

• HOOP *of* •
HOOPERATINGS

"HOOP" of HOOPERATINGS

The Man and His Work

Frank W. Nye

Norwalk, Connecticut

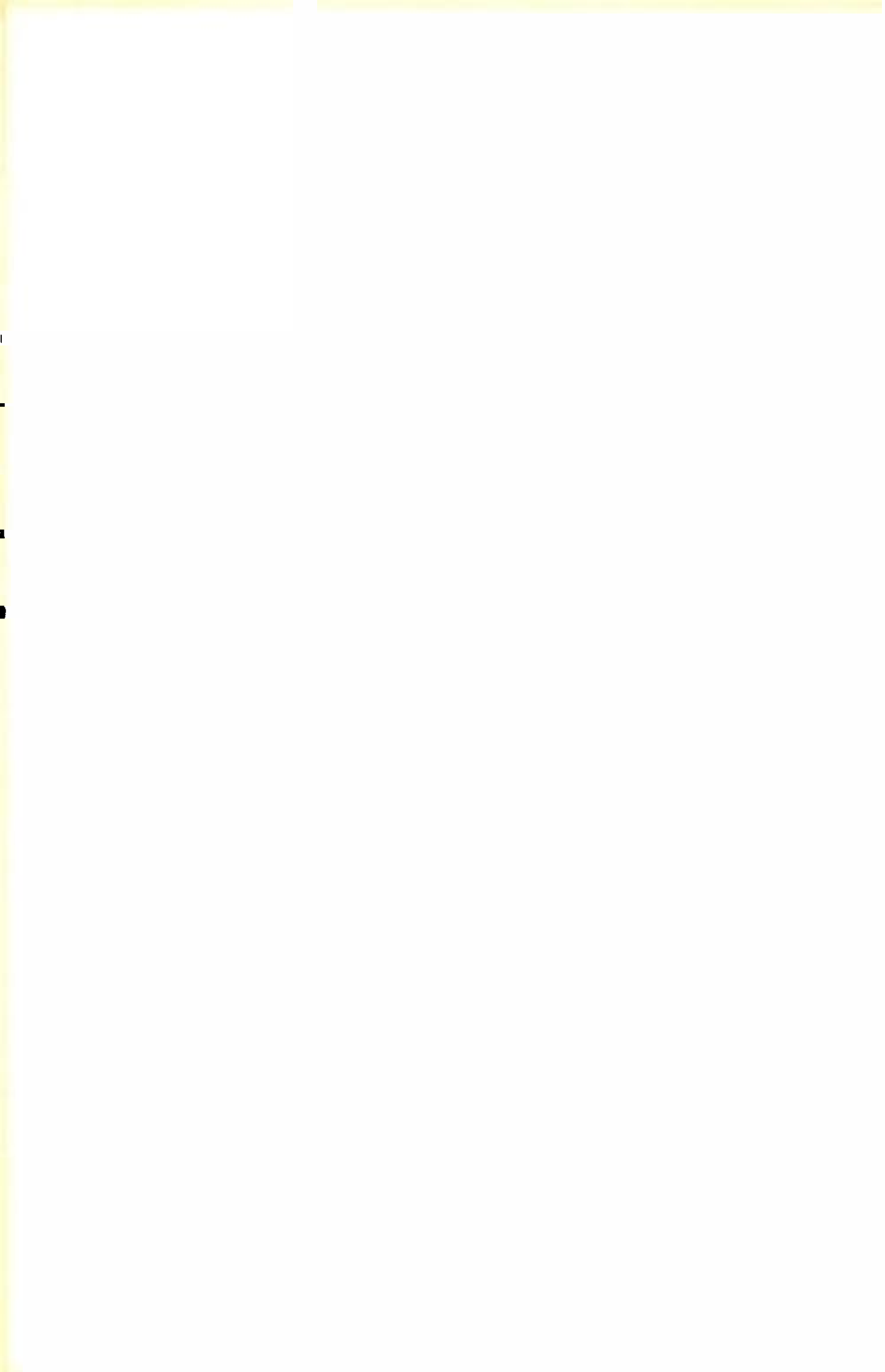
1957



TO
ALL THE HOOPERITES, WHEREVER THEY
MAY BE; BUT PARTICULARLY TO DOT AND
LOIE AND FERDINAND — “THE THREE B’S”
—WHOSE LOYALTY AND DEVOTION HOOP-
ER COULD REPAY ONLY IN KIND.

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CHAPTER I

Somewhat Personal

When radio was in flower — during the nineteen-forties — the most magical word in the industry was *Hooperating*. It was the *open sesame* to script writers, producers and performers; the *sine qua non* of advertising agents with programs to sell; the justification for sponsor expenditures; the hope or despair of networks and stations with time on their hands.

Mayor La Guardia, Eddie Cantor, Danny Kaye, Frank Sinatra and Kate Smith could justly charge Hooperatings with clouding their broadcasting future. Fibber McGee and Molly, Walter Winchell, Fred Allen, Jack Benny and Bob Hope were only a few of the many stars who were grateful or critical, in turn as their Hooperatings changed.

Talent contracts were based on Hooper points. Even President Roosevelt was so Hooper-conscious that he would wait up at night for the report on how many millions had listened to his latest fireside chat. He kept the Hooper chart on display in his study and saw that it was duly sent to the library at Hyde Park for the benefit of posterity.

In Hooperatings had been found a convincing yardstick with which to measure the intangible preferences of listeners.

Air audience measurement was not new when Hooper propounded his famous formula in 1934; and his contribution was by no means the last word in program and station evaluation. Television, automatic measuring devices and other departures in the fast-changing world of broadcasting have altered the focus of those who count listeners. But, for more than a decade, Hooperating was a word that was understood in every radio home and heeded and feared in all offices and studios that served the industry.

In a surprisingly short time the word found its way into the dictionary and was defined: "HOOPERATING (Name of the American deviser of the method) a rating of the popularity of a radio or television performer or broadcast, determined by a sample telephone poll of listeners taken during the broadcast."

Many have wondered what kind of a man gained so much power over the destinies of the air waves and how he achieved his influence. While the recollection of his work remains vividly in the minds of so many, seems to be the right time to satisfy the interest of those who were intrigued by his accomplishments—especially since, both outside and inside of business, "Hoop" was such a colorful person and such an unforgettable character.

If Sinclair Lewis had known Hoop, he might have been tempted to put him on the bookshelf alongside Dodsworth and Babbitt, Alec Guinness would enjoy playing such a distinctive part. Hoop, as I knew him for twenty years, was what writers call a "sympathetic character," possessing rare individualistic qualities. As a reporter well put it on first meeting Hoop, "He makes you feel that he loves everyone, and especially you."

I was half a head taller than Hoop, but it never occurred to me that he wasn't a big man. He didn't need to be self-assertive; his naturally dynamic personality was without egotism. At the same time he was so articulate, and his communication—aided by a strong voice, clear diction and delightful humor—was so magnetic, that you didn't want to miss a word. His conversation was spiced with profanity—but it was not sacrilegious—and by an occasional four-letter word, which you might not use but which seemed the only suitable one for the occasion.

Hoop was a fine-looking man. His eyes were of the clearest blue: they were warm and sympathetic. His smile was ready and spontaneous. He had a plentiful shock of dark hair, which had been reddish in his youth, but, when streaks of gray appeared, they added distinction. I never saw a man whose moustache so became him. I guess you would say he had a stocky build, and he had to watch his weight, but the general impression was of a virile and athletic figure, faultlessly groomed, custom-tailored



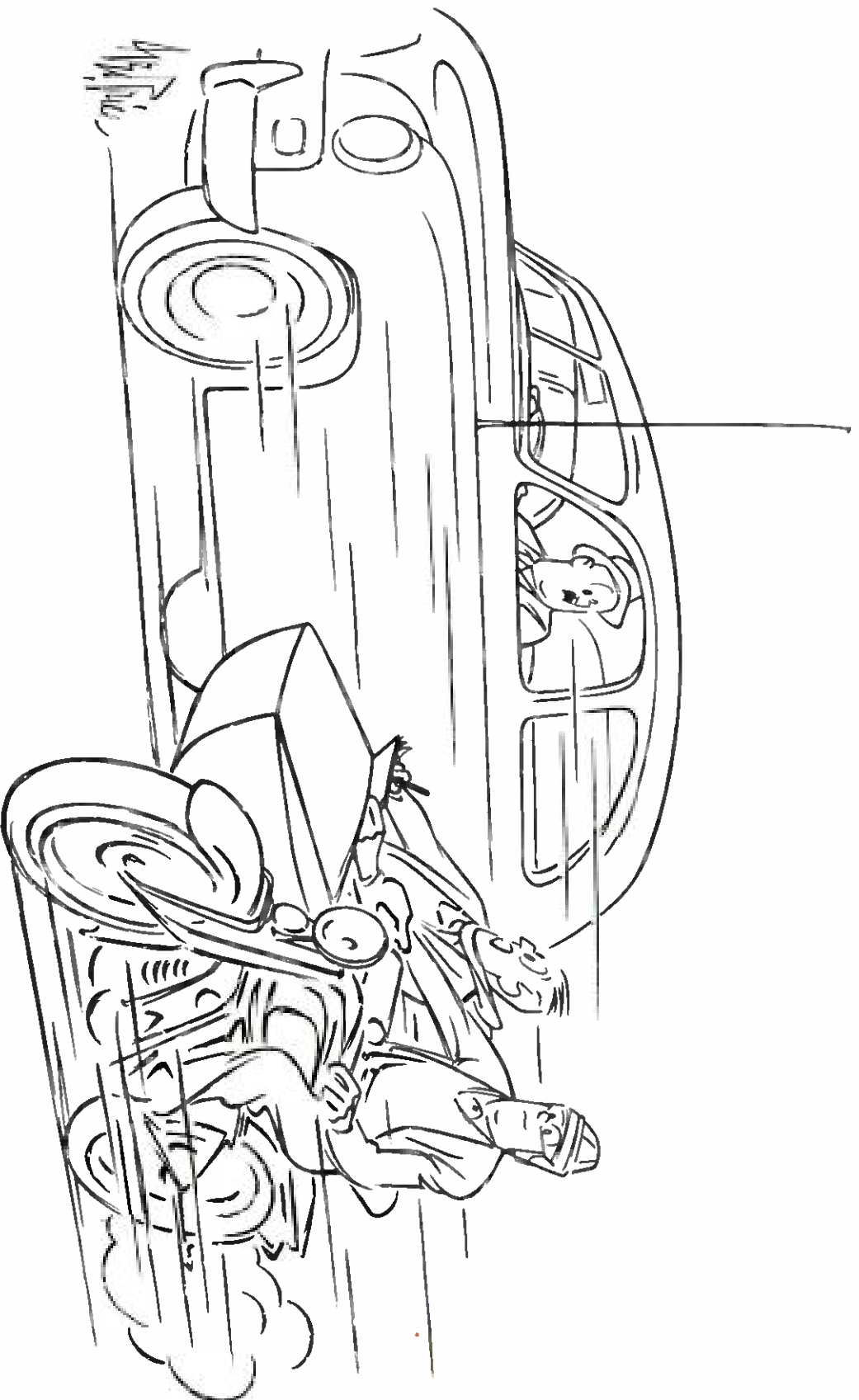
The Official Photograph



The unofficial and much better photograph by Otto Hesse, one of Hoop's favorite duckshooting companions.



And the best picture of all taken on The Upsalquitch, N. B. — July, 1953



*"We're from the Hooper survey, sir. Do you have your radio on,
and if so what program are you listening to?"*

in unobtrusive but becoming fabrics which were usually topped off by a bright scarf in which red and blue predominated.

From his mother he seems to have inherited his charm, ambition, drive, temper and occasional intolerance; from his father, his gentleness, pioneering spirit and love of sports and games. I would say that Hoop's most basic virtues were honesty, generosity and loyalty. He was an extrovert — out-going, out-giving, high spirited, never depressed, a fighter who fought to win — and one in whose company there was never a dull moment.

I first met Hoop in '34 when I had a small reader research study to arrange for and went to the office of Daniel Starch. "Mr. Hooper" was assigned to take care of our needs. I could see that this young man was no run-of-the-punch-cards researcher, and I liked him at once. A few months later I was looking for an outstanding advertising representative, and William G. Palmer, vice-president of J. Walter Thompson, said, "I know just the man. His name is Hooper and he works for Starch, but I don't think he is too happy." That was all I needed to know and I reached for the telephone, only to learn that Hoop had meanwhile hung out his own shingle and was doing well.

In 1936, the Hoopers built a charming traditional home on Flax Hill Road near us in South Norwalk. When it was finished we were invited over and shown around. When the badminton club was formed, the Hoopers joined and we often played with and against them. That was my first taste of his aggressive but amiable competitive spirit. I well recall the first large gathering at the Hoopers' for games, singing and dinner in the back yard. A huckster's cart had been repainted in gay colors and was used as a sideboard. The Hooperized baked beans which he fished out of his private bean hole were the best I have ever tasted. Afterward we went inside and the party divided into poker and bridge tables. Hoop loved poker and was good at it. Bridge bored him, and he played only under protest.

When I think of him, the first picture that comes to mind is of Hoop standing in the deep snow outside our front door. Judy and he had walked the quarter mile through untracked snow, and I hardly recognized him in his high-laced boots, plaid mackinaw and red cap. In the assumed voice of a denizen of the North Woods he inquired, "Does Trapper Nye live here?"

When a friend needed a job or an assist, he could count on Hoop. One time I was anxious to meet one of his close friends from the Pacific Coast. Hoop persuaded him to come to New York from Washington to meet me, and turned his private office over to us for the afternoon. When a young friend of his was setting up a business in Canada similar to C. E. Hooper, Inc., Hoop invited him to his office and turned the place upside down to show him exactly how such an operation was conducted.

Hoop's success was a great source of satisfaction to all of his friends. We gloated with him at his victory over Cooperative Analysis of Broadcasting and read of his eminence in the *Saturday Evening Post* with the pride of those who can say, "I knew him when." And it happened that we were dining at the Hoopers' the night that the Nielsen deal was closed. He and his executive vice-president, Fred Kenkel, arrived long after the dinner hour, played out after days and nights of close trading, but gratified if not triumphant.

During recent years we frequently had holiday dinners with the Hoopers. There was a small dinner party a few weeks before the fatal accident and we dropped in for a drink on Thanksgiving Day 1954. On the night that word came from Utah that we would not see Hoop again, we were too numbed to grasp the full meaning of the tragedy. We simply could not — and cannot yet — picture our friend except as the alert and vibrant Hoop.

Except for the fact that travel kept him away a good deal, the Hooper family life seemed ideal. He loved to be on the move, and when business did not keep him hopping across the map, there were fish to hook and birds to shoot from Canada

to California. Judy skied with him at Stowe and Woodstock and rode horseback with him — frequently before breakfast. They would dash up to Pound Ridge and take off astride Blanche and Lady through the beautiful wooded hills north of Stamford. Blanche was their first mount, and a male. He was named Blanche, Hooper said, to confuse his friends. Returning from an exhilarating canter, no matter how gloomy the day, Hoop could be relied on to sum up the expedition with, “This is the *best ride we ever had!*” The third member of the family, Stuart, imbued with the same enthusiasm for horsemanship, became proficient enough at the age of fifteen to win a blue ribbon for riding Western saddle in her first horse show.

The important event every year was the Hoopers’ vacation together. In the early days they would save up for a real splurge. They might visit Puerto Rico, Nantucket, the Gaspe, Arizona, the Rockies or the West Coast — and there make up for the separations.

Judy has an excellent mind, was a better student than Hoop, and, as a fast and omniverous reader, keeps herself well informed. But she was content to bask in the reflected light of her husband, and to give him the floor whenever he wanted it — which was often. In fact, she made a career of being the perfect wife to her dominant male. So much so, that one time on the boat coming back from Europe, when that psychological game was being played in which the victim is suddenly asked, “Who are you?” Judy quietly replied, “I am the wife of a brilliant and fascinating man named C. E. Hooper.”

She and Stuart used to play a game with Hoop. They were amazed at the store of assorted knowledge possessed by the head of the family who, by the way, they always addressed as “Hooper.” When some question of fact came up he always had the answer, and gave it in his characteristically confident fashion. His pronouncements were frequently challenged, but he was nearly always right. Stuart loved to catch him in an error. These rare mistakes were remembered and counted. He was

allowed three errors a year. The game was to get him to miss even oftener than that. Most of his errors had to do with location or direction. One time during a reunion at Amherst he forgot where he had parked the car, and his friends drove him all over town and campus in the rain trying to find the missing automobile.

Most young men with Hoop's drive are so eager to go places, and are so confident that their personality will see them through any situation, that they are apt to neglect disciplined scholastic training. But Hoop, even if he had never finished college, would surely have made his mark. He had as comprehensive preparation for business as any young man could wish. He never failed to get an "A" for effort. His B.A. at Amherst and his M.B.A. at Harvard were earned, but at the cost of many sacrifices and by dint of the hardest kind of work during the months when most college students relax. His vacation earnings not only put him through six years of college but made him partly self-supporting even while in high school.

You can readily see that Hoop was the type who might easily have been voted the student "most likely to succeed," but would make an important contribution to social science by advancing a new technique in research. Some of the ivory-tower fact-finders still shake their heads and say, "Mr. Hooper was more of a promoter than a scientist." True, he was, and he gloried in it. But that only goes to show that there are two sides to consumer research — on Hooper's side: ideas, constructive imagination and exploitation; on the side of the statistical men: theory, slide rules and tabulations.

Hoop was the first to admit that he was no mathematical genius. In a letter to Stuart, written on her eleventh birthday, when arithmetic was causing her difficulties, he said, "When I was eleven, way back in the Stone Age, I didn't like it either." And in a press interview he made no bones of the fact that balancing his checkbook had never ceased to mystify him. But he had something that most of his contemporaries lacked: in his

view of the forest he never let the trees get in his way. He had an uncanny knack for spotting an error in a page of unfamiliar figures. His sensing of the needs of advertisers and broadcasters, his inventiveness in devising ways to meet them, his good common sense and understanding of how to make the most of a method which, though not perfect, was of immediate, practical value, made his work more effective than that of many better statisticians who got lost in the minutiae of their procedures. And when his technical knowledge was insufficient, he was a good listener to such associated technologists as Dr. Matthew Chappell and Mr. J. Lyman Bogert, and to others on the outside, like George Gallup, Archibald Crossley, Percival White and Pauline Arnold.

Pauline Arnold used the coincidental telephone method at least three years before Hoop talked it over with Gallup and adopted it. Her husband, Mr. Percival White, devised the name and christened it. They discarded this method because of the obvious fact that it could not be used to sample the large number of non-telephone homes, and was therefore incomplete. But the stone that the builders rejected became the keystone for Hoop, and it proved adequate to give the industry what it most needed at the time — quick, reliable, *comparative* ratings of network program popularity at non-prohibitive cost.

Unlike most scientific research conducted in a confined space, experiments in audience measurement are made across the nation, in countless cities, towns and rural communities. The world is its laboratory, and any person may be a guinea pig. It deals, not with objects that can be weighed and calibrated, but with the intangibles of human preference and all the variables implied. Thus it will never be an exact science. Many approved scientific techniques are employed, but with them is mixed a goodly portion of art.

On the human side of program rating, there has been dramatic conflict with shining victories and ignominious defeats; brilliant stars and eclipsed luminaries; rising suns and falling meteors. As the ratings of radio and television perform-

ers have gone up and down, so has the prestige of the raters spurted and dropped — in slower tempo, but with swings none the less.

Let some impartial reporter write the objective history. The author of this biography is not disinterested. The protagonist was my friend. I liked and respected him from the start and had a warm affection for him when I came to know him intimately. This is *his* story, told in the same informal spirit that characterized the man, by one who cares about his place on the record.

CHAPTER II

Hoop's David to CAB's Goliath

The life of a man who counts the noses of radio listeners, or counts their ears and divides by two, is likely to be frustrating. There are always a lot more programs in the lower echelons than among the first fifteen or top ten. The stars rise and fall with their shows. Those who praise the rater when they lead are prone to turn against him when they trail. From the great majority of the "also rans" there is a barrage of fault-finding with the scorekeeper. And they are always on the lookout for a new yardstick that will give them a better break. This condition leads to a multiplicity of measuring "authorities", results in general confusion and — for the less successful raters — insolvency.

In 1956, looking back on the hazards that faced Hoop in 1934, it is remarkable that anyone had the ingenuity and courage to rise so quickly from inconspicuous salesman to most heeded voice, and for sixteen years to dominate the highly controversial realm of broadcast audience measurement.

In 1931, after the depression drove Hoop out of Wall Street, he fell back on an undeveloped aptitude that he had discovered in his Harvard days. There he had taken *Statistics* under an instructor named Daniel Starch. Meanwhile Dr. Starch had gone into business as an independent specialist in magazine advertising research. One day Hoop sat twiddling his thumbs in the idle office of the Doremus Advertising Agency, when a space salesman was announced. Hoop greeted him brusquely with the question, "What are you doing here; can't you see there's no business?"

"In that case, what are *you* doing here?"

"Damned if I know. Guess you got something."

With that, Hoop put on his hat, climbed on the subway and went up to the Graybar Building to renew acquaintance with Dr. Starch.

Starch was one of the then small band of New York advertising research authorities. His business was growing, but he seemed to have more interest in figures representing people than in the people themselves. He needed a man to sell Starch service and contact clients. No one who had known Hoop at Harvard could doubt his ability to win people over, so, no doubt, Starch was as pleased to have this young dynamo representing him as Hoop was to get in out of the snow of depressed Wall Street.

Hoop stayed three years. He was much too alert and interested merely to sell and contact. Soon the younger man felt qualified to think for himself about the research techniques employed, and he even began to debate with the master when he disagreed.

In 1933, Hoop met another Amherst alumnus, L. Montgomery Clark, who, as a free-lance researcher, was doing a study for the Association of National Advertisers, otherwise known as ANA. Clark and Hoop had much in common, and in due time, Hoop convinced "Monty" that he ought to work for Starch, and sold Starch on hiring Clark. They worked in double harness happily, but with growing conviction that they could improve on the Starch method of magazine, and magazine advertising, evaluation. And by April, 1934, though neither of them had any capital to speak of, but encouraged by a group of magazine publishers who liked their ideas, they resolved to go into partnership on their own. Clark left first and opened a small office at 250 Park Avenue, where Hoop joined him within a month. The firm of Clark-Hooper was incorporated. They tossed a coin to see which should be president and whose name should come first in the firm. Hoop won and chose to be president.

The group of magazine executives who encouraged them to go out for themselves was led by Don Parsons — promotion director of *McCall's Magazine*; in charge of promotion, research and merchandising for *McCall's* and *Red Book*; and the man who had made quite a name for himself by suggesting to the publisher the idea of a “three-way” magazine. Hoop soon learned that Parsons was a Connecticut neighbor, and on the New Haven commuting trains, they became fast friends. Parsons was one of the keenest research men in advertising and, without doubt, contributed more than any other man to establishing Hoop in business. In a recent letter Don told how it all came about.

I don't need to tell you what a forceful personality Hooper had. He was never one to pull punches and he was most unhappy with research techniques and statistical methods used by Starch.

Several magazines, including *McCall's*, subscribed to the Clark-Hooper service as an attempt to set up a more valid measurement of advertising effectiveness separated from media evaluation. The way the radio service came about and the genesis of Hooperatings was this:

During the early years of radio, when it was the new, exciting medium, the only measurer of radio audiences was CAB — Cooperative Analysis of Broadcasting, conducted by Crossley and jointly sponsored by ANA, the 4 A's — American Association of Advertising Agencies and, later, by NAB — National Association of Broadcasters.

The Crossley service rated the programs and measured the share of the listening audience obtained by each program, expressed in a percentage of listeners. The more popular programs would achieve ratings as high as 40, 50 and 60 percent. The broadcasting companies, however, were projecting these figures to total sets, which was obviously a misuse of the figures, and resulted in an astronomical number of homes reached — 20,000,000 at all times, they said.

As a result the magazines were being hurt competitively and a Magazine Promotion Committee was formed, of which I was a member, with the assignment of studying the problem and trying to come up with some answers.

It seemed to me that the answer lay in truthful research. Obviously radio fulfilled an important place in public life and was a worthwhile and significant medium. All we were

looking for was an honest disclosure of the facts about radio and the elimination of the highly distorted projections.

I therefore discussed with Hoop whether he would be interested in setting up a competing service which would present the facts in their true proportions. I asked him to study how the figures might be presented, to start with the total number of sets as 100%, and then show the number of people not at home and at home but not listening, followed by the percentage of sets tuned in and the division of listeners according to programs — the reporting to show program ratings as percentages of total sets rather than merely of the identified listening audience.

This suggestion resulted in the establishment of Hooper's later-to-become-famous *available audience base* on which he built his continuing record, whereby listening could be compared from year to year. And when Hooper got swinging, which he lost no time in doing, program ratings were reported as 10, 12 and 20%, virtually cutting in half the CAB ratings.

Judy will recall that Hoop and I spent many evenings working with papers spread all over the dining-room table, putting our ideas together in presentation form. We then made the presentation to the magazine publishers and the new service was made possible by the magazines that subscribed to the service in advance and thus provided the funds for Clark-Hooper to get started on. The estimate was in the neighborhood of \$10,000 which was divided among the publishers as subscribers to the service. We did not underwrite Hooperatings as a service sponsored by magazines, but merely acted as subscribers to an independent service.

Hooper was free to sell it to anyone he could. The more he sold and the wider the acceptance, the more effective the service became from the publishers' point of view. This was not promotional research. It was an honest attempt to get the facts and to set up an unbiased reporting service based on sound techniques. The magazines did not enter into the research itself, nor attempt to influence the reporting or Hooper's interpretation of the figures. Both Hooper and the publishers were meticulous about this and it was a point of insistence on the part of Hooper from the beginning.

Hooper also did a number of other interviewing and research jobs for me at *McCall's*. The most notable of these was the pioneering work we did in developing the interviewing forms and techniques for the first *Qualitative Study of Magazines* which received the *Advertising & Selling Award* in 1939. This first study was set up with an independent

committee of leading advertising agency research men who went over our interviewing technique and the statistical formula with a fine tooth comb.

On the personal side: At the time I left Federal Advertising Agency to take over as Executive Director of Super Market Institute, Hoop and some other old friends staged a farewell party at Sherry's, on which occasion Hoop turned out a special edition of his "Pocket Piece," devoted to his "rating of Parsons in his various manifestations." Hoop also inspired the presentation of a gold money clip copied after one that had been given him, on the back of which was engraved the names of the donors together with the inscription, "Bank always on us." Judy knows with what pride I carry this memento. It is a warm and constant reminder of a good friend.

As if these were not enough, individual expressions of friendship were placed upon a record which I play from time to time when I am down south at our home in South Carolina to hear Hooper's voice and the others speaking to me from the past. They were good days. They were good friends. And among them there was none like Hoop.

When I ran my first convention for Super Market Institute I wanted someone to talk at an Advertising Seminar on the use of radio advertising. Hoop was on vacation somewhere out in Arizona and I finally reached him by devious means. Hoop immediately accepted the assignment, even though it meant cutting his vacation short and changing other plans to meet my date.

In a long letter to his subscribers, written some eight years after he founded his radio audience measurement service, Hooper reviewed his start and the eight years of progress to 1942:

Back in the fall of 1934 we decided to go into radio audience measurements. There were those who wanted us to duplicate the CAB technique. At that time CAB called only "the Morning After" — asked about "listening yesterday." We said, "It's got to be nearer a *measurement* than that or we won't even start." We had heard of the (telephone) coincidental (method). George Gallup had used it. We called to see him.

Dr. Gallup told us the questions he asked. We experimented with them, changed them slightly. We didn't like the base then in use on coincidentals. People then threw out "busy's" and "refusals" — based results on "completed calls." It was Don Parsons who pointed out the soundness of

“total homes called” as a base. We examined it, quickly realized that it is the only fixed base with no variables which could distort the measurement as a true record of change in listening, and adopted it. We then developed our distribution formula to prorate “busy’s” and “refusals.” Our statistical procedure and our questions were then set — to create literally comparative data from that day to this.

By this time some people knew we were getting into radio. Advertisers who were friendly to us and agencies who likewise had hopes for the work we were pioneering in printed advertising said, “Dont go into radio. There are people running CAB who are politically powerful, jealous of their position of leadership. They will force you out of business by exerting pressure. You will never see it, but you will feel it. Big agencies, as well as big advertisers, whose business you must have to survive, won’t buy. The authority of the CAB committee will be matched against your ideas — it will win. And don’t forget that CAB is non-profit.”

We were young and foolish in the fall of 1934. We said, “Everybody in radio advertising is in business for profit. Certainly they can’t damn us for being a private enterprise. The speakers at 4 A and ANA conventions treat ‘cooperatives’ as though they are a menace. We’re going ahead . . .”

Coincidental measurements are expensive, but we started right. We did a good job with large samples during the short period of time each day. We started in the 16 basic network areas only, working from seven to ten P. M.

From 1934 to 1938 Hoop and Clark worked together harmoniously to develop their business. Mr. Clark, now Dr. Clark, was an educator at heart and, since 1941, has been headmaster of the well-known Kiski preparatory school at Saltsburg, Pennsylvania. He never fully shared his partner’s enthusiasm for radio research and, as they went on together, his chief interest remained in publication work. By May, 1934, they had added *Saturday Evening Post*, *Ladies’ Home Journal*, *Woman’s Home Companion* and *Good Housekeeping* to their clientele, and the following year were supplying newspapers with the improved fact-finding service. The publication part of the business was earning a profit. The radio service was running in the red. Thus it was logical that, sooner or later, there would be a parting of the ways.

There were no serious disagreements and they separated good friends and so remained as long as Hoop lived. There was a difference of opinion on which one of their lieutenants should be the general manager, and this may have hastened the parting, but the basic difference was, on Hooper's part, the growing conviction that his future lay in the fast-expanding field of radio while, as Clark saw it, the safer course was to concentrate in an area where the firm had acceptance and where the profits were growing.

So confident was Hoop that his radio service was on the threshold of success, that he cheerfully surrendered more than four-fifths of the client billing to Clark in exchange for the nucleus of radio patronage. Hoop incorporated the C. E. Hooper company, took nine assistants from Clark-Hooper, borrowed on his life insurance, and rented an office at 51 East 42nd Street. For several years thereafter he welcomed the profits on the few publication surveys that came his way and developed some ingenious new techniques for evaluating printed advertising. But, from then on, broadcast advertising research was his passion and his means of livelihood.

Recently I wrote to Dr. Clark and invited him to tell me frankly what he thought of Hooper as a man and a business associate. This is what he thinks of "Hoops," as he called him:

I always felt about Hoops just as I did after our first meeting, that he was one of the most brilliant and enjoyable characters I have ever known. He was a loyal and honest partner and our five years of intensive business association was one of the most successful partnerships I have ever known about.

Clark has done an outstanding job at Kiski where his innovations in curriculum have attracted the favorable comment of leading publications. One subject at a time is now studied intensively. When Clark and Hooper took different forks in the road, both education and social science acquired men of original thought and pioneering courage.

It took courage for Hoop to start over on his own with a small nucleus of radio clients, to give up a half interest in a

going business, and to finance, manage, sell and perform some menial duties in his truncated business. But Hoop had seen radio forge ahead, foresaw much greater things beyond, and had complete confidence that he possessed the most reliable yardstick then devised to supply the industry with what it needed to know if advertisers were to invest increasingly the huge sums called for to buy time and talent. If ever a small staff was hand-picked for competence and loyalty, it happened when Hoop engaged the other nine members of his staff. Twelve years later he could brag that two-thirds of his then major executives had been with him since he started.

Prior to CAB, the most reliable guesses as to who was listening to what, where and when, were based on the theoretical, mechanical limitations of station range and voluntary response from listeners by mail or wire. Both of these indexes had limitations. Station wattage merely indicated what area *might* be reached, not how many were listening. And raves from listeners reflected the opinions of but a small and obviously biased segment of the whole audience.

The coincidental telephone method, on which Hoop built his business, was a simple forward step and, considering how Hoop developed it, it is astonishing that no one else had realized its potentials. Instead of waiting until the next day and then asking, "What programs *were* you listening to?" Hoop asked "What program *are* you listening to?" It took more phone calls than the recall method and thus added to the cost, but the possibility of memory lapses was ruled out.

For his telephone interviewing Hoop tried to find former telephone operators who had become housewives. He also employed many handicapped persons, otherwise unemployable. They worked in relays on a part-time basis, making an average of fifteen calls per quarter hour, then resting for two minutes during station breaks and commercials. The questions they were trained to ask were few and simple. In the beginning there were three: (1) "Were you listening to the radio just now?" If they were, they were then asked: (2) "To what program were you

listening, please?" and (3) "Over what station is that program coming?" Later a fourth question was added to establish sponsor identification: (4) "What advertiser puts on the program?" And, still later, other possible listeners were included by asking: (5) "Please tell me how many men, women and children, including yourself, were listening to the radio when the telephone rang?" It was not easy to get valid answers to these five questions fifteen times in thirteen minutes, but the skillful interviewers managed it and the added data increased the value of the reports. The three basic questions were not changed and they were the ones upon which the sixteen-year comparative record was compiled.

The "coin" method, as the trade soon learned to call it, had definite limitations which Hooper always frankly admitted. Only homes with telephones could be reached, as was the case with CAB telephone recall. This was not so important when the number of telephone homes, approximately 14,000,000, roughly paralleled the 16,000,000 radio homes. The other major limitation was the difficulty of measuring late evening and early morning listening. Hoop later found that he could call as late as 11 P. M. without encountering too many indignant people, but when he undertook to reach around the clock, he used an ingenious recall technique for late night and early morning broadcasts.

Obviously Hoop couldn't call 14,000,000 phone subscribers. The validity of his figures depended upon the skillful selection of a much smaller number which would be typical of the whole — a "scale model" sample. Hoop used the accepted "random" sampling method, explained in Chapter IV. In a city to be polled he would decide on the number of homes to be called, and these would be chosen at random from the phone directory. If, for example, there were 10,000 residence phones listed, and he needed a sample of 100, he would call 1/100 of the homes. He kept track of the homes that had been called by crossing off their names so they would not be called more than once a year.

The CAB service was supported by time-buying subscribers who paid substantial sums for the reports. Originally started by advertisers, members of ANA, it had later enlisted the support of members of the 4 A's. Still later, the broadcasters' association, NAB got behind it, too. But there were hundreds of others, who did not have access to the closely held CAB reports, who welcomed what came to be regarded as a more reliable and — to smaller agencies — less costly source. It wasn't long before some CAB subscribers decided that they needed both services.

Hoop saw no reason why sellers of radio time should not participate and he did special jobs for stations, networks, advertisers and agencies. His City and Area Reports for stations continued to be an important department, eventually becoming the most profitable part of his business. But the top talent and the big money, then as now, was to be found among the network programs. He saw that the most important contribution he could make would be to find a more satisfactory way to rate the costly "web" programs.

When Hoop began to rate network programs there were sixteen cities in which all four webs had affiliated stations and where listeners could make a free choice between NBC's Red or Blue network, Columbia or Mutual. He called them "the cities of equal listening opportunity to network programs." And he held that in these cities only was it possible to get a true comparison between the audience-attracting power of each program and network. CAB was surveying in more cities than Hoop, but had completely missed this vital point of comparability.

In a word he climbed by out-thinking, out-publicizing and out-selling competitors. To sell successfully he first had to offset CAB prestige by making himself widely and favorably known. He resolved to use ideas with which to purchase fame. He would *make* news for the press, and he would make such friends of the press men that he could count on their good will.

Instead of mailing news releases or handing them out in his office, he would invite the fraternity to Pietro Donini's

place, which was upstairs in an unpretentious brick building on the northeast corner of Third Avenue and 45th Street. He would instruct Pietro to serve the boys all they wanted to drink — up to two drinks — and before these had been polished off, thick, juicy steaks, sizzling on their plates would take their minds off of the third drink; or, rather, the third drink would be a bottle of chianti served with the meat. Usually Hoop had a news story to tell and a release to offer. His remarks were to the point and well larded with wit. His releases were snappy and newsworthy. But there was not always an axe to grind. His Christmas parties became a fixture and, at these, he showed his guests that he valued their friendship.

He did not expect any reporter to twist the facts in his favor. In a few years he gave them hundreds of stories that made their papers more readable and hence more saleable. In fact, during the forties, there was not a name in all of advertising that was so frequently mentioned in *Advertising Age*, *Printers' Ink*, *Tide*, *Variety*, *Billboard*, *Broadcasting*, *Radio Daily* and *Sponsor*. In *Ad Age* alone, during a five-year span, I counted more than 200 items featuring Hooper and Hooperatings. In addition, high Hooperatings for networks and stations made good copy for display ads, and scores of broadcasters bought space to boast of their Hooperatings.

Soon the fame of Hooper spread far beyond the pages of the advertising and entertainment press. He was newsworthy in metropolitan dailies and Sundays. *Time* mentioned him frequently. The *Saturday Evening Post*, in a feature article, called him "the biggest man in radio." *Esquire* said he had "the biggest voice" in the industry. Other magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Business Week*, *The New Yorker*, *Coronet*, *New Republic*, *The Nation*, *Woman's Day* and *Pic* found good copy for stories about him. And when star performers started talking about Hooperatings on the air, whether to brag about their own, or to joke about the higher ratings of their rivals, the whole country listened.

When Mayor La Guardia's Hooper dropped from 12.7, for the first broadcast, to 6.5 for his second, the sad news was published from coast to coast. When Secretary of State Marshall spoke, the Department of State wanted his Hooper. Everett Rhodes Castle wrote a play entitled "What's Your Hooper?" The Websters opened one of their programs with dialogue between a Hooper interviewer and a listener. One of the best gags was the time Judy Garland guest-starred on the Bing Crosby show about Thanksgiving time in the hope of bolstering up his drooping rating. Bing politely asked her if she had her turkey. She had. Not to be outdone, she inquired if Bing had his turkey. "What I need," said Bing, "is a *Hooper*. I got a turkey." The usual greeting on radio row was not "How are you?" but 'How's your Hooper?' When Hooper appeared in person on "We the People" program, its Hooper jumped 2.3 points. One of the saddest cases was a certain program's farewell to its audience when, following a droop in its Hooper, it went off the air. Said the emcee in parting, "O K, Hooper, you win!"

Webster, Hatlo and several other comic artists syndicated cartoons and strips in which Hooperatings provided the humor. *The New Yorker* showed an interviewer in a side-car overtaking a motorist and asking: "We're from the Hooper Survey. Do you have your radio on and if so to what program are you listening?" Another interviewer, reaching two cops in a police car by auto telephone, wanted the same information. One of the best showed an interviewer explaining, "Hooper, Modom, *Hooper*, not Kinsey!"

All the world loves a contest, especially one involving big names. Hooperatings made Walter Winchell, Jack Benny and Bob Hope bigger, if not greater names than Marconi, DeForest and Sarnoff. There is no doubt that the name Hooper was a good carrier for the notoriety which it attracted. As you read on you will observe that it was a handy hitching post for the attachment of suffixes and rhymes. Asked where his trademark, Hooperating, had come from, Hoop explained that, one day

while lunching with Paul Warwick of the Warwick and Legler agency at the Hotel Marguery, his guest asked him to explain what he was selling. He launched into a complicated explanation and was asked if he couldn't shorten it to a word. "Yes," said Hoop, "I'm selling *Hooperatings!*"

The CAB ratings gave an idea of the relative popularity of the big name people on the air, but, when Hoop entered the field, this information, gathered at considerable expense to subscribers, was restricted. But a high rating was too valuable to be hidden and the news got around. Hooper was the first fully to capitalize the news value of his ratings without giving the dead-heads a free ride. Early in his radio history he devised a plan by which he could get the publicity without losing subscribers. To the press he released what he called "The First Fifteen," the highest rated evening programs, and then followed with "The Top Ten," leading daytime shows. The papers displayed the lists conspicuously.

Fans watched the climbs of their favorites with eager eyes, and soon learned to call them *Hooperuppers*. And, when things went the other way, they sadly contemplated the *Hooperdroopers*. The upping and the drooping of Fibber McGee and Molly, Edgar Bergen, Amos 'n' Andy, Hopalong, Fred Allen, et al were noted not only by sponsors, agencies and station men, as they were featured in the business papers, but were quickly relayed to consumer publications and frequently referred to on the air.

Naturally CAB was not amused. Quite as upset were the overshadowed performers, writers, producers, sponsors, networks, stations and advertising agencies. Eddie Cantor who, with growing frequency was missing among the leaders, accused Hoop of down-grading higher types of programs by catering to baser tastes and, with ill success, tried to disprove the validity of his method. When Fred Allen started to slip, he challenged Hoop to meet him in Allen's Alley to debate the issue. Mr. Crossley had fallen for such a ruse and had come off second best when Allen remarked that his guest couldn't be a very

big man — *he had holes in his carpet*. Hoop was much too cagey to play fly to Fred's spider. When their ratings would take a nose dive, some of Hooper's clients did cancel their subscriptions. Even some of the networks played "off-again, on-again, Finnegan" as their ratings changed. But, between liking Hoop and fearing to miss something, his clients stayed with him through the years with astonishingly few defections.

One of the criticisms most frequently leveled at Hooperatings was that people, like sheep, follow the leader; and a program's high rating tends to breed more and more of the same, rather than to encourage new, original, and perhaps better, programming. Hoop's answer to that one was, "There is no purer form of democracy than to let every radio listener vote for what he wants by reporting the programs to which he is already listening."

By 1942 CAB was up in arms. Not only was Hooper stealing their thunder, he was signing up many of their subscribers and, as they said, "unnecessarily duplicating labor and expense." This institution was no mean antagonist. Combating the combined forces of advertisers, agencies, broadcasters and Crossley looked like a one-sided contest. Hoop was taking the part of David against the giant Goliath. His slingshot was the coincidental method, and his pebbles were Hooperatings.

Hoop had always loved a good fight and he carried the battle to his opponents. When he showed up the defects of next-day recall, CAB switched to phone calls made the same day, called "day-part recall." When the superiority of coincidental interviews was clearly shown, CAB weakened again and replaced post facto inquiries with the coincidental method. These confessions of weakness by imitation invited spirited attacks on other counts.

For the first eight years the contestants jockeyed for position, and for four more years the battle raged. Every few weeks Hoop would discover another flaw in the CAB armor and would release an attack through the press. And when his opponent retaliated with jibes at his system, Hoop had a forth-

with answer that the press eagerly published. In fact, his counter blows came so fast that it was suspected — not without reason — that there had been a leak and Hoop had been forewarned and had his answer ready before the attack had been published. In contrast, CAB's rebuttal involved conferences and was usually slow and lame. The general impression created was that Hoop was on the ball while CAB was daydreaming. Hoop's logic was so convincing and his name, by now, so authoritative, that the papers welcomed the opportunity to publish both his critiques and his answers to critics.

The four networks were the chief contributors to the running expenses of CAB, and their payments were substantial — some 40% of the total, amounting to \$150,000 a year. But the webs (networks) couldn't keep house without knowing how Hooper was rating their programs. Hoop's explanations of why his ratings were more reliable seemed to make sense, and they were not unmindful of the duplicated expense to which their attention had been called. One by one they dropped out of CAB.

In 1944, when Hooper and Dr. Matthew N. Chappell published *Radio Audience Measurement*, discussed in Chapter IV, the book was presented to CAB subscribers upon whom it made a solid impression. In addition, a barrage of letters, charts and booklets on the same theme was reaching their desks.

The handwriting was on the wall. It was plain that the authority of CAB was being whittled away by the compiler of a more convincing set of figures. The three association backers of CAB became alarmed. The defection of the networks from their ranks left them holding the bag. The large operating deficit could be made up only by increased dues and assessments. Some leaders stressed the importance of keeping the audience measuring function in the hands of the body representing the buyer interests and out of the control of a private commercial firm. Said they, the court of last resort should be a non-profit agency answerable only to them. Other leaders held that free enterprise had won out in a fair fight against

bureaucracy and, in competition between the old and the new, the new had done a better job and was entitled to the decision.

Several attempts were made to bolster up the weakening CAB. Committees, sometimes called groups "of the unqualified, appointed by the unwilling, to do the unnecessary," were instructed to review the situation and make recommendations. Meanwhile, the press was openly predicting the demise of CAB. And Hoop was out with a liberal offer to gather up the pieces by taking over CAB subscriptions at bargain rates, and even to contribute some of the proceeds toward making up the growing deficit.

What happened then and how the CAB battle ended is one of the dramatic high spots of Hooper's career. But, before that story is told, let's go back to his boyhood to see some of the influences which shaped this "Goliath."

CHAPTER III

The Years before Hooperatings

For the story of Hoop's boyhood we have been fortunate in enlisting the co-operation of one ideally qualified to tell it. His parents, Reverend Alfred Ernest Hooper and Clementina McEwen Hooper, died within three months of each other in the winter of '49-'50, but Marjorie, the eldest of his three sisters (called "Madge" by Hoop), Mrs. George Mason of Rochester, New York, is a close observer. She has an excellent memory and possesses the Hooper gift for expression. She has written so poignantly of their years together that I gratefully cite her recollections.

Our parents were born on opposite ends of St. Peter's Bay, Prince Edward Island, Canada. On both sides their parents were of Scotch and English descent. They became acquainted when they went away to school in Waterville, Maine, where Father attended Colby College and Mother, Colby Collegiate Seminary. They met, fell in love and became engaged. After graduation, for a while, they both taught school and Father attended Rochester Divinity School, the fore-runner of the present Colgate-Rochester Divinity School.

Mother was the business manager of the family. Even though every penny had its place in the needs of four children, she was as scrupulous in giving each one his due as she was in using what was left to run the household efficiently. She was the executive of that generation as Claude was of the next and both were known for their uncompromising integrity.

Some of my brother's finest qualities were his honesty, generosity and friendliness. Both parents contributed to the inheritance of these qualities. Mother, though thrifty, was always ready to help anyone and "Here, let me do it," was a familiar saying of Father. From my Mother Claude received the gift of a lively sense of humor which often saw her and him through tight places. Father had the true pioneering

spirit and the courage that went with it. Time after time he would go to a struggling church or one that needed uniting to meet the challenge of what might be accomplished with his vision and crusading spirit. These, too, were qualities characteristic of his son.

My first recollection of my brother is of a little boy with long, light curls, one of them rolled over on the top of his head. These curls caused a family crisis when Claude started to school and insisted that they be cut off. I can imagine how my mother hated to see them go, but other boys at school wore short hair and did not spare their long-haired playmates. With my father's encouragement, Claude was taken to the barber's.

As my mother had never heard of "reading readiness," she taught us all to read before we attended school. Claude liked school and what he told me of the "goings on" made me eager to join him. I remember how proud I was on my first school day as I walked with one hand in his and the other in the hand of his friend. As I looked from one escort to the other they seemed very tall and strong and I felt safe in my new venture. The winters brought deep snows and I was permitted to slide down a hill near our house provided Claude watched me and took care of me. That was in the little town of Hermon in northern New York State.

One Sunday, before my sister Evelyn was born, Mother, as usual, had got the three of us ready for church, but was unable to leave the house. We were sent in my father's care and were placed in the very front row under his watchful eye. During the sermon Claude became restless. As Father was expounding some vital truth he became aware of suppressed laughter in the congregation and realized that his message was not being absorbed as vividly as he had anticipated. Following the direction of their eyes, he noticed a small boy standing up in the front row and giving a perfect imitation of his every gesture. His next words, in a low tone, were addressed to a single member of the congregation. "Claude, sit down and behave yourself!" The sermon was resumed. Later in the day a private one was delivered to the budding orator.

After a few years Father received a call to go to Stephentown, a small farming community near the Massachusetts border. A stagecoach still ran regularly to Pittsfield and there were two trains a day. Watching for the stagecoach and thrilling to the approach of the train were our most exciting diversions.

As far as conveniences were concerned, we were certainly living in the horse-and-buggy era. Kerosene lamps and coal or wood burning stoves were the best the parsonage had to offer. I'll never forget how, on cold winter mornings, we children would dash down from the freezing bedrooms to dress near the warm fire in the living room.

The Sautrday night bath was quite a ritual. A huge copper-lined boiler that covered the whole front of the stove was filled with water and set to heat early. Whether we were called according to age or need I do not remember, but each had to take his turn in the wooden tub that was set in the middle of the kitchen floor.

Our school was a two-room structure. Claude was in one room with the principal and I was in the other. We all had recess together and would play organized games until the hand-bell was rung for our return. After school or early in the evening the neighborhood children would gather on the wide lawns between the parsonage and the church to play "Pull Away" or "Hide and Seek." There was a long row of open sheds on two sides of the church where horses were tied during service. How exciting it was to walk the top beam that separated the two sheds! One shed had a door on it, but we could pull the door open just enough to peek in and see that it contained an old and unused hearse. The dismal-looking vehicle had a different kind of fascination for us—perhaps because it was kept locked up.

It was in this town that we experienced an old-fashioned "donation party." To children it was exciting to have people come in laden with delicious food and to make the house seem gay and festive; but the joy of our parents was a little forced when they realized that such bounty was to take the place of far more needed additions to the parson's stipend.

In the summer one of Claude's favorite diversions was to play circus. He and the boy on the other side of the church, the local doctor's son, would post animal pictures on the sheds behind the church and shows would follow in which pets of the neighborhood doubled as trained animals or even terrible tigers.

It was in Stephentown that our youngest sister, Evelyn, was born. For some time, when saying our prayers, we had been encouraged to pray for a baby sister or brother. One day we were sent to visit a neighbor. When we returned there was a peculiar sound coming from my mother's room. I remember thinking that there must be a cat under the bed. Needless to say it was Evelyn's first greeting.

On Christmas Eve there was always a tree in the church. Children spoke pieces about Christmas. Following the recitations and singing, each child was given an orange and a box of ribbon candy. We would then go home and fall asleep wondering what surprises we would find in our stockings and on the tree in the morning.

Soon the great American game of baseball began to engross Claude's attention. Unfortunately for this pastime, my mother decided that it was about time for him to begin his musical education. We all learned to play on a little foot-pedal organ, where our attention was divided between foot action to produce *any* sound and correct reading and fingering to produce the *right* sound. My brother's attention would often wander to the baseball field. On my mother's part it meant prompting, cajoling and threatening to keep the sounds—such as they were—coming from the organ. Finally she decided it wasn't worth the effort. Later, when he learned what it meant to have a musical education, he regretted his lack of enterprise and used his mistake as an object lesson when Evelyn began to study music.

When Claude was nine, we all took a trip by train and boat to Prince Edward Island to visit our grandparents. It was the first time Father and Mother had been back since their marriage and the only time we children ever saw our grandparents. Grandfather Hooper had died when my father was but ten, but the other three grandparents were still living. The two things about Grandfather McEwen that stand out in my recollection are: he always had peppermint candy in his pocket for us, and when we spoke to him we had to shout into the open end of a trumpet. Most of the time we stayed with Grandma Hooper who lived on a farm with her son. One day we gathered a large supply of spruce gum and thoughtlessly left it on the fireplace mantel in the parlor. Grandma was not amused when the lighted logs caused our cache of gum to become a sticky mess on the woodwork.

Living conditions were much more comfortable in our next home — Lee, Massachusetts. Some modern utilities spared Mother the inconveniences encountered at Stephen-town. The school was of white marble and there was an excellent public library. Reading became one of our favorite occupations, in spite of the fact that all books had to be censored by our parents. Before we were allowed to read them, Father or Mother had to peruse them from cover to cover. This they seemed to enjoy, especially, we thought, those which we were not allowed to read. Claude and I began to be interested in love stories, but these were supposed to be "too

old" for us. One day he whispered to me that he had discovered a pile of magazines in the basement with "wonderful love stories" in them. We didn't miss one. We both enjoyed the whole set of Horatio Alger.

One day on my way home from school I was shocked to see my brother fighting. As I approached he cautioned me not to tell. I was worried and did not want to watch the fight, but was greatly relieved when he appeared at home soon after, grinning from ear to ear, and none the worse for the encounter.

The basement of our house had a room, nicely floored and finished, which served as our rumpus room. Here Lucile and I played dolls and paper dolls by the hour and occasionally joined Claude in what passed for basketball, the basket consisting of a barrel hoop suspended from the ceiling. Nor were Lucile and I above taking a hand at baseball.

The countryside near Lee was a delightful place to roam in summer. There was a little brook flowing through a neighbor's yard at the foot of the hill. What a place to wade and play in the water! It rippled shallowly over stones as it ran through the yard but deepened as it flowed under the bridge, giving us a sense of danger as we waded through the deeper water while cars went crashing across overhead. Beyond the bridge the brook widened as it entered the pasture. Here was the real swimming hole at the foot of a cliff where the shade of the trees growing above us reached down and kept the water cool. In the pasture were mushrooms and puff balls to be gathered and deliciously fried in butter. In the yard was a swing where we "pumped" and "let the old cat die." When we tired of that the overhanging branches of the willow near the stream provided a romantic place to climb or a secret hideout to read a book.

The land opposite our house rose gently to form a hill. On the way back from school on warm June days we would climb the hill and walk along its ridge instead of following the road, picking and eating the wild strawberries that grew there. In the fall graceful deer would sometimes venture over the hill from the woods beyond and stand poised for a few exciting minutes before turning and running back to the greater safety of the woodland.

The Fourth of July was always a day of celebration. On the hill young men of the town would place cannon, shot off at midnight to usher in the glorious holiday, while others climbed the steeples to ring the church bells. We children got up so early in the morning that, though well supplied

with firecrackers, we were usually out of ammunition by the time we were called to breakfast. Near Lee, at Lenox, was the beautiful estate of George Westinghouse and in the evening we enjoyed the magnificent display of his distant fireworks. Home-made ice cream, hand turned in an old-fashioned freezer topped off the day. Why doesn't ice cream taste that good today?

In Willimansett, in the same Bay State, we finished grade school and began our high school work. To get there we had to take a trolley and then walk quite a distance. There was no gymnasium in the old building, but in spring there were baseball games in the town park where you could frequently spot our brother catching behind the bat. One year some of the girls in my class organized a team, too, but we had to play early and get off the field when the boys were ready to practice. In the winter we skated on a pond at the edge of town, warming ourselves at the bonfire we built on the bank.

Willimansett had been settled by French Canadian and English people, many of the latter speaking with a cockney accent. Most of them found work in the Skinner Silk Mills across the river in Holyoke, or in the paper factories. The English comprised a considerable part of my father's congregation. Evelyn played so much with the French-speaking children that she spoke their language almost as well as they did. They were numerous young people's "socials" where we played "Spin the Platter," "Musical Chairs" and an English game called "Here We Come Gathering Nuts in May." Another English custom we enjoyed was Christmas carol singing. We would start out late on Christmas Eve and go from house to house, invited in for refreshments wherever we saw a lighted candle in the window.

Although dances were held at the school, we were not permitted to attend. Our parents had been brought up under the strict rules of a Canadian province, and my father did not approve of dancing. Mother, having enjoyed square dancing when she was young, was more liberal, but respected his wishes. During Claude's senior year in high school, knowing that being able to dance would be an asset at college, he took lessons with money that he had earned. Mother appreciated his viewpoint and was taken into his confidence, but Father was not troubled by knowing that his son was sinning. After my brother had learned, I received the benefit of his instruction.

During high school he had several money-earning projects. The first of these was helping the village huckster by selling horseradish. Another summer he worked in the Farr Alpaca Mills in Holyoke setting bobbins. One vacation he spent in the Stevens-Duryea plant in Chicopee. The most strenuous of all was working on a farm near Framingham. He came home in the fall looking very thin and many years later stated that the hardest work he had ever done was standing at the bottom of the silo that summer, spreading and tramping the silage.

Along with these activities, he raised thoroughbred Plymouth Rock chickens. At the county fair these chickens regularly won prizes. Even after Claude had gone to college and we were living in Utica, we still had a pair of his Plymouth Rocks. They were kept in a little shed in the back yard and became so spoiled that they would wait for us to put them on their roost at night and take them down in the morning.

It was in Willimansett that we had so much illness in the family. Mother had congestion of the lungs for many weeks. We used to tease her about the policeman on the beat who brought her flowers every morning, no doubt obtained at the expense of our neighbors' gardens. And it was here that Lucile contracted rheumatic fever, resulting in valvular heart trouble from which she died when her daughter was born.

My father also was not well. He had sleeping sickness and slept almost constantly for three weeks. He never fully recovered, and it affected his memory so that, from that time on, he had to accept parishes where the work was less exacting. During the early stages of Father's illness, Claude stayed up most of the night helping my mother to care for him.

Claude was popular in school and nearly everyone liked him, but there were three other boys in town from whom he was inseparable. One winter night a member of the quartet had been forbidden to go skating with the others, but disobeyed and ironically fell through thin ice. Claude brought him home and lent him some clothes while my mother hurriedly dried the wet garments so he could go home in good standing.

Claude's interest in circus life received a new stimulus when Barnum and Bailey's came to town. Taking a leaf out of Tom Sawyer's book, he and his friends tied long strings to their big-toes and let them hang out the window. The first boy up would make the rounds giving each string a good yank. By daybreak they would be at the circus grounds watching the trains unload. Later there was the stupendous parade

with its enchanting calliope, caged animals and women in spangled costumes riding elephants.

I first realized that Claude was beginning to get interested in girls when, coming home from school one day, he asked me whether I had noticed what a pretty girl Esther was, and what a beautiful complexion she had. He became quite fond of her, but a year after her graduation from high school, she died of tuberculosis.

As time went on a strong attachment grew between my brother and my youngest sister, Evelyn. Although there was a difference of ten years in their ages, she adored him and he was always happy in the company of this vivacious, fun-loving little sister. Evelyn thought that everything he did was just right and for a long time refused to eat peas because he didn't like them.

Like most boys of his age he enjoyed having an old car to drive. During his freshman year at Amherst, Claude and some of his friends fixed up an aged Model T Ford and took off for Maryland. He would frequently drive over from college for the week end, bringing one of his friends with him.

When he joined the Delta Tau fraternity he frequently arranged a date for me which included a football game and a dance at the fraternity house. It was at one of these parties that I met Emily Judson Reed who was to become my sister-in-law. By the time Claude was a senior I was living on campus at Mount Holyoke, having commuted the first two years. Since men were always in demand there for dances and parties, members of his fraternity were frequent guests. I remember one dance when nearly all of his brothers came over for as many girls. To his fraternity members Hoop was known as "Ernie," derived from his middle name, but he much preferred "Hoop" or "Hoopcr," and "Claude" and "Ernie" were forgotten as quickly as possible.

One year he was elected as college cheer leader. He admitted that it was not his voice but his "noise" that won him the honor. He played on the soccer team, but missed one important game due to an acute attack of poison ivy. He also took up boxing and became skillful at it.

The Amherst graduation was impressive, as were the farewell songs and ceremonies of the fraternity members as they separated. My brother felt a strong loyalty for Amherst and returned to visit whenever time and business would permit.

Hoop's sister Evelyn, Mrs. Ira Wilder, of Stewart Manor, Long Island, was only seven when he went away to college and

too young to remember much of their years together. But we are indebted to her for a few impressions that help to round out the picture of Hoop as a ten-years-older brother.

As Marjorie observed, I adored my brother. Being so much older, the only boy among three sisters, and so active and full of fun, you can well imagine that he was my childhood hero. Nothing pleased me more than to be paid attention by him. And I am happy to remember that he seemed to enjoy amusing me and, when the occasion arose, ministering to my needs.

I'll never forget that night, when I was five or six, and suffered from a most painful ear abscess. Mother, with many household and social duties, was badly in need of rest, and Brother volunteered to stay up all night and keep hot poultices applied to the aching member. Not only that; his antics were so entertaining that he practically kept me in stitches.

To my many questions he would give me the "maddest" answers. For years I was convinced that brown sugar was brown because colored children jumped on the cane.

But Hoop had another side which was no less noticeable. He was quite a workchild with an excessive drive to make money. His first job I remember was when he sold horseradish on McKinstry's vegetable wagon. Boy though he was, I doubt if anyone ever put so much heart and salesmanship into peddling horseradish. Some Saturdays he would bring home as much as \$4. And I remember some dishes and silver spoons which Mother cherished because they were presents bought from his first earnings.

I cannot remember when he was not an enthusiastic fisherman. He and Zeke Wall, the boy next door, would wake each other up by means of the string which Marjorie has described. Later in the day they would practice target shooting with BB guns against the chicken coop in the back yard.

My brother's first long pants and the pompadour which he prized so highly at that time flash back in my memories of those years. I shared his pride in his hairdo and helped him to achieve it.

As I was put to bed before many of his high school dates, I only remember a succession of arguments because he and my sisters were not allowed to participate in dances and card playing. Exception: Flinch — he was a crackerjack at Flinch; also at Croconol, if you remember that fascinating game played with wooden rings. I used to feel very sorry for my sisters and brother about the dancing, but am glad to report that my parents later relented somewhat and I got the benefit

of the selling job that had been done. From high school on there was a succession of preparations for his homecoming between jobs and on vacations, and the fatted calf was always offered and delectably prepared by the excellent cook who was my mother.

Hoop was so much more an impatient man of action than a plodding scholar that his high school and college marks were nearer bogey than par. Nevertheless he finished six years of higher education and finally won his Master's by a safe if not wide margin. During his senior year at Chicopee High he wanted to apply to Amherst. The principal tried to dissuade him, thinking that Hoop would never make the grade and not wishing to mar the fine record "his boys" had maintained there. But Hoop had his heart set on Amherst and put in his application. He fooled the principal by being accepted, in spite of a condition in French. As the son of a minister he won a small scholarship to help him through his freshman year. His average grade for the four years was "C," due less to any lack of I.Q. than to his preoccupation with earning enough to pay expenses and also to his interest in soccer, boxing, dancing, dating and other extra-curricular activities. Hoop was never one to burn the midnight oil buried behind a pile of books.

In April, 1917, when World War I was declared, Hoop was eighteen and was about to graduate from high school. It looked like the war was going to upset his plans and, like many of his schoolmates, he applied for service in the Army. He drilled in khaki while continuing his studies, but, before his number came up, the war was over and he never saw active service.

His chief athletic interest was baseball. He had been catcher and captain of a championship team at Chicopee and was favored as a prospect for the varsity team at Amherst. But he realized that with his duties of washing dishes, waiting table and handling a laundry route, there would not be enough time for practice.

There was another minister's son, George Benneyan by name, Class of '18, who also had a small scholarship as the son



**The Hooper Family
about 1902—**

**Reverend Hooper with
Marjorie — Claude —
Mrs. Hooper with
Lucille.**



**Hooper on his
Wedding Day —
September 7, 1927
enroute to Bermuda.**

**Judy with Stuart
1934.**

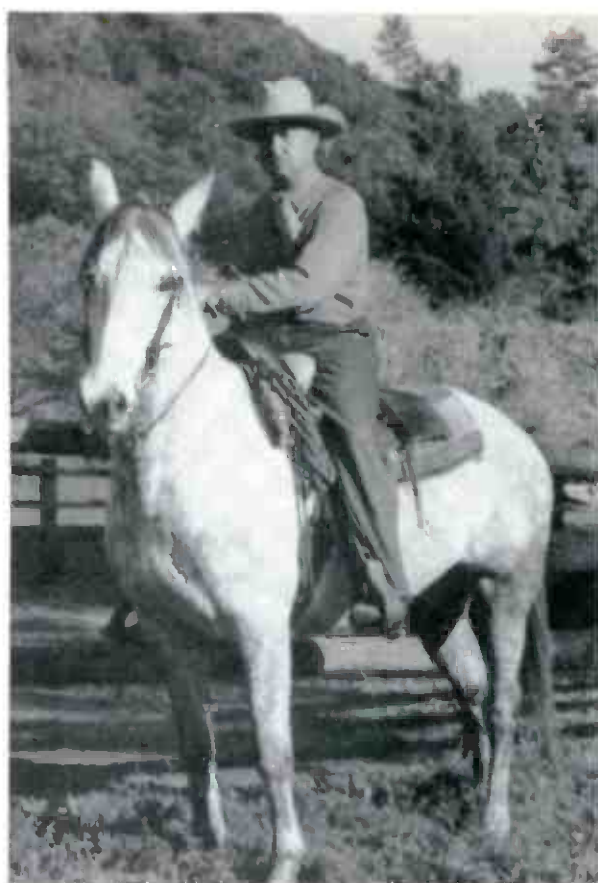


**Skiing with
Stuart in
Wilton, Conn.**



Courtesy of the Saturday Evening Post

Flax Hill — South Norwalk — 1947



**Hooper's Hobbies — Hunting — Riding — Photography and
Playing Host to his Friends.**



of a Congregational pastor and was working his way through. For three years Benneyan had earned his keep by waiting table at Mrs. Clark's boarding house. Before the days of Valentine Hall, boarding houses were where you ate, and each day eighty students put their feet under Mrs. Clark's ten tables.

Mrs. Clark was getting along in years and had decided to retire from the responsibility of running the eating establishment. That was unfortunate because ten student waiters and four dish washers, including Benneyan, would lose their means of subsistence. George, being a man of courage, made a deal with Mrs. Clark to run the place. Hoop applied for a job as waiter. This included something more than passing around the food. Each waiter had to sign up eight boarders and keep them happy. If they didn't like the service they changed boarding houses, and their waiter was out on the sidewalk. Hoop promptly signed up his quota. He was a good waiter and didn't lose a customer. He not only gave prompt, cheerful service, but was so full of bounce and fast come-backs that he kept them entertained.

One month before his graduation, while sitting in History class, Benneyan suddenly remembered that he had not ordered the supplies for lunch. His prolonged phone call from the classroom resulted in his being given his choice of a passing mark — or his boarding house. For the rest of the term, George and Hoop had to rustle another source of livelihood. Years later it so happened that both men went into advertising research and the time came at a gathering of marketing men when it devolved upon Benneyan to introduce Hooper. He presented the speaker as *one of the best WAITERS in the business.*

In June of Hoop's freshman year, and before beginning his summer earning activities, he went for a short visit to his family at Poland, New York, where his father, following his illness, was struggling to make ends meet on the pathetically insufficient pay of a minister in a small and backward parish. Reverend Hooper was always far more interested in the needs of his congregation and the challenge than in the material re-

ward; so much so that his salary was as low as \$500 a year, and the older children secured jobs to ease the burden by clothing themselves. The Poland parish was a low water mark and Hoop found his family in want. Something had to be done at once and he announced that he was giving up college and would find a bread-winning job. The son was firm, but the mother was adamant. Indeed he would do no such thing! Claude was going to have a college education, come what might. It was chiefly due to her courageous insistence that the family would get along somehow that he finished college.

By the time he had graduated he was doing well enough in his summer sales work to be able to send an occasional check to his parents while still keeping his own head above water. He netted as high as \$2,000 for three months' work. On graduating Hoop was offered a history-teaching job at Cornell, but he had been hearing a lot of favorable reports about the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration and decided to investigate.

At this point Judy Hooper has been persuaded to take up the narrative and tell you in her own words when they met, how he impressed her and something of their happiness together before and after their marriage.

The same year that Hoop entered Amherst I enrolled at Smith. Then as now there was much travel back and forth between Amherst and Northampton, most of it on the one-track trolley line; but in spite of the fact that Hoop spent much of his time dating in "Hamp" we did not meet until the end of our Junior year. A Dartmouth beau had suggested that we take in the Delta Tau Delta tea dance in Amherst. As the evening advanced I found myself dancing more and more often with a lively chap with blue eyes and ginger-colored hair who danced divinely and had a cute line. I am quite sure that I left my compact behind — in "Mr. Hooper's" pocket — deliberately and was no small bit elated when a telephone call the next day suggested that he return it in person that night.

From then on we saw one another often, for the rest of that year and our Senior year, at dances, football games, movie dates and walks along Paradise Pond. Both of us, I think, had other heart interests but found more and more

pleasure in one another's company. It was the approaching separation of Commencement, however, that really made us realize that the three thousand miles between Boston and my home in Washington State loomed as a desert wasteland unless we were sure of being together in the future. We reached an understanding. I was "pinned", as they say today, at the Junior Prom our Senior year, and the few short weeks between then and Commencement were heaven on earth.

When my parents and I left Northampton the plan was that Hoop would take the excellent job offered him by Aluminum Company of America, I would teach for a year, and we would be married in June of 1922. By that August, however, Hoop had concluded that it would be wise for him to continue his training at the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration and that our marriage would have a greater chance of success if the ceremony were postponed until he was well established in business. It was a great blow to me, but knowing that he felt financially responsible for his family as well as for me as his future wife, I agreed.

Six years — long years — were to pass before we were married in September, 1927. Much of that time we were separated, and each time we were reunited there was the almost inevitable period of shyness, tension and lack of understanding. It has always seemed something of a miracle to me that we finally did marry. Hoop, so handsome and charming, must have been yearned over by dozens of girls he met or who worked for him at *Scribner's*. I was immature emotionally, and having grown up in the emancipated Twenties, was very reluctant to give up my "freedom" and "career."

And yet we finally did marry and I thank God every waking moment for the twenty-seven years we were able to have together. He and Stuart were my whole life and it was a life that was full of excitement and activity, fun and laughter. I was often lonely when Hoop was gone on business trips for weeks on end, but never did my marriage hold boredom. And each year held rewards in such abundance that I know myself to have been one of the most fortunate of women.

I have often wondered what I had to give in return, to be able to hold so attractive a man. I do not know the answer. All I know is that one evening, not too long before his death, he said to Bill and Emma-Lou Hawkes, friends of long years' standing, "All I want in the way of women are here in this room" — nodding toward Stuart and me — "They are what I want to come home to."

What greater gift could any wife want than words like that, said with deep and unmistakable conviction?

During college years most of Hoop's good times were enjoyed between September and June. His summer vacations had to provide the wherewithal for the following two terms and it was then that he discovered that he was a natural salesman. Lugging his Wearever aluminum pots and pans around, organizing kitchen parties and closing sales was grueling, and he came to hate the grind. But there was much satisfaction in knowing that whenever the pinch came he could pick up his samples, go out and bring home the bacon. His unusual enterprise was duly recognized by the sales department, and it wasn't long before he was boss of a crew, instructing the salesmen, demonstrating his technique, supervising their selling and receiving an overwriting on their sales.

One of Hoop's classmates, L. Sumner Pruyne, known to the Hoopers as "Caesar," has given an interesting account of the class of '21. He regrets that he hardly knew Hoop at college, but he seems to have made up for it afterwards.

The Class of 1920, which preceded us, was one of the largest and best of that era. We came to college during the war years, not only with a much smaller enrollment, but with decreased "quality," as you would expect when many good boys, who might otherwise have been in the class were going into service. Furthermore, during our actual residence in college, quite a number left permanently or enlisted for various periods. In other words, everything conspired to make ours a sort of "runt" class, with less than normal cohesion; and this impression was further heightened by the high caliber of the class which had just preceded us.

With this background it is not hard to understand that we were slow to build up class unity and particularly in developing enthusiasm to return to Amherst. Our tenth reunion was a good one, however, and each succeeding one has been even better. At some point following the Tenth Reunion there also grew up a custom in the class that has been of inestimable value. That was the habit of a small group of 1921 men and wives returning to college for an informal get-together, both in the fall at the time of the homecoming football game, and also again in the spring at commencement time, even when we had no formal reunion scheduled.

Hoop and Judy were in the forefront in the establishment of this custom and were among its most active and enthusiastic participants. The result is that twice each year any "new" participants in these gatherings would know that there would be a nucleus of enthusiastic classmates on hand, and consequently the group has grown steadily. This same expanding group of off-year reuners has formed the backbone around which to rally the whole class for our more formal get-togethers every five years. As a result of this spontaneous program for which I believe Hoop deserves more credit than any other one individual, we have had a closely knit unit and enthusiastic class, taking off our hats to no other class of comparable vintage.

The running of our actual five-year reunions has been shifted from time to time between Boston and New York groups, and Hoop was always the sparkplug when New York was in charge. In fact he was the chairman of the 25th Reunion in 1946, which he often referred to as the "by-damndest" in our history, with no one disputing it. While he always took an active part in helping us when we ran the reunion from Boston, he liked to kid us about our literature and the fact that our group seemed to him to be "all chiefs and no Indians."

Following a year of teaching in the Yakima High School, Judy came east for good in 1925, securing a position as teacher of History at the Vail-Deane private day school in Elizabeth, New Jersey. She saw Hoop constantly but, as she said, "Again there was a period of adjustment and for two years I shied like a frightened doe at the thought of tying myself down, yet knowing that, no matter who caught my fancy — and several men did — Hooper was the one and only man for me."

Mr. A. W. Shaw, publisher of *System* and *Factory*, was a businessman who thought so well of the Harvard Business School that he had gone to study there after he had become a business success. Perhaps this fact prompted Hoop to apply to this firm, or maybe it influenced the A. W. Shaw Company to employ him. He had successfully sold advertising space for the *Harvard Business Review* and it seemed logical for him to sell space for the Shaw publications, even though the only job open at the moment was on what was called the *Journal of Land and*

Public Utility Economics. This highbrow publishing experiment did not pan out and a year later Hoop joined *Scribner's Magazine* in a similar capacity.

Scribner's was a member of the "Quality Group," later the "Quality Three." Much of his work was to sell advertising schedules in the group. His boss, Carrol Merritt, made him advertising manager, and he worked for *Scribner's* longer than for any other employer — four years. But, by the spring of 1929, he realized that he was in an impasse. Wall Street was booming, and when he received a flattering offer from one of the two leading financial advertising agencies, Doremus & Company, he moved downtown. I have already told how the stock market panic and the depression affected the Doremus connection and of his appointment by Dr. Daniel Starch. That brings us back to Hooper's radio audience measuring activities, and calls for some explanation of his then unique methods. Fortunately we can go to Hooper himself for a description of his procedures and his reasons for using them as set forth in the book, *Radio Audience Measurement*, which, with Dr. Matthew N. Chappell he co-authored in 1944.

CHAPTER IV

Radio Audience Measurement

The preceding chapters have made few demands on the reader's knowledge of research, but if one is to get the full flavor of Hoop's achievements it will be helpful at this point to know more about his techniques. In 1943 he had a similar problem in seeking to explain his procedures to the uninitiated. He wanted to show his subscribers and prospects why he operated the way he did without insulting the intelligence of his mixed — and possibly mixed-up audience. His answer was *Radio Audience Measurement* — a short, well-organized book by himself and Dr. Matthew N. Chappell, now Professor of Psychology at Hofstra College. I knew Dr. Chappell and admired the practical way he applied his scientific knowledge to business. And I know of no better way to give you some of the salient principles than to summarize this volume.

In Chappell's short preface, the main point is that research has migrated "from the seclusion of the academy to the field of competitive enterprise" and "not until business and industry developed a fundamental interest in the behavior of a large number of people did it become possible to undertake the study of people as they live and determine the course of living." He hoped that this would result in certain laws which could be abstracted.

In his shorter introduction Hooper wrote, "The need for radio audience measurement dates from the first interview in which 'time' was offered for sale. It is fundamental to commerce that the vendor be able to demonstrate how much he is offering. It is necessary to a transaction that both buyer and seller use the same measuring standard . . . Each of the linear, area, time, currency and other measurements which is now taught in our

grade schools has a history which involves periods of confusion. Each is now treated axiomatically. Since buyer and seller of radio time have not yet experienced the completion of this evolutionary process, we consider it timely to review the methods developed thus far."

The nine chapters in the book cover seven major topics: (1) Selection of the group to be measured; (2) Representing the population (group) by sample; (3) Relation between sample size and statistical reliability; (4) The coincidental method; (5) Recall methods; (6) Fixed sample methods; (7) Combination methods.

The first chapter, "Perspective," lays down a few fundamentals. One of these explains that, by 1940, the United States, with only 6% of the world's population, had 37% of all broadcasting stations and 52% of all receiving sets—largely because it fulfilled the "desires and needs of the American people . . . The radio industry seeks to furnish people with the programs they prefer, and not with programs which some advertiser or company executive *believes* they prefer, nor yet with those which some reformer thinks they *ought* to prefer."

CAB, Hooper and Nielsen services are briefly referred to as having entered the field in 1929, 1934, and 1943, respectively; CAB with the simple recall method; Hooper introducing coincidental telephone interviews; Nielsen advocating his recording device installed in radio sets. The printed roster was mentioned as a recall technique by which respondents were shown a list of programs and asked to report their listening as prompted by this reminder. Ratings obtained by different methods would not and could not agree, and the different ratings could not be rightly appraised without an understanding of the methods employed.

In explaining methods, the authors undertook to give sensible answers to three broad questions in the minds of buyers and sellers:

1. How accurately are the public's preferences and listening behavior determined?

2. What range of listener characteristics is measured?
3. What are the limits of application, reliability and validity of the methods used for obtaining these measurements?

In answering these questions they are broken down into six more specific inquiries, the answers to which were given for each of the methods included. In non-technical language, the authors undertook to tell for each method whether it could be relied on to measure the listening habits and program preferences of all kinds of people to all broadcasts by using a uniform measurement and a representative sample of the right size. Since the last two requirements are common to all methods, the next two chapters are devoted to sample selection and size of sample.

The selection of the sample, they said, would depend upon whether the radio program was to be measured for quality or quantity. By quality, they meant its power to attract an audience; by quantity, the station facilities that make a program available. "The program is the vehicle; coverage is where the vehicle goes."

The principal attracting qualities of a program were shown to be: time of day, day of the week, season, content of program, talent, competitive stations, characteristics of programs immediately preceding and following on the same network and on competitive networks. The measure of the attraction value of a network sponsor's effort was called the "network program rating." (Hooperatings were mentioned in the glossary only.) Emphasis was placed on the need for ratings which were "strictly comparable with ratings on another advertiser's effort."

When audience attracting ratings were combined with coverage figures, to tell the whole story, they were called cross-section ratings. For most research purposes a stratified cross-section rating was considered more reliable than Hoop's random telephone sample in thirty-six (then thirty-two) cities, and the coincidental method had been criticized on this account.

For this reason he was careful to explain that for purposes of *program comparability* a cross-section sample would have been less accurate because it would have included territory where certain programs were heard and others were not. One program might be broadcast in the thirty-two four-network cities only; a second, in all of these and fifty more cities; in which case the second program could have more listeners, while the first program might be far more popular *where it was heard*. Both measurements — comparative ratings where heard (expressed in percentages) and total listening audience (expressed in numbers of people) had value, and in 1948, Hoop offered what he called projectable U. S. Hooperatings. But, for the first fifteen years of his operation, what sponsors most wanted to know was: other things being equal, how their programs were “pulling” in comparison to competitive programs.

In October, 1943, when the manuscript went to the publisher, Hooper was not ready to offer national cross-section reports. There were then 916 commercial stations of which 649 were affiliated with one of the major networks. Even the web stations varied from 100 to 50,000 watts, and it was difficult to measure quantitative factors accurately, much less to combine them successfully with qualitative factors. Three years later BMB (Broadcast Measurement Bureau, set up by NAB) spent one and a quarter million dollars for a mailed questionnaire intended to establish station-by-station ratings, but never achieved full acceptance for its findings.

In Chapter III, “Representing a Population by a Sample,” is shown how the popularity of a program is affected by what is called the “mental set” of the listener — including his habits, attitudes, emotions, opinions and knowledge acquired by earlier experience. His listening habits are also influenced by what programs are available; the broadcast time of programs; trends; competition between stations; geographic conditions; size of locality; family composition, intelligence, national origin, occupation, income, etc.

When all of these differing and changing conditions are considered, it is seen to be impracticable to construct a sample so stratified — proportioned to the differences — as to be a small scale model of the whole. Geographical differences could be easily weighted by reference to the census figures, but stratification of the less measurable variables led to confusion.

Fortunately for the kind of work Hoop was doing, there was a ready solution which cut across the difficulties — the *random* sample — explained thus: “When all members of a population have exactly the same chance of becoming members of the sample, every ‘mental set’ which may influence behavior has opportunity to be represented in the sample with proper weight.”

The relation between sample size and statistical reliability, discussed in Chapter IV, shows that, no matter how accurately research is done, the laws of chance, as in the tossing of a coin, may bring an atypical result; but that the degree of error diminishes as the size of the sample is increased, and it can be calculated within practical limits expressed in plus and minus percentage points. That was why a Hooperating of, for example 5.0, would be qualified by an explanation that it had a deviation of, say, 0.6%. In practice, when Hoop had reason to question the adequacy of his sample, a simple method of testing its reliability would be to triple it and note the deviation.

Chapters V and VI deal with the coincidental method, the three most outstanding advantages of which are given as: (1) Being an *interview*, it gets data from direct contact with the respondent. (2) It is a short, simple interview which requires a minimum of effort on the part of the respondent. (3) It has the fundamental characteristic, found in no other method, of measuring the available audience — the at-home element — while each program is on the air.

Next, the six key questions are answered for the Hooper method:

1. *Does it yield a valid measure of listening?* The answer

is yes, because it reflects accurately what people do while they are doing it.

2. *A valid measure of program preference?* In answering, a distinction is drawn between *tuning in* a program and *listening* to it. A mechanical recorder may show that half a dozen programs have been tuned in while "shopping around" for a wanted program but, if these have been tuned out as soon as identified, they do not constitute a vote *for* the program recorded, but a vote *against* it.

3. *Is the unit of measurement constant under all conditions?* Here attention is called to the difference between listeners who listen to a whole program and those who listen for a few minutes only, called "program-part" listeners. Variety programs, for example, have many program-part listeners, while plays are much less apt to be tuned out part way through. Because Hooper's method made calls at uniform intervals of one minute, it gave a measure of "average audience" throughout a program, properly weighted to show part-time and full-time listening.

4. *Is the method equally applicable to all programs and all populations?* Being confined to telephone homes it does not permit analysis of the behavior of population groups by educational level, economic status and race. Furthermore, it is not practicable to conduct phone interviews around the clock. The coincidental method does not qualify under this heading, and is given a minus.

5. *Is the sample representative of the population from which it is drawn?* "No other population lends itself to pure random sampling as readily as does the telephone sample." This is because every listed home is equally accessible to the interviewer, a condition that does not hold in house-to-house interviewing. Admittedly the phone sample is overweighted on the side of the higher income levels. Repeatedly Hooper had tested coincidental ratings against cross-section ratings and found the differences negligible among the higher rated programs in the thirty-two cities he sampled.

6. *Is the sample large enough to yield statistically significant figures?* This depends upon the use to which the figures are put, and answers are given for eight specific uses: program ratings, program recruiting efficiency, listening pattern, audience composition, city-by-city ratings, sales effectiveness, radio station listening, and area studies. For these different purposes Hooper used samples of varying size, and the reasons were explained.

The next chapter is devoted to basic measurements of the radio industry and the trends in total listening, evening and daytime listening and program types. Hooper is credited by the industry with having contributed substantially to the acceptance and growth of radio advertising in competition with other media. It was not only that he gave sponsors more useful program criteria than they had had; in addition, he aided them in their selection of types of programs, talent, times of day, week and year which would buy the most for their advertising dollar; and he gave stations and networks a more believable base on which to make their claims.

Hooper influenced trends by showing what changes in programming and scheduling increased listening. In spite of his oft repeated statement that his job was to report preferences and not to sway them, the very fact of reporting them more accurately did help to raise the standard of performance, commercially, if not esthetically. His interior analyses of program structure from minute to minute were of special value in showing up strengths and weaknesses in audience recruitment for all parts of a program, including showmanship, performers and commercials.

When it came to maintaining a year-to-year record of trends, Hooper was in a particularly strong position. Said he, "No radio research method of wide scope other than the coincidental has a consistent history of operation which goes back for a period of more than ten months. The Hooper operation has employed the telephone coincidental technique continuously since 1934." The four basic measurements upon which

the condition and trends of the medium were judged, and which Hooper provided, were: Available Audience Index, Sets-in-use Index, Sponsored Broadcast Hours Index, Average Rating Index. Eleven charts are included to illustrate how his four indexes reflected important trends in the industry from 1940 through 1943, and were of particular interest in showing the effect of the war on listening habits.

In Chapter VII, recall methods, including immediate recall, day-part recall and the roster method, are discussed. As CAB had recently abandoned recall in favor of the coincidental, Hooper could say, "Recall methods currently play only a minor part in the measurement of radio audiences. Historically, however, they are of primary importance and are still used for some purposes." CAB had started in 1929 with the simple next-day recall, and had gradually switched over to the Hooper technique. In 1942 Hooper had made two comprehensive studies, based on 6,000,000 calls and concurrent day-part recall samples covering a period of two years, for the purpose of finding out the reasons for the inconsistencies in CAB ratings. The factors which he found to have so influenced memory as to render the recall method unreliable were given as: age of program, length of program, influence of program popularity, different types of programs, networks.

The frailty of the human memory was not the only fault found with the recall method. Chief among the others was the shifting base, the lack of a fixed point, like the North Star, which "remains constant throughout the whole series of events which are to be expressed in terms of it." Also mentioned was the recall method's lack of differentiation between program listeners and program-part listeners.

Printed rosters were conceded to have some advantages over the other kinds of recall sampling but, offsetting these, were mentioned three definite limitations: the length of the list of programs used made a difference — the shorter the list, the higher the ratings; the amount of aid given the respondent also affected the result — if you asked simply, "Do you ever listen

to Spotlight Bands?" you would get a lower rating than if you asked, "Do you ever listen to Spotlight Bands, sponsored by Coca Cola on WJZ every night except Sunday from 9:30 to 9:55 P. M.?"; the third limitation was called "differences in the 'not-at-home' segments of each economic group." This reminded the reader of the difficulty of obtaining personal interviews in apartment houses and high class residential areas, and also the extent to which timing affected the at-home habits of respondents.

The recall method was credited with some utility. On a few occasions Hooper used what he called "immediate recall" in combination with the coincidental method. The respondent would be asked, not only what program he was listening to now, but also what program he had been listening to fifteen minutes earlier. This plan produced two measurements from one call and minimized the objection to reliance on memory, also producing useful data on "audience flow."

Chapter VIII took up "Fixed Sample Methods." Two such techniques had appeared upon the scene: the panel or diary method and the mechanical recorder. Actually the recorder was a panel method automatically serviced. Hooper saw many advantages in listener diaries. Even then he foresaw that they offered a helpful complementary means of converting telephone samples into cross-section samples, and it was not long before he was using them for "projectable U. S. Hooperatings."

In discussing automatic recorders, Hoop spoke from two years of experience with his Programeter. He sensed that Nielsen's Audimeter was something to be reckoned with in the future. Accordingly, he made sure that the limitations of these devices were fully exposed. The early recorders were time clocks which rotated a tape on which dial changes were recorded. During the war, scarcity of materials and labor had retarded Nielsen in the development of the Audimeter, but he had been working for years to perfect it, and had spend a great deal of money installing and maintaining a few hundred of the devices in what was then little more than a pilot test.

As a fixed sample method, the recorder was subject to the pros and cons of any panel. In addition, there were mechanical problems. He conceded that the recorder, when in working order — then about 90% of the time — “may be expected to yield a reliable measure of set operation and dial position (but) the method reveals no factual data whatsoever on *listening* . . . A set may be tuned to a station for ten minutes or for twenty-four hours, but such testimony as the recorder gives does not prove that someone in the family listened.” Mr. Crossley also had experimented with the Potter recorder, which he called Radio-Graph, and he was quoted as finding, in 1939, “as high as 20-25% of the sets in operation for periods exceeding ten minutes when no one was in the room with the set.” One of Crossley’s recorder charts showed also that, in the early periods in the evening, tuning of five minutes or less represented 52.2% of all tunings. These experiments confirmed Hoop’s own experience and contention that the “shopping-around” and the “let-it-ride” habits of listeners discounted the value of the lines on the recorder tape.

In favor of the recorder the authors granted certain unique and exclusive advantages, chief of which was its applicability to all broadcasts and all populations. With an adequate sample, properly distributed, the Audimeter was capable of much closer approach to a true cross-section than the telephone method. At that time, with 700 to 800 Audimeters installed, Nielsen was claiming stratification in eight dimensions: number of radios in homes, geographic area, size of locality, family size, race, occupation, income status and telephone ownership. Samuel Gill is quoted to show that a sample of 18,000 homes would be required if the smallest sample was one home, and that the sample would have to run into the hundreds of thousands of homes to provide a valid sample to include all of these stratifications.

Another objection to the recorder, for comparative purposes, was the lack of any data showing available audience. There was nothing to show whether or not there was anyone at

home and awake when dials were turned off. And would not the presence of a recorder on a set tend to stimulate above normal listening? Two other drawbacks were the excessive cost of installing and maintaining the devices, and the slow reporting necessitated in gathering the tapes and tabulating the figures.

The balance of Chapter VIII is taken up with listener panels. In 1943 the consumer panel was a comparative novelty. The authors could see definite advantages in having a fixed sample. Members of the panel could be chosen closely to parallel a cross-section of the population. Their cooperation for pay in fact-finding could be assumed. And their reports gave valuable continuity of reporting on listening and product purchasing.

The last chapter, "Combination Methods," suggested that no one method is ideal and that the right combination of methods was the ultimate goal. The question then resolves itself into which other method or methods in combination with coincidental will yield "the greatest amount and the most reliable of the data required on radio audience characteristics."

The coincidental method is matched with the printed roster, day-part recall, fixed samples and house-to-house interviews to consider the advantages of each in combination with it. The authors lean toward diaries. On the concluding page of *Radio Audience Measurement* Hooper and Chappell foresee that many combinations of methods will be tried and, with Frequency Modulation and other changes in broadcasting — television was not far enough along to be discussed — new techniques would be applied. As long as the American public was willing to co-operate, soundings could be taken and techniques improved.

CHAPTER V

Fighting for Recognition

Hoop was a born fighter and his life was a succession of battles: first for an education; then for a toe-hold in business; for the wife he wanted; for a business partnership; for his own business; against the CAB giant; against Nielsen competition; and, finally, for the development of that part of his business remaining after the Nielsen agreement.

From the very beginning of his radio fact-finding, Hoop had to be mindful of keeping his costs within practical limits. His problem was not so much to set up ideal procedures as to give the industry more reliable soundings at costs, which when translated into client charges, could be sold in competition with CAB services. One of the few advantages possessed by next-day recall was that it was cheap. One phone call produced data — such as it was — on a whole day's listening. One phone call by a Clark-Hooper interviewer covered one minute's listening to one program only. Granted that Hoop's measurements were more reliable, could the new service be sold competitively at a sufficient profit to make possible the building of a business?

In the beginning it could not. How could a comparatively unknown researcher, with almost no capital and but a handful of clients, sell a more expensive service, which deflated the ratings then used, in competition with an established business backed by a coalition of advertisers, agencies and broadcasters? But by the time Hoop separated from Clark he thought he could see a bright future.

In the early days of C. E. Hooper, Inc., there were pay-days when the ghost didn't walk for his more highly-paid staff members and for himself. One good friend and neighbor, John C. Whitridge lent him \$6,000 secured by Hooper stock. When

Hoop could repay the loan he gave Mr. Whitridge the stock, and later Whitridge joined the company. In 1947, when he was tragically drowned, Mrs. Whitridge became one of Hoop's most valued assistants. On another occasion, Hoop was on the West Coast and couldn't get back to New York to meet the current payroll. His good friend Mo (F. Morse) Smith went over to Hooper's bank and deposited a check, promptly repaid upon Hoop's return. Thanks to good friends and close management, he did all right.

When C. E. Hooper, Inc. was set up at 51 East 42nd Street in May 1938, his nine employees included four who remained with him until 1950. Mr. "Irv" Cartright left at that time, but Miss Edythe F. Bull — nicknamed "Ferdinand," a founder, and in due time a vice-president — remained for several more years; Miss Dorothy M. Behrens, also a founder and vice-president, is still an executive of the C. E. Hooper company. The fourth founder was Miss Lois Bowen. Hoop had a gift for finding, training and working with outstandingly competent businesswomen; and the Misses Bull, Bowen and Behrens, known as "the three B's", became an important triumvirate in the administration of the business. Hoop made a practice of "equal pay for equal work."

Hoop was not an easy boss. He demanded a great deal of himself and expected similar dedication from his associates. There was generally splendid morale in the organization, which Hoop fostered by personal and sometimes paternalistic, consideration for his associates and by frequent get-togethers. Decoration Day was the occasion for an annual party at the Hoopers' in South Norwalk, when as many as eighty of the staff would be entertained. Hoop's birthday fell on the following day, so this event was a double celebration.

On the other hand, Hoop left no doubt as to who was boss. He could ask for and take advice, but he could be autocratic and even temperamental at times, and would brook no working at cross-purposes. This led to some turnover among his Number Two and Number Three men and to some heated

arguments, resignations and firings. But Hoop was not one to bear a grudge. Mr. Whitridge was definite proof of the error made by those who believe that Hoop didn't really want another big man in the firm. Whitridge had been an International Business Machines vice-president, and when he came out of the government service in Washington to join Hooper, he added much to the business know-how and stability of the organization. It was he and Miss Bull who succeeded in getting punch card machines for tabulations, when war scarcity made them almost unprocurable, and who worked out the procedures for important time and money savings.

In the early days of 1939, while there were only ten employes and Hoop was walking the tightrope between collections and payrolls, there were times when the proceeds from an unexpected special report came as a godsend. On one such occasion Hoop was offered a substantial fee for a study, providing he could meet a deadline requiring around-the-clock concentrated effort on the part of all employees. Relying on the known loyalty of the staff, Hoop unhesitatingly accepted the commission and broke the news to his workers. The office was kept open all night and Hoop, not to be outdone, was in the thick of the race. The office was so well organized that Hoop, as the chief executive, had difficulty in finding work. (He used to brag that he was the only one in the organization who didn't have a job and was only around because someone had to occupy the corner office.) All needed chores seemed to be well taken care of. "Well, at least I can run the mimeograph," said Hoop. He grabbed the crank and turned it with such vigor that he broke the stencil on the very first round. Crestfallen, he switched to licking stamps. But Hoop moistened the stamps so well, that the envelopes all stuck together, and the labor required to unstick them was greater than that saved by pressing the boss into service.

Some have asked why Hoop ever gave up magazine research, in which he was established, in favor of the radio. He had spent several years selling magazine space and helping to

sell it through research. He had spent two years in the agency field. Periodicals had their circulation statements and their audit bureau to verify the figures. Their problem was not to prove their distribution, but their sales impact. Radio's greater challenge was to prove both circulation and impact, and this new medium was threatening to surpass both magazines and newspapers in dollar volume. He was convinced that he had a better "mouse trap," and it was just a question of perfecting his method and selling it to enough clients to pay expenses, until the money would begin to roll in. His selling ability had been proved over and over again. His competence as an administrator and financier had not, but his training in and outside of the Harvard Business School would be helpful, and with his courage and optimism he never hesitated.

Hoop's enthusiasm for the coincidental method did not blind him to its limitations or stop him from examining all the other methods by which it could be extended or even replaced. One of these was the mechanical recorder. He had spent almost two years, at a cost Clark-Hooper could ill afford, investigating and testing the Programeter, one of the first such devices. In August, 1937, he had offered his findings and his machine to the Joint Committee of Radio Research in the following proposal:

Early in 1936 Clark-Hooper retained Mr. John Potter who had submitted a device of his own invention which seemed most nearly to conform to practical requirements. Subsequently other engineers, technicians, patent attorneys, etc., were retained to modify, experiment with and develop, under Mr. Potter's direction, a device which would be suitable for practical commercial use in the field. Several such machines were tested, developed and discarded before the machine which is the subject of this paper was completed and deemed to be acceptable. Ten of these machines were then manufactured and installed, by rotation, in a number of radio homes. These machines have now been in continuous operation, under typical field conditions, for the past several months and have demonstrated their consistent reliability to record dependably

In our opinion the information obtainable by these automatic fact-gathering instruments is of such importance to the

radio industry that, initially, it should be developed, analyzed and distributed by an impartial, industry-sponsored research group such as the Joint Committee on Radio Research

Clark-Hooper, Inc., therefore offers the use of these automatic recorders to the Joint Committee on Radio Research, and offers to turn over to the Committee all the facts and observations which have grown out of one and one-half years of intensive study of this device.

Hoop had gone far enough to see that the development of any recorder would take years and require a huge subsidy. The cost of manufacturing, installing and maintaining a sufficient quantity to provide an adequate sample would be astronomical. And when the committee did not accept the proposal, Hooper regretfully surrendered his rights and turned the Potter machine back to the inventor; but not until he had examined another recorder invented by Professor Robert F. Elder of MIT and offered to Clark-Hooper for \$50,000. This was the machine later acquired by the A. C. Nielsen Company.

In view of what happened twelve years later, it is interesting to note that Hooper was among the first to recognize the potential possibilities of a mechanical recorder. Due to Nielsen's income from his other business, estimated at a million or more a year, he was the only man in the business who could afford to take the risk involved in establishing the recorder method on a commercial scale.

Years later Nielsen stated publicly that he had offered Hooper \$250,000 for his business in 1938 (also that he had offered CAB a like amount for their audience measurement service). When I questioned the authenticity of such an offer and asked Mrs. Hooper, "Do you think Hoop, in those lean days, would have refused such an offer; could he not have taken the money and gone into some other branch of research?" she replied, "Not Hooper, he was so sold on his method that no amount of money could have stopped him."

As soon as Hoop was on his own he opened up the publicity throttle with releases and started a direct mail campaign.

One of his first stories was published in *Sales Management* with charts under the head, "A Little Dummy Shall Lead Them." It showed Bergen's Charlie McCarthy with a 35.4 Hooper, the second best rating five points lower.

The very month Clark and Hooper split, *Business Week* published "Checking Radio Checkers" with pictures of Crossley and Hoop. The older CAB and the newer Hooper ratings were compared, and mention was made of A. C. Nielsen and his tests of Elder's Audimeter. Said *Business Week*, "Last fall Colgate-Palmolive-Peet, seventh largest radio advertiser, set the trade humming when it checked up on CAB by means of a private survey using the coincidental method." This was one of the first big advertisers to use Hooper to check Crossley and then to prefer the Hooper findings, thus starting a movement.

That, too, was the month the *New York World-Telegram* ran a little item saying, "C. E. Hooper, Inc. has mailed to 112 radio stations in 40 cities throughout the country an announcement of the 'Hooper Cumulative Station Audience Reports,' a new type of station audience study." By August, *Advertising Age* was publicizing Hooperatings actively, though not yet by that name. And, come October, Hoop had increased his number of checking points from sixteen to forty-two, multiplied his evening sample three-fold, his daytime sample six-fold, and had added cities of 25,000 to 100,000 to those of 250,000 up.

It was in November, 1938, that Orson Welles' mythical men from Mars program stampeded radio listeners as well as those to whom they spread the alarm. Remember the panic? Hooper's ratings showed that only 8.5% were listening to Welles' Mercury Theatre sensation, and a much larger number was tuned in to Charlie McCarthy, but the excitement so raised the Welles rating that, a week later, Campbell's Soup announced it would sponsor the show. And it wasn't many months before Welles had so cut into the Bergen program that Jack Benny passed it. On his election day speech that year, President Roosevelt received a Hooperating of 74.8.

By November, 1939, 18 months after Hooper had incorporated, National Broadcasting Company paid him a high compliment by publishing a description of "Hooper Radio Reports," a study made for the Princeton Radio Project by H. M. Beville, Jr., research manager of NBC, which described exactly what Hooper was offering at that time. He had more than fifty subscribers who were paying from \$75 to \$87.50 a month among advertisers, agencies and broadcasters. He was making calls at the rate of 1,200 per one-half hour, 2,304,000 a year from 9 A. M. to 10:30 P. M.

The three published reports that Hoop was then offering were:

1. "*National*" *Rating Reports*: on which, later, "First Fifteen" and "Top Ten" Hooperatings were based, summarized in Hooper's famous monthly "Pocket Piece."
2. "*Sets-in-use*" *Reports*: intended primarily for the radio industry as a whole, and forming the backbone of his exclusive continuing record of radio's overall use and growth.
3. "*Sectional*" *Rating Reports*: of special value to broadcasters, in the sale of time, and helpful to buyers to show the relative strength of stations and networks.

By 1940 Hooper had earned the respect of the networks, and they were beginning to give him business. At that time NBC undertook the most ambitious survey of a network's coverage that had been made, and Hooper was employed to help them. 1,425,000 post card questionnaires were mailed to 4,926 post offices and replies from 166,000 radio families were sent to the Hooper company for tabulation and analysis. When the results were reported, NBC bought six pages in two colors in the advertising press to high-spot the findings. In *Printers' Ink Monthly*, a two-color spread pictured Hoop showing his report to NBC President Niles Trammel and Vice-President Roy C. Witmer at a table of the sunken Promenade Cafe in Radio City.

In a display line, NBC announced, " 'Every county heard from!' reports C. E. Hooper . . . One million call letters were tabulated . . . giving each county its correct evaluation in terms of the number of radio families it contained. Hooper then translated the results into nation-wide network circulation and

preferences.” Some of the Hooper techniques developed for this survey were later adopted by Broadcast Measurement Bureau for its all-station survey and, when BMB was dissolved, its successor was instructed to get “the higher standard of precision for its measurements by adopting the Hooper Area coverage Index technique.”

Hoop's last printed advertising studies featured a technique which he and Clark had developed in 1934, and in which trade names were masked out. Interviews showed the ads with all identifying names removed and, as in his radio work, respondents were asked to identify the “sponsor.” The success of this plan in magazine advertising surveys resulted in Hoop being invited to make such a study for the American Newspaper Publishers' Association, where he worked it out with his old Amherst boarding-house boss, George Benneyan.

In a booklet which Hoop sent to his list he said that, prior to 1938, he had experimented with listener panels, his Programeter and with seven kinds of recall. The more he tried other methods, the more convinced he became that, by the coincidental method, he could deliver the most to his subscribers for their radio research dollar. In 1938 he had added twelve cities to the basic ones of equal network listening opportunity, but finding too many variables in the increased sample, he had returned to the basic list, then thirty cities. The two questions he had added to the original three asked by his interviewers had proved their value.

In the early stages, the powerful ANA, thirty members of which had put CAB in business before the agency and broadcaster associations joined, took a dim view of Hoop's coincidental method, as his advisors had predicted. The most skeptical was Dr. D. P. Smelzer, Director of Research for Proctor & Gamble and chairman of the CAB committee, who threw his weight against acceptance of Hooper's method, but showed considerable curiosity about his techniques, as will be brought out in the next chapter. By the time of their 1939 convention,

however, ANA invited Hoop to show some charts and exhibits at the Waldorf-Astoria.

The following month *Advertising Age* mentioned Hooper's newly set up Pacific Coast service as "the first separate sectional service thus far established in the radio field." This was an important advance and resulted in the West Coast becoming a Hooper stronghold. Because of its different time zone and distant location, this important area had been neglected by the other measurers. Pacific Coast broadcasts were usually rated lower than elsewhere because of the long outdoor season, but there were strong stations broadcasting excellent programs of national and local origin, and West Coast advertisers, agencies and stations warmly welcomed a localized service to promote the sale of sectional time, talent and products.

Encouraged by the added business he secured from the Coast on two new station services, in September Hoop offered generally: Station Audience Reports — a vertical ranking of all station listening in his thirty cities — and a Comparative Station Popularity Index — a horizontal measurement of coverage in these station areas.

The following month CAB, not to be outdone, announced three improvements in service: Interviewing intervals were reduced from four hours apart to two and were increased in number; their sample was upped from 400,000 to 500,000; stratification by income groups was attempted. This was their fourth attempt in ten years to strengthen their service by making radical improvements. Hoop came back by announcing that henceforth he would report program popularity of all fifteen-minute daytime programs and all thirty-minute evening shows.

Quite unconsciously Hoop was found to be promoting gambling among station employees when a New York paper reported that, at Station WOR, book was being made on what the Hooperatings would be. At a White House news conference the subject of Hooperatings came up and someone asked "What are they?" Another correspondent with a sense of humor, noting the speed with which presidential broadcasts had been re-

ported, defined them as "an attempt to measure something that cannot be measured in less time than it takes to measure it."

Hoop was careful to qualify any claims made for him that he could accurately measure the sales results of a program, but in 1940 an advertisement was run by NBC's Blue Network which gave some interesting figures gathered by C. E. Hooper, Inc., showing what happened to the sales of Jergen's Lotion following the advent of Walter Winchell on the program. In a short time it moved from the number three position in sales to "far out in front." Sixty percent of 2,356 people interviewed said they listened to Winchell, of which 40% said they used the product, while only 10% of the non-listeners were Jergens customers.

Late in 1940 the success of Hoop's West Coast experiment encouraged him to broaden the service and to send a proposal to all networks and agencies in the three states in which he offered to give them the added data they said they wanted, providing they would co-operate actively and underwrite the expense. The response was excellent and Hoop went to the Coast in December to talk it over. Committees were formed in four cities to sell the new services.

Hoop was back again in March and spoke at the ad clubs in San Francisco and Los Angeles. In Los Angeles he was introduced as possessing 2,600,000 telephone numbers — "What a man!" In his talk he emphasized the importance of "program position," its time of day and week and also competitive programs as strongly affecting ratings. He cited the need for advertisers to cultivate close touch with their consumers and recommended telephone interviews as an excellent way of doing this, since business had become so big that personal meetings between buyer and seller were no longer possible.

At the beginning of 1941, when ASCAP had its big fight with the networks and its music was withdrawn from the Big Four, Hooperatings were able to show that no loss of listening to musical programs had been sustained and Hoop received

much helpful publicity from the webs who quoted him as their authority for verifying this happy condition.

At that time Hoop's growing popularity was indicated by a published comment which, though it called the CAB reports "the Good Book," christened Hooperatings "the New Testament."

In the spring of 1941 Hoop was in Vermont for some late skiing and remained over for the maple sap gathering season. Not long after this his subscribers and favored prospects received cans of private stock "fancy" maple syrup bearing handsomely printed labels that said, "Tapped, sapped and fired by our own hand — personally and coincidentally."

Fred Allen watched Crossley and Hooperatings of his program with interest, curiosity and some reservations. He once remarked on the air, "The next time you see a radio comedian gray before his time, his cheeks sunken and his step halt, please understand he isn't dying. His wife hasn't left him. His children aren't sick. He isn't going bankrupt. He's been caught with his Hooper down, that's all. (Bop Hope's definition of a Hooperating was "an ulcer with a decimal point.")

Kidding Hoop on the air, Allen remarked that he had lent him the nickel for his first phone call and referred to Hooperatings as "mythical figures which should be paid attention to by mythical people." This prompted the following note from Hoop:

Dear Mr. Allen:

Among your most appreciative listeners to last Wednesday's broadcast were we of Hooper Radio Reports. We are encouraged. Look where Ford jokes put Henry even B. A. (before Allen) and before radio.

It was the following month that Allen enticed Crossley to appear on his program as guest star and so inconsiderately referred to the condition of his carpet. Notwithstanding which Frank Stanton, then Research Director, now President of CBS, wired Crossley — "Marvelous performance! Anxious to see what your Hooperating will be." About that time Columbia gave a big dinner for Edward R. Murrow, which was attended

by the Hoopers. Hoop was not a speaker, but was pleased to be seated at the Number two table with Mr. Stanton. Looking around the ballroom, the Hoopers discovered Mr. Crossley at Table 27. That told Hoop a lot about his rating with one of the Big Men of radio at a time when the battle with CAB was waxing hotter and hotter. Maybe it was at this very dinner that Hoop, who was successfully practicing girth control, gave his host his diet list, prompting the following telegram from Mr. Stanton:

By your diet I will do my duty,
Although breakfast is much too fruity.

No more chicken, no more fish,
No more wine with every dish.

No more gooey chocolate mousse,
No more stuffed Long Island goose.

No more Fanny Farmer's candy.
Isn't Hooper's diet dandy?

In due time Hoop received a characteristic acknowledgement of his note to Fred Allen. His letterhead showed a cartoon of Fred flattened between the pages of Joe Miller's Joke Book. Each word in the epistle occupied a single line in the middle of the page, front and back, and apparently his typewriter had no upper case.

dear mr. hooper

thank you for your kind note. the trouble with our program is that you and dr. gallup and mr. crossley all tune in but according to our rating we seem unable to penetrate the executive front and get our verbal wares before the radio masses. it is true that ford jokes put henry where he was yesterday. apparently the cio is responsible for putting him where he is today. we appreciate your cooperation in letting us mention the hooper reports on the program and we wish you continued success in your world of decimals.

sincerely,

fred allen

Hoop made several appearances on radio programs. As a result of his first effort as a performer he received a wire and a postcard, which he kept. The postcard came from his sister Marjorie. Also from Rochester came this message:

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS. SO GOOD TO HEAR YOUR
VOICE, CLEAR AND DISTINCT, A GOOD RADIO VOICE.

MOTHER AND DAD

It was three months before Pearl Harbor, but we were preparing fast for a war that few thought we could escape. Radio was playing an increasingly important part in the government's public relations. Hooper had rated all of President Roosevelt's pre-war speeches; the highest mark following his "Arsenal of Democracy" address. In September of 1941, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau was quoted in the press as showing great interest in Hooper's ratings of his bond-selling programs. It wouldn't be long before Hooper would be contributing a quarter of the time, effort and expense of his organization as a public service to rating the many government war programs.

Meanwhile the business was growing and special assignments were coming up. An important one was a survey of New York City radio stations, based on a sample of 70,000 homes. Hoop's station research was not only mounting, but was resulting in a great deal of free advertising for Hooper. From 1940 through 1942, the four networks and the Don Lee network on the Coast were regular subscribers to his reports and also employed him to make special studies, the results of which were duly advertised with Hooper's name prominently displayed.

The stations which ran full-page ads featuring Hooperatings included, in New York, Stations WABC, WOR, WMCA; in Philadelphia, WFIL; in Boston, WORL and WEEI; in Cincinnati, WCPO; in St. Louis, KMOX; in Denver, KOA; in San Francisco, KSFO; in Portland, Oregon, KOIN. The Don Lee Network ran highly personalized ads with such heads as: "Gosh, Mr. Hooper!" and "Mr. Hooper Is Breaking Up My Home."

As part of his regular service and as a by-product of his special reports, Hoop was accumulating a great deal of data that was as yet unexploited. By packaging some of these findings and filling in the chinks with added research and new tabulations, he was constantly developing new service features to be marketed. As the new reports were added they were usually included in the regular mailings to subscribers as bonuses. When they multiplied and their value was recognized, he would use them to justify an increase in his charges. Thus in the 1941-1942 season he introduced his City-by-City Ratings by sending specimens to a list of advertisers and agencies.

CHAPTER VI

Branching Out during the War Years

Articles signed by C. E. Hooper were in growing demand among the advertising and entertainment papers. In January, 1942, *Printers' Ink* featured "The Size of the Radio Listener Sample," in which he prepared the ground for the announcement that henceforth his monthly evening program reports would be issued twice a month. A mailing was sent to his subscribers, which by then included ninety-one stations, describing six service features recently added. He also mentioned that he had been able to shorten the interval between interviewing and reporting by thirty-six hours.

In October, CAB made another radical change in its procedure. This was the signal for Hoop to make a frontal attack on the whole CAB system in a confidential bulletin to his clients. Some passages from this impassioned document show how strongly he felt about the reluctance of certain leading advertisers and agencies to give him credit for raising the standard of measurement:

Throughout our expansion period the coincidental questions have been ever present. The statistical processing has remained the same . . . The comparability of the continuous measurements has been perpetuated in the basic network areas . . . Our records, and ours alone, provide the industry with a continuous long-time comparative record of radio listenership.

Comparability has been destroyed in the CAB record four times in seven years: 1. when they changed from "listening yesterday"; 2. when they changed from random homes to an arbitrarily weighted sample; 3. when they changed to two-hour day-part plus overnight recall; 4. when they changed again to two-hour continuous recall plus coincidental.

Don't think we didn't suffer when we added or subtracted a feature. The "pressure boys" got busy labeling additions and extensions as "change." . . . As a result we were

summarily dismissed in some quarters. A private firm doesn't dare monkey, or even be suspected of tampering with anything as vital as the size-of-audience record . . .

We have never received a subscription from any of the particularly top bracket agencies . . . Certain large advertisers have never seen fit to contribute anything to the pot which we have been operating for the industry . . . A notable eight-year absentee group is the Proctor & Gamble Company and its agencies . . . The only thing that ever accrued to the benefit of our subscribers from this group was a request (from the aforementioned Dr. Smelzer), which developed during the course of our active solicitation . . . We swallowed hard when we read the questions put to us . . . because they dealt, not with the application of the results of our work or the broad principles which were embodied in it, but exclusively with intimate details of a strictly technical character on our interviewing and internal tabulation practices. The recollection of its receipt and the candor with which we replied came back to us vividly on Friday, October 2, 1952, when the radio press carried the story that *CAB had adopted the coincidental method.*

Frankly, our entrance in 1938 into the field of daytime coincidental radio measurement with no receipts and no prospect of receipts from this group, took courage. But we were asked to do it by another influential group composed of Colgate-Palmolive-Peet, Columbia Broadcasting System and Benton & Bowles, and we are still grateful for the encouragement they gave us at that time.

Operating a coincidental survey on an adequate sample costs money . . . Supervising a field staff to produce machine-like uniformity on the part of each interviewer is difficult in the extreme . . . involves the full time of four inside-the-office New York employees, one full-time traveling national supervisor, six part-time regional supervisors . . . Comparative inside charting of results is continuous and supervisory correspondence pours out daily . . . How have we been able to finance this operation?

1. There are four networks, some top agencies and advertisers and a lot of little fellows with radio accounts who want the best and most complete factual guidance obtainable . . . They buy carefully and we get the business. In this connection it is significant to note that, prior to the "official" endorsement given the coincidental method by CAB, in a survey by Dr. Herman Hettinger . . . the following opinions were expressed by a cross section of the industry:

Question: "IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN STATION POPULARITY DATA, CHECK THE METHOD WHICH YOU PREFER."

69 leading spot agency executives	Total 209 agency executives	85 company advertising executives
Coincidental Telephone 66.7%	Coincidental Telephone 58.1%	Coincidental Telephone 47.1%

Coincidental Telephone ranked No. 1.

Question: "CHECK THE METHOD OF MEASURING PROGRAM AUDIENCE IN WHICH YOU HAVE THE GREATEST CONFIDENCE."

69 leading spot agency executives	Total 209 agency executives	85 company advertising executives
Coincidental Telephone 40.6%	Coincidental Telephone 35.4%	Coincidental Telephone 36.4%

Coincidental Telephone ranked No. 1.

In the light of eight years of decrying the "coincidental," the current shiftover of CAB can be interpreted as nothing but an attempt to usurp greedily the ground which this impartial student found to have been won by us through deliberate, patient and persistent educational work.

2. The real financing has come from the radio industry itself, the stations. We noted the absence in the radio industry of individual city listening records and listening area records. We created a type report with our own hands and through the expenditure of our own experimental funds which supplies to the stations in individual cities, towns and, more recently, rural areas, "local" listening reports . . . We don't have to be "official" to have the merits of our efforts

referred to, and by name, when we move among members of the radio industry which, incidentally, has a bigger stake in the creation and maintenance of authentic records than has any other group.

Hoop then reminded his subscribers that, after eight years of indifference and active opposition, CAB had, at last, not only switched over to the coincidental method, but had reversed its previous position on two other basic points, the importance of which Hoop had been stressing from the beginning: (1) "total homes" as a base; (2) the random sample in place of their unsuccessful attempt at stratification. Hoop wound up his critique by listing seven objectionable variables in CAB procedures, only one of which had been corrected in their latest switchover. Since, in effect, CAB was now starting all over, Hoop claimed an eight-year lead. And he signed off by proudly asserting that his clients were investing in his services at the rate of \$1,000 a day.

One of the toughest nuts Hoop had to crack was an area survey for far-reaching Station WLW in Cincinnati. Much of the territory penetrated by this powerful station included small towns and farms where something had to be added to the telephone as an instrument of investigation. In June, 1942, Hoop mailed to his list a reprint of a *Printers' Ink* article explaining what he called his "computed" ratings. Attached was a note in facsimile handwriting saying, "It took us two years to work up this new yardstick. Will you give it ten minutes?"

In describing what he called "the first all-embracing technique for the study of listenership to all types of sets, including battery, car, portable and short wave," Hoop commented:

The feat is accomplished without recourse to the artificiality of "test conscious" or "conditioned" subjects, the constant threat when one deals with listener panels or other types of fixed samples . . . The method is pertinent to comparative audience size between groups different in economic status, race, occupation, presence or absence of children, size of family, number of sets per home, etc. I saw the germ of this idea when a survey crew peeked at dials through the rear windows of a parked car and recorded the "station last listened to" as indicated on the car radio.

Dial reading of silent radios was one of the techniques used experimentally in the WLW study, but it had definite limitations and much more was needed. Obviously the telephone could not be used in communities where phones were scarce. Hoop had to resort to what he called "estimates based on overall relationships." Another difficulty was costs. "When the cost of measuring the listening audience in a community exceeds the pro rata cost of the broadcast itself, the measurement loses its economic significance," he observed. Rather than enter into the technical details, suffice it to say that, through establishing the relationship between listening in the city of Cincinnati, where accurate measurements could be taken, and listening outside, Hoop computed usable measurements for the entire area.

On January 23, 1943, Hoop mailed a three-page letter to his list, reviewing progress and announcing new features. He reminded his readers, "Before the expansion, our organization rated more programs and supplied more information on each program measured than has been available from any other source." Calls per year had reached 4,500,000, "twice as big a sample as applied elsewhere." He claimed that his City-by-city Reports, begun three years earlier, had "revolutionized time buying." Station clients had increased to 150.

The first of the three new features offered turned out to be one of the most useful guides to time buying ever devised and marked a turning point in the acceptance of Hooperatings. He called it a "Pocket Piece," first sent to subscribers with the January reports, and he described this "four-page-essence-of-radio-information" as something that would be valued "as is no other piece of paper issued in the industry." The National Ratings Report was expanded to include six new features; and a new Sectional Ratings Report, including actual program names, was the third added service. Hoop closed his letter by saying, "Now that the industry appears to have settled on the coincidental telephone method," he wanted them to be familiar with his amplified service, and enclosed specimens of the new reports.

Never satisfied, Hoop soon added: "Number of men, women and children listening to particular time periods; average number of minutes of listening per hour; continuous ratings on programs broadcast after 10:30 P. M." Hoop gave an "Audience Measurement Clinic" breakfast at the Palmer House in Chicago when NAB met there in convention. The still lagging acceptance of Hooper reports by CAB members was offset by the fast growing patronage from stations, and you may be sure Hoop made the most of the Chicago meeting to push his advantage.

The year 1944 marked a major battle in the CEH-CAB war for survival. Hoop's several additions to service in 1943 helped to needle CAB into another desperate attempt to preempt the field. Hoop had signed up a few hold-out advertisers and a large number of agencies; he had run his station subscribers up to 205 and his dollar volume to \$600,000. CAB backers were getting nervous and put pressure on their general manager, Mr. A. H. Lehman. Proceeding on the principle that "if you can't lick 'em, jine 'em," CAB invited Hoop to bid against Crossley on taking over the operation of their audience measuring function. The catch was that his doing so required his giving up his own rating service. He declined.

That being settled, CAB went ahead with elaborate plans for a "bigger and better service." Separate meetings were held with their advertiser and their agency members. The press was invited in to learn of the "Big New Extensions of Service" which CAB would unveil. During the next few days the press blazed with scarce headlines:

SURVEY GROUPS' RIVALRY
New CAB Plans Still Being Discussed
by Agencies, Sponsors and Networks;
Most Time Buyers Non-committal
HOOVER, CAB EXPAND REPORTS
TO COVER WIDER RANGE
Both Are Based on Cross Section of Country;
Scheduled to Begin in Early April

RATINGS ORGS PREPARE TO FIGHT

The New CAB Operation Is First Gauntlet
in Crossley Vs. Hooperating Conflict.

It's Indie Operation Against "Co-op."

CAB, HOOPER PUT UP DUKES

Rating Orgs Fued in Open

Hoop reprinted seven of the more favorable articles and mailed them to his list in a correspondence folder labeled: "Maybe you missed some of 'em."

The net of CAB's announcement was that henceforth the coincidental method alone would be used by them; they would increase the number of their cities from thirty-three to eighty-one; phone calls for the year would be upped from 2,100,000 to 6,300,000; their reports would be increased to fifty-four per year; survey samples would be distributed in nine geographical sections. But Hoop had beaten them to the punch. That was the year his book, *Radio Audience Measurement*, was published. And as an example of how skillfully he handled the press, I quote from *The Billboard*.

Everyone worried how Hooper would repulse the latest threat. Then came the announcement and it was obvious that once again CEH had outsmarted CAB. Not only outsmarted but outmaneuvered it to boot. This is why:

Operating in typical heavy-handed fashion, the CAB invited reps of the advertisers to confer Thursday, February 3 in New York; and ad-agencymen a few days later. At these meetings the new CAB operation was to be displayed. What irked sundry folk in each category was that they were strictly segregated . . .

Meanwhile CEH invited the trade press to a luncheon on the same Thursday. CAB countered by rescheduling its meeting for the same day. ANA met in the forenoon; AAAA members in the afternoon. Finally CAB reacted to the Hooper trade press lunch, previously planned, with a last minute invite to the scribes. (Cocktails.)

Never before had CAB asked the press to get the "facts" about CAB, or a drink. Tipoff that CAB's invite was a quickie was shown in its inadequate preparations. Where Hooper furnished his guests with a copy of the letter he was sending to the trade, and a thorough explanation of its con-

tents, the CAB had nothing but words to offer. Words and off-the-record statements for tradepapermen, most of whom knew little about the intricacies of radio research. CAB's announcement didn't hit the newspaper offices until Saturday.

Thus the CEH letter was being worked over and written about by the press well before the CAB note arrived. And as radio research requires much mulling, especially for the novitiates, Hooper had a three-way edge, namely: time, quantity of space and quality of interpretation.

Even *Business Week* took notice of the imbroglio to devote three columns to it under the more dignified head:

ADDED RESEARCH

Radio listening habits of nation
to be studied on broader basis.
Two agencies to expand coincidental
checking methods.

Possibly the most graphic picture of how Hoop had crept up on CAB was published in *The Billboard* under the title:

COMPARATIVE FIGURES CAB-CEH Facts and Figures Give Pic of Indie Vs. Co-op Operation.

Hoop was still weak in number of advertiser clients. Of twenty-eight listed, he had eleven; CAB, twenty-one; and four subscribed to both services. The agency picture was more favorable. Out of sixty-four, Hoop had forty-seven, including now the Proctor & Gamble agencies; CAB had forty; twenty-three subscribed to both services. But, whereas Hoop had 205 station customers, listed by name, CAB had none; and as the stations were standing 44.6% of the cost of the Hooper operation, this fact was impressive, showing as it did that the sellers of time were paying nearly half of the cost of giving buyers Hooper data, while CAB had to rely on buyers alone.

One thing was certain: both CAB and CEH would have to charge more than before for their services. In both cases, the networks paid a substantial part of the total, and had to do a lot of independent research work of their own, too. The duplicated expense had become an intolerable burden to the webs, and it was freely predicted that, sooner or later, they would

balk and choose a single rating service. Because buyers had founded CAB and owned and supported it, the odds seemed to favor it. Some of his reporter friends expressed sympathy for Hoop.

As the war proceeded, Hoop had occasion to congratulate himself on having placed his facilities at the disposal of Uncle Sam. He had rated all of the President's important speeches from June, 1936, when listeners numbered only 6,300,000, to December 9, 1941, when 62,100,000 heard his war message.

Before and after the Declaration of War, Hooper was called upon by the government to tell how many Americans were hearing a total of 130 official programs. When the public was asked to spare the use of their telephones as much as possible, Hoop would have been paralyzed in conducting his interviews, had it not been that his work for the government was recognized as an important war service. His nascent competitor, A. C. Nielsen, did not fare so well. Because of labor and material shortages, Nielsen had to suspend his plans for increasing the installation of Audimeters. Hoop received a very important letter which was of great assistance in facilitating his use of the telephone:

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION
WASHINGTON

August 19, 1942

Gentlemen:

Our office sees fit to rely on your organization as a source of comparative radio audience information on scores of sponsored and sustaining network radio programs. We refer to the programs to which have been allotted specific war messages in connection with the War Information Network Allocation Plan.

We therefore request that you acquaint local Civil Defense authorities, police headquarters and local telephone company officials of this fact in the areas where you interview regularly. For purposes of identification, it will also be well for you



Signing the CAB Agreement.



Courtesy of the Saturday Evening Post

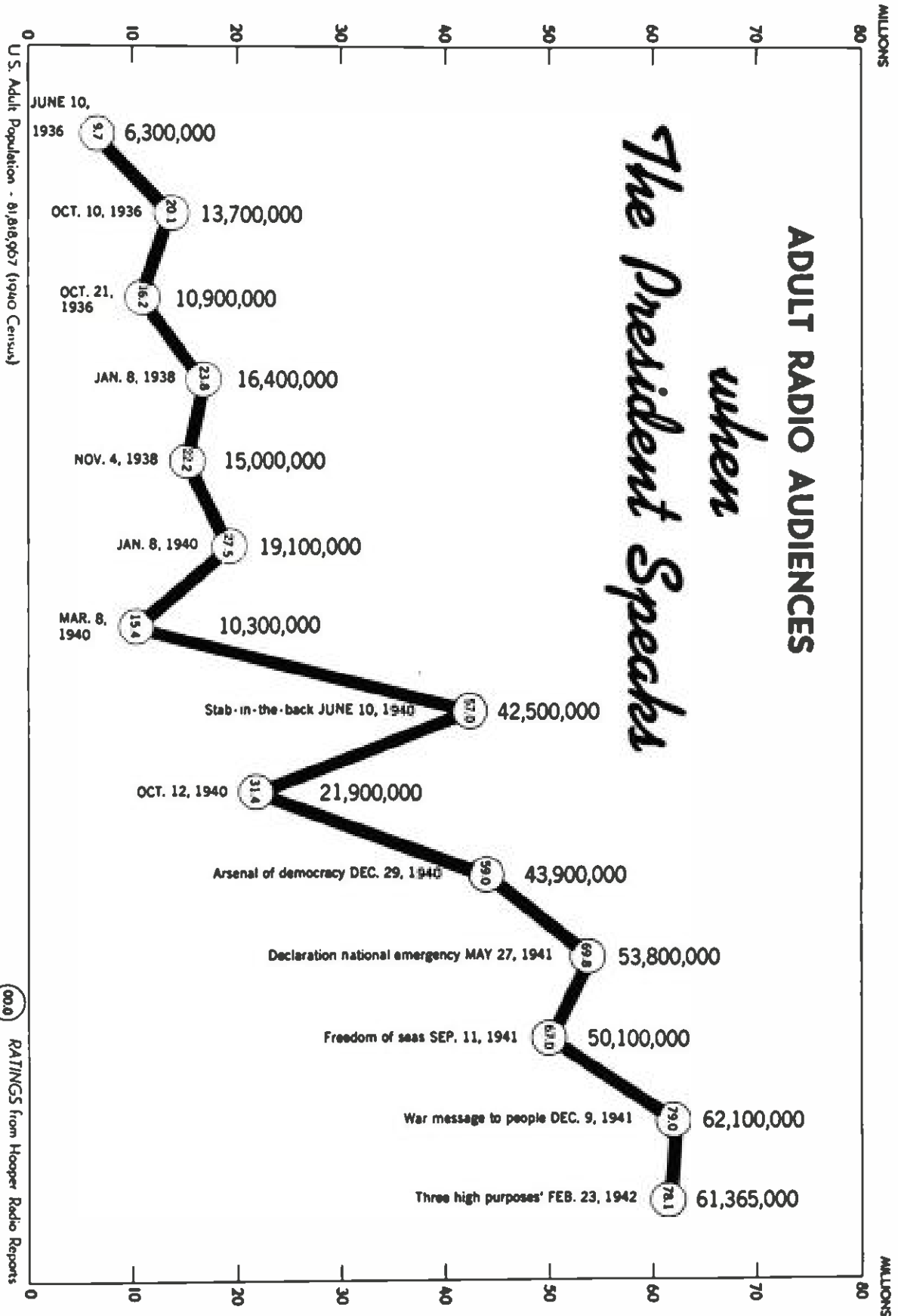
The Cartoon-like portrait accompanying Colley Small's article in the
Saturday Evening Post — 1947.



The party for Don Parsons.



Demonstrating the Marble Game.



The President Speaks.

to familiarize them with your standard radio audience measurement interviewing procedure.

In this connection, you may show this letter to whom it may concern. It is our hope that your use of it may serve to clarify your function and identify you with the War Effort, thereby avoiding preventable interruptions in your service to us.

Sincerely,

William B. Lewis

Chief, Radio Bureau

After the war the many letters from government officials were printed and bound in a folder titled SERVICE RENDERED, with this message: "Here are your government's citations for faithful service rendered by you to your country during World War II." The correspondence began with a letter from Major General Robert C. Richardson, under date of May 20, 1941, accepting Hoop's offer of service, and ended with the following from the Secretary of War:

October 1, 1945

Dear Mr. Hooper:

General Surles has told me of the part played by your organization in supplying the War Department with management information on Army-produced radio programs throughout the war. This has been of such undoubted value, not only to the Bureau of Public Relations, but to other interested agencies of the War Department, that I hope you will permit me to express my appreciation of your practical generosity.

The research studies you have carried out over a long period on the Army Hour have been of particular benefit and played an important part in the success of this official War Department program. Your service has been of great assistance to all Army personnel engaged in radio productions. I want you to know that I am grateful for it.

Sincerely yours,

Robert P. Patterson,

Secretary of War

Another important public service rendered by Hooper was to supply Advertising Council for seven years with ratings on their many public service programs, with his compliments. This public spirited, non-profit institution, in which advertisers, agencies and media worked together to promote causes in the public interest, were using radio time for several of their campaigns, and the Hooperatings on these were invaluable in appraising their effectiveness.

CHAPTER VII

Top of the Heap

During 1945 the C. E. Hooper Company marched on while CAB fumbled. When round after round went to Hooper the odds shifted and the trade press seemed to be laying mental bets on private enterprise. In January, *Advertising Age* devoted one of its "You Ought to Know" profiles to CEH and Hoop let it be known that he was developing a measurement of "Total Program Audiences," which he later called "Projectable U. S. Hooperatings." By February his subscribers totaled 453. In May it was a Hooperating that told the country President Truman's V-E Day address had reached an all-time high for daytime broadcasts. In September two new departments were added, including a "Brand Rating" service. Following a feel-out of late evening interviewing, he said he would extend evening coverage to 11 P. M.

By early 1946, the magazines were beginning to take notice of the author of Hooperatings. *Coronet* devoted a page to "Yardstick for Radio" which took the typical magazine publisher's view of the medium by suggesting that Hooper had gone into business to show radio advertisers that their audiences were smaller than they thought. But Hooper's accomplishments as a measurer did not suffer by the remarks of author Horace Coon.

The metropolitan dailies, too, were finding Hooper newsworthy. In the *New York Times* Jack Gould said that, though Hooper labored in "personal obscurity," his work was the "best known and most widely quoted in broadcasting." He mentioned that Hoop had added a sixth question to his interviewing: "What is the occupation of the head of your household, please?"

Gould devoted a later column to "The Curse of Ratings." Said he:

Over the years the ratings have come to fulfill the sinister function of being the final and absolute critical standard for radio programming, and it is at this point that they may be considered detrimental to the medium . . . Instead of programs making the ratings, the ratings are determining the nature of programs . . . It is as though a Rembrandt, a Beethoven symphony, a burlesque comic, a Tin Pan Alley ballad, a Keats sonnet and a pulp magazine serial all were to be weighed on the same scales. That would seem to be too much of a package deal even for radio.

In Hoop's published letter of reply he countered:

Please remember that the ratings aren't intended to and don't evaluate programs. They are not criticisms. They are measurements. Because the symphony gets a 4.0 and Fibber McGee and Molly gets a 28.0 we don't say that Fibber is seven times as good. We merely report that seven times as many listened to it.

A feature article in the *New York Sunday Times Magazine* by Henry Morgan asked: "What's Wrong with Radio?" and answered, "The Audience." He did not agree with Gould that the ratings make the programs, but placed the onus on public taste and said some nice things about Hoop, including, "Mathematically Hooper is bound to be right in the long run."

In *Printers' Ink* Hooper explained that his figures differed from those of CAB because of: *what* questions were asked; *where* they were asked; *how* they were tabulated. For example, his first question was: "Were you listening to the radio just now?" CAB inquired: "Will you please tell me what you were listening to on your radio when the telephone rang?" Hooper cited the authority of psychologists to show that the CAB question was a "leading" question. Under item two, "where?" Hoop gave his reasons for measuring in cities of equal listening opportunity. In explanation of the importance of how data were tabulated, Hoop cited an extreme but specific instance of fourteen telephone calls. Two did not answer, eleven were busy, and only one answered. CAB tabulations would ignore the eleven "busy's" and would show an available audience of three with two not at home — 66.7%. Hoop insisted that the eleven

“busy’s” were also available even though temporarily using the phone. Accordingly his “not at home” figure was 14.3% contrasted with CAB’s 66.7%. How could the two systems possibly agree with such different bases?

“CAB BOWS TO RATING TRENDS” was a blast published in *The Billboard* in February, continuing: “CAB underlined its ‘me-too’ approach . . . by releasing this week, for the first time in its history, a list of the top ranking programs to the trade and other press. Whereas the C. E. Hooper organization has for years been giving out the evening ‘First Fifteen’; CAB came forth with its ‘Twenty Most Popular Nighttime Programs’ . . . This switch over from secrecy to seeking a favorable press, like its issuance recently of a four-network sheet (its imitation of Hoop’s Pocket Piece), is simply emphasizing, the trade points out, the wasteful duplication of the two rating services.” Two additional criticisms included: “Due to their ‘moving average’ method of rating, a Crossley rating is never the rating of one actual show, but a combo of what’s current and what went before.” And, “Although CAB uses 81 cities, the cities are never the same from report to report.” The piece ended by asserting that the webs “want CAB out of program rating business as soon as possible.”

Evidently some of CAB’s most influential spokesmen also wanted CAB “included out” of ratings. *Variety* of February 13 carried the head: “CAB Smacked by Execs, Told to Shift into Research Development, Leave Ratings to Privately Operated Outfits,” and continued, “The battle for the ratings has at last been thrown wide open. The CAB vs. Hooper ‘survival of the fittest’ has been taken out of the realm of a whispering campaign and veiled suggestions . . . Last week at a lunch in New York of the Radio Executives Club, Marion Harper, Jr., vepee in charge of research for the McCann-Erickson agency, voiced a series of recommendations . . . Principally it was recommended that CAB should withdraw from coincidental rating service . . . should police these businesses technique-wise for the industry.”

By this time, CAB had appointed a committee of three to make recommendations on what to do with ratings. On March 12 *The Billboard* predicted that the committee would follow Mr. Harper's suggestion to quit ratings. Meanwhile, CAB had published a list of eighty-four points of superiority and Hoop, making only eight points, seemed to have the better of the argument. The Nielsen Audimeter was also referred to. Nielsen, freed of wartime restrictions, was opening up the throttle and expected to have 2,500 machines installed by 1947.

In March, Hoop addressed the Rochester Ad Club and had the pleasure of introducing his father to his audience. At that time, Rev. Alfred E. Hooper, in apparent good health at 82, was retired pastor of the Lyell Avenue Baptist Church in that city. In reporting the talk, the Ad club mentioned that the Hooper Company's full-time staff now numbered 300, of which 200 were in the New York office, and that 1,500 part-time workers were also employed. "When a program's Hooper slides too far, the crash of dropped options can be heard from coast to coast."

In October, the weight of Hooperatings in influencing program contracts was brought out when it was learned that they had been cited in Philco's contract for the new Bing Crosby show. The sponsor preferred live shows; Bing wanted to do his stuff on "platters." The compromise agreed to was that while the Hooperating remained at 12 or above, Crosby would have his way, but if it fell below that figure, the show would go live. When Bing got an initial 24, the platter boys were in high glee. But in the next three weeks, the rating dropped to 18.3, to 15.1, and then to 12.2. At this point, bigger and better guest stars were drafted and the rating rebounded to 15.6. Adele Hoskins wrote in the *New York Daily News*, "Many stars have contract arrangements to be paid so much per Hooper point."

On March 16 *The Billboard* published a significant interview with Hoop. He could see that Nielsen was building up stronger competition than CAB had ever been and he felt that the time had come to go beyond comparative ratings. Said he,

“There is today no measurement of the *total number* of people who listen to an advertiser’s program.” Nearly half of the population was not then sampled either by CAB or Hooper and he realized that if he did not provide what so many had said they wanted, someone else would.

His answer was to be a “panel” which would be changed often enough to avoid the stock objection that fixed samples were too static. His panel, he said, would consist of several thousand homes in which a diary would be provided for and attached to each set. Listeners would be paid to report all programs listened to. “Shopping around” and “let ’er ride” distortions would not apply to the diary technique as they would to recorders. Hoop’s first mentions of his projectable national ratings were guarded and in the nature of trial balloons. The cost would be high and he wanted to sound his market.

The same month Nielsen flayed the coincidental method, citing eleven reasons why his system was better. The number of his Audimeters then installed was too small to be an immediate threat, and his reports were a month old when received; but he was carrying on a significant experiment and had already booked a few of the larger firms as subscribers, including as his New York City client, Station WOR, which was reportedly paying him \$25,000 a year on top of the \$3,600 collected by Hooper.

On April 1, *Broadcasting* reported that the fate of CAB hung in the balance. “Murmurs of dissatisfaction have grown to roars of late, due largely to increased assessments.” The following week, when the committee made its report public, they tried to save face by reminding their readers what a fine idea CAB had been, how much the industry needed a co-operative service, the many things lacking in all existing services. But they did admit “*The present CAB rating service should not be continued because it does not meet the specifications of the ideal rating service.*” Commented the editor, “CAB membership had better decide quickly what to do since webs are not

going to dig down any longer — and the rest of the CAB bank-rolls won't make up any deficit.”

While members were considering the committee's recommendation, the CAB board of governors met with Hooper and Nielsen to consider proposals for carrying out subscriber agreements. Hooper was ready to go and offered his planned projectable ratings as an extra inducement. Nielsen admitted that he would not be ready to meet CAB requirements for nearly two years.

American Broadcasting Company resigned from CAB. CBS was withholding a formal announcement until CAB had taken a vote, but let it be known unofficially that it had had enough. MBS was thought to be of the same mind, but since Mr. Kobak was on the committee, he also delayed final action while CAB die-hards struggled to keep breath in the body. Ben Duffy of B. B. D. O. and Mr. Elder of Lever sought a majority vote to keep the bureau measuring. In a desperate attempt to scare members into action, a legal opinion was procured which stated that a CAB agreement with another measuring service to carry on the work would be “in restraint of trade.” The questions in the ballot finally sent out to members were loaded in favor of carrying on and resulted in a majority vote to continue.

By the middle of May, ninety votes were in and sixty-eight wanted to carry on, but that did not solve the problem. The networks who had financed 40% of the operation would not go on. And those who voted yes were unwilling to say it with dollars. NAB was brought more prominently into the picture in the hope that some stations would contribute funds. But none would. By the middle of May the plan was to suspend services until CAB could be refinanced. At the best, service could only be promised on an interim basis until November.

Realizing that his ability to offer CAB subscribers projectable ratings might be the determining factor in his choice as the CAB successor, Hoop invited them to a meeting in New York where he outlined his plans more concretely. He reminded

them that only he had had experience in projectable ratings, that he had already issued two reports on the subject. These had been made during wartime and were admittedly incomplete, but he had continued to experiment and was ready to give them projectables if the cost would be underwritten. Further to win their confidence by showing his was not a one-man show but that he was willing to seek expert advice, he appointed a Hooperatings Advisory Council, representative of the best thought in the industry.

June 17 was a big day for Hoop. On that date CAB arranged with him to take over its rating service as of July 31. Firms which subscribed to both services would cancel their CAB subscriptions and Hoop would inherit those of the 102 CAB subscribers who had not been his clients and who were willing to go along on his liberal terms. He agreed to remit to CAB the difference between his higher rates and the rates CAB members had been paying until May, 1947.

“Crossley Ratings Give up the Ghost to C. E. Hooper”—“Distinguished Mourners Bow as CAB Passes” — “By clinging to an idea determinedly and seeing it through in dark days and light, Hoop not only slew the octopus but swallowed it.” These were lines typical of the way in which the press summarized the victory.

The war had lasted for twelve years, and it had been a tough fight. For the moment Hoop seemed to have the field pretty much to himself. It was a tribute, both to Crossley and Hoop, that they remained good friends. Hoop had used every legitimate weapon at his command, and Mr. Crossley had not taken the fight lying down, but neither man had resorted to personal disparagement. It was a war of methods and there was no hitting below the belt.

The outcome was a great triumph for Hoop and all of his loyal associates. Champagne was served in the office and press photographers appeared with flash bulbs to picture the “win-nah.” The whole staff adjourned to Pietro’s and more corks popped as the steaks sizzled.

While Mr. Archibald Crossley, as the man whose name had been attached to CAB ratings, had to bear some of the onus of defeat, he had borne more than his share of frustration and, even before the final curtain, had been in Hoop's corner. They had known each other since the earliest days of Hoop's entrance into radio, liked each other from the start, and made it a point not to let professional rivalry interfere with a warm man-to-man regard. They met often at gatherings of the industry, and if "Arch" had trouble getting a room at a hotel, he knew that Hoop's room was at his disposal. Hoop would call him up when he was about to launch a thunderbolt, warn Mr. Crossley and try to temper the blow.

Mr. Crossley's work for CAB had been no bed of roses. He started Crossley, Inc., in 1918 and got into radio research in 1927. At that time the Frank Seaman Agency wanted him to check a program for Davis Baking Powder and see how it was being received. Among other things, Crossley discovered that some of the Davis time was being swiped for local commercial announcements, and a stop was put to this. Then another Seaman client, Eastman Kodak, wanted similar service and Crossley obliged.

Even in those early days, ANA was becoming actively interested in the new radio medium, and had just published "The Advertiser Looks at Radio. Albert E. Haase was the ANA Managing Director and he and several members felt the need of a check on the extravagant claims then being made for certain powerful stations. Mr. Crossley was encouraged to develop a checking and, if possible, a measuring service on a co-operative basis with this group. By late fall of 1929, he had figured that if thirty advertisers would underwrite the cost, he could give them a valuable continuing series of reports on their programs at a total cost of \$1,800 a month. It was he who originated the term "rating." And he was given the Harvard Business School's Bok Award for his early work in radio research.

By March 1, 1930, the thirty subscribers had signed up, and the service started. Interviews were made by telephone two

weeks each month, using a limited urban sample and reporting on all radio listening of the preceding twenty-four hours. By 1934, the 4 A's wanted to be included and two years later NAB joined CAB. During the first four years the service belonged to Crossley, and he was given a fairly free rein in conducting it. But, when the agencies came in, the property was turned over to the CAB corporation. After that committees, divergent ideas and politics led to a bureaucratic situation which thwarted Crossley at many turns and eventually led to CAB's undoing.

Hoop used to josh Crossley about "too many chiefs" and he frequently reminded his friend that when he wanted to make an improvement in his own service or call on some prospect he did not have to consult a soul, while the hired man of CAB was hamstrung. When, in the fall of 1939, Crossley, Hooper and Nielsen were invited by a committee of twenty-eight, representing the West Coast radio interests, to make a proposal to render measurement services in the Coast states, Crossley tried to get CAB to participate. His group wasn't interested, so Crossley went out there on his own. Four researchers made their presentations, Hoop getting out of bed, where he was recovering from pneumonia, to attend. Hoop received the unanimous vote of the committee in favor of his deal. And, needless to say, Crossley's opinion of Hoop's salesmanship rose to a new high.

By the spring of 1946, Crossley was discouraged and disgusted with the way in which CAB was being mismanaged. Not the least of his differences was the fact that he was expected to finance all of the expensive additions to service, which I have mentioned. Toward the end he was losing more than \$10,000 a month, and there was nothing he could do about it because selling the service was CAB's responsibility, and they just couldn't sell it.

When Crossley knew that CAB was doomed, he asked Hoop, "Do you want the remains?" Hoop said he certainly did. "I'll try to help you gather up the pieces," said his friend. And he did. They had lunch at the Players' Club and an extra cocktail or two; Hoop to celebrate his victory; Crossley to

celebrate the removal of an incubus. Around three o'clock, when they were finishing their lunch, Hoop looked at his watch, gave a start and said, "I'm overdue at the office to hear a presentation by one of Nielsen's representatives. Come along with me." They hopped in a cab and arrived when the presentation was about half over. The arrival of Hoop and Crossley in a mellow mood was in itself a bit puzzling to those who knew only of their rivalry and nothing about their friendship. In fact, their being seen together at the club had occasioned some raised eyebrows.

The young Nielsen salesman was an earnest man given to very positive but unsupported assertions. When Hoop heard the first one he asked, "Why?" The explanation was lame. A few minutes later the Nielsen man emitted another flat statement and Crossley, from the back of the room, asked, "But why?" And then Hooper and then Crossley until they had the poor fellow so rattled he didn't know what he was saying.

When others asked Mr. Crossley how he explained the decision that Hoop had gained over him in the CAB war he replied, "My name doesn't rhyme with anything." He was referring to the many words that had been tied to Hoop and Hooper, which had been so helpful in giving circulation to the Hooperating idea and included: Hooper Superdooper, Hooper Drooper, Hooper Pooper, Hooper Snooper, Hoopla, Hooper-up, Hooparade, Hooperative, Hooperprojectables, Hooperace, Hoopercents, Hooperism, Hooperatingitis, Hoopermania, Hooperism, Hooper Happy, Hooperanemia, Hooperchondriac, Hooperpressure, Hooperecorder and Hoops, my dear! Some of the implications were disparaging, some were complimentary, but all were publicity.

Mr. Crossley, only two years Hoop's senior, was too firmly entrenched in the research world to have been seriously embarrassed by the CAB debacle. Two years ago his firm joined with another of the best, Stewart, Dougall & Associates, and they are now operating at capacity under the title of Crossley S-D Surveys, Inc. On a very busy day Mr. Crossley generously

gave me more than an hour of his time to recall the days when his friendship for Hoop so far outweighed their ostensible rivalry. I asked him if he thought the book, *Radio Audience Measurement*, had been a factor in Hoop's success. "Yes, I think it was," said he. "Of course I disagreed with much that it contained. I never used the word 'recall.' That was Hoop's invention. But he and Matt Chappell had some good ideas. Their data on memory made a deep impression on me. In fact, I am still developing some of the thoughts on the subject originally planted by their charts and remarks. To show you what a friendly feeling our whole family had for the Hoopers I'll tell you of an amusing incident: Not so long ago, my daughter, who like Mrs. Hooper and Stuart attended Smith College, saw a car with a Connecticut license in a Northampton street. On the license plate were the four letters H O O P. She ran after the car to see if it could be the Hooper car and had such a nice chat with Judy."

Hoop seemed to be at the top of the heap after CAB bowed out. But he was not resting on his laurels. He knew that he had inherited the CAB following not alone because he had done a better job in the past, but because they relied on him to do a still better one in the future. With increased income he could afford to increase his staff, set up his diary panel and prepare to give his subscribers national ratings in numbers. Nielsen was not ready for this step, but that did not prevent him from insisting that the coincidental and diaries would not work and only the Audimeter was the real McCoy. To keep the trade informed on what he was doing, Hoop then wrote a number of technical articles for the trade press in which he explained how U. S. Hooperatings would compute the magic formula by which two different yardsticks could be combined to do the trick.

On July 15, half a month ahead of schedule, CAB turned over to Hoop the first thirty-two of their subscribers who had accepted the Hooper offer.

In *The Billboard* of July 27, Ted Enns of the Cowles radio organization, who described himself as "not a Hooper salesman but a satisfied customer," explained, with illustrations, how Hoop and he had used family diaries successfully in and around Des Moines. A few days earlier Hoop had shown how he was using diaries in New York to get a cross-section sample.

Though Hoop was now the big frog in the puddle, he wasn't the only frog, and there were several pollywogs swimming around the edges. One Johnny-come-lately called himself *The Pulse* and was betting on house-to-house interviewing plus the printed roster. Hugh Beville of NBC, though among the first to notice Hooper, was loyal to the association of broadcasters and hoped that BMB, set up by NAB to measure station coverage, would become the ultimate authority for ratings. He broke into print to say that here was a ready-made agency, officially backed by the industry, which had certain advantages over any privately owned service. Edgar H. Felix, director of *Radio Audience Reports*, took sharp issue with him and answered the plea with a piece in *Broadcasting*, which drew a deadly parallel between CAB and BMB and opined that BMB was the last place to go for rating service.

After two years of effort and the expenditure of \$1¼ million, BMB issued its first report of station coverage. 706 out of some 1,000 station members had subscribed. The job was done by mailed ballots to 1,000,000 people representing all cultural and economic levels. This was the most monumental sample that had ever been employed in the radio industry and was an equally enormous disappointment. The fundamental flaw in the method used was the same one Crossley had encountered — a too great reliance on recall — carried to a greater extreme. Respondents were asked three questions: 1. What stations do you listen to at any time? 2. At night? 3. In the daytime? Possibly BMB was so fearful that listeners would understate their listening that they were encouraged to overstate it. The results were so inflated that time buyers discounted them.

It was in 1946 that Frederic Wakeman's best seller, *The Hucksters*, was published. It would have been difficult to write any novel about advertising at that time which did not mention Hooperatings. Sure enough, there they were on three pages:

The talk shifted to business in general and Vic said he'd be glad to see the day when you could measure advertising results by sales, as well as by Hooperatings . . .

* * *

"Her Hooper has fallen too," said Vic (speaking of "that horrible Steele dame.")

* * *

Jean said she'd heard about Hooperatings ever since she'd auditioned for a kid trio on Station WRIX in Brooklyn, but she'd never actually understood what it meant. So Vic explained.

"Nothing matters in commercial radio but a Hooper or a Crossley rating, whichever one you happen to read. All success is measured by them; most jobs are lost on account of them. The ratings are figured like this. Research people in all the big cities call telephone numbers, picked at random out of the local phone book. When somebody answers they say 'Is your radio tuned in?' If the answer is yes, they ask what station and what program and what product is advertised."

Hoop had a short piece in the *Hollywood Reporter* year-book. It is so characteristic of the way he talked (and wrote, when he felt like it) that it is quoted in full:

Nervy they called me when I announced a meeting with the program producers only. No nets, no reps, no agys, no sponsors, doors locked, gloves off, chips down, yes, hair down! I let loose with:

"I've spent enough time in the Bamboo Room to know what you fellows think puts ratings up and down. And it ain't what I overhear. Nobody ever got to Hooper. And I'm not inviting anybody to try. Before I unlock that door, you guys are going to know what really goes on in making a rating."

You can see I was on the war-path because I'd been listening to sponsors, account executives and network sales managers tell me what a troublesome, temperamental, maybe psychopathic element producers represented. "You can't tell these guys out in Hollywood anything! They don't understand research. They are not figure minded. They don't think, they just feel."

I made them listen to a half-hour of interviewing. During four-fifths of it, the most dramatic thing in process was

the sound of a phone dial being spun or a phone bell ringing. But they waited patiently between calls. When we did contact a home, they hung on every word of the interview. They noted the honest effort of the public to give accurate information. They observed how conscientious the respondent was in calling the person who was really listening to the phone to be interviewed by us.

Then I gave those necktieless-slack-clad wonders of the western world a bunch of marbles to play with. The marbles demonstrate the statistics of sampling. Before they got through totaling black marbles (people not at home) white marbles (people at home but not listening), red, blue, etc. (representing different networks being listened to) they knew as much about the basic statistics of our operation as research directors.

Well, it wasn't long before I relaxed. Here before me was the most understanding, comprehending, soundly critical audience I had ever faced. The effect of weather in changing the audience size from one broadcast to the next was no news to them. They had hit blizzards and cloudbursts on one night stands. They didn't need any explanation of why one night an audience was bigger, hotter or colder than another. "That's show business," said these otherwise inarticulate experts in mob psychology.

The possible effect of new competition on a program's audience was old stuff to them. They anticipate changes in rating when competition changes — even plan against it in advance, changing their own program's format to soften the blow. And the effect of a new program preceding or following didn't need a chalk talk either. "Mood" programming? It's no mystery in Hollywood what holds CBS together on Monday night and NBC on Tuesday.

The thing that really got me was the mass of actual statistical information they carried around in their heads. Of course, I am traditionally without a Hooperating Pocket Piece on me and I can't quote any rating from memory except President Roosevelt's 79.0 and, more recently, the Louis-Conn 67.2. So it did something to me to listen to ratings we had published being peeled off, by the yard, compared year-to-year on specific shows, referred to in terms of annual highs and lows. Those characters not figure minded? They are walking comptometers.

When I too got my shirt collar unbuttoned, we were plotting how to keep the execs from going off half-cocked every time a rating shifted a half-point up or down or when it didn't change at all, but someone thought it shoulda.

There weren't many actors in the gathering. The producers were invited and the producers came. But it was producers — not statisticians and not research directors. And we were talking about what swells and shrinks audiences. If you ask an actor for the explanation, he will give you his autobiography. If you ask a producer, you'll probably get closer to the truth than from any other source — on all but his own shows. He will tell you what keeps top shows top, what causes flops to flop and what shows to watch. His own brainchild of next week may lay a proverbial . . . I'm not talking about producers' ability to produce. I'm talking about them as analysts. I'm impressed. Maybe you, if you are one to tag them crackpots, will learn if you too listen.

CHAPTER VIII

"Biggest Man" or "Most Powerful Voice?"

While Hoop was engaged in a campaign for expansion or a contest for survival, all of his energies and most of his time were concentrated on the task. His mobility amazed everyone. He would fly from city to city at the lift of a telephone receiver, never letting a few thousand miles stand between him and service or selling action. Days would go by without his family catching sight of him and weeks would pass while his able lieutenants ran the show in the New York office.

Once when Hoop touched home base for the Fourth of July after an extended trip to the West Coast, he found this plaintive note on his desk, dictated into the machine by his eleven-year-old daughter, Stuart: "When you come home tomorrow I hope you will stay home for a long time because I have sort of forgotten what you look like."

When the pressure let up he would take a breather, preferably with his family, but if Judy and Stuart couldn't get away, with the birds and fishes. "For years we spent our savings for wonderful vacations together," Judy tells me. Following the CAB victory the three took off on their most memorable jaunt, a visit to Zion, Bryce and Grand Canyons, and from there to the Tetons and Jackson Lake.

Before Hoop joined the others he went to the encampment of the San Francisco Bohemian Club in the Sequoia Forest. Through his friendship with Larry Lane, publisher of *Sunset Magazine*, he had become a member of the Sempervirens group, and he joined Mr. Lane for a fortnight of roughing it de luxe. For two solid weeks Hoop did nothing that required exertion. Cooking was not so counted. Being such an excellent chef, and thoroughly enjoying the art under these idyllic conditions, he gladly undertook such culinary duties as would add variety to the meals provided by the club.

Toward the end of his stay, *High Jinks*, the big show of the season was coming up in the beautiful outdoor theatre where the Bohemians, noted for their literary and dramatic talents, put on their best performance. Ex-President Hoover was on hand for the main event and spoke to the gathering. After two weeks of battery recharging, Hoop was in the right mood to enjoy the high spot of his stay to the utmost and to look forward to four more weeks of a different kind of play with his wife and daughter and, while she remained, with vivacious "Ferdinand" Bull.

The fishing at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, was disappointing, and Hoop was easily persuaded to make a side trip to Victor, Idaho, where he was rewarded with excellent sport. He returned triumphant, but looking more like a tramp than a New York business executive. For greater freedom in casting, he had ripped the sleeves off his jacket. To drain the water quickly out of his sneakers, he had cut holes in them. And so his pants could be tucked into his boots, he had amputated each trouser leg above the ankle. Fish blood and line goo was smeared across the front of his khaki shirt and he hadn't shaved for days.

Leaning against the side of the Silver Dollar Saloon in spic and span Jackson Hole, he was anticipating the luxury of a hot bath and clean linen, when, out of the corner of his eye, he noticed the approach of a familiar figure, accompanied by a smartly dressed lady and two young men wearing immaculate white western hats cocked at precisely the correct angle. These would be the eminent Public Opinion Pollster, Dr. George Gallup and family, returning from having judged a rodeo beauty contest. Hoop could see that, despite his disguise, the sharp eye of Dr. Gallup had recognized him. Hoop was introduced with "This is the great Hooper, of whom I have told you so much." Mrs. Gallup acknowledged the introduction by saying, "George, don't be funny!" Hoop enjoyed the situation hugely and often told the story.

Next to hunting and fishing, Hoop now fancied photography, and the color shots taken on this tour bear witness to the fact that he had acquired much skill in his new art. The whole vacation was a great success and Hoop returned to his office with the renewed bounce he would need to meet the problems then brewing.

In February Mr. Nielsen must have been in Florida, for the *Jacksonville American* reported Nielsen progress under the head: "Samplers of Radio Audience Opinion Wage Private War," going on to say that 1,300 Audimeters were now installed. Hoop was mentioned as making 1,380 phone calls per half-hour, having 600 subscribers who paid him \$125 to \$1,300 a month. Beville of NBC was quoted as favoring Nielsen for city-by-city and minute-by-minute listening data but added, "You can't beat Hooper for speed and service." Elmo Wilson of CBS said, "We like Hooper for speed and trends and audience composition. We like Nielsen because he touches all income brackets in little towns and cities."

At the Radio Executives' Club Hooper and Nielsen appeared on the same program, billed as the "Battle of the Ratings." On Hoop's side the debate was disappointingly peaceful. For once he ignored his rival and gave a constructive talk on the advantages radio possessed over the publishing industry, with its Audit Bureau of Circulations, in being able to measure qualitatively as well as quantitatively. His text was, "Radio's Inferiority Complex and How to Cure It." *Radio Daily* said he "aimed a few left hooks at ABC and BMB." Nielsen spoke on "Program Ratings — Boon or Menace," and, following Hoop, and evidently having expected a blast from his rival, gave a highly competitive paper in which he took the usual pot shots at the coincidental method. "Nielsen displayed the scholarly approach of Gene Tunney with words, charts, words and more charts," wrote *Radio Daily*.

Nielsen could not be forgotten, but at the moment, Hoop had his eye on a different target. Broadcast Measurement Bureau, set up by the National Association of Broadcasters to

measure station coverage, had done such an unconvincing job in its first million-dollar survey, that many of the stations had dropped out and several hundred of these had switched to Hoop. Another national survey was scheduled for 1948 and BMB, with ill success, was campaigning for subscribers. If the BMB effort and the Hooper surveys could be combined in some way, everyone would be better off. Hoop had the organization, soon to be enlarged to compile U. S. Hooperatings, and he realized that the thousand or so stations from which BMB could draw was a much bigger reservoir of funds than he could command.

As a step toward improving his own station service and a move in the direction of a deal with BMB, Hoop announced in March that his Station Listening Index had emerged from the experimental laboratory and would be expanded, now that certain limitations had been removed — chiefly the measuring of remote communities at non-prohibitive costs. Only 120 stations had subscribed to the 1948 BMB survey and it had been necessary to postpone it a year. Hoop's first proposal was that BMB should employ the Hooper Company to do the field work. In releases to the press he stated flatly that he could save them from \$325,000 to \$375,000 a year.

One of the papers suggested that, now that Hoop had swallowed CAB, he was out to take over BMB also. A hot war was predicted and the press deplored the probability that again there would be duplication of expense; this time in station ratings. Hoop replied that he looked upon BMB, not as a competitor, but as a prospect, and agreed that there should be one and only one accepted authority for station coverage measurement. Nevertheless he could not resist continuing to underscore the faulty research techniques employed by BMB in the past and the lack of confidence in their methods on the part of buyers and station owners.

In April, in a talk to the American Marketing Association, Mr. Crossley showed what a generous person he is. He said the industry was suffering from "ratingitis" and that, so

far as talent and general publicity were concerned, the principal controversy seemed to be whether "you are a Hooper-droop or a super-duper Hooper . . . As Hooper well knows, I am not, and never have been among those who wanted to see him out of business. He has done a magnificent job and deserves full credit and great success."

Bob Freeman in *Advertising and Selling* called attention to a growing practice of what he called the "pump-priming of Hooperatings." Since rating weeks were known, the brightest guest stars were saved to shine on nights when Hooper's gals were on the phone, thereby tending to boost Hooperatings when ears were being counted. Special newspaper advertising had also been concentrated during these weeks to the same end. Hoop countered by reporting many tests which had been made to measure the differences, if any, and had found them negligible.

In May Hoop had added three cities to his network ratings cities, now thirty-six, and announced another hoist in rates. About his planned "Projectables" he was cagey in giving details, knowing that, however sound they were, there would be plenty of sniping from sidewalk superintendents. He did say, however, that additions to service were predicated on subscribers' willingness to pay; and he estimated that the new ratings would add some \$125,000 a year to his overhead.

The networks, irked by Hoop's 100% increase in their subscription costs, were playing hard to get, especially as Nielsen was promising 90% national coverage at an early date. In a frank letter to his subscribers, Hoop explained that his costs had gone up at the following rates: field interviews, 35%; clerical, 60%; office rent, 650%; equipment, 600%. He had lost \$2,000 in April. Of the \$4,000,000 of gross business he had done since 1938, only \$191,999 represented profit and, of this, \$101,000 had gone for taxes and \$63,000 for furniture and equipment. The inherited CAB subscriptions had added only 4% to his revenue.

By June it became evident that BMB was approaching desperation. Their original \$1,400,000 fund was about exhausted and subscriptions for future surveys were dragging. Something radical had to be done. Hoop renewed his offer to do the field work. BMB listened, but Dr. Kenneth Baker, NAB research director, said that Hoop's proposed technique "correlated too highly with the coincidental method." Hoop seemed to accept the verdict with good grace, but had up his sleeve a bombshell to be sprung at their June meeting.

Since BMB refused to let Hoop do their field work, *Hoop offered to sell them his business!* In this way all danger of duplication would be removed. The price for C. E. Hooper, Inc., was to be \$1,000,000, payable \$25,000 a quarter for ten years. Hoop was then grossing something over \$800,000, of which \$433,500 was with advertisers and agencies. He proposed that a new company be formed which he would operate with his present staff, but BMB would own and direct it. The Hooper organization was to do the work at cost plus 10%. Hoop had several times as many station subscribers as BMB and these would accrue to the new corporation. Hooper's figures showed that, with the savings that could be made, his business could be bought out of the profits of the combined operation. There was, however, one condition imposed by Hooper that raised immediate doubts: the purchase was to be guaranteed by NAB, ANA and 4 A's. Offsetting this proviso, Hoop showed that his proposal would put BMB into the audience measuring business "without financial investment, without immediate increase in organization, without change in structure, without increase in cost of ratings to subscribers, without duplication in audience measurement."

Hoop had three objectives in mind: (1) He wanted to impress the industry with the fact that he was not profiteering and that he was willing to subordinate himself to the best interests of radio. (2) The deal would bring him a satisfactory income plus peace and greater stability. (3) He foresaw the growing threat of Nielsen domination and sought to entrench

his position by an alliance with the three powerful associations. He was aware that the merger would raise the same major objection there had been to CAB — too many cooks. It may be that this consolidation would have been one of the best things that ever happened to broadcasting. BMB did not think so. Hoop got an immediate and completely negative response from Mr. Feltis, president of BMB.

“At its meeting on June 20, 1947, the Board of Directors of the Broadcast Measurement Bureau decided not to undertake the measurement of program audiences. In view of this decision we are not in a position to consider your proposal that BMB purchase C. E. Hooper, Inc.”

Hoop's 650% increase in office rent led him to explore the New York suburbs as an alternative to high Manhattan rentals. He found just what he needed in a large building with ample grounds and out buildings on the east side of Norwalk, Connecticut. It had been used by Fairfield County as a temporary home for children. It was not zoned for business, but the price was right, and he met with the authorities to explain that he wanted the property for offices, tabulating and processing only. He had previously paved the way by addressing the Kiwanis Club and had told them how he worked. He handled community relations with his usual tact and persuasion and his broker, Charles A. De Saussure, closed the deal at what Hoop reported as a satisfactory price.

Soon there were 140 employees in the Norwalk office and the payroll reached \$350,000 a year. When the building had been renovated he held open house for the Dry Hill residents from five to seven, and they were shown that their district had not been harmed by the presence of C. E. Hooper, Inc.

BMB was not prospering. In spite of a pep talk by G. Richard Shafto, Station WIS, Columbia, South Carolina, a loyal member of NAB board of directors, who presented a 15-point plan for continued operation, the bureau seemed to be dying on the vine. Hoop felt encouraged to keep after Mr. Feltis in an attempt at least to get the field work for the next

survey. He told the press he was preparing a twenty-seven page letter and a thirty-six page booklet in which a new and better offer would be made.

BMB held a special meeting of their Board Research Committee to consider the new proposal. They voted it down unanimously. In a nine-page letter Mr. Feltis explained their reasons and gratuitously included the most critical opinions of Hoop's methods that had been published since the CAB controversy. Unfortunately the power of decision lay with those whom he had most criticized, and they took this opportunity to vent their displeasure.

Their ire was understandable. While they were trying to re-sell the stations, disillusioned by the costly and faulty 1946 survey, and getting nowhere, Hoop was out signing up stations right and left for his independent service. BMB had a large and highly paid staff, two of whom, as Hoop had publicly mentioned, were drawing more pay than himself. To disband their organization and turn the work over to Hoop would have been an admission of past mismanagement. To save face they had to justify their plans at the expense of their critic and would-be successor.

By mid November all four networks had signed up for U. S. Hooperatings, including MBS which had dropped out in June. The price, however, had to be reduced from an advance of 100% to one of 60%.

1947 was the big publicity year for Hoop. Many thought that he had retained a press agent, but that was a job he would not delegate to anyone. It started with *The New Republic*. They called the four-page piece "Hooperism Clears the Air." Thomas Whiteside asked, "Who is Hooper and how does he rate? Meet the men — and the machines behind radio's sponsors." Then came a double-truck feature in the *New York Sunday News*: "Who Listens and Why; Radio's Eternal Question." Hoop's portrait was prominently displayed with the caption: "Mastermind — now a by word in radio and everybody talks about his Hooper except the guy who hasn't one." The piece

de resistance followed in the November 22 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*. That was when Collie Small called Hoop "The Biggest Man in Radio." Said he, "A mysterious little fellow (Hoop was five feet nine) named Hooper has a lot to say about what you hear on the air . . . He makes 10,000,000 telephone calls a year and radio's top councils plot their course by his charts."

Mr. Small asked the question: "Does Hooper work for radio or does radio work for Hooper?" He quoted *The Billboard* as computing that Danny Kaye with a low rating was costing his sponsor \$1,434 per Hooper point, while Fred Allen, with a much higher rating, was a bargain at \$517. The recent dropping of Kaye and also of Frank Sinatra was attributed to their drooping Hoopers. He thought his readers would be interested to know that there had once been an 0.0 rating on a Pacific Coast program.

Many people could not understand why they had never been called by a Hooper interviewer. In the areas measured he called each residence in the five-cent zone approximately once a year. A short time before, while lecturing in Cleveland, Hooper had been challenged by a woman who asked, "Why haven't I ever been called?" Hoop replied, "We are interviewing in this city at the present time, but because of the manner in which we distribute our calls, the chance of your phone ringing at this moment is about the same as the chance of your being struck by lightning." He gave up when she rejoined, "But I have been struck by lightning!"

Mention was also made in the *Post* of the appearance of Miss Margaret Truman on the Detroit Symphony Hour, when the Hooperating, normally around 2 or 3, had risen steadily through the first forty-five minutes to 21.1 and then, when the President's daughter went off the air, had dropped to 13.3 for the fourth quarter.

The *Pocket Piece*, Mr. Small explained, was a confidential document, and on the cover was a warning that any non-subscriber found with one in his possession was liable for the full

amount of the subscription. This had happened, but Hoop had never prosecuted, although he had sent his lawyer, Bill Cole, around to convince the offender that Hoop had a case.

Hoop, always frank about the financial figures of his business, had told Mr. Small that, in 1938, when he started on his own, he drew \$5,400 a year only, and that he was now paid \$24,000. Yes, there had been Christmas bonuses, the last one a single \$18.75 War Bond. He considered himself the classic victim of the excess profits tax in that the years 1936-1939 had been taken as the base. He was still trying to cover up what the C. E. in his name stood for, his favorite explanation being "Christian Endeavor." A news magazine called him up one time and said they knew but were calling for confirmation. He said, "If you know my name go ahead and print it." It came out as Charles.

Small described Hoop as "chubby, exceptionally articulate and equally voluble." He also mentioned Hoop's "disarming habit of closing his eyes when making a delicate point," his difficulty in sitting still and his insatiable appetite for travel.

In the interview Hoop had mentioned his first selling job in the horseradish line and admitted that some people, including A. C. Nielsen, insisted that horseradish was what he was still peddling. Hoop told how his salesmanship had gained him admission to the Harvard Business School. He lacked the price of tuition, and the dean was skeptical as to his ability to finance himself but agreed to give him thirty days in which to raise the entry fee. Hoop got his pots and pans out of storage, invaded one of the toughest house-to-house markets in America, Back Bay Boston, and in a few days returned with the cash. Thereafter, whenever he ran short, he would make another sally across the Charles River.

John Keating's "Mr. Hooper Counts Ears," published in *Esquire* two months later, added quotable remarks to the comprehensive *Post* piece: "Radio comics grow sad or glad, songsters and sponsors change their tunes, according to the pronouncements from this supersalesman . . . The most powerful

voice in radio is the emphatic rumble of a forty-nine-year-old New Englander, Claude Ernest Hooper, whose name is a household word and whose semi-monthly 'Hooperatings' are the most eagerly awaited edicts in the frenetic universe of broadcasting."

An additional point made by Mr. Keating was the odds against Hoop when he started. An unknown, selling a deflationary method to those who wanted optimum figures, based on a technique 1/3 more costly, against an established firm, backed by three powerful associations, it was little wonder that Hoop lost money for two years. In those days, when he called a client meeting, he was careful to inform them that it would be over by noon, so they could keep lunch appointments. He wanted to be sure that he wouldn't be stuck with the lunch check. The third year, he told Mr. Keating, there was a profit of \$18,000 and he could afford to play host occasionally.

The Ad Club of Des Moines featured Hoop on a panel and printed the "canned biography" which he was asked to furnish. Tongue in cheek, Hoop had written: "I fish in the spring and summer in the Catskills and the lakes of Utah and in the rivers of Oregon. I follow the grouse and duck season from north to south in the fall, ski in the hills of Vermont and the Laurentians; am an habitue of dude ranches in Arizona; ride a horse each morning before breakfast when I am home; and I'm likely to stop doing any of them to take a picture." Comment of the *Advergram* reporter: "Old Hoop's hotter'n a pistol, ain't he? Must eat Wheaties, too." It was all true about his many kinds of recreation. When he worked, he *worked*; and when he played, he really had fun.

One of Hoop's most congenial fishing companions was Eugene S. Wilson, Amherst Director of Admissions, and it was fitting that I should invite him to tell something of their expeditions together. This he did promptly and graciously in a long letter from which I quote:

He was a warm, friendly individual and his type of humor was, for the most part, my type of humor. This is why the two of us had so much fun when we took salmon trips together. Hoop was always most unselfish and would usually

insist on my fishing a pool first or he would insist on my taking a choice of pools.

I can remember one pool from which we had always taken one or two small salmon or grilse. He said he was going to take a nap and that I was to call him when I had finished fishing the pool and give him a report. I fished the pool hard both high and low with dry flies and with wet and I got not one strike. I woke Hoop up from his nap and reported. He arose and with a great display of confidence tackled the pool with a dry fly which he called "angel dust." He hadn't been fishing long when he hooked a good grilse and landed it. He then did his best to persuade me to take his rod and his angel dust and try this same pool — a step I, of course, refused to take. He then proceeded to get one more grilse out of this pool, all the time making comments about my inability to learn this intricate sport, how hopeless it was to try and teach someone who was inadequate for the task.

On our second trip Hoop brought along a reflector oven which he had purchased at Abercrombie & Fitch. He also brought along some cake mixes and he told the guides all about the reflector oven and how easy it was to make a cake. To demonstrate he opened a gingerbread package, mixed some water with the mix, but did not stir the material thoroughly. In fact the package called for something like five minutes of beating and mixing but Hoop gave the contents a quick ten-second beating, poured the mix into the reflector oven and set it up beside the coals. He then went fishing and announced that when he came back we'd have a beautiful ginger cake.

I went fishing, too, in another part of the pool and I returned before he did after about forty-five minutes and found that the cake had browned but had not risen one quarter of an inch. So, the guides and I picked some field flowers and stuck them in the cake and made it look like a Japanese garden. When Hoop came back and saw his cake, he shouted to me, "Hey, Wilse, did I buy Max Schling Peat Moss and Garden Mix or was that really gingerbread?"

Hoop would share anything with his fishing companions or guide without hesitation, without discussion. He never loafed and let the other fellow do the work. He always did his share. He did a fine job heading up the Alumni Committee on Vocational Counseling for veterans. We organized a program which enabled us to have men in various cities meet and talk with veterans who were thinking about jobs in various industries. These regional representatives would introduce

veterans to men in banking, finance, manufacturing et cetera. Hoop must have given Amherst a high priority because I never had to wait in his office to see him and he was never too busy to take on a job for Amherst.

A small item in *Variety* between Christmas and New Year's was significant: "Hooper Rates Television Shows." He started with New York's three TV stations. He announced that both coincidental and diary methods would be used. By diary a sample of TV homes would be polled every other month to show: comparative audience size, comparison with radio listening, viewers' reactions to individual programs, quality and reception. The phone would be used much as it was being employed for radio work, but, for the present, calls would be confined to a few hours in the evening. He had obtained a list of 20,000 TV set owners — not an easy thing to do in 1947.

As one part of setting up U. S. Hooperatings, Hoop let it be known that he would soon offer a poll of rural audiences. The Projectables were proving to be a difficult assignment, both in arriving at the right formula for combining telephone interviewing with other techniques and in getting the greatly added cost underwritten.

Meanwhile his station survey business marched steadily on. Looking through the eighteen-by-twenty-four inch scrap-books of '46-'47, filled at the rate of two a year, chiefly with network and station ads prominently and proudly proclaiming favorable Hooperatings, one is struck with the tremendous amount of free advertising Hoop was enjoying at the hands of his 700 subscribers. His sales volume was now within hailing distance of \$1,000,000 a year and there can be little doubt that the hundreds of display ads, when added to the magazine and newspaper publicity that had been so liberally accorded, had both increased his business and added to the weight of his authority.

CHAPTER IX

TV Ratings Coming Up

The beginning of 1948 heralded two developments which were of special importance to Hoop. The first was the burgeoning of television. He had already started to measure TV audiences and realized that new and complicated problems would have to be solved. It was not easy to locate the set owners. There were only some million sets in use on which to view the programs of a handful of TV stations, three of them in New York City. Set manufacturers were not giving out the names and addresses of retail buyers and Hoop had to exercise considerable ingenuity to compile his original list of 20,000 in New York City, where his early efforts were confined.

Mr. Langhoff, research director of Young & Rubican, headed a group which sought to build up a useful list of TV set owners for research purposes, and he suggested that it be placed in Hooper's custody to avoid the possibility of misuse. Hoop had one big advantage in compiling his list. With his millions of phone calls he could ask the respondent, "Were you listening to your radio or looking at television just now?" After a while he located enough viewers to give him a valid sample. However, all were telephone homes and he was criticized for over-weighting his TV ratings, inasmuch as there were more TV sets among phone subscribers than among non-subscribers.

You will recall how fast television grew in 1948 and 1949. New stations were springing up in all of the larger cities, and in no time radio began to feel the encroachment, became jealous of the new medium and highly critical of research which reflected the trend. At the outset, when Hoop was confining his ratings to TV homes and to viewing of the shows of three New York stations, he came up with some startlingly high figures.

Compared with radio, there were more viewers per set, more hours of viewing per day and, of course, far less competition among stations and programs. The result was that some TV ratings exceeded any radio ratings there had been since the early successes of Major Bowes. Thus Hoop was accused of favoring TV at the expense of radio, and it took him some time to disprove the claim. Meanwhile, his seeming favoritism cost him many radio subscribers.

With the growing popularity of TV and the widening availability of programs, this condition corrected itself. In a few months Hoop could abandon his fixed list of set owners and take his measurements as a by-product of his radio telephone interviews. This gave him a great advantage over his competitors and quickly established him as the leading source for TV ratings. He foresaw the tremendous growth of the medium and worked aggressively to outdistance Nielsen and The Pulse, who were his chief rivals.

To illustrate what Hoop was up against in reconciling seemingly inflated TV ratings with radio listening, Milton Berle soon had a 46.8 rating in New York which rose to 80.0, while in Los Angeles, his audience was but 9.0 of available viewers. Such discrepancies quickly forced Hoop to change his base. In the beginning Hoop had not tried to show detailed comparisons between TV and radio, but mainly the comparative popularity of such TV programs and stations as were available.

By November, 1948, Hoop was including his New York TV ratings in his Pocket Piece, and he announced that national TV ratings would soon be ready. By the following January nine cities were included, and he said he would have to charge more money for them. Nielsen came back with the promise of national radio ratings in April, 1949, with TV ratings to follow soon.

In June, Hoop offered monthly network ratings on some 100 TV programs in thirty-one cities, to be included in his regular radio reports at no extra charge. At this point he was



The house on Flax Hill Road — South Norwalk, Conn. sometimes called “Aching Acres” but privately known as “The Green Pastures”



**Hooper, Judy and Stuart
at Amherst College—1946**



Dancing with
Judy at
Stuart's debut.



Stuart and her
father at her debut
at the Autumn
Cotillion, September,
1949.



Congratulating Charles H. Peckham 3rd, his new son-in-law—
Wee Burn Club, Darien, Conn., November 14, 1953.



The Grandson who was "another man in the house" to Hooper—
Charles H. Peckham, IV — Honolulu—1955.

leagues ahead of competition and the press said no serious rivals seemed to be developing in the national TV rating field. He now had a list of more than 100,000 TV homes and was making 17,000 contacts a month to get TV data. Nielsen ridiculed the validity of his TV ratings, claiming that the ratio of TV sets in telephone homes was 2½ times that in non-phone homes, a statement quickly challenged by Hoop's figures.

At a meeting in the Hotel Biltmore in Los Angeles, late in June, Hoop explained his new TV ratings. Measurements were being taken in random homes as well as in TV homes. In TV homes he established: (1) Number of sets carrying a program; (2) Sets-in-use; (3) Network tele-ratings and share of TV audience. In random homes he established: (1) Number of radio homes in cities having TV; (2) Percent of homes using radio or TV or both; (3) Percent of homes using TV only; (4) Percent of homes using radio only; (5) TV Hooperatings; (6) The share of audience of TV and radio. Late in 1949, Hoop changed his Pocket Piece by substituting for his sets-in-use figure: (1) A Broadcast Audience Index, *i. e.*, radio and/or TV homes using sets; (2) TV Audience Index; (3) Radio Index.

One of the criticisms aimed at Hoop was that he had short-changed radio by including in his sample homes having both TV and radio. Apparently the increased competition with a TV set deflated radio listening figures. But when he gave figures based on no-TV radio homes and the figures went up, his critics said these ratings were inflated. There is no doubt that in trying to ride both radio and TV horses at the same time, under the extraordinary conditions prevailing, Hoop lost ground in radio while establishing himself as the leader in TV.

Hoop could see a lot more merit in using a mechanical recorder on a TV set than on a radio set and was again testing audience meters. His contention was that, while many people would turn on a radio and then go off and leave it, they were much less apt to walk off and leave their TV on. In October, 1948, he invited five developers of mechanical recorders to

submit proposals. He wanted to get away from the nuisance of tapes. Due to the progress of electronics this could now be accomplished. Electronic recorders could report tuning and to what stations by beep signals. A man named Sindlinger was testing what he called Radox in Philadelphia, but the cost was heavy and commercial practicability had not been established.

The second major development, beginning early in 1948, was the far more comprehensive and aggressive competition of Nielsen. He claimed to have spent \$5,000,000 to set himself up in the audience measurement field and was ready to invest another \$2,000,000 to prove that his Audimeter was the ultimate answer. By April he would have increased the number of machines to 2,000 and would have enlarged his coverage to 97% of the nation. Partly due to Nielsen's promises, U. S. Hooperatings had not gone over with the success hoped for. The networks were especially slow to get on his band wagon.

In addition, Nielsen was becoming much more articulate, both in blowing his own horn and in publicly picking flaws in all competitive methods. Hoop's preoccupation with TV ratings did not help him in radio, and the years, 1948 and 1949 found him somewhat on the defensive in the field where he had so recently reigned supreme. Nielsen's opening gun in his campaign of publicity, advertising and debate was, for the first time, to supply the trade press with his top ratings; and by this time his figures had gained enough acceptance to be published by several of the advertising and amusement papers.

Hoop fought back. By February, 1948, he had more details about his projectables to announce. The number of diary homes had been reduced to 4,800, but there would be up to three diaries in multiple-set homes. Ninety-four cities would be measured by both coincidental and diary samples. The first diaries had ben put in the mail January 2, and returns were coming at the rate of 65%.

The old clamor for one, and only one, rating service was being voiced again. Edgar Kobak took a large ad in *Variety* and *Radio Daily* to say:

First we had CAB, then a little later Hooper entered the picture. Two methods, two different sets of results, two sets of costs to achieve one purpose. Then confusion, misapplication of statistics and a tangle. Finally CAB bowed out. But look, Nielsen hove in sight. So again two methods, two sets of results which don't coincide, double cost . . . We should have only one rating service. I think Hooper and Nielsen should merge.

Hoop smiled and asked Kobak why he didn't merge Mutual. At the same time he realized that it would be a good thing for the broadcasting industry if it could come up with figures that would have universal acceptance.

In an interview, Mr. Beville of NBC raised some technical questions about the new Hooper projectables. While lauding Hoop's experimental work, he said he did not consider its soundness yet proven and NBC was withholding judgment while keeping an open mind. On the other hand, Mr. James of MBS, not seeming to agree fully with Mr. Kobak, said he welcomed the new service.

In *Broadcasting*, in February, Hoop explained the formula by which U. S. Hooperatings would be figured. This followed a letter to Kobak, in which he answered Kobak's suggestion about merging with Nielsen and did a little bragging about his progress. He said that he had 579 subscribers to the new service, of whom ninety-six were agencies, fifty-three advertisers, thirty-one talent firms and miscellaneous. He was beginning to measure FM audiences and was including the ratings in his City Reports. In compiling projectable U. S. Hooperatings, three different ratings would be combined: (1) Coincidental ratings in ninety-four cities; (2) Diary ratings in the same cities; (3) Cross-section ratings for the country as a whole. His formula would then be:

$$\frac{94\text{-city coincidental ratings}}{94\text{-city diary ratings}} = \frac{\text{U. S. Hooperatings}}{\text{cross-section diary ratings}}$$

The long-awaited first U. S. Hooperatings of radio were released late in April, 1948. According to the press they raised only a few eyebrows. The figures were based on January-Feb-

ruary listening and were released five at a time, the complete report to subscribers to follow in May. The first ten programs were, in the order named: *Fibber McGee and Molly*, *Truth or Consequences*, *Charlie McCarthy*, *Jack Benny*, *Bob Hope*, *Fred Allen*, *Radio Theatre*, *Amos 'n' Andy*, *Your Hit Parade*, *Band Wagon*. For the first time Hoop gave national listening in *numbers of homes*. The number one program was heard by 8,449,000, and the tenth by 6,840,000.

For each program the rating was broken down by cities, towns and rural. For all ten programs rural listening was the lowest. And for all except *Your Hit Parade* and *Band Wagon*, the cities rated higher than the towns. Hoop must have heaved a big sigh when he could at last make good on his long projected projectables. They had cost many a headache and enough extra money to require \$200,000 in added subscription revenue in order for him to come out even. His first printed report covered eighty-one pages and went to 106 subscribers who received ratings on their own programs only. The full set of figures covered 268 shows and could be had by paying extra. The networks demurred.

In July, *Radio Daily* reported that Hooper had failed to get enough subscriptions to put over U. S. Hooperatings as a separate service and that they would be combined with his regular thirty-six-city reports at an advanced cost to customers. Dr. Hans Zeisel, Associate Research Director of McCann-Erickson, published an article, with charts, in which he asked Hoop some searching questions about "total" vs. "average" audience figures, and questioned the soundness of the samples used. Hoop needed an additional \$100,000 a year from the networks to finance his projectables, but Nielsen was now supplying his projectables to them without extra charge and the networks were not curious enough to buy Hooper's.

For the first time Nielsen was going after agency subscribers — but hard — and signing some up. In December, the Radio Writers' Guild held a meeting in Chicago, and Hoop and Nielsen were invited to send speakers. The Guild was a

minor factor in the rating controversy, but competition was getting so hot that both Hooper and Nielsen appeared in person. Nielsen carried the battle to Hooper with increasing pugnacity.

Hoop started 1949 by announcing that NBC had signed for U. S. Hooperatings. MBS, on the other hand, eased out of the Hooper fold and also out of BMB. Hooper's latest projectables partly explained both moves. The four networks were credited with the following national audiences: NBC, 31,128,000; CBS, 27,681,000; ABC, 22,057,000; MBS, 19,162,000.

Hoop received another blow in February. Radio Stations WQXR, WOV and WNEW in New York, irked by Hooper's high TV ratings, canceled their subscriptions. These were all the independent stations he had in New York. The local network stations remained on his books in spite of the fact that ABC, CBS and MBS were not. Nevertheless, Hoop reported that he had 600 subscribers paying him from \$25 to \$1,600 each, per month, and was employing 2,200 part-time interviewers.

He explained how his interviewers were supervised. While they were working, they would be spot called by the supervisor. If their phone was busy, they would be presumed to be on the job. If they answered their phone, they were asked for the last two numbers they had called and these were then called by the supervisor for verification. Hoop was having no difficulty in recruiting interviewers — he had a backlog of hundreds of applicants.

The lack of general acceptance of U. S. Hooperatings did not greatly affect the work he was doing for stations. In April, 1949, Hoop announced that he had completed or was working on forty-seven listening indexes in 820 counties. This measuring was done by means of three-question mail ballots according to the plan he had recommended to BMB. Nielsen replied with his usual "me-too" line, mentioning area reports made by Audimeter in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Cincinnati.

Hoop's troubles were slight compared to the difficulties that confronted BMB. At a board meeting of NAB in Washington in November, 1948, an influential group, disgusted with delays and confusion, asked for the resignation of the president, Mr. Feltis, and the research director, Mr. Churchill. Though claiming nearly 800 signers for the postponed new survey, things were in such a state that the press freely predicted BMB was not long for this world. Among other trials, BMB was suffering from the chronic complaint, by parties who did not come out with top ratings, that something was wrong with the method.

Temporarily, Feltis and Churchill held on to their jobs, but assistants were promoted to share responsibility. The main trouble was money. \$300,000 was needed to complete the next survey, and while NAB was willing to put up one-third, ANA and the 4 A's demurred. In January the chairman of the board and Mr. Churchill resigned, and Dr. Kenneth H. Baker, NAB's research director, took over their duties. In addition, the government threatened a tax suit. Then came the resignation of the executive secretary, and Mr. Feltis quit in March. *Variety* reported "BMB Broke, Muddled, Bewildered." Once more Hooper stepped to the front and offered to carry on BMB's fact-finding, but not until the '49 survey had been completed.

In October, the U. S. Tax Department moved in on BMB and called Hoop as a witness. He said he did not consider BMB as a competitor; he had them on his books as a customer and used their figures on total radio homes as his base for computing ratios. The next month the suspension of BMB was announced. The survey would be completed, but BMB would bow out as of July 1, 1950. Possibly a new corporation would be formed. Hoop explained how he could use his station index ballot, then employed by forty-five stations, to reduce time lag, increase precision and halve cost.

Research itself received a body blow in November when nearly all of the top pollsters guessed wrong in predicting the defeat of Truman for President. Long sufferers from drooping

Hoopers seized the opportunity to say, "What did we tell you about these theoretical researchers?" Hoop hit back hard with "We don't ask people what they are *going* to do; we ask them what they are doing *now!*" Then he sat down and wrote a booklet, "What's Your Hooper?" in which he explained the big difference. There had been some intimations that ratings weren't even on the level. Hoop replied, "This business is so complicated from bottom to top that the slickest crook in the world would figure the only safe way to play it was straight."

In the Hooper-Nielsen battle Hooper was anxious to beat Nielsen to the punch in finding a way to measure the sales effectiveness of broadcast advertising. After his long experience with his drug and food indexes, and after spending \$250,000 trying to measure broadcast advertising results, Nielsen had publicly stated that it couldn't be done.

Hoop thought he could do it. For some years he had been comparing the use of radio advertised products in the homes of listeners and non-listeners. His tests showed that listeners used, on an average, 38% more of the advertised product than non-listeners and pluses from 23% to 109% had been found. Hoop's earlier method was to call back by telephone (using the name of another research organization), persons who, by previous calls, were found to be listeners to the program in question. With the thousands of diaries he was now using, it was a simple matter to include questions about product use and brand purchases. Diaries plus the telephone were producing much valuable information, but to perfect his measurements, Hoop needed a valid comparison between a listener panel and a cross-section panel.

With the assistance of J. Lyman Bogert, a well known researcher who had recently joined him as a vice-president, Hoop worked out a matched sample method which he announced as his answer to the problem. This proved too complicated, hence expensive, for immediate use but, at the time of his death, Hoop was well along on an adaptation of this idea for commer-

cial use and was about ready to spring it with his usual conviction and aggressiveness.

In May, 1948, Hoop was relaxing by his radio and listening to "*Truth or Consequences*," when the phone rang. He answered and was asked the familiar question, "Were you listening to the radio just now?" When he told the sweet-voiced interviewer the name of the program he had been listening to, she replied, "That's swell, it means \$250 in my pocket."

The same month NBC broadcast "Salute to Norwalk, Connecticut," on which appeared three well known Norwalkians: the late F. Chase Taylor, better known as Colonel Stoopnagle; the veteran announcer, Norman Brokenshire; and C. E. Hooper.

Tex and Jinx McCrary pulled a smash hit late in September with their "Billion Dollar Glee Club," featuring celebrated New Yorkers. The occasion was New York's Golden Jubilee. Imagine a program headed by Mayor O'Dwyer and including such personalities as Bernard Gimbel, president of Gimbel's, reading a commercial against a piano background played by Macy's prexy, Jack Straus. Hoop joined in the chorus with his lusty second tenor singing a parody on the Yale Wiffenpoof song that went like this:

We're poor little lambs who have lost our way—baa, baa, baa,
Poor little hams who have gone astray—baa, baa, baa.
Gentleman songsters off on a bat, wearing white tie and high
silk hat,
Lord have mercy if we sing flat—baa, baa, baa.

The C. E. Hooper Company house organ, *The Hooperator*, called attention to the romance contained in the call letters of: WOLF — WINX — WAVE — KOY — KISS — KOZY — WARM — WHAM — WOW! Someone added, "They're saving WOO-WOO for TV."

Indicative of the kind of strenuous days Hoop put in as a businessman — when he was not hunting, fishing, skiing or riding — in December, 1949, in Columbus, Ohio, beside making business calls on several local subscribers, he made speeches

to the Station WCOL staff, the Ad Club and the radio classes of Ohio State University.

It was about this time that the Kansas City papers, above the caption, "Hooper Rides Again," pictured him prominently riding in the famous annual trek of the Saddle and Sirloin Club.

As 1948 drew to a close, Nielsen's thrusts at Hooper became increasingly pointed and aggressive. He even resorted to something that seemed quite out of character — a joke. According to Harriet Van Horne, a man telephoned by a Hooper interviewer, when asked to what program he was listening, replied, "The Happiness Boys." Told that their program had been off the air for years, he replied, "I've got an old radio."

The fight got so hot that *Advertising Age*, in reporting that the two measurers were appearing on the same program, added, "Of course the fire department is standing by." Hoop explained his projectables and distributed a twenty-page booklet. Nielsen announced a formidable-sounding improvement in speeding up his reports: mailable tapes which could be inserted and later mailed by the listeners. For their labor, custodians of Audimeters received pay; as the tape was inserted a shiny new quarter dropped out. The machine could do everything but report *listening*.

In addition, Nielsen would send reports covering forty-eight weeks in the year; his 97% coverage was functioning; he was offering, for the first time, Pacific Coast network ratings; his product reports had been expanded; more data on commercials and spot announcements were included; he had worked out costs on a homes-reached-per-dollar basis; sponsors, advertising more than one product, would know their ratings on each. No wonder his monthly reports now covered 1,000 pages. Some wit remarked that you had to have a whole staff just to read, analyze and file the Nielsen findings.

In September, 1949, Nielsen announced that he would issue four reports a month. In November, *Variety* opined that Hoop and Nielsen were squaring off for a finish fight. In December, *Broadcasting* published a profile of Nielsen headed,

"Our Respects to Charles Arthur Nielsen." Large display ads were being run. CBS, outshone by NBC, canceled Hooper service. Hoop sent out a series of six letters to counter-attack the Audimeter man. He ridiculed Nielsen's attempt to measure New York City broadcasting with 120 machines. And he noted that his rival, in trying to establish a continuing record, was putting his '48 ratings, based on 63% of the population alongside his '49 ratings, based on a claimed 97%.

Nielsen hit back in kind by stating that Hooper's New York City teleratings were based on a sample of fifty calls per telecast. But Hoop was getting much the better of it in the growing field of TV, while Nielsen was winning in the fading field of radio.

What happened early in 1950 did not come as a surprise to Hooper's close friends because they knew that the profits from his business were dwindling fast and that, unless something radical were done, he would have to get out the red ink bottle by April.

CHAPTER X

Silver Lining

Late in 1949, Hoop was beginning to think about the possibility of retirement from some of his more onerous executive duties. The growing competition and controversy in audience measurement had dulled the fine edge of his enthusiasm, and he cast about for the right man to take over the more burdensome administrative duties while he devoted more time to creative thinking and outside interests.

One thing that needed doing, he felt, was to revamp completely the book, *Radio Audience Measurement*, or bring out a new book on broadcast research which would reflect the many changes which had taken place in the industry since publication in 1944. He was not politically ambitious, but after the removal of the Hooper plant to Norwalk and many new Norwalk friends were added to the already wide circle of old friends, there was an active movement to run him for mayor. He smiled and shook his head. Political office was not the answer then, if it would ever be, but there was little doubt among his backers that if he could put his heart in the campaign and make full use of his eloquence and flair for promotion, that he would have been the next mayor of Norwalk. His enthusiasm for riding, hunting, fishing, skiing, and especially photography, had not dimmed with the years. But, most of all, he wanted more time to spend with his wife and daughter.

More than ten years earlier, Arthur Charles Nielsen had first shown an interest in buying out Hooperatings and had made a liberal offer for the business. Since then, from time to time, Nielsen had indicated that he still thought a merger of the two services would be a good idea. Merging these two rugged individualists was unthinkable to anyone who knew

them, but in the frame of mind in which Hoop found himself as the half-century was closing, he decided that he would at least explore the possibility of selling the less profitable parts of his business to the company which was able to pay a handsome price.

Though temperamentally at opposite poles, Hoop and Nielsen were close contemporaries — Nielsen was one year older — and they had many thinking and fighting qualities in common. Nielsen's outstanding characteristic was thoroughness. He was a product of Chicago, the Morton High School at Berwyn, where his interest in electrical engineering had been stimulated by the proximity of a Western Electric plant, and of the University of Wisconsin. He received his B. S. in electrical engineering at Wisconsin in 1918, following a short stretch as Ensign on transport duty in the North Atlantic, and with marks so high that, the last I heard, they had not been equalled.

Before starting his own testing laboratory in 1923, Nielsen served briefly in the refrigerating machinery business and spent four years making and reporting field surveys of machine performance for business paper publisher, H. P. Gould Company. Nielsen began his own business in a twenty-by-twenty foot establishment, but forged ahead steadily and, by 1931, employed forty-five people. With the depression, his clients pulled in their horns, and in two years his staff had shrunk to twelve. The same slump that had driven Hooper into research was pushing Nielsen into research of a different kind. Considering that Nielsen's early business experience had been confined to industry, his switch to surveys in the retail field was a radical departure.

He had the vision, however, to uncover a great unfilled need, and the constructive imagination to find his way through a maze of difficulties. The need was for suppliers to know promptly and continuously how their products were moving competitively in the retail markets. His "Big Idea" was to provide a continuing index of the movement of merchandise

through retail channels, so that his clients would know at once where they were gaining and also where inroads were being made by competitors, by what competitors, and to what extent. He began in the drug field. His plan called for a cross-section sample of drug stores, in each of which his field representative would take inventory every other month and secure from the druggist, and audit, all transactions pertaining to the products of his clients and their competitors.

Nielsen's Drug Indexes were an immediate and substantial success. The following year he branched into grocery products. Four years later he took on several of the leading distillers. By the late thirties Nielsen was in the blue chips. Broadcasting was booming, and several of the leading radio advertisers were his clients. Some were looking for a more precise yardstick than recall or the coincidental method. Professor Elder showed him his recording device. It was electrical and appealed to an electrical engineer. Many things combined to put Nielsen into audience measurement, but, had he foreseen the pitfalls, I wonder if he would have taken the plunge.

In 1949, Hooper really had three businesses: national radio Hooperatings, national TV Hooperatings, local station Hooperatings. Toward the end of that year he concluded that Nielsen wanted part of his business more than he did — that part which was or soon would be unprofitable. Till then, Nielsen had wooed him. Now he decided to find out how badly Nielsen wanted what.

The first published hint that Hooper had been talking to Nielsen appeared in December, 1949. Right after the beginning of the new year, Nielsen released a progress report to the press. He had added variety store and pharmaceutical departments to his indexes; he was taking inventories of packaged goods in a national cross-section of consumer homes; he announced that he would now report for each network program whether purchases of the products advertised were above or below normal; and he stated that his New York City TV ratings were in full working order. His usual criticism of Hooper's methods was

missing and lent some confirmation to the rumors that he was trying to buy Hooperatings.

Due to the growing recognition by the press that Nielsen's views were newsworthy, and to more skillful direction of his public relations efforts, he was having the best press of his career. His didactic pronouncements were giving way to thoughtful and persuasive signed pieces in which he took a broad view of the situation, instead of obviously grinding his own axe. "What's Ahead for Audience Research," in *Variety*, was a good example of his greater understanding of how to influence people through the press. In four columns he didn't even mention the A. C. Nielsen Company, but drew a broad picture of the future needs of marketing which, however, all pointed in the direction of his facilities. The day of percentage ratings had passed, said he, and thoroughness, precision and mechanization were the order of the day.

Hoop was still getting the lion's share of publicity. Following his appearance in "The Billion Dollar Glee Club," when Hoop managed to be photographed showing that one of the two arms that encircled Jinx's lovely torso belonged to him, Tex and Jinx devoted their "Close-Up" column to a joint interview with him. To illustrate what a tremendous hold radio and TV had in American homes, Hoop related two experiences of his daughter, Stuart. There was a radio in the nursery, and it had been pumping shattering nightmares into the sleep of his five-year-old moppet:

We didn't know the cause of these nightmares until we checked and found that the plots and villains of her dynamite dreams came straight from a gruesome afternoon radio program.

We had a long talk one day and even though she loved that program, she hated the nightmares — so she promised to stay away from the radio for a week and see if her dreams would settle down.

For one week we heard not a peep out of her at night — and then on the eighth night she woke up screaming. I rushed in to calm her, and then I sat on the edge of her bed and admitted that I had been wrong . . . the nightmares had noth-

ing to do with radio programs. But she'd always been a very honest youngster, and she stopped me:

"No, Daddy, you were right! I listened to that program again this afternoon . . . I just HAD to find out what happened to the murderer!"

According to Jinx, a country club dance furnished proof of television's pulling power — and again Stuart was the guinea pig:

She was seventeen — an age when all normal girls are most interested in boys and dances . . . according to the experts. It was Christmas time, and the biggest dance of the year was being held at the Greenwich Country Club. We gave a dinner for sixteen kids before the dance.

Mrs. Hooper and I were busy carving and dishing out the food until about 9, and then we sent the youngsters into the den while we sat down in the living room to eat the scraps . . . the way parents do, you know.

The dance was due to begin around 9:30 — but it's fashionable to be forty-five minutes late, so we didn't worry for awhile about the kids not grabbing their coats. But then about 10:30 when there was silence from the den — we figured they had left by the back door — we were just a little disappointed that they had not said good night.

But then I looked out the window and saw that the cars were still lined up in the drive . . . so I walked into the den to see what was happening to our younger generation.

The lights were out and there they were . . . sixteen youngsters stretched out on the floor . . . in white ties and tails and new evening dresses . . . watching the Roller Skating Derby on television. I actually had to remind them that the most important social event of the season had started an hour before — without them!

The rumors of the Nielsen buy-out gradually became more frequent and definite. "Hoop vs. Nielsen: Who Woos Whom?" and "Nielsen All Set for Move-in on Hooper" were typical of the headline guesses that preceded the official announcement. By January 23, the press said the trade was certain there would be a deal. Nielsen's words were, "When something like this has reached the announcement stage, I'm sure it will be in the form of a joint announcement." Then Hoop admitted discussions were taking place but emphatically denied that they involved the *absorption* of his business.

When, early in March, the joint announcement appeared, it was front page news in metropolitan papers. *Advertising Age* said, "Nielsen Absorbs Hooperatings." This was only partly correct. Hooper retained his City Hooperatings, his City Tele-ratings, his Area Coverage Indexes and his Sales Impact Ratings. According to report, both companies were losing money. The price paid for U. S. Radio and Television Hooperatings was said to be between \$500,000 and \$750,000. C. E. Hooper, Inc. could not re-enter the national program rating field for five years, and Hooper personally agreed to stay out of it for ten years.

Hooper issued his own statement in which he vehemently said that he was not quitting the field. His local ratings were significant beyond the areas measured and he would continue to issue individual city reports. He asserted that the national rating business which depended on the number of network advertisers had been on the downgrade; that there were 60% fewer network advertisers than there had been in 1947. He contrasted conditions in a city like Portland, Oregon, where radio had remained unchanged, with a city like Los Angeles, where TV had cut into radio substantially; and he said it was like averaging apples with oranges to compare ratings. Phone interviews would continue in 100 cities.

Two weeks later further explanations were forthcoming. Said he:

We have sold two national indexes which were good B. V. (before video) but which now obscure the very differences the advertiser must know. The big differences are no longer between networks or between programs, but between markets . . . We continue to use the telephone coincidental, the only method that gets the true facts of listening and looking direct from the listeners and lookers. It also provides the only means of reporting comparability, radio with TV, radio with radio, TV with TV. We went out of business like Henry Ford when he replaced Model T with Model A. Exception: we didn't have to stop to retool.

Summarizing what had happened, *Tide* said that the deal "left Nielsen supreme and alone in the national field and Hooper

er supreme, if not alone, in the local field." The day after the joint announcement, Hooper had held what he called "a clarifying press luncheon." Without the loss of a day letters, in which Hoop described the negotiations as "probably the hardest traded deal in the history of American business," had gone out to subscribers. He said, "The shift of emphasis is now to local measurements . . . Last fall we decided to sell our network services, and to make the deal attractive, threw in the national television ratings . . . What we've sold is an assignment on which it will be very hard to perform from now on."

The reaction of one commentator was that the Nielsen battle was still going strong and would be fought on new ground of Hooper's choosing and would, if anything, get more intense, if not more confusing.

How confusing the broadcast rating situation had become, was pointed up when Hooper, several months later, called attention to the fact that there were eighty-two sizeable organizations attempting to measure one or more phases of the medium. Of the eighty-two there were eight which *Sponsor* thought worthy of detailed description. Of these eight, Nielsen alone was using a recorder. Three—Hooper, Conlon and Trendex—employed the coincidental method. Three — Videodex, Tele-Que and American Research Bureau — used diaries. One — The Pulse — depended on house-to-house interviews with printed rosters.

Of these eight raters, the one who was most annoying to Hoop was a young contender named Sidney Roslow, who had converted an unmarketable radio program, which he called "The Pulse of New York," into a rating service. Following several years with the Psychological Corporation, Roslow and branched out with his own service in which he had employed the aided recall technique by house-to-house interviewers to attract a small following among New York City radio stations and networks.

Hooper crossed swords with Dr. Roslow in a dispute arising out of differences, as high as 600%, between Hooper's rat-

ings of stations in San Francisco and The Pulse figures. Stanley Breyer, representing these stations, was so indignant that he ran full pages in the trade press calling for a once-and-for-all showdown by a third disinterested researcher. Hooper jumped at the chance for a searching comparison and immediately offered full co-operation.

Roslow thought it over and then qualified his acceptance with eleven conditions. Mr. Breyer's recommendation struck a responsive note in the industry and the press was full of the controversy. The idea spread to the point where some said, "While we're about it, why confine the test to one city? Let's open up the throttle and have a real comparison." A special committee was appointed, with Dr. Kenneth Baker, research director of NAB, as chairman, and there was talk of NAB appropriating \$140,000 to finance a comprehensive test. But the more the project was talked about, the greater the difficulties appeared. After a while it seemed to be evaporating into thin air, as such definitive comparisons had always done before.

Hoop tried to revive the attempt in an open letter to NAB, ANA and the 4 A's, in which he asked for the establishment of sound standards. He proposed that the three associations examine the procedures of all audience measurement services "with an eye to issuing validation, or the opposite, of the basic soundness of the procedures;" also that it examine the pattern of subscriptions, the costs of each measuring firm and the justification for any experimental projects that might be undertaken; in particular, unadjusted diary and aided recall methods.

The three associations did not rise to Hoop's suggestion but stood on the sidelines to witness Hooper's latest duel. So Hoop chose his own expert and called upon Dr. Chappell for a special report, "Comparison of Ratings," in which, on forty-eight pages, Chappell's and Hooper's views were expounded.

The ink had hardly dried on the Hooper-Nielsen agreement, when Hoop was in Los Angeles demonstrating what he called the Hooperecorder and talking about installing 500 of them in that city. By October, the press featured illustrated

articles with some intriguing details. Hoop had worked out the mechanics of the machine with the telephone company. Such wires as are used for fire and burglar alarms would connect Hooperecorders with a central station, and at a cost of one-tenth of a cent per call — from non-telephone homes as well as others — Hoop believed he would get instantly all the tuning information Nielsen was getting at many times that cost. The cost of one Audimeter was estimated at \$400, while a Hooper machine could be installed for \$40. Mr. Bogert was credited with having done the development work on the meter. Hoop thought the best way to make use of the revolutionary invention would be for the three associations to form a non-profit corporation to finance installations, with Hooper's organization to do the field work and tabulating.

Another project to which Hooper was giving attention and publicity was what he called his Media-Meter. For years one of the major needs of advertising had been a scientific comparison of the effectiveness of various media, and especially the major four: newspapers, magazines, radio and TV. Hoop had concluded that the only common denominator by which they could be compared was the factor of time spent — the hours, minutes and seconds employed in reading, listening and viewing. Not long before his death he told me that he had been making some thrilling experiments with this yardstick. The balance, he thought, was in favor of the broadcast media. They were the ones which were occupying the spare time of consumers in a big way. The measuring was to be done by the use of diaries and consumer panels. In May, 1951, Hooper announced the new service.

With Hooper's national ratings out of the picture, Nielsen's figures dominated the ratings pages of the trade press during most of 1950. But, little by little, the reports of other national raters found their way into print.

It was said, "Hooper keeps the pot boiling." He did. His contract with Nielsen had eliminated him from the national field, but in a few months he found a way to get his ratings —

made in twelve New York and Ohio cities — published as a helpful index, and to book some subscribers to his new “non-national” reports. While Nielsen was abroad, his lawyer raised the question as to whether Hooper was abiding by the terms of the contract in offering his limited measurements as a “reasonable facsimile” of national ratings. The matter was arbitrated.

During the remaining years Hoop continued in the news with many announcements of new services. Following the Nielsen deal he took things a little easier, but his mind was as active as ever, especially in improving and pushing his local measurements. What had long been the most profitable part of his business, City and Area Reports and station studies, were more conspicuously publicized than ever by press reports and hundreds of display ads of his customers featuring their Hooperatings. In 1954, he was working on a comprehensive Brand Use Reporting Service. He felt that the value of Nielsen’s retail indexes had been impaired by the refusal of certain retail chains to co-operate and that, using his TV diaries as a base, he could get from consumers much of the product information which Nielsen was getting from retailers.

Hoop devoted the years 1951 and 1952 to adjusting his business and himself to the changed conditions, to building up his local station services, and to interesting himself in new projects to which he could give the enthusiasm that had been centered on network Hooperatings during the building up process. He was glad to be out of the national field. That part of audience measurement, he thought, had degenerated into a rat race. The desire of Class B and Class C program sponsors to procure Class A ratings by *any* means was putting a premium on loose and even dishonest measuring procedures. It seemed that there were no raters whose measurements were so unreliable that they could not come up with figures attractive to a fringe group of subscribers.

It was not until 1953 that he found exactly the right man to administer the business. Temporarily, he took on managerial duties which, he was the first to admit, were irksome and got in

the way of more important thinking about constructive plans and selling strategy. By 1953, the major adjustments had been made and the business was definitely on the upgrade, especially after November, when Bill Cole helped Hoop to find in "Jim" Knipe just the right man to relieve him of the more uncongenial administrative duties.

James L. Knipe, Yale Ph. D., is that rare kind of an economist who has distinguished himself both academically and in business. He had been a vice-president and general manager of Union Bag and Paper Company and possessed the qualities Hoop needed to complement his own. After he became vice-president and general manager of C. E. Hooper, Inc., much of the pressure was off. By the summer of 1954, and with the aid of new subscribers and special surveys booked by Hooper, Knipe's cutting off of unprofitable activities enabled the firm to show a profit during the normally unprofitable slack season. Drastic cuts were made in staff and operations, but left a sound and profitable business in the radio field exclusively, still depending upon the coincidental method.

CHAPTER XI

The Last Year

The year 1954 began as the most propitious since Hoop's early successes in the thirties. For one thing, he had a new and absorbing interest. Dr. John H. Heller, son of his old friend and Wilton neighbor, "Bert" Heller, was engaged in medical research of the most advanced and significant kind as administrator of New England Institute of Medical Research in nearby Ridgefield, and had invited Hoop to work closely with him as trustee.

The non-profit New England Institute was set up primarily "to combine the skills of the physical scientist with those of the physician to investigate fundamental problems in medicine." Hoop recognized that "the tremendous advances in physical sciences — nuclear physics, electronics, physical chemistry, engineering — have made available new techniques, instruments, and theory which can be used to probe more deeply into the most fundamental aspects of natural processes. In the normal course of events, a physician receives almost no training in any of these fields. At the same time, the physical scientist has virtually no familiarity with medicine and its problems. By bringing together the physicians and physical scientists, the Institute is able to take advantage of the skills and training of both groups."

At first Hoop hesitated. He was not a physicist, much less a physician. But this was research in a new and vital area, and it required some of the services in promotion, public relations and fund raising which he was eminently qualified to contribute. Among other recent discoveries, the use of radio isotopes was opening up fascinating new possibilities in a new field of research. Research was his business; the atom was coming into

its own outside of the destructive uses to which it had been applied in the beginning; and he could see how his knowledge, experience and enterprise could be of real service. Why not withdraw gradually from advertising research and concentrate his energies on extending the benefits of the discoveries of the medical and physical sciences to suffering mankind? In addition to its laboratory work, the Institute offered special training to physicians, graduate students and even to undergraduates; and he could see how this educational work could vastly broaden the results of the program. He did not need to look to the Institute for a living. Soon he was on fire with the challenge. He would sell his TV ratings business and devote himself wholeheartedly to the most needed of all fields of research.

Right through the year 1954, up to December 15, everything seemed to be breaking happily for the Hoopers. In August, Judy joined Hoop in what turned out to be the happiest of all their twosome vacations. She had never fully shared his love of fishing, but she decided to go along, be a good sport and enjoy his company while he whipped the salmon streams of New Brunswick. They went first to the Upsalquitch. It was raining there and the fishing was poor. Other streams were tried with no better luck. Finally it was decided to leave the fish in peace and visit nearby Prince Edward Island, birthplace of Hoop's parents, which he had not seen since he was nine. In Charlottetown on St. Peter's Bay, Hoop went into a drugstore for a fishing license, got into conversation with the druggist and discovered that he was talking to a cousin. Through him they met other cousins and Hoop's one living aunt, Mrs. Edith Ladner. This was more fun than fishing. It turned out to be "Old Home Week" for the Hoopers.

Stuart, who had been married in November, 1953, to Charles Henry Peckham, III, came home on a visit in April, 1954, when her husband was sent to Korea with the Army. She worked in the Hooper office that summer, became seriously interested in the business and got much better acquainted with her dad. Charles Henry Peckham, IV, was born October 1.

Hoop was beside himself with the joy of what he called "having another man in the house for me."

The Hoopers went to the Williams game at Amherst and spent the week end. Hoop managed the gathering and rented a house to provide headquarters for the Class of '21 delegation. All agreed that the Twenty-oners had never had a more delightful foregathering.

Stuart's husband was transferred to Honolulu with the 25th Division and, on December 2, she flew to Hawaii to join him. Hoop was about to take off for some business and duck shooting near Salt Lake City, with a stopover at Chicago, once more to negotiate with Nielsen — this time in behalf of selling his TV business. Often as he traveled, the day before he left was always a trying one for his associates. He demanded the almost unanimous assistance of the staff in order to get everything shipshape for leaving and all needed accessories packed. It was a saying in the shop that the peace following his departure was a blessing, but that, mighty soon, when the office quieted down, there was an aching void where he had been.

Warren Mayers saw Hoop off at La Guardia Field and said he had never seen him looking better or seeming more enthusiastic. He was full of his plans for the Institute at Ridgefield and for the new Hooper home near Pound Ridge. The purchase of this property had been a typical Hooper impulse. He had been out riding with Judy and had discovered a home-site with a view unparalleled in that part of Westchester County, overlooking the winding valley of the Mianus, since dammed to form a lake. The curved sheet of water stretches for six miles toward the horizon where the top of the dam is barely visible. Not one human habitation is to be seen. When he saw the property Hoop was so enchanted that he said, "I'm going to own that piece of land!" Within twenty minutes he had bought it by the telephone coincidental method.

Coming as it did, when Hoop felt that a new and more satisfying life was just beginning, his sudden death, on December 15th, was an especially great shock to his family and

friends. But it was the death of a stormy petrel, and characteristic of the man. The air-propelled boat, in which he and one of his closest radio station friends, Frank McLatchey of Station KSL in Salt Lake, were duck shooting, got stuck on a sand bar and Hoop, helpful and impulsive as ever, jumped out to give the boat a push, slipped and fell into the unguarded propeller.

Hoop's life work was evaluation and he based his measurements on facts. It is not so easy to evaluate a man. I suppose some of his competitors heaved a sigh of relief when they knew that no longer would they have to contend with his aggressive methods. But, with his departure, research lost one of its most original thinkers, and one of its most resourceful leaders.

There can be no doubt that Hooper made important contributions to research, to broadcasting, to advertising and to business. How important they are, time will tell. But the record shows that he was an honest and able man; an unselfish husband, father and friend; and a leader in his chosen field.

Memorial services were held at the Noroton Presbyterian Church, not far from the Hooper home, conducted by good friend and Amherst alumnus, Reverend Lawrence McColl Horton. Hundreds of telegrams and letters expressing sorrow and sympathy had come from those who had felt the warmth of Hoop's nature. Even Dr. Roslow missed him and said, "competition will never be the same." Friends from every walk of life — from cleaning women and taxi drivers, to whom Hoop had been kind, to business leaders — gathered to fill the church and pay their last tribute. From Salt Lake, Birmingham, St. Louis, Chicago, Boston, Amherst and nearer places; by plane, by train, by car, by bus, and on foot, came hundreds of those to whom Claude Ernest Hooper had meant much, and whom they sought thus to honor.

At Amherst commencement exercises on June 10th, 1956, President Charles W. Cole presented to Mrs. Hooper evidence of the high esteem in which Hooper was held by his alma mater, with this message:

Claude Ernest Hooper of the class of 1921 took his MBA at Harvard in 1923 and for eleven years thereafter held various positions in business and especially in advertising. In 1934 he founded with an Amherst partner a new kind of business, that of broadcast audience measurement and developed it so successfully that Hooperating became a word to conjure with from Hollywood to Madison Avenue. For Amherst he was Chairman of the Dramatic Arts Visiting Committee and member of the Committee on Endowment. But his greatest service to the College was as Chairman of the Alumni Fund Committee for 1951 and 1952. In that post he set new goals, and explored new techniques, but most of all he infused the Fund with his spirit, for he visibly radiated affection and enthusiasm for Amherst. Whether he was working at a desk or dropping a dry fly in an eddy, one corner of his mind was ever busy with thoughts of this College. All those who knew and worked with him were deeply moved by the tragedy of his death and greatly inspired by the example he had set us. That alumni loyalty is both of the mind and of the heart, he not only knew but symbolized.

By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Trustees of Amherst College, I award the Alumni Medal for Eminent Service to Claude Ernest Hooper, *in memoriam*.