

The Mighty Purple Pajama III - Henry P. Broughton, K2AE

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It is here recorded with deepest regret and sympathy that Henry Broughton, "The Mighty Purple Pajama No. III" as he was affectionately known, passed on to his just reward in the land of the "Silent Keys" May 26, 1959. Henry was at 94 (less one month) the oldest living member of the Old Old Timers Club which organization requires proof of 40 years of amateur radio participation. Heavily active as a ham from 1893 to the day of his death, he has employed the astonishing group of illustrious call signs 9SD, W9SD, 9JM, 8NJ, W2OIV and K2AE. His first "modern" ham station was 9SD in 1913 using Ford Spark Coils. Some of Henry's original equipment has been on exhibit at the ARRL museum for many years.

Besides being the head of that venerable organization "The Pajama Club," known for populating a segment of the 75 meter band in the wee hours of the morning, K2AE was always most active in the Old Old Timers Club. the Professional Loafers Club. the Schenectady Amateur Radio Association where he was elected a lifetime member and most of all the Schenectady County Emergency Net. Preparedness, and Assistance in Public Service Emergencies he always considered the most important aspects of amateur radio. At his own expense and with considerable concentrated effort he became the mainstay of the communications emergency organization in Schenectady N. Y. during World War II where he outfitted his own home as a light-proof, gas-proof and bomb-proof radio communications headquarters complete with 5 KVA of emergency power generating equipment. He used his own station wagon for mobile operation with the South Schenectady New York State Police, the Municipal Police and Fire Departments, the County Police, the FBI mobile radio, the key broadcast station in the area and the Schenectady County Wartime Emergency Radio Service.

During World War 1 his patriotic efforts professionally were directed towards maintaining the only source of electric power to the Northwestern Indiana area and providing war-plants with reconditioned heavy metalworking machinery which he had collected and worked on for years as a secondary hobby. Such equipment was virtually non-existent at the sudden time of need.

Henry Broughton never laid claim to any major role in spectacular or sensational amateur radio activities. His glory lay in the mundane constancy of solid everyday effort without which our country could never have achieved its significant stature. Perhaps his greatest moments occurred during five days in 1893 when, in an auditorium in St. Louis, Mo., he was the sole and personal assistant to the world renowned genius Nikola Tesla during the performance of hitherto little known experiments in the alternating current electrical art. During these experiments these two men demonstrated wireless communication using electromagnetic waves across the

auditorium stage. Unfortunately the learned men present were largely unable to realize the immense significance of what they had just witnessed. Consequently others received credit actually for a repetition of this feat many years later.

Henry Broughton was important to us all as a pillar of his community and as a standard bearer of the amateur radio fraternity. His steady selfless efforts in the realm of public service could well serve as a guide to us all. We shall value the personalized Christmas cards which he sent out to almost a thousand of us each year. We shall miss him on the nets and will think of him often.

