ACHS SUMMARY FORM M: 31-10

1. Name Jenkins Broadcasting Station

2. Planning Area/Site Number 31/10

3. MNCPPC Atlas Reference
Map 21 J-2

4. Address 10717 Georgia Avenue, Wheaton

5. Classification Summary

Category Building
Ownership Private
Public Acquisition Being considered by WMATA
Status Occupied
Accessible No
Present use Residence
Previous Survey Recording Federal ___ State x County x Local ___
M-NCPPC 1976

6. Date 1929

7. Original Owner Charles Francis Jenkins

8. Apparent Condition

a. Fair to Good

b. altered

c. Original Site

9. Description
The Jenkins Cottage is a simple 1½ story frame bungalow, facing west on Georgia Avenue. It is built on concrete foundations and set into the hillside so the east (rear) elevation is 2½ stories. The house is three bays across and two bays deep. The exterior walls have been clapboarded except at the gable ends where they have been shingled. There are two porches, on the west (front) and south (side) elevations. One interior stove chimney may be seen at the southeast corner. Windows throughout the house are 6-over-1 double-hung; on the west elevation there is a pente roofed dormer window, and below are 3 windows grouped together to form a single unit. Inside, there is a center square hall. Trees, bushes, a small garage complete the site.

10. Significance
Charles Francis Jenkins deserves to be called the "father of the American Television". For 4 years his Jenkins Radio movie Broadcast Station operated from 10717 Georgia Avenue. Jenkins invented numerous items related to motion pictures and television. In 1928 the Federal Radio Commission granted him the first license in the U.S. for simultaneous broadcasts on a plurality of wave length, and he began regularly scheduled broadcasting.
In 1929, Jenkins moved his operations to this cottage. In the backyard, 2 100-foot steel transmitting towers were erected, and the broadcasting was uninterruptedly transferred from his laboratory to this station. He discontinued broadcast operations in Wheaton on October 31, 1932. He never anticipated his "radiomovie" service as anything more than experimental in nature; however, it never quite reached the quality he had hoped for. Jenkins died in 1934. His inventions and techniques, broadcast from Wheaton, proved to be the foundation of the television industry.

11. Date researched Summer, 1978 Mark Walston Candy Reed - Architectural Description

12. Compiler
Eileen McGuckian

13. Date Compiled
November, 1978

14. Designation
Approval ___

15. Acreage: Approx. 8,957 sq. ft.

M: 31/10
MAGI#

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Jenkins Cottage

AND/OR COMMON: The Jenkins Broadcasting Station

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 10717 Georgia Avenue

CITY, TOWN: Wheaton ___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 8

STATE: Maryland

COUNTY: Montgomery

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	XOCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
XBUILDING(S)	XPRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	XPRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	XBEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		XNO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Mrs. Evelyn Breen Telephone #: 649-4531

STREET & NUMBER: 10717 Georgia Avenue

CITY, TOWN: Wheaton ___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code: Maryland 20906

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Montgomery County Courthouse

Liber #: 1815
Folio #: 240

STREET & NUMBER:

CITY, TOWN:

STATE:

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: M-NCPPC Inventory of Historical Sites

DATE: 1976 __FEDERAL XSTATE XCOUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Park Historian's Office

CITY, TOWN: Rockville

STATE: Maryland 20855

M:31-10

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
X FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This is a simple one and a half story frame bungalow in fair to good condition.

The house faces west toward Georgia Avenue. It is built on concrete foundations and set into the hillside so that the east (rear) elevation is a full two and a half stories. The house is three bays across and two bays deep. The exterior walls have been clapboarded except at the gable ends where they have been shingled. There are two porches: one on the west (front) elevation, and one on the south (side) elevation. The front porch is set on brick foundations and has wooden flooring and posts. The gable roof of this porch is perpendicular to the house. The side porch faces west. It too has brick foundations and is constructed of wood; its gable roof is parallel to that of the house. One interior stove chimney may be seen at the southeast corner. Most of the original exterior doors have been replaced except at the south porch. This is a six-paned glass and wooden paneled door. There are six over one double hung windows throughout the house. One exception is a single paned rectangular window on the south elevation. On the west elevation three windows are grouped together to form a single unit. There is a pent-roofed dormer window centered on the west elevation. Each of the two windows in this dormer is composed of two lights each. The gable roof was recently shingled with asbestos shingles.

The interior of this square cottage is organized around an interior square hall. The front door is located on the west elevation toward the north. It leads into the living room. To the south, and projecting slightly forward (west) of the living room, is the dining room. East of the dining room is the kitchen and east of the kitchen is a bedroom. A second bedroom north of the first is separated from it by a bathroom. A closed stairway leading to the two upstairs bedrooms is built between the two north rooms (living room, NW, and bedroom, NE).

The floors throughout the house are wooden, the walls and ceilings are plastered and have in many cases been wallpapered. The original interior doors have all been replaced. In the kitchen the walls are covered from the floor to halfway up the wall by tiles. The woodwork is very simple and has been covered by wallpaper in many cases. The house is heated by a gas furnace.

The house sits close to Georgia Avenue on the West. To the south and east, however, there is a nice yard with trees and bushes. A small frame and clapboarded garage is located northeast of the house.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

M:31-10

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION	
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION	
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		X INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES c.1929 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Charles Francis Jenkins deserves to be called "Father of the American Television." For four years his Jenkins Radio movie Broadcast Station operated from 10717 Georgia Avenue, Wheaton.

Among numerous inventions, Jenkins invented a motion picture projector in 1893, which was considered the prototype of subsequent movie projectors. He also developed the initial theory behind television by 1913, and called his invention, "radiovision."

He designed and built equipment for broadcasting entertainment and home reception of the broadcast. In 1928 the Federal Radio Commission (forerunner of FCC) granted him the first license in the United States for simultaneous broadcasting. Jenkins' regularly scheduled broadcasting was the second such service scheduled having been inaugurated by the General Electric Company's Station WGY, Schenectady, NY, on May 11, 1928, less than two months before Jenkins.

The four channels assigned to Jenkins became known as W3XK. Jenkins invented and sold for $7.50 a radio conversion kit so that home viewers could watch his soundless radiomovies. He set up a studio, filming shots of his staff and neighborhood children to broadcast.

In 1929, Jenkins moved his operations to 10717 Georgia Avenue, Wheaton. In the backyard of the house, two 100-foot steel transmitting towers were erected. As soon as all things were in a proper state of preparedness, the broadcasting was uninteruptedly transferred from his laboratory to this station, "...thus keeping faith with the host of friends scattered over the country, and who had learned to trust Mr. Jenkins promise of "picture stories by radio every evening."

Jenkins discontinued his broadcast operations in Wheaton on October 31, 1932. He never anticipated his "radiomovie" service as a permanent one, viewing it only as experimental in nature. The truth of the matter was the Jenkins' nightly soundless broadcasts had never quite reached the quality he had imagined possible.

Jenkins died in 1934. His inventions and techniques, broadcast from Wheaton, proved to be the foundation of the television industry.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

M:31-10

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Attached Sheets)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approx. 8,957 sq. ft.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block #6, Lot #9 of Glenview Subdivision

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY	Candy Reed - Architectural Description
STATE	COUNTY	

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE	Mark Walston	Candy Reed - Architectural Description
ORGANIZATION	Sugarloaf Regional Trails	DATE 6/78
STREET & NUMBER	Box 87	TELEPHONE 926-4510
CITY OR TOWN	Dickerson	STATE Maryland 20753

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: ~~Maryland Historical Trust~~
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

SUGARLOAF REGIONAL TRAILS
Box 87, Stronghold
Dickerson, Md. 20753
(301) 926-4510

PS-1108

THE JENKINS RADIOMOVIE BROADCAST STATION

M: 31/10
MAGI#

Mark Walston

This unassuming cottage, set within the confines of a modern suburban development, was for four short but dramatic years associated with Charles Francis Jenkins. A Washington based inventor, Jenkins, above all other early pioneers of the visual airwaves, deserves the appellation of "Father of American Television." And, it was here, in a small frame house south of Wheaton, Maryland, that Jenkins put into operation his groundbreaking discoveries in the realm of electrical picture transmission.

I. A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES FRANCIS JENKINS [1]

Charles Francis Jenkins was born in the country, north of Dayton, Ohio, on August 22, 1867. With his Quaker parents he spent his boyhood on a farm near Richmond, Indiana, and obtained his education in the "country" manner typical of the period. Jenkins finished his studies at Earlham College, in Richmond, Indiana, and soon after graduation, in an attempt to appease his questioning spirit, set out to explore the United States, travelling from the wheatfields and timber regions of the Northwest to the cattle ranges and mining camps of the Southwest. He came to Washington, D. C. in 1890, as a consequence of his passage of the Civil Service Examination, and served as secretary to Sumner I. Kimball, in the U. S. Life Saving Service. [2] It was also in this year that Charles Jenkins began developing his motion picture projector, referred to as the "Phantascope". Completed in 1893, Jenkins attained a modicum of success with his projector by exhibiting it at the Atlanta Cotton States Exposition in 1895, and even greater plaudits when he presented it later that year before the Committee on Science and Arts of the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. This machine, the prototype of all subsequent movie projectors, was hailed years later by the Institute as "...the first successful formof projecting machine for the production of life-size motion pictures from a narrow strip of film..." [3], and proved to be the impetus needed to propel Charles Jenkins into inventing as a full-time profession. By the time of his death in 1934, Jenkins held over 300 patents, and had listed among his credits:

- Construction of the first automobile in Washington, D.C., 1898
- Development of the spiral-wound, paraffined all-paper container, as a replacement for the glass milk bottle
- First transmission of a photograph by wire (Oct. 3, 1922), and overland by radio to a distant point (March 3, 1923)
- First weather map telecast from a land sending station to land receiving station (Aug. 18, 1926)

II. THE JENKINS BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Charles Jenkins first proposed the electrical transmission of pictures in an article published in the July 25, 1894 issue of Electrical Engineer. This was followed by a decade of further speculation, until, in the September 27, 1913 edition of The Motion Picture News, Jenkins proposed another mechanism for "Motion Pictures by Wireless." Thus it was that Jenkins had developed the initial theory behind television by 1913. Yet, it was not until the physical apparatus necessary to bring his proposals to fruition were developed that Jenkins' "radiovision" was ready for an actual demonstration. This first occured in the Jenkins Laboratories, located at 1519 Connecticut Avenue, in Washington, on June 14, 1923. This primary testing was followed by further experimentation until, on June 13, 1925, Jenkins demonstrated his "radiovision" in a public broadcast, the first such public transmission made anywhere in the world. [4] Such notables as the Secretary of the Navy, Curtis D. Wilbur, Dr. George M. Burgess, director of the Bureau of Standards and Judge S. B. Davis, acting Secretary of Commerce, had gathered at the Jenkins Laboratories to witness the historic occurence. A "radio eye" had been installed at the old Naval Radio Station, NOF, at Bellevue, D. C. The transmitted scene, a small Dutch windmill with the blades slowly propelled by wind from an electric fan, was viewed by the dignitaries at the laboratory across town. The image, while not clear cut, was easily distinguishable by the "radioviewers", and the television era had begun. [5]

These pioneer developments were paralleled by the work of John Logie Baird in England, and followed in 1927 by the Bell Laboratories transmission of visual images from Washington to New York over the regular wire channels of communication. This event was described in the prepared press matter as "television", due to the fact that the picture was carried over wires, "just as a wire instrument for audible communication is called a telephone, and a wire message by dot and dash translation a telegram." [6] Technically, this manner of transmission differed from what Jenkins had termed "radiovision", which is the process of transmitting images by radio from living subjects, while the broadcast records on film of persons and films was called by Jenkins "radiomovies". As wires were not readily available to Jenkins, his activities were limited to the transmission and reception of radiomovies and radiovision.

Having thus established the feasability and reality of moving picture transmissions, Charles Jenkins began in earnest to push development toward the broadcast of radiomovie entertainment for the home. Apparatus was designed and built for the radio transmitter, and broadcast station equipment installed at the Jenkins Laboratories on Connecticut Ave. Application for simultaneous broadcasts on a plurality of wave lenths was made of the Federal Radio Commission (forerunner of the FCC), and granted on February 25, 1928, being the first such license granted in the United States. [7] Four channels were assigned by the Commission for the Jenkins Experimental Station, along with the station signature 3XK, later changed to W3XK.

Jenkins began broadcasting radiomovies on the evening of July 2, 1928, followed every evening thereafter (except Sundays and holidays) at 8:00 E.S.T. [8] The radio amateurs of the country were invited to participate in this pioneering by equipping their short wave radio sets with picture receivers, and then reporting on the quality of the picture reception. To aid the public in obtaining proper reception, a radio conversion "Kit" was offered by Jenkins for $7.50. The minute projected picture was often enlarge by a magnifier. According to Mr. Jenkins, by August following, "...a hundred or more had finished their receivers and were dependably getting our broadcast pictures, and reporting thereon." [9]

Because the channels assigned to the station were but 10 KC. wide (providing little in the way of picture definition), only silhouette pictures were broadcast at first, with each story preceded by a microphone announcement. These "radiomovie plays" were filmed in a special silhouette studio designed and set up in the Jenkins Laboratories. The stars of these plays were members of Jenkins' laboratory staff and neighborhood children.

The widespread interest created by Jenkins' nightly broadcast of radiomovies soon attracted the attention of men with investment capital. And, in November of 1928, a "financier of New York and Palm Beach" undertook the merchandising of the devices developed in the Jenkins Laboratories. Styled "The Jenkins Television Corporation", Mr. Jenkins was elected "Vice-President in Charge of Research" by the board of directors. Jenkins, however, owned by assignment all the patents issued and pending applications on "visual radio." [10]

III. THE JENKINS RADIOMOVIE BROADCASTING STATION

By the year 1929, Jenkins, with the aid of his viewing audience, had attained a higher degree of technical broadcasting skill, with improvements made in mechanisms and methods. Consequently, Jenkins petitioned the Federal Radio Commission for a wider band, which would provide greater definition for the broadcasting of halftone movies. Channels 100 KC. in width were granted, and plans were then immediately made for a more powerful station. The site selected was located five miles north of Washington, on the Hugh Wallis estate, near Wheaton. Approval of the station change was asked of and granted by the FRC, and, sometime in 1929, the small white frame house on Georgia Avenue, rented for $35 a month, was equipped to perform as the 5 kw. Jenkins Radiomovie Broadcast Station W3XK. In the backyard of the house, two 100 foot steel transmitting towers were erected. As soon as all things were in a proper state of preparedness, the broadcasting was uninterruptedly transferred from the Connecticut Avenue laboratory to this station, "...thus keeping faith with the host of friends scattered over the country, and who had learned to trust Mr. Jenkins' promise of "picture stories by radio every evening.'" [11] These halftone broadcasts (scanned at 48 lines/frame and 15 frames/second) offered the viewers greater variety and definition and brought Jenkins closer to his promised goal of a time when Americans will

view "...an action picture of some event taking place downtown or in some distant city, a ceremonial, a national sports event, [or] a spectacular scene in the news" as they sit by their firesides. [12]

Early in the summer of 1930, Jenkins resigned his position with the Jenkins Television Corporation, his reasoning being that "the financial stringency would be relieved somewhat if he were to resign", as he was the highest paid officer in the company.[13] Jenkins then took over the lease of the Washington laboratories from the corporation, and continued their operation under his own individual responsibility. It was here that Jenkins spent most of his time, perfecting and developing the technical apparatus necessary for improved radiovision broadcasts. Incidentally, Jenkins appears never to have lived in Wheaton, having resided at his home at 5202 16th Street, in Washington, for sometime until his death.

Jenkins discontinued his broadcast operations in Wheaton on October 31, 1932. He never anticipated his "radiomovie" service as a permanent one, viewing it only as experimental in nature. The truth of the matter was that Jenkins nightly soundless broadcasts had never quite reached the quality he had imagined possible. It took time to work out the details, and, even though Jenkins' attention was constantly occupied by the development and refinement of each separate element, he had reached the limit of capability of his particular system. Charles Francis Jenkins died in 1934, two years after the closing of the Jenkins Radiomovie Broadcasting Station, but the advances he made in the field of visual electronics proved to be the foundation for a television industry which has come to realize those goals set by Jenkins in the early days of radiovision.

FOOTNOTES

1. Most of the following information was taken from Charles Francis Jenkins autobiography, The Boyhood of an Inventor (Washington, 1931)
2. Formed in 1871, the U.S. Lifesaving Servie was operated by the Revenue Cutter Servie until 1878, when it became an independant bureau of the Department of the Treasury. The Revenue Cutter and Lifesaving Services were combined in 1915 to form the United States Coast Guard.
3. C. Francis Jenkins, Vision by Radio, Radio Photographs, Radio Photograms, (Washington, 1925) p. 117
4. Historians disagree as to whether Jenkins or Baird produced the first televised moving images. However, Jenkins public demonstration predated that of Baird by several months, Baird's public demonstration coming on January 7, 1926
   J.N. Kane, Famous First Facts and Records in the United States (New York, 1976) p. 611
   P. Robertson, The Book of Firsts (New York, 1974), p. 188
5. Jenkins, Boyhood..., op.cit., pp. 145-146
6. C. Francis Jenkins, Radiomovies, Radiovision, Television (Washington, 1929) p. 9
7. Kane, op.cit., p. 613
8. Jenkins' regularly scheduled broadcasting was the second such service in the history of television, the first regular television service scheduled having been inaugurated by the General Electric Co.'s Station WGY, Schenectady, N.Y., on May 11, 1928, less than two months before Jenkins.
   Robertson, op.cit., p. 185
   Jenkins, Boyhood..., op.cit., p. 158
9. Jenkins, Radiomovies..., op.cit., p. 10
10. Jenkins, Boyhood..., op.cit., p. 169
11. ibid., loc.cit.
12. Orrin Dunlop, The Outlook for Television (New York, 1932) p. 52
13. Jenkins, Boyhood..., op.cit., p. 189

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Klinge, Property Atlas of Montgomery County, 1931

Dunlop, Orrin, The Outlook For Television (N.Y., Harper & Brothers, 1932)
Felix, E.H., Television, Its Methods and Uses (N.Y., McGraw-Hill, 1931)
Hogan, John, "The Early Days of Television", Journal of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, Nov., 1954, pp. 230-234
Hylander, C.J., An Introduction to Television (N.Y., MacMillan Co., 1946)
Jenkins, C.Franics, Animated Pictures (N.Y., Arno Press, 1970 [c.1898])
_____, The Boyhood of an Inventor (Washington, National Capital Press, Inc., 1931)
_____, Radiomovies, Radiovision, Television (Washington, National Capital Press, Inc., 1929)
_____, Vision by Radio, Radio Photographs, Radio Photograms (Washington, National Capital Press, Inc., 1925)

M #31-10
1608215704

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Jenkins Cottage
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Georgia Ave. (Rte. 97) and Windham Lane
CITY, TOWN
Wheaton
__ VICINITY OF
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
STATE
Maryland
COUNTY
Montgomery

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	✓OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
✓BUILDING(S)	✓PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	✓PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		✓NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Block #6, Lot #9 of Glenview Subdivision Telephone #:
STREET & NUMBER
(on tax map)
CITY, TOWN
STATE, zip code
__ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Liber #:
Folio #:
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Montgomery County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN
Rockville
STATE
Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN
STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

M:31-10

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	✓ ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	✓ ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
✓ FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This is a one-story-with-attic bungalow of the early 20th Century. The concrete basement is exposed at the rear (east) of the house. The box-like shape of the house is broken by an open portico over the doorway, at the NW corner of the building. The house faces west on Georgia Ave. The gable-roof is low-pitched, and there is a very low, shed-roof dormer on the west slope. The building is important mostly for its historical associations with Charles Jenkins, an inventor, but it should be noted that almost nothing visible remains in the area that does not signify 1950's and '60's suburban development.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

M:31-10

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
_PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	_COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	_RELIGION	
_1400-1499	_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	_CONSERVATION	_LAW	_SCIENCE	
_1500-1599	_AGRICULTURE	_ECONOMICS	_LITERATURE	_SCULPTURE	
_1600-1699	_ARCHITECTURE	_EDUCATION	_MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
_1700-1799	_ART	_ENGINEERING	_MUSIC	_THEATER	
_1800-1899	_COMMERCE	_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	_PHILOSOPHY	_TRANSPORTATION	
X 1900-	_COMMUNICATIONS	_INDUSTRY	_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		_INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This was the home of Charles Francis Jenkins during the 1920's and '30's. Mr. Jenkins was an inventor, who held over 400 patents. His most famous contribution was as a pioneer in the development of early television of "radiovision", as it was then known. He broadcast programs from this house until his death in 1934.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

M:31-10

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1) Getty, Mildred Newbold. "Wheaton" (1970) Mont. Co. Historical Society.

2) COMMUNITY GUIDE TO WHEATON. Wheaton Chamber of Commerce, (1964-65 edition.)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Michael F. Dwyer, Senior Park Historian

ORGANIZATION: M-NCPPC

DATE: 8/21/75

STREET & NUMBER: 8787 Georgia Ave.

TELEPHONE: 589-1480

CITY OR TOWN: Silver Spring

STATE: Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

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RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

THE JENKINS RADIOMOVIE BROADCAST STATION

M:31-10

Mark Walston

This unassuming cottage, set within the confines of a modern suburban development, was for four short but dramatic years associated with Charles Francis Jenkins. A Washington based inventor, Jenkins, above all other early pioneers of the visual airwaves, deserves the appellation of "Father of American Television." And, it was here, in a small frame house south of Wheaton, Maryland, that Jenkins put into operation his groundbreaking discoveries in the realm of electrical picture transmission.

I. A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES FRANCIS JENKINS [1]

Charles Francis Jenkins was born in the country, north of Dayton, Ohio, on August 22, 1867. With his Quaker parents he spent his boyhood on a farm near Richmond, Indiana, and obtained his education in the "country" manner typical of the period. Jenkins finished his studies at Earlham College, in Richmond, Indiana, and soon after graduation, in an attempt to appease his questioning spirit, set out to explore the United States, travelling from the wheatfields and timber regions of the Northwest to the cattle ranges and mining camps of the Southwest. He came to Washington, D. C. in 1890, as a consequence of his passage of the Civil Service Examination, and served as secretary to Sumner I. Kimball, in the U. S. Life Saving Service. [2] It was also in this year that Charles Jenkins began developing his motion picture projector, referred to as the "Phantascope". Completed in 1893, Jenkins attained a modicum of success with his projector by exhibiting it at the Atlanta Cotton States Exposition in 1895, and even greater plaudits when he presented it later that year before the Committee on Science and Arts of the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. This machine, the prototype of all subsequent movie projectors, was hailed years later by the Institute as "...the first successful formof projecting machine for the production of life-size motion pictures from a narrow strip of film..." [3], and proved to be the impetus needed to propel Charles Jenkins into inventing as a full-time profession. By the time of his death in 1934, Jenkins held over 300 patents, and had listed among his credits:

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- Development of the spiral-wound, paraffined all-paper container, as a replacement for the glass milk bottle
- First transmission of a photograph by wire (Oct. 3, 1922), and overland by radio to a distant point (March 3, 1923)
- First weather map telecast from a land sending station to land receiving station (Aug. 18, 1926)

II. THE JENKINS BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Charles Jenkins first proposed the electrical transmission of pictures in an article published in the July 25, 1894 issue of Electrical Engineer. This was followed by a decade of further speculation, until, in the September 27, 1913 edition of The Motion Picture News, Jenkins proposed another mechanism for "Motion Pictures by Wireless." Thus it was that Jenkins had developed the initial theory behind television by 1913. Yet, it was not until the physical apparatus necessary to bring his proposals to fruition were developed that Jenkins' "radiovision" was ready for an actual demonstration. This first occured in the Jenkins Laboratories, located at 1519 Connecticut Avenue, in Washington, on June 14, 1923. This primary testing was followed by further experimentation until, on June 13, 1925, Jenkins demonstrated his "radiovision" in a public broadcast, the first such public transmission made anywhere in the world. [4] Such notables as the Secretary of the Navy, Curtis D. Wilbur, Dr. George M. Burgess, director of the Bureau of Standards and Judge S. B. Davis, acting Secretary of Commerce, had gathered at the Jenkins Laboratories to witness the historic occurence. A "radio eye" had been installed at the old Naval Radio Station, NOF, at Bellevue, D. C. The transmitted scene, a small Dutch windmill with the blades slowly propelled by wind from an electric fan, was viewed by the dignitaries at the laboratory across town. The image, while not clear cut, was easily distinguishable by the "radioviewers", and the television era had begun. [5]

These pioneer developments were paralleled by the work of John Logie Baird in England, and followed in 1927 by the Bell Laboratories transmission of visual images from Washington to New York over the regular wire channels of communication. This event was described in the prepared press matter as "television", due to the fact that the picture was carried over wires, "just as a wire instrument for audible communication is called a telephone, and a wire message by dot and dash translation a telegram." [6] Technically, this manner of transmission differed from what Jenkins had termed "radiovision", which is the process of transmitting images by radio from living subjects, while the broadcast records on film of persons and films was called by Jenkins "radiomovies". As wires were not readily available to Jenkins, his activities were limited to the transmission and reception of radiomovies and radiovision.

Having thus established the feasability and reality of moving picture transmissions, Charles Jenkins began in earnest to push development toward the broadcast of radiomovie entertainment for the home. Apparatus was designed and built for the radio transmitter, and broadcast station equipment installed at the Jenkins Laboratories on Connecticut Ave. Application for simultaneous broadcasts on a plurality of wave lenths was made of the Federal Radio Commission (forerunner of the FCC), and granted on February 25, 1928, being the first such license granted in the United States. [7] Four channels were assigned by the Commission for the Jenkins Experimental Station, along with the station signature 3XK, later changed to W3XK.

Jenkins began broadcasting radiomovies on the evening of July 2, 1928, followed every evening thereafter (except Sundays and holidays) at 8:00 E.S.T. [8] The radio amateurs of the country were invited to participate in this pioneering by equipping their short wave radio sets with picture receivers, and then reporting on the quality of the picture reception. To aid the public in obtaining proper reception, a radio conversion "Kit" was offered by Jenkins for $7.50. The minute projected picture was often enlarge by a magnifier. According to Mr. Jenkins, by August following, "...a hundred or more had finished their receivers and were dependably getting our broadcast pictures, and reporting thereon," [9]

Because the channels assigned to the station were but 10 KC. wide (providing little in the way of picture definition), only silhouette pictures were broadcast at first, with each story preceded by a microphone announcement. These "radiomovie plays" were filmed in a special silhouette studio designed and set up in the Jenkins Laboratories. The stars of these plays were members of Jenkins' laboratory staff and neighborhood children.

The widespread interest created by Jenkins' nightly broadcast of radiomovies soon attracted the attention of men with investment capital. And, in November of 1928, a "financier of New York and Palm Beach" undertook the merchandising of the devices developed in the Jenkins Laboratories. Styled "The Jenkins Television Corporation", Mr. Jenkins was elected "Vice-President in Charge of Research" by the board of directors. Jenkins, however, owned by assignment all the patents issued and pending applications on "visual radio." [10]

III. THE JENKINS RADIOMOVIE BROADCASTING STATION

By the year 1929, Jenkins, with the aid of his viewing audience, had attained a higher degree of technical broadcasting skill, with improvements made in mechanisms and methods. Consequently, Jenkins petitioned the Federal Radio Commission for a wider band, which would provide greater definition for the broadcasting of halftone movies. Channels 100 KC. in width were granted, and plans were then immediately made for a more powerful station. The site selected was located five miles north of Washington, on the Hugh Wallis estate, near Wheaton. Approval of the station change was asked of and granted by the FRC, and, sometime in 1929, the small white frame house on Georgia Avenue, rented for $35 a month, was equipped to perform as the 5 kw. Jenkins Radiomovie Broadcast Station W3XK. In the backyard of the house, two 100 foot steel transmitting towers were erected. As soon as all things were in a proper state of preparedness, the broadcasting was uninterruptedly transferred from the Connecticut Avenue laboratory to this station, "...thus keeping faith with the host of friends scattered over the country, and who had learned to trust Mr. Jenkins' promise of "picture stories by radio every evening.'" [11] These halftone broadcasts (scanned at 48 lines/frame and 15 frames/second) offered the viewers greater variety and definition and brought Jenkins closer to his promised goal of a time when Americans will

view "...an action picture of some event taking place downtown or in some distant city, a ceremonial, a national sports event, [or] a spectacular scene in the news" as they sit by their firesides. [12]

Early in the summer of 1930, Jenkins resigned his position with the Jenkins Television Corporation, his reasoning being that "the financial stringency would be relieved somewhat if he were to resign", as he was the highest paid officer in the company.[13] Jenkins then took over the lease of the Washington laboratories from the corporation, and continued their operation under his own individual responsibility. It was here that Jenkins spent most of his time, perfecting and developing the technical apparatus necessary for improved radiovision broadcasts. Incidentally, Jenkins appears never to have lived in Wheaton, having resided at his home at 5202 16th Street, in Washington, for sometime until his death.

Jenkins discontinued his broadcast operations in Wheaton on October 31, 1932. He never anticipated his "radiomovie" service as a permanent one, viewing it only as experimental in nature. The truth of the matter was that Jenkins nightly soundless broadcasts had never quite reached the quality he had imagined possible. It took time to work out the details, and, even though Jenkins' attention was constantly occupied by the development and refinement of each separate element, he had reached the limit of capability of his particular system. Charles Francis Jenkins died in 1934, two years after the closing of the Jenkins Radiomovie Broadcasting Station, but the advances he made in the field of visual electronics proved to be the foundation for a television industry which has come to realize those goals set by Jenkins in the early days of radiovision.

FOOTNOTES

1. Most of the following information was taken from Charles Francis Jenkins autobiography, The Boyhood of an Inventor (Washington, 1931)
2. Formed in 1871, the U.S. Lifesaving Servie was operated by the Revenue Cutter Servie until 1878, when it became an independant bureau of the Department of the Treasury. The Revenue Cutter and Lifesaving Services were combined in 1915 to form the United States Coast Guard.
3. C. Francis Jenkins, Vision by Radio, Radio Photographs, Radio Photograms, (Washington, 1925) p. 117
4. Historians disagree as to whether Jenkins or Baird produced the first televised moving images. However, Jenkins public demonstration predated that of Baird by several months, Baird's public demonstration coming on January 7, 1926
   J.N. Kane, Famous First Facts and Records in the United States (New York, 1976) p. 611
   P. Robertson, The Book of Firsts (New York, 1974), p. 188
5. Jenkins, Boyhood..., op.cit., pp. 145-146
6. C. Francis Jenkins, Radiomovies, Radiovision, Television (Washington, 1929) p. 9
7. Kane, op.cit., p. 613
8. Jenkins' regularly scheduled broadcasting was the second such service in the history of television, the first regular television service scheduled having been inaugurated by the General Electric Co.'s Station WGY, Schenectady, N.Y., on May 11, 1928, less than two months before Jenkins.
   Robertson, op.cit., p. 185
   Jenkins, Boyhood..., op.cit., p. 158
9. Jenkins, Radiomovies..., op.cit., p. 10
10. Jenkins, Boyhood..., op.cit., p. 169
11. ibid., loc.cit.
12. Orrin Dunlop, The Outlook for Television (New York, 1932) p. 52
13. Jenkins, Boyhood..., op.cit., p. 189

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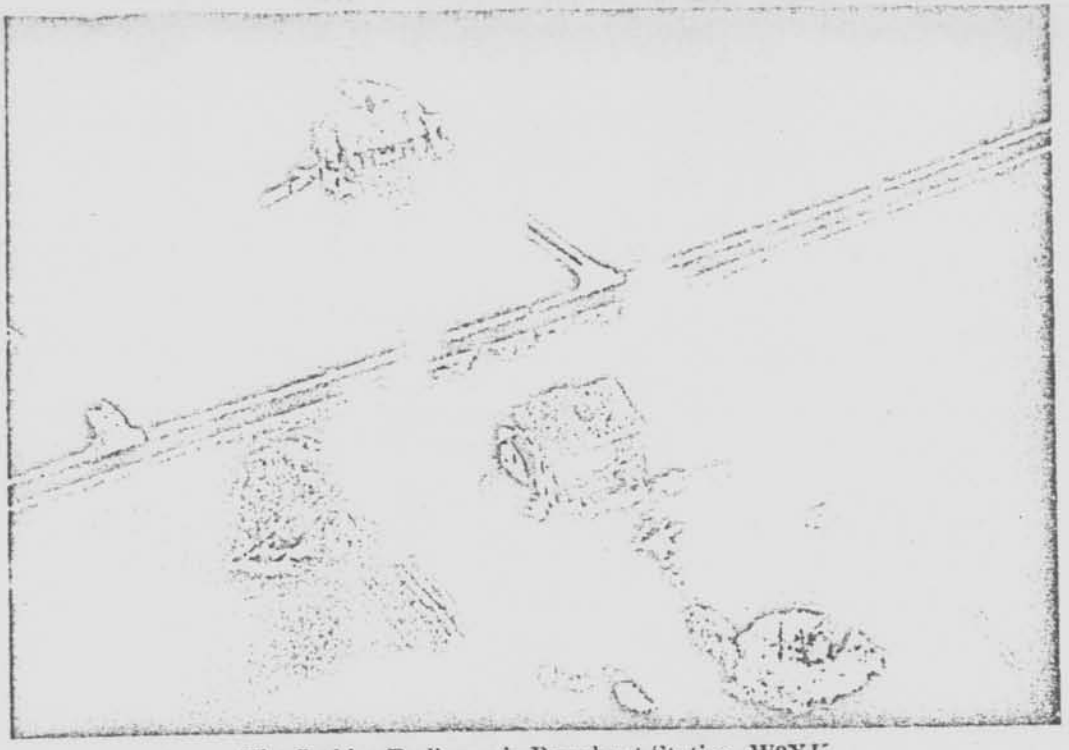
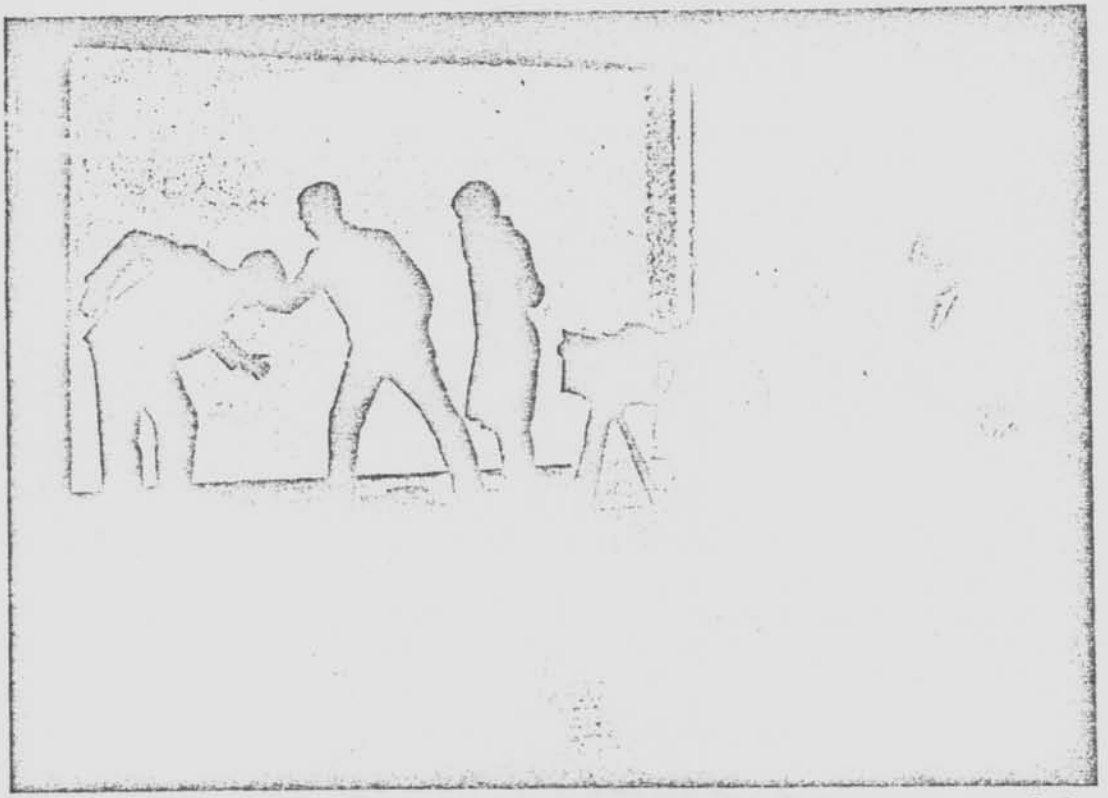
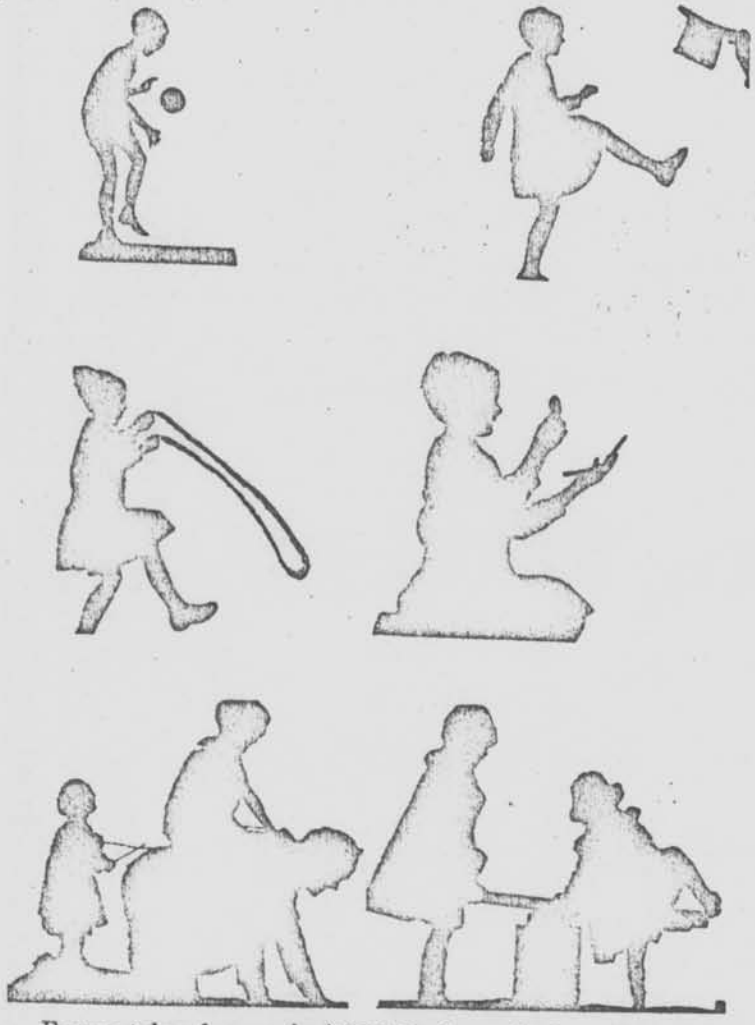


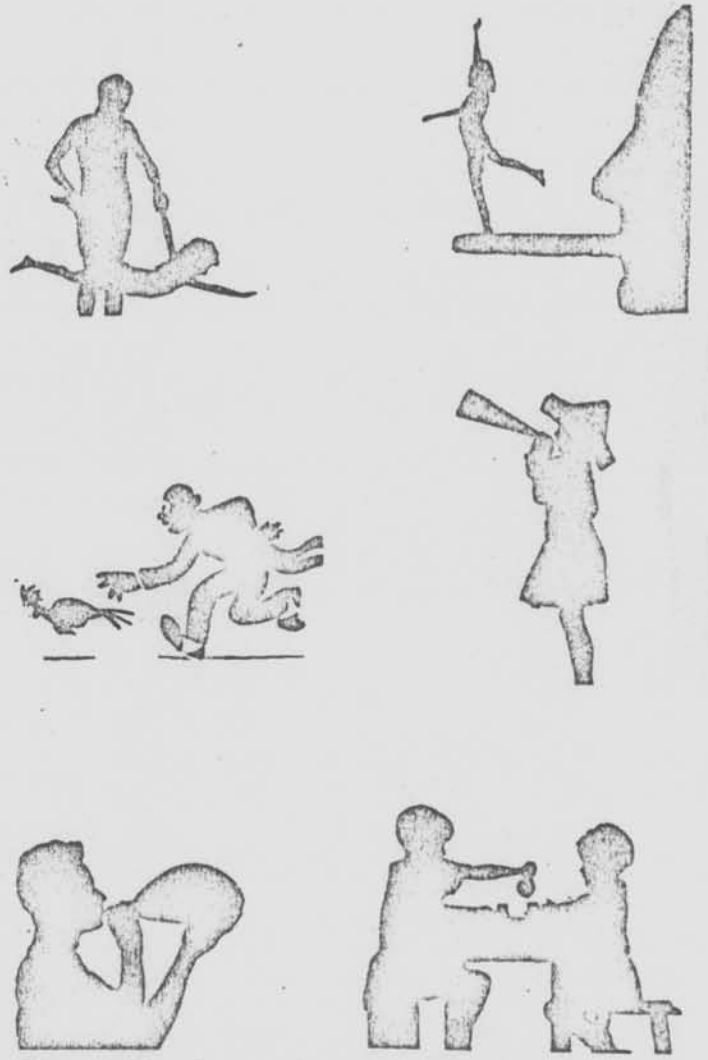
The Jenkins Radiomovie Broadcast Station, W3XK,
located five miles north of Washington, D. C.



Unique silhouette studio in which motion picture stories in black-and-white were made for broadcasting of first radiomovies.



Frames taken from early (1928) Radiomovies broadcasts from W3XK. The Jenkins Laboratories, Washington, D. C.



Frames taken from early (1928) Radiomovies broadcasts from W3XK. The Jenkins Laboratories, Washington, D. C.

M: 31-10
Joe Davis

File 782314 Site 31-10 Jenkins Cottage 10717 Georgia Avenue

10717

MI: 31-10

Joe Davis

File 782317 Site 31-10 Jenkins Cottage 10717 Georgia Avenue

M: 31-10
Joe Davis

File 782316 Site 31-10 Jenkins Cottage 10717 Georgia Avenue