

Local Telephone Co.'s Long Distance Connections

(No. 11 of Series)

By Mr. A. D. Bruce

In a former chapter of this series we related how, previous to 1890, the development of telephone business followed no systematic plan: rival companies would operate within the same city. Because of the very nature of the service that the telephone is supposed to give to the public, there is implied, — as a fundamental principle — that to give the maximum of service at the minimum of cost there should be no unnecessary duplication of circuits; also the further principle that there should be exchange of messages among all telephone systems, subject to equitable agreements being negotiated.

General realization of these two fundamental principles was a process that developed slowly. From the beginning of its history the Bell Company recognized the first mentioned principle, and the first important change to be made by them was the termination of rival companies competing for business within one city, by buying or absorbing the different systems and bringing them into one organization. Commencing its operations in large cities the Bell Telephone Co. developed a "city" mentality. To Bell Co. officials, telephone service was service in cities and large towns, plus long distance circuits, for the connection of those cities and towns. This "city mentality" is not surprising. The Bell Co. officials were so busy developing their city business that they had not given any thought to giving service to farmers. When farmers commenced to ask for service the company officials were unprepared, and were completely at sea, as we will discover.

If Bell Tel. Co. officials were immature, when confronted with a demand for service in rural districts, the rural dwellers were more primitive in their thinking. Those who were charged with the management of the first independent telephone systems were densely ignorant concerning the difficulties with which they would be confronted, and sometimes rushed in where experienced men would have hesitated to tread. Very early the independent companies accepted the principle that there should be exchange of business between all systems, but for many years they failed to realize that delineation of boundaries was necessary before the maximum of service could be given to the public, at a minimum of cost.

Evidence of this erroneous thinking is found in the fact that one of the company members in our York & Ont. Tel. Union obtained its charter primarily to give service in the Town of East Toronto, which town was a suburb of Toronto, and in which the Bell Tel. Co. was firmly established. At the other end of Toronto—in West Toronto Junction—a company called the Stark Telephone, Light and Power Co. announced its intention of establishing telephone service, using an "automatic" switchboard. Incidentally, to the writer, this was the first intimation that "dial" operating was a possibility. In March, 1906, the Directors of The Bethesda & Stouffville Tel. Co. appointed a committee to communicate with the ambitious Stark Tel., Light & Power Co. with a view to discussing a possible connection between our systems. We did hold one meeting with representatives of the Stark Company and had a friendly discussion. Fortunately negotiations had not reached a point at which we had incurred any expense — as a result of our negotiations — when the Stark Co. vanished from the scene.

In 1906 an attempt was made to organize a company which, it was hoped, would be able to compete with the Bell Tel. Co. The writer was invited to become one of the promoters of the proposed company, but declined the invitation. The proposal originated among U.S.A. manufacturers of telephones, who were anxious to promote sales among independent telephone companies throughout the U.S.A. and Canada. The proposal was to erect long distance trunk lines only, which would form a network connecting independent systems, thus creating a country-wide long distance service.

The fatal weakness of the

(continued on page 6)

Mr. Ray Yake and his brother Wilmo are on an extended bus tour of the Southern States. At present they are enjoying California sunshine.

Mink Ranch Wiped Out by Poisoning



The hopes and dreams of Mr. Alvin S. Farmer, Gormley mink rancher ended in ruin last week. His entire brood of 325 animals with the exception of two, died in their cages after receiving their final meal on Tuesday night. The loss is estimated at approximately \$13,000. Food poisoning is believed responsible.

Mr. Farmer recalls giving the mink their regular evening meal of ground horse and whale meat. When he returned to their cages early the next morning all but two were dead. The only mink that survived was one that escaped from a cage during the previous day,

and another that wasn't fed. It is all that remains of a once-thriving business.

The exact cause of the deaths is as yet a mystery. Mr. Farmer took a number of the dead animals to the Ontario Veterinary College at Guelph where a thorough check will be made. A sample of the food will also be inspected.

The catastrophe marked the end of a dream that was just beginning to be realized by the Gormley-mink farmer. He started the business with two small mink 17 years ago. At first it was just a hobby but in a few years' time it grew into a profitable trade. Now everything he has worked for is lost.

A separate feed house was turned into a mink morgue where the small bodies littered the floor. Dozens have been placed in bushel baskets and will be buried. Some of the pelts may still be saved.

Mr. Farmer was specializing in the costly silver-blue breed. He believes it to be the worst loss ever to be experienced by a single mink rancher in Ontario.

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him in 1939. Since Mr. Raymer made his home with his daughter, Elma (Mrs. Scott-Rafter) in Hamilton until last summer when he went to live with his other daughter, Lorna in Alexandria. Although within a few months of his ninetieth birthday, Mr. Raymer enjoyed vigorous health until recently.

The funeral was conducted by Rev. Douglas Davis from O'Neill's Funeral Chapel on Tuesday afternoon with interment at Dickson's Hill.

Pat Smith, daughter of Alfred Smith, Cashel has received a special award from O.A.C. for a prize bull reared by her.

Markham Township Council made a grant of \$100 to the 1955 Markham Fair on Monday evening and a special grant of \$75 towards the special Centennial activities of this year's Fair.

Markham Township Council has engaged three new police officers on the recommendation of the local police committee, bringing the total force up to eight men, including Chief Clarence Wideman. The men engaged include two former provincial officers, Geo. Fyfe and R. A. Hood who will be paid \$3,300 per year as experienced policemen and Louis Durant of Markham who will receive \$2,900. The township had twenty-four applicants from which to choose.

Engineer Resigns
Council accepted the resignation of Jack Howard, road engineer, during Monday night's meeting. Mr. Howard who comes from Box Grove has taken a position as co-ordinating engineer for Scarborough Township. He has been with Markham for the last two years.

Reeve LeMasurier in announcing the resignation stated that he deeply regretted Mr. Howard's move. Council agreed that a replacement should be advertised for immediately and this matter will be taken up at a special council session being

held this Saturday.

No Pink Slips
Messrs. Stewart Watson, Don McIntosh and Fred Wicks appeared before council on Monday evening asking for the continuance of the half mill levy for Federation of Agriculture purposes and the continued exemption for fire and police costs for land owners of more than five acres.

The delegation asked further that the sending out of a pink slip to all farmers be discontinued. The pink slip is sent out by the assessor and any farmer who does not wish to pay the Federation levy can object by filling out this form. Only five such forms were returned last year and this fact Reeve LeMasurier pointed out.

The deputation objected on the grounds that the special paper drew attention to the levy and possibly threw it in a "bad light."

Assessor Archie Fleming stated that the Assessment Act required him to give every farmer an opportunity to be exempt from the levy if he wished and it was his intention to carry out the Act.

Eleven senior graduates received their diplomas on Friday evening at the annual Stouffville Dist. High School Commencement. The students

from left to right are: Margaret Burkholder, Barbara Hisey, Margaret White, June Smith, Phyllis Paisley, Patsy Smith, Gloria Hood, Betty

Lou Keffer, Audrey Brown; in front are Graham Frisby and Glen Thompson. The diplomas were presented by A. G. Thompson, vice chairman

Ontario '55 Road Budget Provides for Repaving of Stouffville Main Street

The new road budget of the Province of Ontario as recently announced at \$220 million by Premier Frost, provides as one of its capital expenditures, the re-paving of Stouffville's Main Street with storm sewers. The road budget was part of the \$317 million total budget and while not an entire breakdown has been given, some of the important items on the agenda for this part of the country have been revealed.

The Stouffville Main St. pavement was laid in 1930 at a cost of approximately one hundred thousand dollars of which the local municipality bore \$67,000 in debentures at that time, the total cost being divided between the province, the county and the village. Since that time the road has been taken over

and maintained as Provincial Highway No. 47. The twenty-five year old road which was laid with a six inch concrete base by the Warren Paving Co. is in bad state of repair, its steady decline having been accentuated in recent years by the heavy truck traffic through town.

More assistance was promised in the provincial budget for municipal roads which is thought to consist mainly of help to those municipalities hard hit by last fall's hurricane.

In conversation with Reeve Daniels, The Tribune learned that if the re-paving is going ahead to completion in 1955, council may give consideration to the possibility of sewers as the time would be most advantageous for such a program.

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Some Stores To Open Friday & Saturday

A number of business places in Stouffville will re-commence opening both Friday and Saturday evenings this week. A large display adv. on page 11 of this issue announces the change.

Those business places listed will be open for shopping until 10 p.m. on Friday night and until 9 p.m. on Saturday.

C. H. Bell & Son Sixteen Years In Business Here

C. H. Bell & Son is this week marking sixteen years in business in Stouffville and to celebrate the occasion this well-known appliance store has announced a smashing sale with prices dropping on some items to below cost. The announcement appears on page two of this issue where Mr. Bell has used The Tribune's new service of two-colour advertising of these great anniversary bargains.

Television sets, electric stoves, refrigerators and laundry dryers will be cleared in this sale at prices which even the city's cut-rate appliance stores cannot beat. Read the announcement and see for yourself.

Report Big Price For Highway Farm

The 100 acre farm belonging to Mr. Wm. C. Champion west of Unionville has been sold for a reported \$126,000. The property was purchased a number of years ago from Mr. Oscar Cox for \$18,000. Mr. Champion will continue to reside there until the end of the year. The land has been purchased for a proposed development.

"White Christmas" one of those all-time great motion pictures is showing for four days at the Stanley Theatre next week.

Peewees Get Ready For Goderich

The Goderich-bound PeeWee team will hold its first practice on Saturday afternoon from 12 o'clock noon to 1 p.m. The 3 regular PeeWee contests will be cut to forty-five minutes instead of the usual hour long games. The following boys are requested to be at the arena

and dressed by twelve o'clock: Norman Galbraith, Lynn McMullen, Larry McMullen, Alan Boyd, Marvin Betz, George Malcolm, Larry Malloy, Rick Wedseloff, Warren Hendricks, Roger Stover, Wayne Pennanen, Glenn Jackson, Willard Peddie, Bill Ratcliff, Jim Malloy and Eldon Wagg.

Coaches Bill Lennox and "Casey" Hilliard will handle the practice sessions. The last journey to Goderich on the week of April 10th.

Newmarket Wants Whitchurch Land For Industry

A delegation of Newmarket councilmen headed by Reeve Jos. Dales appeared before Whitchurch Township Council on Thursday evening to discuss the possibility of annexing certain Whitchurch farm land for the purpose of industrial development. Reeve Dales stated that their visit was purely in the exploratory, to ascertain if the township would be willing for such annexation.

Councillor Belugin explained Newmarket's situation, stating that the percentage of residential assessment as placed against industrial assessment was falling, that employment had fallen off and it was council's desire to provide jobs for the residents. He said that council had taken a stand against any further subdividing for residential purposes.

"We just can't afford to supply services any more to homes," Mr. Belugin said. Reeve Dales told Whitchurch that determined efforts were being put forward to bring several new industries to the town and one in question required a tract of fifty acres and railway facilities.

Deputy-reeve Legge of Whitchurch commented that the township council could not sell the farmers down the river in to higher taxation. Farms located along the Middlebrook road were suggested as probable annexation lands.

"They would definitely have to be considered," replied Reeve Dales. "We can't have them bled for taxation while they're waiting for a good price for their industrial land," continued deputy-reeve Legge.

Councillor Wallwork cited an instance in British Columbia where such land was given a fixed tax until the development took place and then the difference in the high industrial price was returned to the municipality.

Reeve Dales reaffirmed his stand that adequate safeguards would be given the township property owners.

L. P. Evans, chairman of the Whitchurch Planning Board, who was in attendance at the meeting, said that Whitchurch faced the danger of becoming a "bedroom" for Newmarket, residents living in the township and working in Newmarket which municipality would gain all the benefits of the industrial assessment and the township would run all the risks of having the relief problems. He said that he did not believe in wholesale annexation.

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Lou Keffer, Audrey Brown; in front are Graham Frisby and Glen Thompson. The diplomas were presented by A. G. Thompson, vice chairman

of the High School Board, assisted by Mrs. Jemmett, Secretary, and Principal O. E. Robbins.