

In Memoriam



William F. Jordan, AES fellow and pioneer in the broadcast industry, died 1995 May 15 at the age of 91. While a teenager, Jordan went to sea as a wireless operator on a freighter. After three years at sea, he became an audio engineer for WEAJ, one of the nation's first commercial radio stations. In 1928 he was the engineer in charge of the first broadcasts of the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) radio network.

Jordan became an audio engineer

for Movietone News in Manhattan, a subsidiary of Twentieth Century Fox that covered news from around the world for a newsreel shown in theaters and produced advertisements, screen tests, and documentaries. Assigned to Italy in 1929, he covered news stories such as the rise of Mussolini, the eruption of Mount Vesuvius and the inauguration of King Zog of Albania, and was a member of the first news crew permitted to film inside the Vatican.

As a member of the broadcast press for 40 years and one of the world's first audio engineers, he came to know five presidents, three kings, a Pope, several cardinals, and scores of performing artists. His experiences were documented in books such as *Newsreel Man* and in newspaper columns by his lifelong friend, Lowell Thomas.

As a studio engineer, he was the audio engineer for screen tests for

actors such as Grace Kelly, Humphrey Bogart, Joan Crawford, Gary Cooper, and Helen Hayes. In addition to his engineering tasks, during the depression he was the voiceover for the Movietone newsreel and starred as the free spending Mr. Courage in a motivational short film series called "Mr. Courage and Mr. Fear."

Born in Dorchester, Massachusetts, in 1904, Jordan lived in Teaneck, New Jersey, for 40 years before moving back to Massachusetts. For the past two years he resided in Mountainview, California.

Jordan was also a fellow of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, a member of the Wireless Pioneers and a member of the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees.

He is survived by a son, two daughters, eleven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. His wife died in 1976.

William F. Jordan, Jr.