

STRANG MANAGED FIRST TELEPHONE SYSTEM IN CITY

Switchboard Installed in
Drug Store in 1898 —
Few Subscribers Until
Jacksonville Tolls Erased

The telephone today is looked upon as an indispensable convenience if not a commercial and social necessity, but there was a time in Medford when it was viewed as an extravagant and unnecessary luxury.

And Charles Strang, owner of Strang's drug store, recalled today just when it was when telephones were frowned upon in this locality.

The memory took Mr. Strang back to 1898 when Medford's first switchboard was installed in the back of his pharmacy, then situated where the Economy meat market now stands.

At that time the Pacific States Telephone company had just linked up San Francisco and Portland and was endeavoring to build up its telephone business along the line.

Switchboard service had already been inaugurated in Ashland and Jacksonville and the company sought to establish its business here, Mr. Strang recalled.

Few Cared for Phones.

The result was that a small board was set up in the rear of the Strang drug store and Mr. Strang became the first operator. He built up his patronage to 15 or 16 subscribers, but there the expansion stopped, as no one outside of a few physicians and business men showed even passing interest in the blessings and conveniences the telephone was supposed to bring, Mr. Strang related.

Despairing of the poor showing, an official of the company came to Medford from San Francisco and asked Mr. Strang if he had no suggestions as to how the patronage might be increased.

"Yes, I have," Mr. Strang replied. "Establish free service between Medford and Jacksonville."

That was done, Mr. Strang said, and tolls between the two points were eliminated. Business began to grow from then on, for Jacksonville was at that time the county seat and there was naturally considerable communication between the two cities. Soon it became necessary to install another switchboard in the pharmacy and it was not long before a third board was needed to handle the increased business, Mr. Strang said.

First Operators Named.

The first full-time operator to be employed at the drug store switchboard was Lillian Barr, now Mrs. Ralph Woodford of this city. It was recalled by Mr. Strang's son Fred, who by then had become an interested observer of the telephone business. The second operator was Florence Toft, who subsequently married and now resides in Los Angeles. She was a sister of the late Ray Toft. The third operator to be employed at the drug store was Miss Edna Ebert, who now is bookkeeper at the Hutchison Mercantile Co.

Mr. Strang said for his compensation he received a percentage of the phone rentals and tolls, out of which he had to pay the employees and take care of other expenses. He recalled with a chuckle that it always cost him more to operate the service than he received.

After ten years the subscribers exceeded 600 in number, Fred Strang related, and a separate office was established by the telephone company. While a student at the University of Oregon, Fred himself worked for the company during vacations, his job being to drive about the countryside in a buggy to collect rentals and to remove the wall phones when payment was refused, though he was called upon seldom to snip the wires, he said. "Those were the real horse and buggy days," the younger Mr. Strang commented.

Strang's drug store, incidentally, was the first pharmacy to be established in Medford. It was opened by the elder Mr. Strang in March, 1884, when the city's population was only 200. Mr. Strang having come here from Jacksonville, where his parents resided.

SUNDAY SCHOOL RALLY PLANNED

Next Sunday the Sunday school of the First Methodist Episcopal church will hold Rally Day Services in the sanctuary of the church. At the same time Promotion Day will also be observed and all the classes will be advanced according to grade.

All children advanced from one department to another will be given certificates. A number of new teachers are being added so as to provide for all attending. A class in teacher-training will be started the first Sunday in October.

"This is about the finest time of the year to enter a Sunday school class if you are not already attending and a large number of new members are expected to be present Sunday. Any one not attending elsewhere is cordially invited to be present," said the church announcement.

The Sunday school this Sunday will begin at 9:30 a. m.

SAFETY STORES LAUNCH CONTEST

The entire month of October is the time set for a \$1200 customer coffee contest, sponsored by Safety Stores. It was announced today.

Contest fans are to be treated to a unique type of contest in the firm's latest drive for coffee business. Unlike many contests, prizes will not be awarded on the basis of chance or skill. Awards will be made according to the number of pounds of the firm's three brands of coffee (Airway, Nob Hill and Edwards Dependable) sold upon the recommendations of the contestants.

There are 50 prizes in all to be offered. \$1200 in cash prizes are to be awarded as follows: First prize, \$500; second, third and fourth prizes, \$100 each; fifth, sixth and seventh prizes, \$50 each; eighth to seventeenth prizes inclusive, \$25 each. The 33 remaining prizes will each be a copy of Julia Lee Wright's latest edition of her loose-leaf cook-book, personally autographed.

The contest, which is open to everybody except, of course, employees of the company, works this way: The contestant calls at the store and asks for a supply of contest slips. These are to be signed and then passed out to friends and neighbors with a recommendation to try a pound of one of the three brands of coffee. When the purchase is made the slip is countersigned by the purchaser and turned in at the store, and at this point the contestant receives a credit of five points for each pound of coffee purchased. At the end of the contest the 50 highest contestants will be awarded the prizes in accordance with the standing of their scores.

Safety officials predict a tremendous interest in the contest this year.

Since a similar contest last year proved so popular. Stores participating in the event are located throughout Oregon and southwestern Washington. The closing date of the contest is October 31.

WINDOW GLASS—We sell window glass and will replace your broken windows reasonably. Trowbridge Casement Works.

HITCH-HIKER, AGED 3,
IS KLAMATH PROBLEM

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore.—(UP)—Police had to deal with the youngest hitch-hiker to go on the blotter—3 years old.

Two women motoring from the country club saw the youngster hop out of the weeds along the road and flash his tiny thumb at them. They picked him up and brought him into town, but he wouldn't tell them where he wanted to go. He spent most of the afternoon in police headquarters before his family was located.

"KICKERINICK"
Undergarments that fit at Ethelwyn B. Hoffmann's.

DRAW POKER RULED
AS GAME OF SKILL

SALEM.—(UP)—The sanctity of the pleasant art of filling an inside straight, holding the kicker and watching the other ace has been writ in large court records.

There's only one gambling game that's a game of skill, and that is good old-fashioned draw poker," ruled Judge L. H. McMahon in a legal dictum concerning an investigation of local gambling.

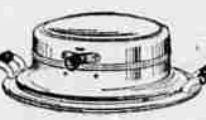
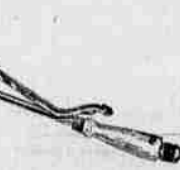
YELLOW JACKET FRIEND
OF FARMER, IS CLAIM

ASHLAND, Ore.—(UP)—The yellow jacket is not a 100 per cent nuisance, declares Fred C. Homes, local farmer who has studied the habits of the insect.

Yellow jackets befriend the farmer by destroying large numbers of alfalfa weevils. Many crops have been saved, he said, by advent of the wasps on poorly yielding farms.

GUNSMITH. Repairs for all makes of guns. Sims Bros., 23 N. Fir.

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\$8.95	\$3.95	98c
		
SANDWICH TOASTER AND GRIDDLE Toasts sandwiches, fries bacon and eggs, meats, fish cakes, etc. Brownie pancakes perfectly. Expansion hinge for 2 plate surface cooking. Chromium Plate.	THREE-HEAT PAD Two thermostats provide heat regulation. Peach eider-down cover. Complete with washable muslin slip for dry heat—separate water-proof cover for wet applications.	TURN-EASY TOASTER One of the most beautiful of all Turn-Easy Toasters. Attractive piercing on bread racks and top. Sides, bottom and top panelled. Chromium Plate.
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AUTOMATIC WAFFLE MAKER Adjustable—Light, Medium or Dark. Soft signal light tells when to pour batter and when waffles are ready to serve. Beautifully Panelled Top. Chromium Plate.	OLD ENGLISH TURN-EASY TOASTER Opening the bread rack turns the toast. Attractive piercing and etching on bread rack. Panelled Top, Base and Sides. Chromium Plate.	CURLING IRON Curls the hair with a professional touch. Has detachable connector plug. Chromium Plated Rod and Clamp Green Enamelled Handle.
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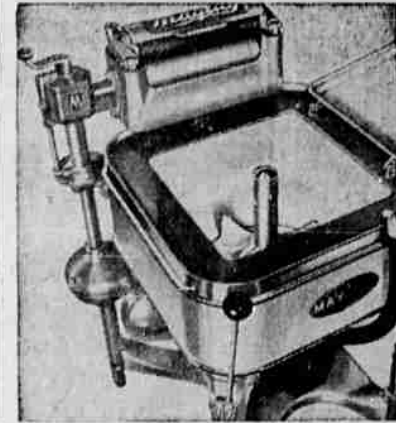
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