

ELECTRIC CO. DATES BACK TO HORSE CARS 80 YEARS AGO

Series of Consolidations Involving 29 Firms Brings Service to Present Day

(September 28, 1939) – The Columbus & Southern Ohio Electric Co. is the modern outgrowth of a series of consolidations of 29 other Columbus Companies, beginning with the operation of horse-drawn street cars 80 years ago and the first appearance of commercial electric energy in Columbus 56 years ago.

Following is a thumbnail sketch of each of these various companies from their inception to the present day [1939].

First came the **Columbus Street Railroad Co.**, incorporated in 1859. Next was the **Columbus Railroad Co.**, incorporated in 1862. Then the **Friend St. (now Main St.) Railroad Co.**, incorporated in 1868; the **East Park Pl. Railroad Co.**, incorporated in 1870; the **State & Oak St. Railway Co.**, incorporated in 1873, and the **N. High St. Railroad Co.**, incorporated in 1876. Each of these companies operated in a different section of the city, generally on one street.

MERGER IN 1877

In 1877 came the first merger. The **N. and S. High St. Railway and Chariot Co.** was incorporated in that year and immediately purchased the N. High St. Railroad Co. Two years later came the second merger. The **Columbus Consolidated Street Railroad Co.** was incorporated in 1879 and that same year took over the Columbus Street Railroad Co., the Columbus Railroad Co., the Friend St. Railroad Co., and the E. Park Pl Railroad Co. Ten years later in 1889 it purchased the State & Oak St. Railway Co. and the N. and S. High St. Railway & Chariot Co.

Three years later in 1892, the **Columbus Street Railway Co.** was incorporated and in that same year it took over the Columbus Consolidated Street Railroad Co. Three years later, in 1895, it purchased the **Indianola-Fourth St. Railroad Co.** which had been incorporated in 1904. [inconsistent date] This was the largest group of merged companies, but there were at that time other street railroads operating in Columbus.

The **Glenwood & Greenlawn Street Railway Co.** was incorporated in 1872 and the **Leonard Ave. Street Railway Co.** in 1892. These were sold in 1899 to the **Crosstown Street Railway Co.** which had been incorporated in 1893. Also, the **Columbus & Westerville Railway Co.** was incorporated in 1891 and sold in 1894 to the **Columbus Central Railway Co.** which had been incorporated in 1893.

Then came the second big merger in Columbus street railways. The **Columbus Railway Co.** was incorporated in 1899 and immediately took over the Columbus Street Railway Co. thus bringing into one group all the street railway operations in the city.

But two years later, in 1901, as interurban traction lines sought entry into Columbus, the **Central Market Street Railroad Co.** was incorporated, operating local street cars over the same tracks used by the interurban cars entering the city from the

east and west sides. In 1907 this company was sold to the **Columbus Traction Co.**, incorporated in that year.

ELECTRICITY IN 1883

In the meantime, electric energy had come to Columbus with the incorporation in 1883 of the **Columbus Electric Light & Power Co.** and the incorporation in 1887 of the **Columbus Edison Electric Light Co.** In 1898 the former company was sold to the **Columbus Electric Co.**, incorporated that year. In 1902 the **Columbus Edison Co.** was incorporated and immediately took over the Columbus [Edison] Electric Light Co. and the Columbus Electric Co.

Concurrently with this major electric development, another small company was organized, the **Indianola Land & Power Co.**, incorporated in 1901 and sold the same year to the **Indianola Heating & Lighting Co.** Three years later in 1904, this company was sold to the **East Columbus Heating & Lighting Co.**, which had been incorporated two years previously, in 1902. Immediately the East Columbus Heating & Lighting Co. was sold to the **Public Service Co.**, which had also been incorporated in 1902.

PROVIDED STEAM HEAT

Two years later, in 1904, the Public Service Co. was sold to the **Columbus Public Service Co.**, which had been incorporated the same year. After four years of operation, the Columbus Public Service Co. was sold in 1908 to the **Columbus Light, Heat & Power Co.**, incorporated, the same year. As their names indicate these companies provide not only electric service but steam heating in the neighborhood of their generating stations.

Thus, with these various mergers 24 companies were combined into four. These were the **Columbus Edison Co.**, a combination of three previous electric companies; the **Columbus Railway Co.**, a combination of 15 street car companies; the **Columbus Light, Heat & Power Co.**, a combination of five electric and heating companies; and the **Columbus Traction Co.**, which had taken over one preceding street car company.

In 1903 occurred the first step toward the ultimate combination of these four surviving or successor companies. The **Columbus Railway & Light Co.**, was incorporated that year and its first step was the leasing, in 1903, of the Columbus Edison Co., the larger of the two electric companies, and the Columbus Railway Co., which operated all the street cars in the city. In 1907 it leased the Columbus Traction Co. and in 1908 it leased the Columbus Light, Heat & Power Co.

BUYS OTHER COMPANIES

In 1913 the Columbus Traction Co. was reincorporated under the name **Columbus Railway, Power & Light Co.**, which that year purchased the Columbus Railway & Light Co. and the Columbus Edison Co. and in the following year purchased the Columbus Light, Heat & Power Co., thus finally combining all the electric street car and heating companies in Columbus into one corporation. In later years the neighborhood heating business was discontinued.

In 1937, the last change was made in the company's corporate structure when the Columbus Railway Power & Light Co. and its two subsidiaries – the **Southern Ohio**

Electric Co. and the **Adams County Power & Light Co.** – which it had acquired a few years previously, were consolidated into the new corporation, the **Columbus & Southern Ohio Electric Co.**

Today, [this was written in 1939], the lines of the present company extend into 20 central and southern Ohio counties as follows: Franklin, Pickaway, Madison, Fayette, Licking, Knox, Athens, Delaware, Gallia, Highland, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Vinton, Adams, and Brown.

This territory is divided into 11 divisions with division headquarters in Columbus, Delaware, Circleville, Chillicothe, Hillsboro, Gallipolis, Athens, Nelsonville, Middleport, Oak Hill and seaman.

Energy for serving this wide spread area is supplied by three generating stations – Walnut in Franklin County, Picway in Pickaway County, and Floodwood in Athens county, south of Nelsonville.

Eight years ago the Columbus & Southern Ohio Electric Co. launched a program for thorough modernization of its equipment.