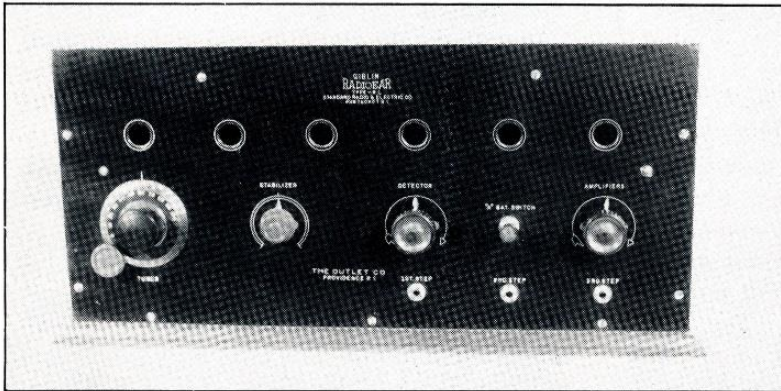


THOMAS P. GIBLIN AND HIS RADIOEAR MODEL RL

Leonard Arzoomanian

61 Columbus Ave., North Providence, RI 02911

On July 12, 1924 the New York World had an article on a new broadcast receiver, the Giblin Radioear Model RL with loop antenna. The article explained that, true to a prediction of Major Armstrong, here was a set that did not require an outside antenna for good DX reception.



Thomas P. Giblin was a radio engineer from Pawtucket, Rhode Island. He graduated from Pratt Institute in 1912 and was the holder of a dozen patents in the automotive and electrical fields. During the 1920s he owned and operated the Giblin Radio Company and the Standard Radio and Electric Company. He was the (disputed) inventor of the honeycomb coil, and in 1919 his firm was commissioned to improve the coils to be used in the NC-4 transatlantic flight. The Providence Journal claimed at the time that this native son was responsible for the "vital accuracy of the wireless receiving instruments and the proper functioning of the radio compass." He was also the first chief engineer of

radio station WJAR in Providence. It went on the air September 6, 1922 with a transmitter rumored to be Mr. Giblin's converted amateur set.

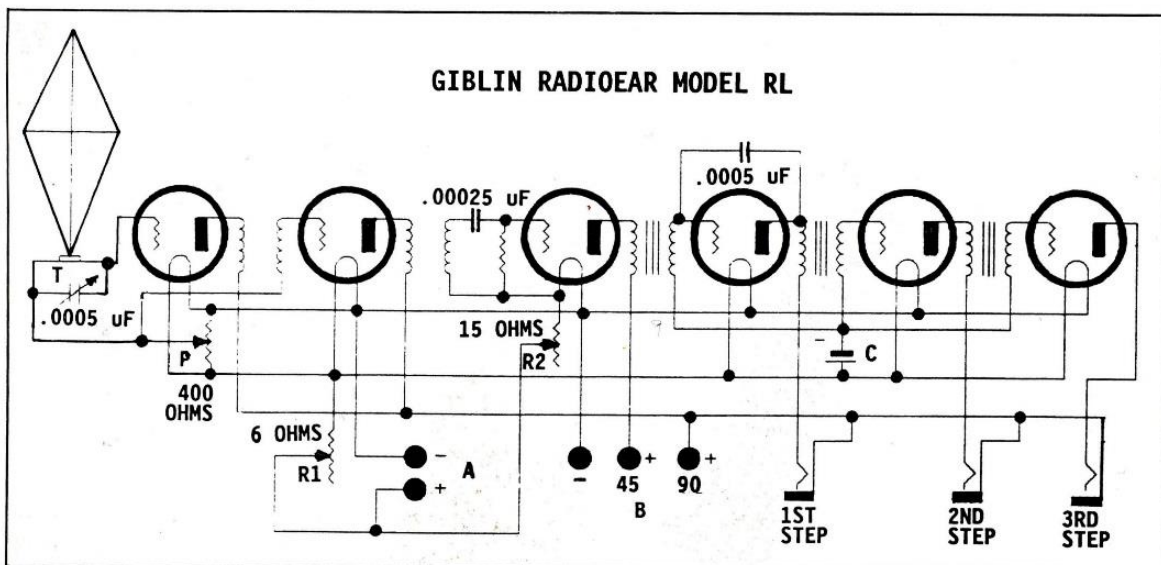
In 1924, the Standard Radio and Electric Company introduced the Model RL. The ads of the day claim that this set did not need an

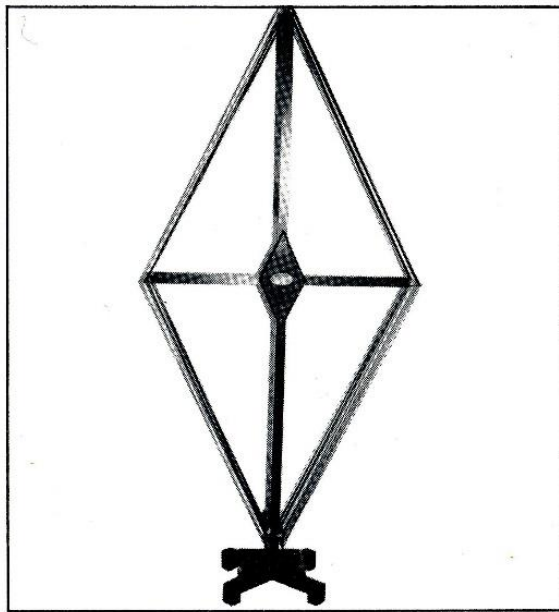
outside antenna. Now families in apartments could hear "enjoyable, everchanging programs throughout the day and evening by 'listening-in' with the Giblin Radio Frequency Broadcast Receiver."

The Model RL uses a six-tube circuit. The handsome loop consists of 120 feet of braided enameled wire wound in 12 horizontally spaced turns on a wood form. This

was a different method than in the vertically wound pancake loop, and was said to be able to receive more signal energy. A .005-uF variable condenser was placed directly across the loop to tune it. In testing the set, I found that the loop was as directional as it should be, with 90- and 180-degree turns from the "best" position resulting in a marked decrease in volume as well as an increase in interference.

There are two RF stages, a detector, and three audio stages. All the coils in the set were made by the Giblin Electric Company. The RF coils are of the air-wound type and are designed for the 250-550 meter (550-1500 kHz) broadcast range. I found that even the first audio stage was





powerful enough to drive a horn speaker with today's signal levels, and that use of all three resulted in excessive volume levels. The audio transformers are of a low ratio (3 to 1). The World article states (justifiably) that higher-ratio coils would result in increased distortion.

The set requires A, B, and C batteries. The review of the set in the World stated that the B(s) should be 22-1/2 and 45 volts, with a C-battery of 1 volt. Higher voltages could be used on the B as long as a proportional increase was made in the C. In testing the set, I found that a 45- and 90-volt B and a 2-3 volt C battery resulted in proper operation. Being able to adjust the C voltage on a battery eliminator enabled me to reduce the distortion in the audio greatly. This, unfortunately, was not an option for the original owners!

Tuning of the set is very easy. A Stabilizer control (P) is turned to the counter-clockwise position. The Amplifier control (R1) is then turned about three-fourths clockwise. This lights the two RF and three audio stage filaments. At this point, turning the Detector control (R2) clockwise results in a loud regenerative hiss. When this hiss is heard, the detector control should be turned back until the hiss is gone. Stations can now be tuned on the TRF dial (T). When a station is found, adjustment of the stabilizer and positioning of the loop result in increased volume and quality in the program.

In my tests, the set performed well considering the situation. I was able on a first attempt to pick up five local stations down in the cellar of my house. The tuning has a very narrow separation enabling stations close together on the dial to be tuned in easily without interference. Overall it is a well built, good performer.

One additional item: The set pictured has "The Outlet Company" engraved on the panel. This company was a local department store with a large radio section. It is interesting to note that this company was also the owners of WJAR. It seems that Outlet and Mr. Giblin were creating a market for the receivers by opening the station!

Thanks go out to Alan Douglas and Charlie Harris for their help in obtaining information. References covering the Giblin story are: New York World, 7/12/24, "Giblin 6-Tube R.F. Circuit"; Radio Progress, 3/15/24 and 4/01/25, Giblin Radio Apparatus ads; Providence Journal, 9/30/19, "Providence Man Aids NC-4 Trip," 9/28/22, "Providence To Have Powerful New Radio Station, WJAR," and 3/18/63, "Thomas P. Giblin, Designer, Dies."