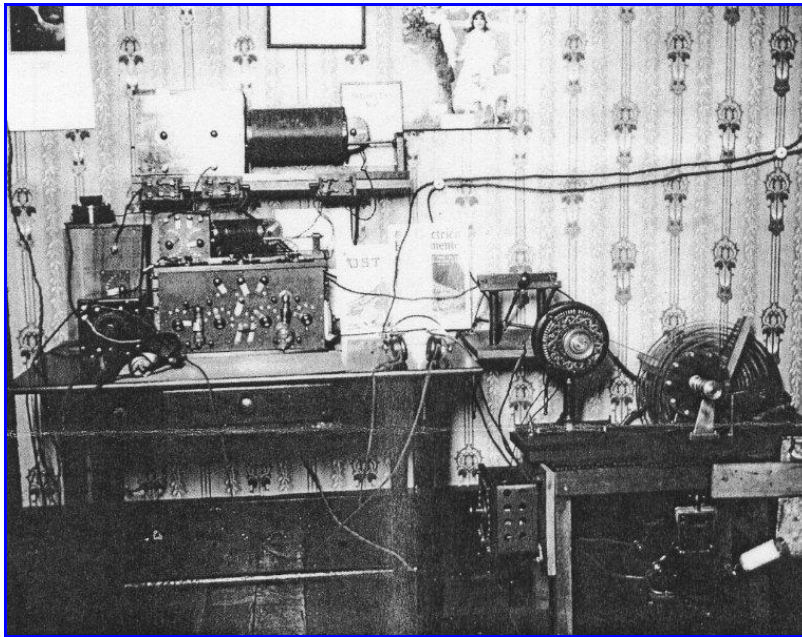


There is an unusual place in Western Ohio near the Indiana line. It is an 8 mile man made reservoir called "Grand Lake St. Marys." Fine boating, fishing and camping ever since I can remember plus one of my assignments for service was at the St. Marys State Highway Patrol Post. As I usually do in the winter months, read old issues of QST from the teens and found a good subject.



Little did I know at the time of my tenure in the 60s of a local married couple in the town of St. Marys, "The Candler's." Dr. Charles and Emma Candler shared a station, the joint call **8NH** and were wireless pioneers in that region. Because of their civic mindedness and activities with pioneer radio the couple became known far and wide.

Charles became a "Ham" in 1914 then his wife Emma in January 1915, at a time when equipment was usually home made and primitive, yet they

were experienced and knew how to put out a good signal that was easily copied in the region and beyond. Doc. Charles born in 1884 had earned his BA from Miami of Ohio U and presently Principal of St. Marys High School. When he became interested in radio in 1914, they started with a one inch spark coil, crystal detector and loose coupler.

In 1915 the couple acquired 1KW and an audion and abused the ether with 133 cycle static and signed 8NH on the key. (Per QST Who's Who November 1920.) Charles was part of the transcontinental DX testing in the early 20s experimenting with the likes of 9ZN at the Chicago Radio Laboratory. (Of the Zenith dynasty)

Ms Emma Candler loved handling ARRL traffic and was part of the Presidential relay coast to coast May of 1917. My friend Bob Baird W9NN who was (8BTI) in his letter of 21 Aug 1998 advised me that he and the Dayton boys would travel to see the 8NH station at St. Marys from their location then in Dayton. We didn't receive any QSLs from Emma but visited her a few times, as Bob recalled Dr. Candler didn't care for the extra excitement over Emma. Prior to 1920 QSL cards were a rarity.

Bob Baird said "The Candler station got out very well and it was thought they had lake effect from Grand lake St. Marys to help the signal, Emma had a great fist and could send ARRL traffic by the hour, she had a lot of guys at her door step who were fascinated with the great signal. She was courteous showing them the station and antenna system which was 87 feet long, 58 feet high, six wires, lead in from the center. It got hectic for Charles and he didn't appreciate the knocks on the door at all hours."

David Middleton W5CA/W7ZC said of Emma "Myself as an avid ham since 1919 I have watched with great interest the advent and progress of YL's into the Ham Game. My first cognizance of YL Ham radio came in listening in awe to 8NH as the skillful fingers of Mrs. Candler in St. Marys Ohio, beating out rhythmic code on Spark in her inimitable fashion as a veteran traffic handler.. Continued

Ham radio owes much to those women pioneers who blazed a trail.” Middleton said.

Some say Emma was the first YL ham operator in the USA. Which could be true but there is one record that shows a California lady slightly ahead of her. Post war the Candler's were issued 8ER and then Charles was involved in long distance communications to determine how far two way contacts could attain. Record after record was broken and they both shared a very competitive station.

Your author has spent hundreds of hours out on Lake St. Marys, the pleasure of boating and fishing, through all kinds of weather, blue skies, sunny summer days. That truly was a beautiful place and hasn't seen the likes of the Candler's since. It seems not a trace was found of the Candler's in the late 20s. Could the loss of old King Spark cause two casualties to the ranks? It was said then, CW did not measure up to the old tone and quality of King Spark in the eyes of many early operators. But then in the school system, should a position call of better importance, I am sure both of our subjects would move away and serve gladly.

We found a Ohio death record for Emma Candler in 1938, location Hamilton County near Cincy. Then Charles Candler in 1944 at Washington County Ohio from his home area.

Their name comes up on occasion and it is my hope that this material might help in the memory of those two great pioneer ham operators.

Our second picture is of Emma at the radio installation circa 1920. Thanks to Bob Baird W9NN memories and pictures, David Middleton W7ZC, dokufunk.org
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earlyradiohistory.us/1917



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