The Beginning and Progress of Electrical Service in Kendrick Troy Juliaetta Deary Bovill Elk River and Communities

by

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Kendrick Idaho

1974

As

- To -

Jim O' Toole

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EARLY HISTORY OF THE ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER SYSTEMS IN THE TOWNS OF KENDRICK, JULIAETTA, TROY, DEARY, BOVILL AND ELK RIVER IDAHO, NOW BEING SERVED BY THE WASHINGTON WATER POWER COMPANY.

-- 1973 --

BY HERMAN C. SCHUPFER.

KENDRICK, IDA,

Kendrick had one of the first electric light systems in this group. This was a steam-engine-driven generating plant installed some time before the turn of the century, in 1893 This was discontinued some time later and until 1915 coal oil lamps were mostly used, Some of the business places were served by a carbide gas system. For street lighting a hollow copper wire was attached to telephone poles, to the street lamps amd gasoline was forced to these lamps from a tank located at a central point. These lights were lit and turned off by the town marshal.

In 1915 Arthur Dunkle and Frank Candee decided/to install an electric light system in Kendrick. They had in mind to install the plant about one mile above town and dam the Big Potlatch creek for power, but after closer study it was decided to install diesel-engine-driven generators in town.

A building was built on the street corner of lot ten, block two. An office was located in the front part and the 2,300 volt generating equipment in the rear. Distribution lines were built, houses wired and within a short time the "Juice" was on the lines and places began to light up.

The house wiring was mostly done by Art Dunkle, Frank Candee, Dave Center, Otto Schupfer and Leslie Roberts.

An 11,000 volt line was also built to Troy.--(see under Troy.)

EARLY ELECTRIC LIGHT SYSTEMS,
BY
HERMAN SCHUPFER,
1973.

In a short time the demand for electric power was greater than was expected. An electric power grain elevator was being built, the water-powered flour mill was being moved into town and also to be driven by electric power.

With this increase of load a change had to be made and more power secured or generated. Mr. Dunkle's father-in-law, Mr. A. Wilmot, who was financing this Potlatch Electric Company; disposed of his Gem Cafe at Wallace and moved to Kendrick. Mr. Wilmot reorganized the company, named it the Potlatch Consolidated Electric Company, secured additional financing, and had an 11,000 volt line built to Moscow and secured power from the Washington Water Power Company. Soon thereafter, with the increasing demand for electricity the voltage on the Moscow-Troy-Kendrick transmission line was changed from 11,000 volts to 22,000 volts and the wires on the Kendrick-Troy line were changed from iron to copper. Generating with diesel power had been discontinued.

JULIAETTA, IDAHO.

The Juliaetta generators were located in the Juliaetta flour mill. This was a water powered mill and was located Southwest and across a short street from block five in Juliaetta. The generators were installed in 1903, two connected in series, 220/440 volt D.C. In 1920 this mill and generating equipment was destroyed by fire. It was then owned by Frank Vincent.

From a 1911 advertisement: JULIAETTA MILLING & LIGHT CO.
Holbrook & Martin, Props.
"Pride of the Potlatch" patent flour,
Electric Lighting--Electrical Supplies.

EARLY ELECTRIC LIGHT SYSTEMS
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In 1921 the Juliaetta distribution system was acquired by the Potlatch Consolidated Electric Company of Kendrick. This was mostly all rebuilt and a 2,300 volt line was built from Kendrick and 24 hour electric service was made available for the people of Juliaetta.

TROY, IDAHO.

From and until 1916 the electric light system in Troy was owned and operated by the Washington Water Power Company. Electricity was generated by the Troy Lumber Company, at their planning mill, by steam. This was a 110/220 volt a.c. with 2,300 volt distribution system. In 1916 this distribution system was acquired by the Potlatch Electric Company of Kendrick. An 11,000 volt transmission line was built from Kendrick, and Troy was served by the diesal-driven generators at Kendrick. This was soon changed as a transmission line was built to Moscow and power secured from the Washington Water Power Company.

DEARY, IDAHO:

Deary was served by a town-owned gasoline engine driven 220 volt d.c. generating plant. This was installed in . In 1927 this was discontinued as the Potlatch Consolidated Electric Company of Kendrick had built an 11,000 volt transmission line from Troy and began serving Deary in July. This was within a few months acquired by the Washington Water Power Company.

BOVILL, IDAHO:

Bovill was served by a town-owned, steam-driven generating plant. This was quite a combination--a 150 HP. steam engine--driving a 50 KW. 220 volt generator--with steam supplied by a 40 HP. boiler using cord wood for fuel. Installed in 1911.

EARLY ELECTRIC LIGHT SYSTEMS.
By Herman C. Schupfer, 1973

The transmission line that was being built thru Deary to Bovill was purchased by the Washington Water Power Company and power was supplied to Bovill in the fall of 1927.

ELK RIVER:

The Elk River System, installed in 1910 was one of the most up to date electric installation at that time. It was installed for the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company in conjunction with the saw-mill that they were constructing. This was an all electric mill, driven by steam engine generated electricity which was generated at 550 volts a.c. and was also transformed up to 2,300 volts to supply the town of Elk River and also for loading logs, shop and other uses outside of town.

This mill was discontinued about 1930 and a 22,000 volt transmission line was built to Bovill and power was purchased from the Washington Water Power Company. This was operated by the town of Elk River until 1948, at which time it was sold to the Washington Water Power Company.

FROM 1903 to 1973:

In the earlier days the use for electricity was for lights only and the electricity was on the lines only from the time it got dark until about midnight. The cost for each residence was a flat rate of $1.50 a month in most of these towns, this was for 16 candle power carbon filament light globes. In case too many were being used, an additional charge was made or a meter was installed. Metered rates for residence use generally started at 15 or 20 cents a kwh and then reduced in steps according to the amount used during the month. Business places were usually checked for the number and size of lights that were being used at one time, also meters were sometimes installed.

EARLY ELECTRIC LIGHT SYSTEMS, By Herman C. Schupfer,

There was no Public Utilities Commission at that time and different charges were made to fit the situation as decided between the supplier and the user.

As time went by, different electrical appliances came into use, and one of the first was the electric iron, this called for a change in service. An "ironing morning" was established and electricity was kept on the lines one morning each week, until about noon. This was most generally on Wednesdays. This service was made available in all of these mentioned towns with the exception of Elk River, as they had continous service.

Each light system in the different towns was operated and maintained individually in those days.

By 1908 I. Herman Schupfer and my brother Otto had worked on telephone lines between three different grain warehouses and having learned pole climbing, we were generally called upon by the Juliaetta Light Company to do their line work when needed, we also worked for the Potlatch Telephone Company-(R,H.Porter) when help was needed.

In 1917 and until 1924 we also helped Mr. Wilmot with his Potlatch Consolidated Electric Company. During this time Art Dunkle, Walter Coble and C.J.Andrews were the different electricans.

In 1924 Mr. Andrews decided to accept a position at another location and with work that he was more familiar with. He was a graduated electrician but could not get used to the outside line work. I took the job temporarily but which ended with my retirement from the Washington Water Power Company in 1957. This job consisted of anything that had to be done in order to give the best service possible, also line building, maintenance, house wiring, meter

reading, collecting, selling appliances and whatever happened to be necessary in this line of business. My brother Otto and Phil Johns of Juliaetta and P.L.Chaney of Troy were generally available when help was needed. In 1924 Eben Adams was hired to replace the lady bookkeeper who had resigned. He also helped with the meter reading and collecting.

EARLY FARMERS SERVICE (160 acres or more).

These were connected not as a profitable investment but for checking farms for future profitable revenue.

The first installation was at the Frank May ranch out of Kendrick in 1916, a little later the Chas Smith ranch out of Troy was connected, In 1925 the next installations were made on American Ridge, out of Kendrick, The Ira Haven, Sam Bigham and Frank Benscoter ranches were connected. In 1926 the kwh. used by these run between 15 and 30 each for each month. but the use of electrical equipment was increasing rapidly and the prospect of the use of electricity to increase more rapidly Mr. Wilmot decided to expand his system and Build to Deary and Bovill.

At this time a cooking rate of 3¢ per kwh. and waterhheating at a flat rate of $2.00 a month for a 500 watt heater was in effect. The general residence rate started at 15¢ and reduced at 2¢ steps to a minimum of 5¢ per kwh. each month. The commercial rate started at 8¢ per kwh. with an additional 40¢ for each 100 watt of connected load used. Larger motor rates were $3.50 a hp. for the highest 15 minute demand used during the month, no kwh. were metered or figured., As this power was purchased from the Washington Water Power Company at a peak demand rate a different deal was sometime made if power used was only on off peak period.

1927:

As it had been decided to build a 22,000 volt transmission line to Deary and Bovill and rebuild the lines in the towns, a crew of local men were hired, including Willard (Tony) Eichner, Gus Blum and myself, as foreman. Tony soon learned the pole climbing and he and I did practically all of the climbing on this entire job. We had about a dozen men in our crew. The hole digging was contracted at one dollar each. The pole setting and wire work was done with pike poles and hand tools. A model "T" Ford with flat bed was purchased for our line truck and which was the first mode of transportation owned by the Potlatch Consolidated Electric Company. The working schedule was a ten hour day, a six day week and pay was thirty cents an hour.

By the first of July this line was completed as far as Deary (twelve miles), a substation built, the town lines rebuilt for 2,300/110-220 volt service and the power turned on.

A few months later, as this transmission line was nearly completed to Bovill, the Potlatch Consolidated Electric Company (Mr. Wilmot) had sold to the Washington Water Power Company.and a District office was established at Kendrick with Jack Barnes as manager and a local office at Bovill with Victor Casebolt as manager.

We were instructed to complete our rebuild job at Bovill as we had it planned and Al Wetzel would be sent from Spokane with his crew to build the substation. Our crew had been reduced to five men-Axel Burklund, Fred Fonholtz, Roy Wells, Tony and myself. Gus Blum ~~left~~ had left our crew for a timeto help on forest fire patrol and was helping at Kendrick again at this time.

The lines built, transformers up and connections made Tony and I were ordered to bring the truck and tools and come to Kendrick, this we did, but with winter weather having set in this proved to be quite a chore, thru mudholes, snow and whatever was to be encountered on the old dirt roads at that time. The other three men of our crew were laid off. Casebolt and Mike Barns were left in Bovill to look after the needs there,

The organization at Kendrick at that time, taking care of Kendrick, Juliaetta and Troy were Jack Barnes Manager, Eben Adams bookkeeper,Tony Eichner stock clerk and Otto, Gus, Phil and myself were the line crew, salesmen, installers (including wiring and plumbing), demonstrators, repair men, meter readers, collectors and at times our wives would get involved when help was needed to teach the housewife how to bake a cake or operate her new electric equipment, also helping with the cooking schools which were held at the different towns.

Casebolt and Mike Barnes were transferred out of Bovill a few years later, the Bovill office was closed and Bovill was served out of Troy.

About 1930 the Kendrick District office was moved to Troy leaving me stationed at Kendrick a local representative with Phil, and Otto when needed.

Between 1930 and 1940 in Troy as manager were Fred Campbell, replacing Jack Barns, Wilbur Foster, replacing Campbell, and John Black, replacing Foster.

In 1935 a 66,000 volt transmission line was built between Moscow and Orofino, thru Juliaetta and including a substation there. This voltage was later raised to 110,000 volts.

About 1942, with the war facing us, many changes were made. The Troy District office was closed. Deary and Bovill was placed under Kendrick supervision and extra help furnished from Moscow when needed. Troy was served out of Moscow.

In 1948 the town owned light system and the transmission line from Bovill was purchased by the Washington Water Power Company from the town of Elk River. Within the next few years a new substation was built, the distribution lines rebuilt and the socket type meters were installed on the houses. At the time of this transfer, Leonard Foster was their electrician. He added electric ranges, water heaters and other electric appliances in his general merchandise store after the transfer and did wiring and installing and did a good job of load building and helping in case of trouble. Elk River was also placed under Kendrick the meter reading at Deary was placed out of Moscow.

At the present-1973: Kendrick, Juliaetta and the Clearwater Power Company (R.E.A.) are being served out of the Juliaetta substation. A 110,000 volt branch-line from the Juliaetta switching station to the Deary substation serves Deary, Bovill and Elk River.

The supplying of electricity was a hard struggle in those early days, the use of it was limited, also the distance of transmission was limited on account of the low voltages generated.

Some people felt that it was being extravagent to use more than the minimum (10 kwh.-$1.50 a month). They would watch the meter and use an oil lamp part time. Neighbors would compare and the ones that got by without "going over" were the winners.

As time went by many different generating plants were in use with some useing alternating current and a higher voltage thereby being able to serve a larger area. Some of these were as follows:

A water powered plant was on the Clearwater River, beyond Grangeville, serving Grangeville and some of the surrounding country.

A water powered plant on Lolo Creek, above Orofino, serving Orofino and that neighborhood.

A water powered plant above Asotin, serving thatAsotin-Clarkston neighborhood.

A water powered plant on Clearwater River, near Lewiston Built about 1925. Now being dismantled, 1973.

The Idaho-Washington Light and Power Company of Moscow with T.W.McGowan as President,and F,M.Shields as Manager, advertised ln 1914 of Having capital stock of $500,000 and continous service to Moscow, Pullman, Genesee, Tekoa, Garfield, Oaksdale, Palouse, Farmington, Colton and Uniontown. These are now served by the Washington Water Power Company.

A Power plant and dam has just been completed (1973) on the North Fork of The Clearwater River near Orofino. This was built by Bonneville Power and are distributing power at 550,000 volts AC. to their plants on Snake River and to Montana.

1903 to 1973.

It is hard for the present generation to realize the changes that have been made thru the use of electricity. For fuel, wood had to be cut and split, by hand tools, hauled home with herses, piled in the wood shed, carried into the house and placed in wood box daily, then start the fire and feed the stove or heater according to the heat desired-(temperature control), ashes to take out. A nice dinner on a hot day with a hot stove nearby. No refrigerator, surplus food must be taken to the cellar which was generally under the house. No ice water, no electric fan just a hand fan or some paper--a hot house with no way to cool it. On wash day, wash on a wash board, use a hand powered wringer, hang clothes on line or find a place in the house to get them dry, draw water from the well, heat water on stove in wash tub etc etc. This now all done by flipping a switch or turning a knob.

As the home makers were better acquainted with the use of electricity and not as much demonstrating or trial installations necessary the Washington Water Power Company discontinued the sales and repairing of appliances and cooperated with the dealers in the promotion of sales. Also house to house collecting was discontinued and pay stations were located in business places.

A great change in the maintenance and operation of an electric system has occurred during the years. material and tools were carried in a large canvas bag or a wheelbarrow or children's wagon was used, in the Kendrick-Juliaetta area, between towns it was generally going one way by passenger train and the other way by foot (4 miles). From Kendrick to Troy and back wasby train but by foot while being there.

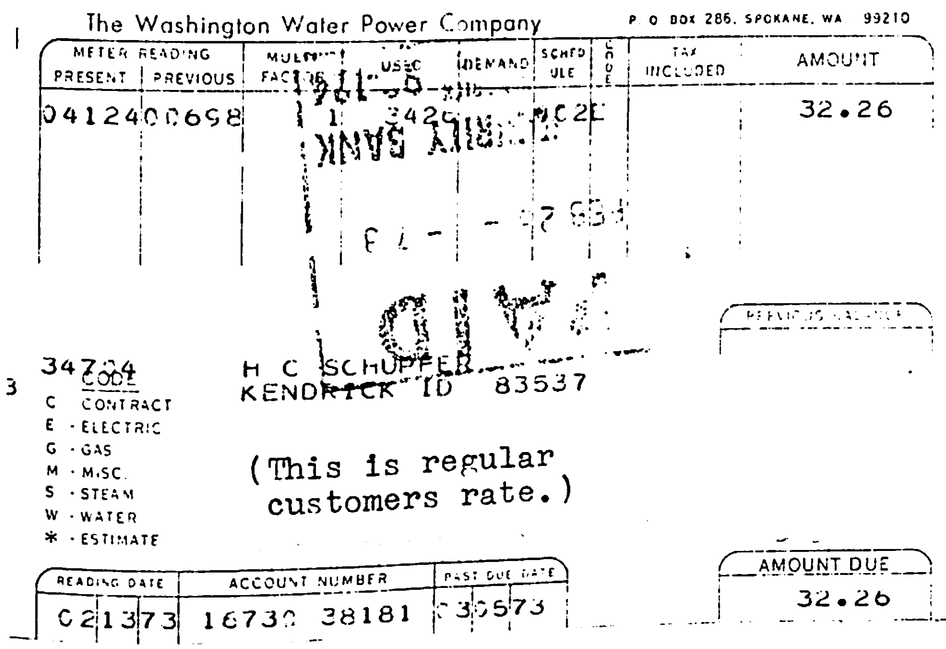
EARLY ELECTRIC LIGHT SYSTEMS.
By Herman C. Schupfer. 1973. (12)

On maintenance work on the Kendrick-Moscow transmission line, a team, rig and driver would generally be hired from the livery for the first lap to a farm house where a fresh outfit would be hired. At times, in the winter the team would have to be unhooked from the sled or rig and be driven thru the snow drifts, a number times, before before the sled or rig could be pulled thru.

The roads generally not plowed out until the snow storm was over. or even a few days later, but the trouble-shooting had to go on, one way or another. by snow shoes, skis or on foot, when no other way was available. In the summer time a car or truck was generally available.

My brother. Otto and I , started helping the Juliaetta Light Company in 1908. when needed. in 1917 also started helping the Potlatch Consolidated Electric Company (Mr. A. Wilmot)) when needed In 1924 I was employed full time by the Potlatch Consolidated Company and continued on with the Washington Water Power Company until my retirement in 1957, the last 27 years I was stationed at Kendrick as local representative, also serving Juliaetta, Deary, Bovill and Elk River.

On my retirement in 1957, Dean Hollenbeck was appointed and in 1964 he was transferred to Tekoa and Clair Reed was transferred from Colfax to take his place. This is a diversified job, reading meters and maintaining service in the Kendrick valley, in sunshine, one day and then doing the same the next day, at Elk River and mountains, on snow shoes, 50 miles from Kendrick.


The Washington Water Power Company P O BOX 286, SPOKANE, WA 99210

METER READING PRESENT	PREVIOUS	MULTI FACTOR	USAGE	DEMAND	SCHEDULE	TAX INCLUDED	AMOUNT
04124	00658	1	3426		C2		32.26

PAID

34734 H C SCHUPFER
KENDRICK ID 83537

CODE
C - CONTRACT
E - ELECTRIC
G - GAS
M - MISC.
S - STEAM
W - WATER
* - ESTIMATE

(This is regular customers rate.)

READING DATE	ACCOUNT NUMBER	PAST DUE DATE	AMOUNT DUE
021373	16730 38181	030573	32.26

Copy electric bill Of Jan.13 to Feb.13 1973.
3426 kwh.---$32.26.
Includes house heating, cooking, hot water,tv and all other household appliances.

At the present these towns and surrounding country are well taken care of for electric service. The Clearwater Power Company,R.E. serves most of the rural farming country and the Washington Water Power Company serves these towns and the rural country from Deary east to Elk River. Also the small tracts an the hill side and and along the Big Potlatch Creek in the Juliaetta-Kendrick valley are served by the W.W.P.Co. for a distance of about ten miles.

The use of electricity has increased immensely since my early days. If a meter read over 10 kwh. ($1.50 minimun) an explaination was often necessary.

There were very few electric ranges or water heaters in use in these towns until 1928 at which time a drive was made by the W.W.P.Co. to sell the electricity users electric ranges, water heaters, refrigerators-(new on the market) and all other small appliances. The old wood ranges and other wood or oil burning appliances were taken in on trade and installment payments to be made along with their monthly bill. This was the starting time that the use of electricity was taking effect and it has increased up to this time (Dec. 1973) but now the reports of a shortage has caused Bonneville Power System to cut off much of its inter-ruptable power to aluminum plants and others. W.W.P.Co. seem to have enough but may have to share with other systems.

KENDRICK, IDAHO. NOV - 1 1916

Gottlieb Telephone Co

SERVICE
RENTAL

TO Potlatch Electric Company, Ltd. DR.

					BALANCE	
METER READINGS						
[illegible] 1915	66	K.W.H.				
OCT - 1 1916	45	K.W.H.				
Total Consumed	21	K.W.H.				
			K.W.H. @ 15c.			
			K.W.H. @ 13c.			
			K.W.H. @ 11c.			
			K.W.H. @ 9c.			
			21 K.W.H. @ 8c.	1	68	
			K.W.H. @ 5c.			
			K.W.H. @ c.			
CONNECTED LOAD	200	WATTS @ $4.00 per 1000 watts per month			7	48
		WATTS @ per 1000 watts per month		80		
MINIMUM CHARGE					1	00
ITEMS, APPLIANCES, FIXTURES, ETC.,	as per attached bill				3	63
			TOTAL BILL			

PAID
NOV 3 1916
POTLATCH ELECTRIC CO. LTD.
F. W. Candler

Monthly Statement of Potlatch ~~Consolidated~~ Electric Co.
Kendrick, Idaho. 1916

FEB 28 1919

Kendrick, Idaho, 28 1919

M Potlatch Telephone Co

To Potlatch Consolidated Electric Co., Dr.

METER READING			$	c.
663	P. R.			
631	P. R.			
28	K. W. H. Con.	@ 15c		
		@ 13c		
	28	@ 8c	2	24
Connected load 200 watts @ 40c per 100				80
Minimum charge				
Mdse. as per attached bill				
Balance due on bill rendered				
Total			3	04

Monthly statement of Potlatch Consolidated Electric Co. Ltd.
Kendrick, Idaho, 1919.

It has been a pleasure to have been involved in the promoting and building utilities in these communities, both electric and telephone. Having lived among these people most of my life as neighbors and friends I was naturally interested in these communities. In working for the different promoters and companies I generally felt I was also working for the people served, and enjoyed that progress in the community was being made.

I enjoyed working for the three different owners of the Juliaetta Light Co.--Mr. Holbrook, Mr. Martin and Mr. Vincent, for the owner of the Potlatch Consolidated Electric Company--Mr. Wilmot, the owner of the Potlatch Telephone Company--Mr. Porter. My brother, Otto, and I acquired this telephone company in 1915.

It was thru the experience with these companies that qualified me as an electrician and whatever was necessary to maintain and operate the electric system for the Potlatch Consolidated Electric Co. I feel very thankful to these people who gave me the chance, also to all others who had helped--also including the country people. who in case of trouble or working on the lines, fed us and team, and helped when needed.

I am proud to have worked for a great company like the Washington Water Power Co. after they acquired the Potlatch Consolidated Electric Co. and to have a hand in supplying electric service to people in outlying towns and places. who wholeheartedly appreciated all of our efforts. My thanks to the personel and co-workers for the co-operation and interest shown me during my years of work. Gratefully

Herman C Schuffer