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## 1935 CENSUS OF BUSINESS: SCHEDULES OF RADIO BROADCASTING STATIONS

### Introduction

On the single roll of this microfilm publication, M2070, are reproduced schedules of radio broadcasting stations taken during the 1935 Census of Business. These schedules are part of Record Group (RG) 29, Records of the Bureau of the Census, and are part of the records designated as Entry 319, *Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Bureau of the Census*, Preliminary Inventory (PI) 161 (Washington, DC: National Archives, 1964), by Katherine H. Davidson and Charlotte M. Ashby.

### Background

#### Collection of Business Statistics by the Bureau of the Census

The Census Bureau established a Current Business Division and a Distribution Division on July 1, 1928. These were consolidated into a Current Business and Distribution Division on July 1, 1929; however, this division was abolished on July 10, 1930. On December 4, 1933, the Census Bureau established a Division of Business with Fred A. Gosnell as Chief Statistician. Effective July 27, 1943, this division, which had also been known as the Business Census Division, was renamed the Business Division. These successive divisions supervised the business censuses taken under section 4 of an act of June 18, 1929 (46 Stat. 22), which authorized a census of distribution, the taking of business censuses as relief projects, and the collection of monthly and annual business statistics.

The suggestion that the Census Bureau should take a census of distribution or business, in cooperation with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and trade organizations, was originally presented in December 1926, at a meeting of the Committee on Collection of Business Figures. As a result, a trial census of distribution was taken in 1927 in 11 cities, beginning with Baltimore. The schedules for the 1929 census of distribution were based largely on the experience gained in 1927. The 1929 Census of Distribution covered retail and wholesale trade, hotels, the construction industry, and the distribution of goods by manufacturers. The 1933 Census of Business gathered data on retail and wholesale trade, service businesses, places of amusement, and hotel establishments. The 1933 and 1935 censuses of business were set up as relief projects, and the 1933 census was financed by the Civil Works Administration.

#### The 1935 Census of Business

The 1935 Census of Business was the largest and most inclusive inventory of business establishments undertaken by the Bureau of the Census up to that time. Much broader in scope than either the Census of Distribution of 1929 or the Census of American Business of 1933, the data for this census, when considered together with the Census of Manufacturers and the Census of Agriculture of the same year, permitted a fairly complete analysis of American economic life.

The Business Census was designed to provide a picture of essential items of information concerning most types of business activity in the United States. The severity and duration of the depression of the 1930s indicated the need for an intensive study of the U.S. business structure. Government and business both felt the need for detailed economic data as a basis for planning methods of increasing business activity, thereby stimulating economic recovery.

Funds to defray the cost of the 1935 Census of Business and for the subsequent publication of any related reports were furnished by the Works Progress Administration. The canvassing of businesses began on June 2, 1936, and all final reports were issued by June 30, 1937.

Fifteen categories of businesses were surveyed: advertising agencies, banks, bus transportation, construction, distribution of manufacturers' sales, financial institutions, hotels (including tourist camps), insurance and real estate, miscellaneous enterprises (primarily nonprofit organizations), motor trucking for hire, public warehousing, radio broadcasting, retail trade, service and amusement, and wholesale trade.

Upon completion of tabulations and reports, the Department of Commerce, under authority granted by Congress, disposed of the schedules relating to the following: construction, distribution of manufacturers' sales, hotels, retail trade, and service and amusement. The schedules relating to advertising agencies, banks, bus transportation, financial institutions, insurance and real estate, miscellaneous, motor trucking for hire, public warehousing, radio broadcasting, and wholesale trade were retained and transferred to the custody of the National Archives in 1941 and 1946. In 1953, in order to dispose of the paper schedules, the National Archives transferred to microfilm the following categories of schedules: advertising agencies, banks and other financial institutions, miscellaneous, motor trucking for hire, public warehousing, and radio broadcasting. The remaining schedules, relating to bus transportation, insurance and real estate, service and amusement, and wholesale trade were retained in paper form because resources required for extensive rearrangement prior to microfilming were not available.

#### Records Description

These records consist of Schedule 73, Broadcasting Stations Schedule, which was used to enumerate radio broadcasting stations and/or companies. Schedule 73 requested the following information: name and license number of station; address; name and address of owner; legal form of organization (proprietorship, partnership, corporation, other); if a partnership, number of partners or firm members; if affiliated with a chain organization, the nature of that affiliation (owned by chain, carries chain programs, other); maximum power used by station during day and night hours; operating revenue and expenses for 1935; number and payroll of full- and part-time executives, supervisory employees, office and clerical employees, employees engaged in operation and maintenance of broadcasting equipment, employees furnishing entertainment (such as musicians), announcers, and total paid employees in the pay period ending October 26, 1935; number of male, female, and "Negro" employees; and total number of paid employees working during the pay period ending nearest the 15th of each month during 1935. There was also a section requesting "remarks," which is usually blank.

The records are arranged alphabetically by state, thereunder by county, thereunder by station wattage, and thereunder alphabetically by station call letters.

#### Related Records

Other microfilmed 1935 Census of Business schedules have been or are being reproduced in the

following National Archives Microfilm Publications: M1797, *1935 Census of Business: Schedules of Advertising Agencies* (1 roll); M2066, *1935 Census of Business: Schedules of Banking and Financial Institutions* (31 rolls); M2067, *1935 Census of Business: Schedules of Miscellaneous Nonprofit Enterprises* (43 rolls); M2068, *1935 Census of Business: Schedules of Motor Trucking for Hire* (103 rolls); and M2069, *1935 Census of Business: Schedules of Public Warehousing* (6 rolls).

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