

Telephone

Rhodes Telephone Exchange 1911—1929



Mary Steiner, local telephone operator, at the Opera House.

If memory serves me correctly, I believe my parents, Edward and Maude Pyle Beye purchased the Rhodes Telephone exchange from a group of farmers in Rhodes in 1912. The Melbourne exchange had been purchased by them in 1910. Incidentally, this is how my parents became acquainted. My father was night operator at the Melbourne exchange and my mother at the Rhodes Telephone office. My parents and I and my sister Opal, moved to Rhodes from Melbourne in 1912. The telephone office then was in the southeast room, upstairs, in what was known then as the "Opera House." Names of operators I do recall are; Phoebe Jacobs, Mary Pyle Vasey, Lou Freland Shelker, Pearl Freland Shelker, Nellie Freland, Garnet Thompson,



Telephone operators from the left; Mary Steiner and Maude Beye, in the opera house.



Pearl Beye in 1929 at local switchboard.

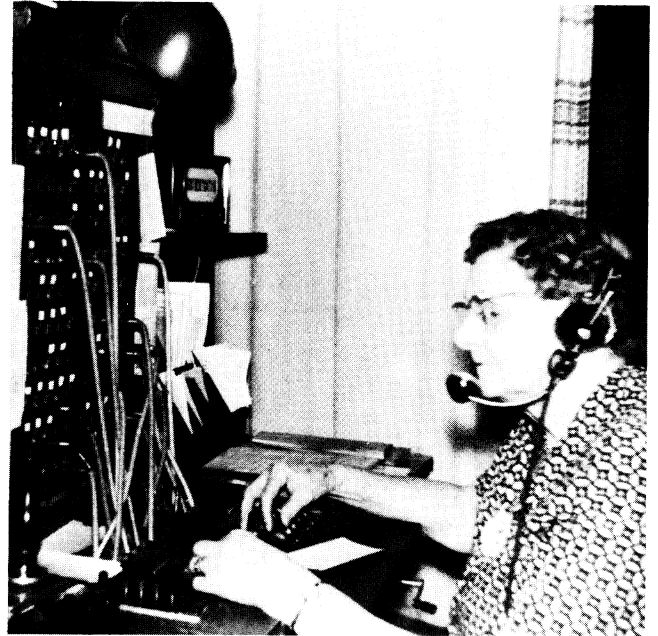


Telephone operator - Nina Baker

Mabel and Furley Stone, Ethel McCloskey and Dollie Billings; Nina Strickler Baker and our own family. Around 1920 my father purchased two - one story brick buildings on the east side of Main Street - north and the telephone office was moved to the south room of this building. It was operated by the Beye family until sold, as was the Melbourne Exchange to, the Central Iowa Telephone Corporation in 1929. My father then purchased the Jack Sprat Store from Frank Bentley, Jr. and operated the store until 1931, when the store was purchased by the late Mann Everhart. The Beye family moved to Blythedale, Missouri on July 24, 1931.

The equipment was converted to direct dialing on March 26, 1959. The company was sold to the General Telephone Company, in 1967 which is the present company serving the Rhodes area.

*Submitted by
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Dolly Billings in 1959 at new telephone office.

Rhodes Honors Phone Operator 1959

Nearly 150 people gathered in the school gymnasium at Rhodes to celebrate the fact that Mrs. Dollie Billings lost her job.

Dollie had been telephone switchboard operator in Rhodes for 39 years, but now has been replaced by the installation of a dial system in this community. (March 26, 1959)

She first took the job in 1916 and worked at it until 1945, when she quit and moved to California. But in 1949 she returned to Rhodes, to her job at the switchboard and stayed with it until automation relieved her of her duties.

Central Iowa Telephone Company officials and several of Dollies fellow operators were special guests at the celebration.

Alfred Buck opened the program with a short comment on her career. A Rhodes High School girls trio consisting of Diane Gibbs, Cindy Richeson and Connie Robinson sang. They were accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Harold Robinson.



Telephone office in 1957, operators from left; Dollie Billings and Maud Hale.

1874 Census for Eden Township Marshall County, Iowa

White Males	379
White Females	313
Colored Male	1
TOTAL	693

Statistics of Farms

Product	# of Acres	Harvest
Indian Corn	3,741	152,630 bushels
Rye	61	1,100 bushels
Oats	704	23,195 bushels
Barley	369	7,410 bushels
Buckwheat	7	89 bushels
Sorghum	—	30 gal.
Bluegrass pasture	147	978 ton of hay
Tame grass	363	298 ton of hay
Grass seed	—	144 bushels
Sweet potatoes	1	30 bushels
Potatoes	61	5,768 bushels
Onions	—	30 bushels
Beets	—	158 bushels
Turnips	—	161 bushels
Peas & Beans	—	77 bushels
Natural timber	1,384	—
Rod of Hedge	10,425	—
Planted timber	97	—
Bearing Apple trees	952	246 bushels
Bearing Pear trees	8	4 bushels
Bearing Plum trees	58	24 bushels
Bearing Cherry trees	93	18 bushels
Fruit trees barren	4,484	

2,565 ll Grapes gathered - 24 gallons of wine made.
 421 horses of all ages, no horses sold for export.
 32 head of mules and asses, none sold for export.
 348 Milch cowa-Cows made 27,950 pounds of butter,
 50 pounds of cheese at factory.
 574 head of cattle except work ox, 74 head of cattle
 sold for slaughter.
 One head of thoroughbred - Shorthorn Cattle.
 4,419 head of hogs on hand, 2,114 head of hogs were
 sold for slaughter.
 One head of Merinos on hand, 2,395 head of sheep on
 hand, sheep produce 10# wool.
 117 head of dogs.
 47 stands of bees, 270 pounds of honey and beeswax
 produced.
 Value of products from farms \$114,895.00, value of
 garden products \$100.00.
 Value of products from orchard \$106.00.
 Value of animals sold for export slaughter, of hide,
 tallow and other products of the herd \$3,814.00.
 Value of products of dairy \$5,231.00.



Violet Bear Brittain telephone operator in 1957.

Fred Cheville was master of ceremonies at a, "This Is Your Life," type of revue of her life and career.

Dick Thompson of Toledo, commercial and traffic manager of the Central Iowa Telephone Company, made a presentation on behalf of the company and Otto Newkirk of State Center, district manager of the company, gave her a bouquet of flowers.

She received a locket from the Rebekah Lodge, of which she has been a long time member and Cheville presented her with a purse filled with money as a gift from the community.

Harold Howell Rural Mail Carrier

Harold Howell moved to Rhodes in March of 1950 with his wife Charlotte and a four year old son, John and a two year old daughter, Ruth. In 1952 another daughter, Mary, was born.

Harold transferred from the post office at Marshalltown to become the rural mail carrier at Rhodes. He served the rural route at Rhodes until 1968 when he was transferred back to Rural Route #4 in Marshalltown. The rural routes at State Center and Rhodes were consolidated at this time. In 1969 Harold transferred to Rural Route #2 at State Center which includes the original route at Rhodes.