

# The Alliance Herald

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## PHONE FRANCHISE STILL UP IN AIR

Company Laying Low to See What Council Intends to Do—Improvements Needed.

The Nebraska Telephone company is pursuing a policy of "watchful waiting" these muddy spring days. In some parts of the city they are unable to give individual phones to customers, despite the fact that party lines are no longer popular. Some of these days, when the council passes a franchise, the company will spend some more money in installing needed improvements and extensions, but, as Commercial Superintendent F. A. May told the council at one of the earlier April meetings, they do not intend to spend a dime until given the legal right to do business in the city.

At the fourth council meeting of the month, Councilman Harris introduced a resolution providing that the sum of \$100 a month for occupation tax be asked of the Nebraska Telephone company, and this resolution was adopted unanimously. The company has not commented on the resolution, although, from remarks made by company representatives, this amount is considered outrageously high. Other cities the size of Alliance impose a tax of from \$50 to \$75 a year. Mr. May told the council at one time, and there is no question that a tax of \$1,200 a year will meet with firm objection.

Just what will happen if the company refuses to accept a franchise with so stiff an occupation tax and the council refuses to concede a thin dime? It opens up the opportunity for a fine little racket in which the citizens will get the worst of it. The council declares that it wants the company to do business here. In fact, members of the council have repeatedly said that they don't want any other company. But somehow, when it comes time to talk turkey, someone throws a monkey wrench into the franchise machinery.

The company's attitude is pretty well represented by a tale told by Councilman Moore at the Thursday evening session of the council, where a quorum failed to appear. Mr. Moore said that he had been called to the phone the previous evening, and a woman's voice asked anxiously:

"Can I get a phone put in?"  
"How do I know?" asked the councilman in turn. "I'm not in charge of the telephone installations. Why don't you take it up with the company's manager?"  
"I did," the woman replied, "and he told me to ask the council."

Clay Harry, the local manager, says that the case in question is one where it would have been necessary for the company to set new poles and string new wire in order to give the customer phone service. He says that he told the woman the circumstances and explained that the company did not, under the circumstances, care to make any additional investment.

Mr. Harry has made the following statement:

"It is a source of regret to employees of the telephone company that a condition of this kind should develop where we are temporarily obliged to refuse service to people of Alliance who really need it. Ours is a public utility company and service to the people of this city is the only commodity that we have to sell. The very nature of our work has imbued us with a spirit of service and loyalty equally to our patrons and to the telephone organization, but we realize that the company must protect its own interests or its ability to serve would be lost. Our franchise, our legal right to do business, in the city of Alliance has expired and we have asked for a new one. We want the city to grant us the use of the streets and alleys for the operation of our lines because our business is of such a nature that it would be impossible to operate without them. In return for this privilege we have built up a large telephone plant and distributed its lines and cables over the city and are rendering a necessary service at the very lowest possible cost to the people of the city. Up to the present time our franchise has not been renewed because the company and the city council have not been able to agree upon certain stipulations that should be included in it. It is right that the council should go slow in this matter. They have used every precaution to protect the interests of their constituents and are to be commended for it, but I believe that their zeal in protecting the city has caused them to hamper the progress of an industry whose service is ab-

solutely necessary to the people of the city.

"We have been here a long time and feel that we are a part of Alliance. There is every indication of a rapid growth of this city during the next few years. We want to lay our plans to develop and grow along with the city and serve it as we have in the past. The franchise in question is only our request for the legal right to remain here and grow with the city. The telephone company has had experience in franchise matters in hundreds of towns and are in a position to know what stipulations should be included so that they may operate and co-operate with the city most harmoniously. The people of Alliance I am sure will not censure us for attempting to protect our interests any more than they would the council for protecting the interests of the city. The lighter the burden that is imposed upon the company the lower the telephone rates will necessarily be because we have only one source of income from which to pay our expenses and that is from the service we sell to our patrons. We want our rates low so that we can develop along with the city and put telephone service within the reach of everybody. One man's telephone is of little value to him unless a majority of the other people in the city also have telephones.

"We now have plans for large extensions in Alliance to reach the new houses that are to be built this year and are waiting for the legal right to do business before we go ahead. The case in question is at a new house where we would be required to invest in a new pole line to reach it. The mayor himself has applied for telephone service under like conditions, the situation was explained to him and he has gracefully acknowledged our position. He is very anxious as are all of the councilmen to have the matter settled and the franchise granted, and I believe that our differences will be adjusted very shortly, a workable franchise put into effect, and the extension of our telephone lines continued."

## CANDIDATES FILE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

Candidates for nominations at the primary are beginning to file their expense accounts. They have until ten days after election, and today is the last day allowed by the law. But three men filed their accounts before Friday, and these got under the wire only a day sooner than they had to.

Earl D. Mallory has filed a statement showing that it cost him a total of \$64.17 to be elected delegate to the republican national convention. This included a donation of \$50 to the Wood-for-president club, and the balance was expended for printing and advertising.

County Judge Ira E. Tash filed a statement showing that all the money expended to secure his renomination for county judge was \$10, which is the amount of the filing fee. W. C. Mounts, clerk of the district court, got off with \$5 less than that, the filing fee for that particular office being only five simoleons.

## SECRETARY JONES HELPS ORGANIZE MULLEN CLUB

Secretary Rufus Jones of the Alliance chamber of commerce spent Thursday in Mullen, where he was the principal speaker at a public meeting called to organize a chamber of commerce. This meeting had been planned for some months, but everything from the influenza to the punk weather has had a turn at interfering.

No secretary has yet been chosen to take Mr. Jones' place, but the chamber of commerce directors have several men under consideration. Among these are men who are now at Denver and Amarillo, Tex. Mr. Jones has promised to stay until his successor has been selected.

## YOUTH FINED ON CHARGE OF DISORDERLY CONDUCT

Charles Pearl, eighteen years old, who is on his way to Colorado with an older friend, a sufferer from tuberculosis, was arrested by Chief Reed Tuesday evening on a charge of disorderly conduct. He pleaded guilty the following morning in police court and was fined \$10 and costs by Judge Roberts. Business has been dull in police court this month, there being but two cases. The other case was that of a Mexican who was fined \$25 and costs April 16 on a charge of carrying concealed weapons.

## ALLIANCE HIGH WINS IN DEBATE

Team Achieves Championship of Western Nebraska District by Defeating Scottsbluff.

The Alliance high school debating team won the championship of the western Nebraska district by defeating the team from Scottsbluff at the high school Thursday evening. It's an especially pleasing victory, not only because it permits the team to participate in another contest and brings them a step nearer the state championship, but because in this debate they won on the negative side, while previously they had been on the affirmative. It seems to be one of the rules of the association that the side to be taken depends on the toss of a coin, and the Scottsbluff debaters were lucky. It takes a good team to be able to win with either side of an argument.

The question was: "Resolved, That congress should prohibit strikes on railroads doing an interstate business." Alliance was represented by Edward Morrow, Ruth Stanton and William Cotant. The Scottsbluff debaters were Bruce Magee, Clarence Cooper and Harold Douthig. Scottsbluff supported the affirmative and Alliance the negative. The judges were Principal Robert E. Reed of Bayard, Superintendent V. H. DuBolt of Crawford and Superintendent E. L. Novotny of Bridgeport. The decision of the judges was unanimous in favor of the Alliance team.

The victory gives Alliance the championship of the western Nebraska district. There are ten districts in the state, and the next step is an elimination contest between the districts. Alliance will meet either Broken Bow or Mason City within the next few weeks, and the winner of that contest will go to Lincoln for the state contest on May 15. There will be five schools represented at the finish and the debates will take the better part of a day.

Miss Rena Keith, who has been coach for the Alliance debaters, is entitled to considerable credit for the success of her work. She was in charge of the training last year, when Alliance won the district contest. Alliance has won in district debates with one exception for the past eight years, and should have been awarded the decision in the debate lost. This year the chances are exceptionally good for winning state honors.

## SCOTTSBLUFF FEEDERS FORM ORGANIZATION

More than twenty of the prominent livestock feeders of the North Platte valley attended a meeting held at Scottsbluff Monday at the call of Floyd McCaffree, chairman of the livestock committee of the Scottsbluff chamber of commerce, at which an association of feeders was effected which will have for its purpose the protection of stockmen against the objectionable methods employed by the packing companies. Two weeks ago the stockmen of this section were urged to ship their stock immediately upon advice of packers and commission men if they would take advantage of a good market, says the Omaha Bee.

The resultant consignments were quite heavy, but, according to the stockmen, when the markets were reached there was no immediate demand for their stock and the shipments were necessarily held an entire day. The following morning, without showing just cause and without explanation, it is alleged, the price dropped \$1.50 a hundred below what it had been at the time of the receipt of the shipments, causing the stock owners a loss of from \$16 to \$20 per head.

Comparing notes, the feeders found there had been no discrimination, but that all had been subjected to the same decrease in price. The forming of the association is the result, a statement says. "Those interested, while aware of the fact that they are going against powerful interests, will do all possible to cause the packers to desist from such practices."

A committee to place the matter before the congressional legislative committee was appointed. A permanent organization will be formed and all stock feeders will be asked to join that the protection desired may be obtained through the strength of the association.

Lynn Snow and Miss Joan Bouck, both of Marsland, were married by County Judge Tash Thursday afternoon.

## COUNCIL MEETING WAS CALLED OFF

After a Wait of An Hour and a Quorum Failed to Put in an Appearance.

The city council was scheduled to meet Thursday evening in order to clean up the month's business, but only half of the eight councilmen put in an appearance, although Mayor Rodgers, City Attorney Metz, City Clerk Kennedy and Councilmen Moore, Hacker, Hills and Sturgeon waited patiently for over an hour. More than that, they used the telephone in a fruitless appeal to the absent ones. Two of these had left home without telling their wives where to locate them, a third was at a church meeting and the fourth was out of the city.

This has been a hard month for the councilmen, anyway. The Thursday evening meeting was the fifth during April. This is the month the new councilmen took their seats. Incidentally, there is a lot of routine business to be transacted the first month of the fiscal year. Council committees have to be appointed, licenses renewed and other little details worked out that take time and try the patience. The council stood four meetings nobly, but five was too much. Yet all of them voted for an adjournment at the last meeting and promised faithfully to be on hand.

The business scheduled for the evening included the approval of five pool hall and three plumbers' licenses. These were all on file, and accompanied by the proper bonds. There was also a raft of other unfinished business, all of which will now have to go over until next month's meeting, which isn't as far away as it sounds, unless Mayor Rodgers decides to call them together for a short session today or tomorrow.

It was a fairly interesting session, however, despite the lack of a quorum. The ears of those absent brothers were still burning. Not that anything particularly harsh was said—three women were present—but the expression in the eyes of those who turned out was of a sort that was unmistakable.

Promptly at 8 o'clock the mayor counted noses. He found four men seated where they should have been six, to make everything strictly legal.

Everyone settled back in their chairs, resigned to wait for a few minutes. A quarter of an hour later, City Clerk Kennedy went to the phone. She called up every councilman at least once. One of them was traced to a church meeting. Another was followed to the Elks, and there the trail was lost. Once she got a promise that somebody would tell somebody to notify another councilman to show up and register, but nothing came of it.

A half-hour dragged by. In the meantime one of the visitors, who had come with a delegation which presented a petition for water extension, had an inspiration. He believed he could locate one of the missing men. Nobody encouraged him—everyone present was beyond hope—but undaunted he dashed forth. If he returned, it is not so recorded in the minutes.

At 9 p. m., exactly one hour after the session was supposed to begin, the telephone rang. The faces of everyone, with the possible exception of reporters and City Attorney Metz, brightened. The mayor answered the phone and braced himself to listen to an excuse. What he heard was a question: "Is this King's Corner?" With a fine exhibition of patient hopelessness, Mr. Rodgers informed the anxious inquirer that it was not.

At 9:15, fully fifteen minutes after hope had fled, or died, the mayor adjourned the meeting, that is, if a meeting which has never been opened can be adjourned. This is a fine legal point which the city attorney may be able to answer. It was suggested that a meeting of the council be called for this afternoon, but Mayor Rodgers was not particularly enthusiastic. Neither was Councilman Moore.

"What time do you suggest for this daylight meeting?" Mr. Moore asked.

"Noon," was the reply. "All of us can take dinner down town."

"Nothing doing," was Mr. Moore's comment. "It would take a month's salary to buy a noon luncheon."

"Aren't there any police meal tickets left?" asked City Attorney Metz. There was a rather heated discussion, a month or so ago, about a goodsized bill for meal tickets used

## THE WEATHER

For Alliance and vicinity: Unsettled weather with rain Saturday, and west portion tonight. Warmer west portion tonight.

by the police in feeding prisoners. There was a ticket left, but nobody wanted the privilege of using it. A petition was presented by a number of north side citizens, asking for water extension, and this will be referred to the proper committee the next session, provided the committee is on hand.

## COUNTING BOARD TO FINISH WORK TODAY

The county board, whose duty it is to check and certify returns of the April 20 primary election, will finish its labors today. All they will have to do will be to check the votes on the mail ballots, of which there are exactly seven. Then the return sheets will be filled out, certified and sent to the secretary of state.

There will be no material change in the totals when the mail ballots are added, either as regards county or state offices.

The board uncovered a few errors in going over the precinct returns, the chief ones being in connection with the vote accorded County Judge Tash. The final returns will give him a total considerably larger than the first report credited him with. Some of the errors were due to the carelessness of precinct election clerks in putting his vote in the wrong column. The board consists of C. W. Brennan, E. G. Laing and W. C. Mounts.

## RED CROSS LOOKING FOR BERT MAURICE

An aged lady in Brockton, Mass., is very much interested in the whereabouts of Bert Maurice, ex-soldier, who has disappeared. She describes him as a ranchman, weight 190 pounds, with dark brown hair and blue eyes. He is thirty years of age. He was drafted into the army and was overseas for a year, she says, being discharged about June 12, 1919.

Maurice is supposed to be out in this part of the country, the inquirer says. He had promised to help her get land out here, and she does not say whether she gave him any money to invest. Neither does she hint that anything is wrong. Evidently she suspects foul play of some kind.

If any Herald reader knows this soldier, please communicate with Josephine Ganson, secretary, home service bureau, Red Cross, by mail or at her office in the court house.

## ARMY LIGHTWEIGHT SEEKING A MATCH

Bob White, known to members of the Third and Fourteenth divisions and a good share of the rest of the A. E. F. as "Kid" White, is in Alliance, and has expressed a desire for a match. He is just a trifle too heavy for the lightweight division, but will not weigh in at over 130 pounds. He is anxious to meet anyone his weight, and promises an interesting match. Alliance promoters who are grooming boxers can get into communication with Kid White by dropping a letter to him in care of general delivery.

White is working, at present, on the Antioch road, but as soon as he accumulates a stake that will carry him on the cushions to St. Louis, he is going to the Missouri town, where he believes he can find a manager who will make the game worth while.

## ALLIANCE ELKS PLAN INITIATION AT GORDON

Wednesday, May 26, Alliance No. 961 will hold a session at Gordon for the purpose of initiating candidates, and the Gordon Elks say there will be a class of fully one hundred to ride the goat on that memorable occasion. Something over fifty applications are now in, many more are on the way, and without a doubt the class will outnumber the record-breaking class of seventy-three initiated at Alliance on the other Gordon day, last September. The Gordon boosters are making elaborate plans for the celebration, and among the other entertainment features is a banquet, to be held just before the lodge session. A number of Alliance Elks will go to Gordon to attend the meeting.

## MUCH INTEREST IN OIL PIPE LINE

Experts of the Opinion That Plan Is Feasible—Omaha Chamber of Commerce Investigating.

The plan for a pipe line from the Lance creek oil field, north of Lusk and northwest of Alliance, to Omaha, to carry gas or oil or both, is receiving much attention from the press of eastern Nebraska and from those who would benefit primarily from it. Lloyd Thomas of Alliance, who was in Omaha recently, reports that the Omaha chamber of commerce has taken hold of the proposition and has appointed a special committee, headed by John L. McCague, to get behind the matter.

The severe cold spell of last November, coupled with the coal shortage, caused many Nebraska people to wonder if there was not some way of securing fuel for private and industrial consumption from the vast Wyoming fields which are being rapidly opened to production. Inasmuch as the present production of crude oil in Wyoming is cared for by the refineries of that state, attention is turned to the immense quantities of natural gas which are held in capped wells and for which at the present time there is no use and from which no benefit is being derived.

Mr. Thomas says that there are at the present time six gas wells in the western end of the Lance Creek field, which is located twenty-six miles north of Lusk, with a combined capacity of not less than 173 million cubic feet of gas every twenty-four hours. This is sufficient natural gas to care for the needs of several states. These wells have an enormous pressure and the small amount of gas which escapes from them and which cannot be confined can be heard "sizzling" for a distance of one or two miles away. It is the pressure from this gas that causes the oil wells in the Lance Creek field to flow as gushers.

This natural gas is known as "wet" gas and contains a large amount of gasoline which can be easily extracted by plants built for this purpose in or near the field, after which the gas would be piped away for commercial use. At the present time an "absorption" plant is being built in the Lance creek field for the purpose of extracting the gasoline from the gas. The only other use for this natural gas in Wyoming, outside of the small amount piped over the oil field and used for heat, light and fuel, is the making of carbon black. In another part of Wyoming there are several carbon black plants. These plants use, however, only a few million cubic feet of gas per day. Their methods are so wasteful of gas that the Wyoming legislature passed a law recently forbidding them to use the gas for this purpose. However, this law was declared unconstitutional by the supreme court and the carbon black plants are still in operation.

Experts are of the opinion that the plan is a feasible one and that a pipe line, capable of handling the gas under high pressure, could be laid from the Lance creek field to Omaha. The pipe lines which run from Oklahoma and Texas go to Chicago and other eastern points and some of them are over a thousand miles in length.

Mr. Thomas says that a gas or oil or a combination gas and oil pipe line direct from the Lance creek field to Omaha, in a straight line, would have to be approximately 448 miles in length. However, it would touch only a few centers of population and would not be of benefit to many outside of the terminal. On the other hand, a pipe line going from the gas and oil field to the North Platte valley and then east to Omaha would have to be only approximately 528 miles in length and it would traverse a densely populated territory and serve hundreds of thousands of people with light, fuel and heat, besides furnishing thousands of industries which require fuel with gas for that purpose.

A pipe line following the North Platte valley would go first to the city of Lusk from the field. The oil from the field is now piped to Lusk and loaded there in tank cars and shipped to the refinery. The line would then go south to Torrington, Wyo., on the North Platte river and then follow the water grade eastward. This line could furnish gas to the cities of Mitchell, Scottsbluff, Gering, Bayard, Bridgeport, Oshkosh, North Platte, Gothenburg, Kearney, Grand Island, Central City, Columbus, Schuyler, Fremont, Omaha and Council Bluffs, as well as many smaller intermediate towns.

(Continued on page 4.)