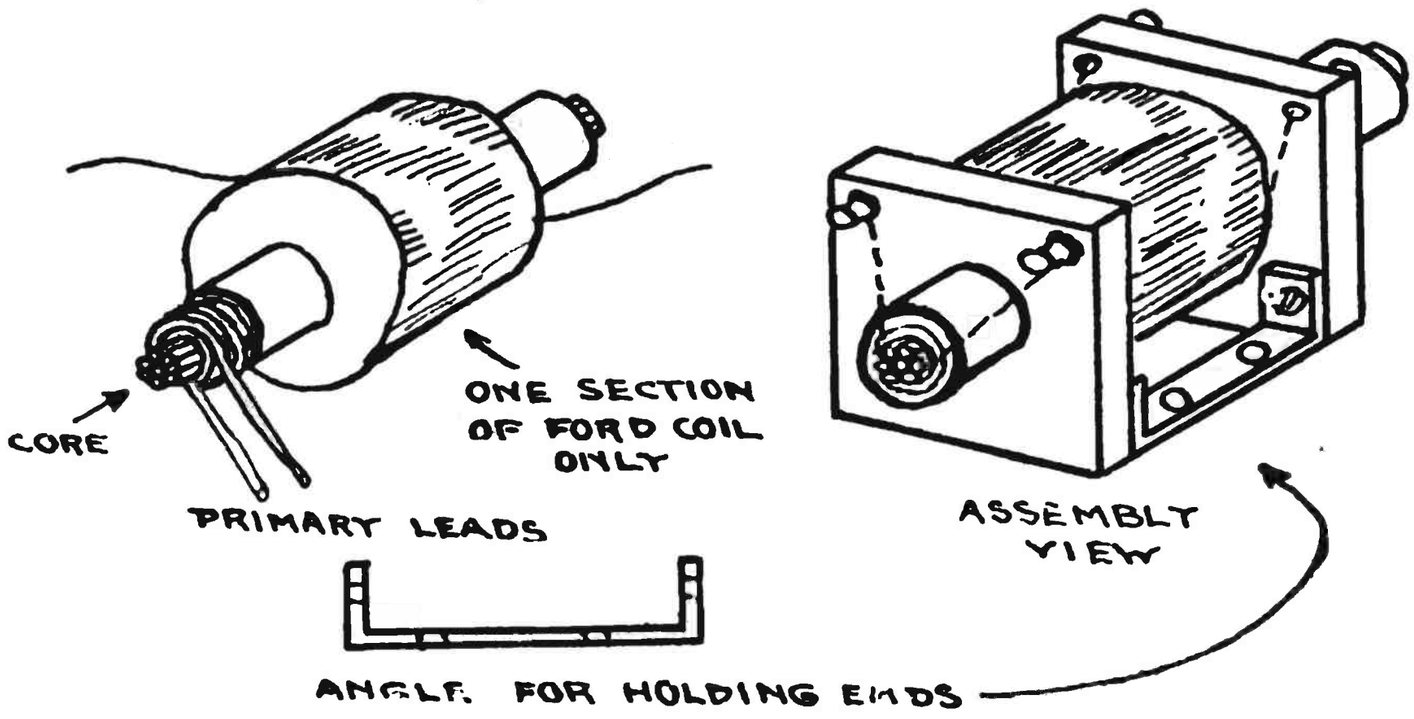
The voices of the evening story-tellers are well known by the small radioites. Some of the broadcasters sound a signal on the telegraph key, giving their call or some single letter indicative of their station besides the customary announcing of the letters.

Methods of announcing the time also serve to establish who is at the transmitter. Those who hear the Louisville "Courier-Journal" say they like the method of telling the time, as the hour approaches, with a simple statement, "Ten o'clock," when the minute hand reaches twelve, better than the standard tick-system of the Naval broadcasting stations.

When the Detroit "News" signs off the exact time is given. This is a benefit to those who have not set their timepieces for the night. Probably the custom will grow rapidly, and familiarity with the voices of broadcasters all over the country, as well as the mottoes and slogans of stations, will extend the acquaintance of listeners-in with the voices of the air.

Utilizing Ford Spark-Coils for Audio-Frequency Transformers

By Ortherus Gordon



Illustrations to guide the amateur in making transformers of Ford spark-coils.

WHEN the time comes to supplement your detector bulb with amplifiers, you will need in addition to the bulbs, sockets, filament rheostats, and two audio-frequency transformers. Any amateur who wishes to avoid paying the price of these transformers may make them himself provided he can get hold of two old Ford spark-coils. Most cities have automobile wrecking companies. Such concerns always have some of these coils on hand at a very low price.

With a little care and discretion, the amateur can pull the coil apart so that he has the primary, the secondary, and the make-and-break device in separate pieces. This done, throw the vibrator into your spare-parts looker and proceed to construct the transformer with what is left. Leave the primary and the core just as they are, but remove one section of the secondary. Ford-coil secondaries are made in two sections. Place the remaining section in the center of the primary, bring the thin wires out free and block the ends with wooden partitions. Then you will have something similar to the design shown in the accompanying illustration.

Put two binding posts on one end and fasten the primary leads to them. The secondary leads may be taken and made fast to binding posts on the other end. A brass piece bent in staple shape, as shown, will serve to hold together the wooden ends and, at the same time, provide a means of screwing the finished transformer down to the table or baseboard. The whole makes a satisfactory audio-frequency transformer.

The Rheostat's Work

IN radio a rheostat connects the storage A-battery with the filaments of the vacuum tube. The rheostat is the valve which permits the operator to increase the electric current going from the storage A-battery to the filament. Rheostats are heat regulators. Heat drives off the electrons from the filament to the plate. When the tube shows a dull red glow the temperature is about 1800 degrees, and electrons are then beginning to be cast off. When the filament is white hot the temperature is 2050 degrees. As each degree of heat is increased from about 1800 degrees a tremendous increased proportion of electrons is cast off.