

Fight Over Phone System Continues

Editor's note: One of the most dramatic legal battles in this country's history involves the United States government and the heirs of an inventor held by many to be the man who made possible long distance telephone calls. In the following dispatch, UPI reporter Dick Fontana tells how this historic struggle was born and continues today—long after the death of the inventor.

By DICK FONTANA
United Press International
Pittsburgh — UPI — Elwood Aristides Grissinger knew wealth and fame. Yet he died broke, nearly forgotten.

Grissinger passed away Oct. 8, 1934. His obituary attributed death to "digestive trouble" which precipitated a heart attack. It could have read simply: Broken heart.

Grissinger earned a half-million dollars from a repeat system which revolutionized telephone communications and helped shorten World War I by a year.

Bill Would Force Stockmen To Give For Promotions
Salem — UPI — The Senate Wednesday passed and sent to the governor a bill forcing cattlemen to contribute to promotions of the Oregon Cattleman's association and the Western Oregon Livestock association.

The bill requires operators of all stockyards, packing plants, livestock auction markets and slaughterhouses to take 10 cents from the price of cattle and give the money to the state agricultural department. The department will turn it over to the Oregon Beef Council.

A seller who refuses to contribute has to sign a statement to this effect. He then gets a refund. Prior law stipulated that the fee could not be deducted from the sale price without specific consent.

Bill Criticized
Sen. Al Flegel (D-Roseburg) said the bill is mandatory because few persons will have an opportunity to sign for a refund in a cattle sale rush, and he criticized the bill. Flegel said cattlemen in his area don't want the state ordering them how to spend money they get from cattle sales.

Sens. Eddie Ahrens (R-Turner) and Walter Leth (R-Salem) said the bill does for the cattle industry what the fryer and wheat commissions have done for those industries.

They said the bill is really permissive because opponents are protected by a provision for referendum.

One-Car Crashes Take Large Toll

One-car non-collision accidents on Oregon highways are continuing to take an unusually high toll in human lives, and there is evidence that this death toll is growing greater all the time, according to Medford Police Chief Charles P. Champlin.

Champlin said that nearly a quarter of Oregon's rural highway crashes during 1960 were of the one-car variety, with more of them involving fatalities than any other kind of crash, including collisions.

The chief pointed out that in many of these accidents, particularly where the driver is killed, law enforcement officials can only speculate on the cause.

"However," he said, "the evidence usually indicates that the driver was driving too fast to keep control of his vehicle, went to sleep at the wheel, or committed some other careless act."

Champlin declared: "In spite of increased enforcement in town and country, use of radar, constant patrolling and broadening of our safety education program, one-car accidents continue. So we ask every driver to take stock of himself and remember that his own destiny lies in his hands when driving."

4-H News

Teen Bakers
The third meeting of the Teen Bakers 4-H club of Engle Point was held recently at the home of Mrs. John Pogue, our leader. The 4-H county extension agent, Miss Phyllis Kirkland, attended and talked to us.

Susie Carroll and Frances Huffman gave a demonstration on how to make a pie. Our officers are Susie Carroll, president; Frances Huffman, vice president; Ellen Hay, secretary, and Nancy Carroll, reporter.

At the previous meeting, Nancy Carroll and Ellen Hay gave a "show-me" on mixing bread dough and kneading. Nancy Carroll, Reporter

Death found him penniless, "because the government turned his invention over to France as surplus following the war," his relatives claim.

In 1911, Grissinger's invention was unveiled to the public at the Independent Telephone association's convention in Chicago. The Chicago Examiner called it "a remarkable test."

Remarkable Test
It indeed was a remarkable test, transmitting a human voice 4,500 miles under simulated conditions which would have placed the telephone receivers in Chicago and Honolulu.

Grissinger and his wife, Lucy, carried out the initial test, standing in separate rooms connected by a mammoth coil.

Grissinger, somewhat shaky, asked: "Hello. Are we right?" Over 4,500 miles of wire came the answer from his wife:

"It is perfection. You win."

The demonstration was heralded in magazines and newspapers across the country, each pointing up the elimination of cumbersome relay points and marveling at "the quality of voice resonance on a little box which annihilates distance."

Actually, the device was a three-in-one instrument. It neutralized over-magnification of sound waves, instituted station-to-station conversations and carried all overtones of the human voice — at least unheard of prior to that time.

With perfection of his idea, Grissinger sold internal patent rights to the American Telephone and Telegraph Co.

"Then the war came along," recalled Mrs. Priscilla Schuster, Grissinger's niece, who lives here. "And all Uncle Elwood's patents for England, Holland, Belgium, France and Italy were taken over by the U.S. government."

"Uncle Elwood's intention was to sell the patents to the individual European countries after the war. Instead, the United States installed the system during the war and used it, selling it afterward as part of surplus materials."

"General (John 'Black Jack' Pershing said it helped end the war by a year."

Grissinger filed suit against the government in 1922. He sought compensation for a "preconceived plan whereby my invention was . . . appropriated and secretly used to the enormous benefit of (the U.S. government) and all the Allies . . . leaving me standing without even the recognition of having been inventor of one of the great factors of success in winning the war and the saving of human life and property."

He was fighting a losing battle. Numerous "amicable settlements" were agreed upon and referred for adjudication.

"But Elwood was never paid a cent," Mrs. Schuster complained. "All the money he received for his original patent was poured into law suits. He was penniless when he died."

Ironically, Grissinger was attending Mrs. Schuster's wedding here when fatally stricken. She took up his fight and has been waging the struggle ever since.

"Not for me," she said, "but for Aunt Lucy (Grissinger's invalid widow) who is confined to her home in Buffalo, N.Y., and requires almost constant attention."

"The government got \$400 million from France for that surplus equipment, including the repeater system. All I want is for Aunt Lucy to get a fair pension. She's 89 and all alone."

Two bills were introduced into Congress in 1957 by New York Senators Jacob Javits and Kenneth Keating seeking to have the issue finally resolved. Both measures died in committee. There has been no legislative action since.

Cancer Is Subject Of Television Show

"Diagnosis and treatment of cancer" will be the topic of the Sunday television program, "Adventures in Medicine," arranged by the Jackson County Tuberculosis and Health association.

Physicians who will take part on the panel are E. W. Sickels, surgeon; Alan Markee, radiologist; Thomas J. Tinsley, radiologist, all Medford, and Dr. Earl Lawson, Medford, are co-chairmen for arrangements, and Mrs. John Boe will be moderator.

The program will begin at 4:30 p.m., with questions telephoned by the public to be answered during the half hour. Dr. P. M. Turner, Ashland, and Dr. Earl Lawson, Medford, are co-chairmen for arrangements, and Mrs. John Boe will be moderator.

London — UPI — Britain is asking the Soviet Union to agree to an immediate cease fire in Laos Thursday. Foreign Secretary Lord Home said today.

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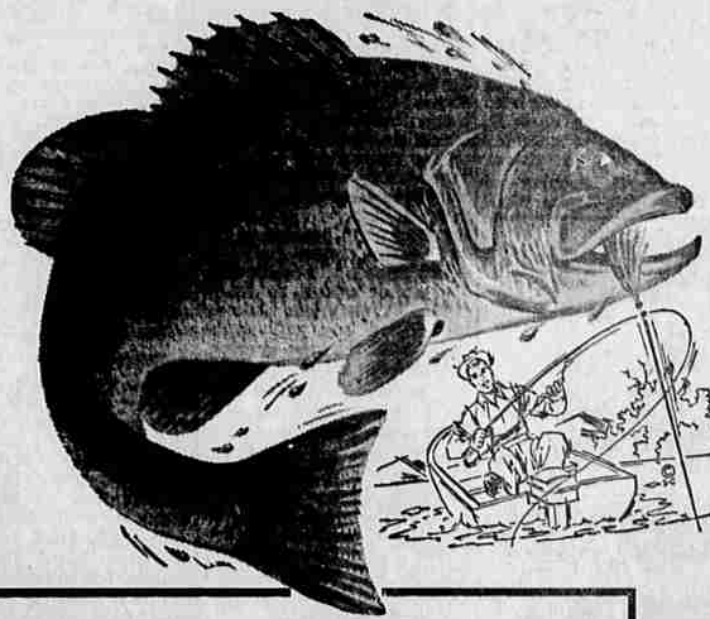
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