

Atwater Kent Model 4066 “Breadboard” Radio

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Donated by Bill Jack



Atwater Kent was the largest manufacturer of radios during much of the 1920s. In 1923, Atwater Kent released the Model 4066, also known as the Model 10. Mr. Kent liked being able to see the lighted vacuum tubes, and so his early radios did not have cabinets to enclose the components. Instead, parts were just screwed to a wooden board with connecting wires concealed on the bottom side of the board. The public began calling them “breadboard” radios. While quite a few were sold, the housewives of America found them difficult to dust, and so the company soon felt obliged to offer its radios in closed cabinets.

Before offering complete radios, Atwater Kent began by selling components and continued to offer components. Rather than purchase a factory-made breadboard radio, quite a few people purchased the individual parts and screwed them to their own wooden board, thereby saving some money. Today a radio collector purchasing a breadboard radio will check to see whether it has the original Atwater Kent paper tag showing that it was factory built.