

### How One Town Owns All It's Public Utilities

The following article from the Technical World tells the interesting story of how a Kansas town a little larger than Marshfield manages to own its public utilities to the profit and comfort of its citizens. Sabetha, Kansas, was formerly the home town of J. W. Mitchell and he bears personal knowledge of the excellence of the service rendered. The following is the article:

It did not take long for Sabetha, Kansas, to build its own utilities. While the newspapers were printing frosty messages last winter about the weather thirty degrees below zero, coal shortage and shivering families, this little town of 2,100 inhabitants in Nemaha county, was the most comfortable place in the state. It had its own pure water supply; it owned an excellent light plant; it had a perfect system of sewerage disposal; and more important than all, in the winter, it had a municipal steam heating outfit that made it independent of everything and everyone on the frozen, snow-covered earth, excepting only the powers that produced the fuel oil for the furnaces—and it had a good supply of that.

Sabetha had no injunctions to fear last winter. It had no franchise grab to fight, no coal trusts to fear and not one lawyer within its peaceful limits. This doesn't mean that Sabetha had an embargo on lawyers. It means, only that a man in that profession would starve to death there—and so would the honorable police judge, appointed as a necessary part of the town's corporation, if he were not above want, for he never holds court. It means, too, that Sabetha has been wise enough to profit by the mistakes of other towns and cities and, in view of the record to date, it must have had much to learn. It is without a doubt, the one town on the American continent so self-satisfied that it is not particularly interested in commission form of government now, although its more progressive citizens are urging this further movement, while admitting it is not especially needed. It is in a class by itself, too, in that it has fewer than 125 negative votes in a total of about 700 home-owners. And even this timid opposition to things taxable is weakening, thawed out, and warmed into smiles and good nature by the graceful radiation that comforted everyone while the outside world was wrapped in gloom. But there are no ward bosses in Sabetha, and, as I said a moment ago, no lawyers.

There never was an engineer, I suppose, who did not, at some time in his life, try to figure out a way to use waste steam, especially when he learned that only about 20 per cent of the amount actually did any work. This problem struck in the mind of George Edward Johnson, Sabetha's city engineer, for years. It had been there for a long time. He didn't solve it either; let me put that down; but he learned how to use the steam he created, instead of letting it float away into the Kansas sunshine and he told Sabetha what to do and how to do it, a raw, young fellow whose chief technical training had been gained in a hurry-up course in the Armour Technological Institute in Chicago. While some others marveled in small towns were content to draw their salaries, Johnson, helped by a wife, a Chicago girl, who was a graduate civil engineer, figured out the way, and learned the lesson, and gave the town what few towns have, a municipal heating system that heats.

It isn't an easy task to unravel the municipal business negotiations of the average American city or town. There is always so much to hide. But you can see the books in Sabetha. They are as clean as the drinking water. They show that the town began its Uplift Movement in 1901, when it bonded the town for \$125,000 for a lighting plant. To cover this indebtedness the town issued \$10,000 in four per cent bonds, and issued six per cent warrants for the remainder to be paid out of earnings. The bonds of course were paid out of the taxes at that time eight mills on the dollar. Now the tax rate is six mills.

When a town of 2,000 population gets electric lights its people ordinarily, consider themselves as near Heaven as any rural inhabitant has an every-day right to be. But in Sabetha's case this improvement was only a beginning. True it dragged along for seven or eight years rather discouragingly contented, but then came the demand, one day, for water, pure water and lots of it. So Sabetha with its customary unanimity of public opinion, remarkably infrequent in American communities, voted some more bonds, \$65,000 worth, at 4 1/2 per cent, rebuilt its light plant, put in oil burning apparatus, erected a storage tank for oil, a tank that holds 22,000 gallons, constructed a smoke stack that cost \$1,400 and made a contract for fuel oil at 2 3/10 cents a gallon. This was two years ago. Citizens of Sabetha bought \$30,000 worth of these bonds, and if the law had not required that the whole public have a chance at them, they would have bought the entire issue, bankers say.

Being an inland town, a no-river settlement, Sabetha had to dig for its water. Most towns would have bored the wells and let it go at that. But Sabetha's wise men did more. They pestered the state board of health until its experts journeyed to its boarders and marked the best site for four wells. The site chanced to be on a man's farm—all the land out here is someone's farm—so Sabetha bought the two acres for \$1,000, put a well 140 feet deep, steel cased at each of the four corners, and promptly planted the tract to alfalfa. Now alfalfa you must remember is the golden egg of Kansas. In this case the crops, four or five in number, cut from the

town farm, pay the interest on the investment. And the electric light plant, down town does the pumping.

Sabetha seemed by this time to be proceeding rather more smoothly on its municipal career than observers in the nearby towns had believed, or in some instances, hoped; but Engineer Johnson wasn't quite satisfied. The electric light-water plant was not doing enough work, and the town needed heat. The old problem about steam came back. It worried him to see that white cloud, mounting hour after hour, into the blue. A big hospital was being planned for the town on the lines of the Mayo brothers at Rochester, Minn.—and there was talk of heating it with steam. Why not do this for the whole town, Johnson demanded? He knew, now, just what he needed, a simple little attachment for the radiators, a little attachment with a big name, a thermometer! An instrument maliciously planned to defeat Jack Frost.

Some may not understand the hard times Johnson had while he planned this improvement. Many of the best men in town who had been leaders in public improvements had to "call a halt" when the young engineer proposed to send steam through pipes to radiators, pass it through this thermometer arrangement, and return it to the plant as water to be re-boiled into steam and again sent out, again and again, and some more yet, and all for the price below the cost of coal. They were public-spirited citizens, they wanted that understood but there was a limit, and when it came to this kind of scheme—well, although residing in Kansas there would still be a demand for visible proof.

The lowest bid Johnson turned up in Chicago to equip his town, was \$9,000. And that was rather too stiff. The doctor with his hospital plans, involving about \$75,000 was with him, and together they searched the town. It must be possible, Johnson argued, for a town to get wholesale price when it bought in wholesale lots. He got his cut rates, too, finally, and then the "Big Business" came around with a lower bid and Sabetha got its pipes and its radiators and the little contraptions with the long name. When the system had been installed, the labor of digging having been done by high school boys, for twenty-five cents an hour, Sabetha had spent exactly \$4,922. That included the vacuum pumps. Standard steam pipe was used in size eight inches at the plant, reduced to seven inches, two or three blocks away, with a three-inch return pipe all the way. To serve a consumer a two-inch tap pipe was used with one-inch return pipe.

The pipes were laid in a conduit which cost, for material and labor, including the digging of the ditch at 25 cents an hour, \$2 a foot. The conduit to carry the pipes, consisted of a pipe box of 1-2 inch stuff having no cover, laid in the trench on top of four inches of concrete at the bottom of which was put a four inch tile to carry off any seepage. The main steam pipe and the return pipe were laid in the box which was filled with concrete. Expansion joints care for the usual pipe activity and under the conduit a roller at certain intervals disposes of "creeping." The construction, the engineer believes, could be done somewhat more cheaply after the first trial, but this was one of the things they learned by experience. Steam, Mr. Johnson knew, could be produced alive for nine cents a square foot of radiation, but thermosfer were needed and money for development was needed, so they charged 25 cents. He satisfied himself, too, that electricity could be produced at the board for 3 1/4 cents a kilowatt hour, if fuel oil were used. One gallon of this oil will evaporate fourteen pounds of water. The steam produced is sent through the pipes at one pound pressure, usually, but it enters the vacuum at the velocity of a cannonball and when it condenses in the radiators the water is pulled back by these vacuum pumps through a smaller pipe lying underneath. The pumps are duplicates having 6 by 8 steam cylinders and 12 by 8 water cylinders. Less than two per cent of the steam is wasted in the process.

Of course no one man "unaided and alone" could handle a deal like this, untie all the options and satisfy all the viewpoints. Sabetha has a finely organized Commercial Club which holds the people's confidence—it is the people for that matter—and a city council does just what the Commercial Club thinks is right. It was this representative body that carried out the inside ramifications of the business when it came to equipping the stores and factories and homes with radiators. These were bought by the town in Chicago and sold to the consumers at an advance just high enough to pay for the work of putting them in. Seven blocks, or rather three on both sides, had been equipped when the extreme cold weather came. The rate for service is now twenty-five cents a square foot of radiation, about 7 1/2 per cent, the cost of coal, the users say, but this will be reduced after the plant is paid for, which will be a little more than two years. The revenues from steam heating, the last service year, will be about \$2,000. The town used last winter 10,000 square feet of radiation. As the surrounding towns are arranging to buy electric current from Sabetha for light and power, more steam will be generated and in this way the inevitable extensions will be supplied those who need steam heat.

One of the chief joys of Sabetha with its fuel oil furnaces and its steam radiators is the town cleanliness. It has no coal smoke. The houses are bright, the windows shine. One's linen shows no signs of black. There are no ashes in the al-

leys. There isn't any coal in the towns except in the home districts where the steam pipe has not been laid. And all these districts will have steam next winter.

To get steam into the homes of Sabetha the property owners must pay for the mains in the street. By combining this does not create an excessive expense: about \$125 or \$140. The rate then is based on the price of coal and what it cost to heat the house the winter previously. This method was used last winter. For instance, the Sabetha National Bank had a rate of \$57. Its coal bill in the winter of 1910-1911 was \$66. It had more steam heat last winter than it needed. A drug store 60x22 with 16-foot ceiling paid \$41 for its radiators, last winter. It cost \$70 to install the system. This store couldn't be heated with furnace for less than \$75 a winter. Another delightful feature is the fact that if you don't use steam heat in Sabetha you don't have to pay a tax for someone else's heat. The tax is apportioned among the users, in the shape of payment for services, and those earnings take up the city's warrants issued to pay for the equipment.

But Sabetha is just the sort of town to demand the new service just as fast as it can be supplied. It is a motor town. There are so many motors in use that a special rate was made. We have never seen so many electrical conveniences in homes anywhere. They are found in shops, the butcher stalls, planing mills, garages, grain elevators, and in homes; they are used for passenger elevators, feed grinders, washing machines, ironing laundries and dentists' offices. They seem to delight in putting in every convenience they can buy. They were not satisfied until they had spent \$26,500 a few years ago, to install septic tanks and sanitary sewers, a system large enough for a town four times as large as Sabetha. The lateral sewers cost them \$15,000 more and all this tax, as the books show, was paid up within thirty days, except \$3,022.12—the treasurer insisted on having the exact amount reported.

And how about paving? Sabetha will have paved streets, thank you, after awhile. It prefers right now to let the steam plant pay for itself as the light and water plant has done. It would like, too, to have a fund—a paving fund, but it does not care to put down a foot of paving until all the wires are underground. Think of that in a town of 2,100! You couldn't string a line of poles in Sabetha today for love or money. All wires must go under. There's the "White Way", for instance, on the principal street. The ornamental poles, with three or four globes, have been ordered for seven blocks of business property and every foot of the wire will go under ground. This improvement will cost every business man \$8.33 as an installation charge. After that, presumably the rate will be "sliding" like the others, for everyone in Sabetha pays according to his consumption, with a liberal discount above certain amounts. The ice plant uses \$400 worth of current a month with a four cent rate. Twelve cents a kilowatt hour is the basis for this charge.

It is due Sabetha at this point to draw attention to the fact that it is not a Socialistic town, a co-operative community or anything of the sort. It is a town almost without politics. Indeed there are no parties where the welfare of Sabetha is concerned. These distinctions are reserved for state and national disturbances and newspaper polls. There are two tickets in the field when the town has an election: Citizens' and Municipal, although both, bless their hearts! are working for Sabetha. The only contest appears to be which side can get the candidates first. A city official in Sabetha has precious little to do anyway. The people don't leave him many of his prerogatives. When some thing turns up that would look good, they call a meeting of the Commercial Club and talk it over, and that's all there is to it, so far as Mr. City Official is concerned. It would be hard to imagine a happier family, municipally speaking. And not a lawyer in the town.

Sabetha, however, does not exactly attribute its prosperity, its freedom from discord to absence of members of the legal fraternity. No it does not so indiscriminately jumble its causes and effects. It thoroughly understands that the lack of lawyers alone does not make for harmony. When the good citizens of Sabetha—if that day should ever come—grow fractious and quarrelsome, lawyers may follow.

#### NEWS OF THE RAILWAYS

The Pennsylvania railroad claims to have a payroll that is unique among the railroads of the country. It has on its salary list 2040 employees who have been in service 43 years or longer, and 1572 men who served 40 years or more and are now receiving pensions. There are upon its payroll today 489 men who have been in the service of the company more than 50 years and one employe has been receiving pay from the company for 60 years. There are living today eight Pennsylvania employes who are over 90 years of age.

Libby COAL. The kind YOU have ALWAYS USED. Phone 72 Pacific Livery & Transfer Co.

Have your job printing done at The Times' office.

If you have anything to sell, trade or rent, or want help, try a Want Ad

#### HELPED TO KEEP DOWN EXPENSES

Mrs. J. E. Henry, Akron, Mich., tells how she did so: "I was bothered with my kidneys and had to go nearly double. I tried a sample of Foley Kidney Pills and they did me so much good that I bought a bottle, and feel that they saved me a big doctor's bill." Red Cross Drug Store.

# 'Meet Me In Marshfield' Have a Merry Time

## Three Days of Fast and Furious Fun Tuesday, Wednesday July 2, 3 and Thursday

### Program of Events As They Happen

#### JULY 2.

9 to 12 a. m.—Trap shoot. First Event—Ten targets; preliminary. Unknown angles. Entrance fee, \$1. Three prizes. Money divided 60 and 40 per cent.

Second Event—Fifteen targets. Unknown angles. Entrance fee, \$1. \$25 added money. Three prizes. Money divided 50, 30 and 20 per cent.

Third Event—Fifteen targets. Unknown angles. Entrance fee, \$1. \$25 added money. Three prizes. Money divided 50, 30 and 20 per cent.

Fourth Event—Twenty targets. Unknown angles. Entrance fee, \$1.50. \$50 added money. Four prizes. Money divided 40, 30, 20 and 10 per cent.

The highest individual average will be presented with the Peters medal. All ties will be divided.

All events will be shot off in strict accordance with the American Association rules.

WILL EKBLAD, Secretary.

10 to 10:45 a. m.—Human rosebud drill.

1:30 to 4:30 p. m.—Races at fair grounds.

No. 1—Trotting and pacing, 1/4 mile heats, 2:30 class, best two out of three. Purse, \$150.

No. 2—Running, 1/2 mile dash, for horses owned in Coos and Curry counties since January 1, 1912, catch weights. Purse, \$75.

No. 3—Half mile burro race. Purse, \$5.

No. 4—Carriage horse race, half mile, best two out of three. Purse, \$25.

No. 5—Running, 1/4 mile dash. Purse, \$150.

No. 6—Quarter mile dash, catch weights, for horses not trained this season. Purse, \$15.

F. P. NORTON, Secretary.

4:45 to 5:30 p. m.—Log rolling contest. Three prizes, \$20, \$10 and \$5.

A. H. POWERS, Secretary.

7:30 to 8:30 p. m.—Band concert.

8:30 to 10 p. m.—General promenade city streets.

#### JULY 3.

9 a. m.—Assembly. Music.

9:20 to 11 a. m.—Boat races.

No. 1—Speed boat race for boats with speed over 25 miles per hour; 15 miles. Three prizes, \$25, \$15 and \$10.

No. 2—Speed boat race for boats with speed less than 25 miles per hour; 15 miles. Three prizes, \$20, \$10 and \$5.

ARTHUR K. PECK, Secretary.

11 to 12 a. m.—Water parade. Best decorated launch in parade. Two prizes, \$10 and \$5.

1:30 to 4:30 p. m.—Races at Fair Grounds.

No. 1—Trotting and pacing; half mile heats, best three out of five, free for all. Purse, \$150.

No. 2—Running, half mile dash, for horses owned in Coos county since January 7, 1912, catch weights. Purse, \$100.

No. 3—Running, 1/4 mile dash, catch weights, horses not trained this season. Purse, \$20.

No. 4—Running, 1/4 mile dash. Purse, \$150.

No. 5—Half mile mule race. Purse, \$5.

No. 6—Carriage horse race; half mile heats, best two out of three. Purse, \$25.

F. P. NORTON, Secretary.

2 to 4:30 p. m.—Field sports in town.

100 Yard Dash for boys under 16 years. Three prizes, \$3, \$2 and \$1.

Pole Vault—Free for all. Three prizes, \$5, \$3 and \$1.

Pole Vault—Boys under 16 years. Three prizes, \$5, \$3 and \$1.

Pole Vault—Boys under 13 years. Three prizes, \$5, \$3 and \$1.

Running high jump—Free for all. Three prizes, \$5, \$3 and \$1.

Pole Vault—Boys under 16 years. Three prizes, \$5, \$3 and \$1.

FRANK D. COHAN, Secretary.

4:45 to 6 p. m.—Log rolling contest. Three prizes, \$25, \$10 and \$5.

A. H. POWERS, Secretary.

7:30 to 8:30 p. m.—Band concert.

8:30 to 9:30 p. m.—Street show.

#### JULY 4, 1912

9:00 to 9:30 a. m.—Assembly and music.

9:30 to 10:15 a. m.—Parade.

Best business or industrial floats in parade two prizes, \$10 and \$5.

Best appearing fraternal order in parade—First prize, \$10.

Sunday school making best appearance in parade, \$10.

Best decorated automobiles in parade, three prizes, \$15, \$10 and \$5.

Best decorated buggy or wagon, one prize, \$5.00.

Best decorated bicycle in parade, \$1.50.

Best decorated dog or goat cart, \$1.50.

Best rube wagon in parade, \$2.

Best decorated doll carriage. Three prizes. One box candy each. Best drilled team in Human Rosebuds. Two prizes. Large box of candy each. Best boy flag bearer in Rosebud parade. Two prizes. Large box of candy each. 10:15 to 11:00 a. m.—Human Rosebud display and drill. 11:00 to 12:00 a. m.—Patriotic exercises.

#### Masonic Opera House

1. Music—Band.

2. Recitation—Declaration of Independence by Miss Ruby Hendry.

3. Music—Band.

4. Oration—Dr. Harry Lane.

5. "Star Spangled Banner"—Band. J. T. McCormac, Sec.

1:30 to 2:30 p. m.—Horse race and exhibitions, two prizes, \$40 and \$20.

DAN KEATING, Secretary.

2:30 to 3:30 p. m.—Field Sports in town:

100 yd. dash, free for all, two prizes, \$10.00 and \$5.00.

100 yard dash for ladies, two prizes, \$5.00 and \$3.00.

75 yard dash, running backward two prizes, \$3.00 and \$2.00.

Sack race for boys under 16 years three prizes, \$3.00, \$2.00 and \$1.00.

100 yard dash, men weighing over 200 pounds, two prizes, \$5.00 and \$3.00.

Base ball throwing contest, ladies two prizes, \$5.00 and \$3.00.

Climbing Greased pole, one prize \$2.00.

Pie-eating contest, one prize \$2.00.

Frank D. Cohan, Sec.

4:00 to 5:00 p. m.—Tug of war contest, two prizes, \$45.00 and \$30.00.

A. H. POWERS, Sec.

7:30 to 8:30 p. m.—Band Concert.

8:30 to 12:00 p. m.—Masked Carnival, Confetti Battle, Ball.

All those appearing on the streets of Marshfield after 8:30 p. m. July 4th, should wear masks.

For information concerning an event, please correspond with the Secretary having that event in charge.

An additional prize of \$10.00 will be given for the best decorated business window in Marshfield during the three days.

All entries for field sports will close at 11 o'clock on day of event.

All citizens will kindly decorate their homes and business places with flags and bunting for these three days.

R. O. Graves, Mgr.

#### Don't Miss the Beautiful

# Human Rosebud Parade

### An Inspiring Spectacle of a School Children's Flower Drill and May Pole Dance

# Two Days of Horse Racing

## \$1,000.00 In Purses

# Dancing Every Night

### Good Music

# Come: We Will Be Glad to See You---Welcome