

# BETHINKING OF OLDE ORLEANS

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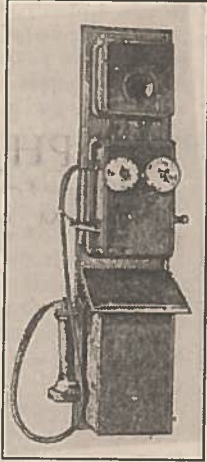
## EARLY TELEPHONE CONNECTION

BY C.W. LATTIN

To anyone who is familiar with construction and operating costs of public utilities today, there is a startling contrast to be found in an old clipping from the Orleans Republican of July 21, 1880. It concerned a public meeting for discussion of a move to bring the "magic voice" of telephone to the far-off reaches of Gaines and Carlton from the central station of Albion.

The item read as follows:

"All citizens of Albion, Gaines and Carlton who are interested in having telephone connection are requested to meet at the Court House in Albion on Friday



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evening, July 23, at 8 o'clock."

On Aug. 4 the following news item appeared in the Orleans Republican:

"On Wednesday last a meeting took place at Warner & Nobles Hotel at Point Breeze at which decisive action was taken. The necessary fund was subscribed and a board of directors was chosen for the ensuing year. The necessary instruments and poles were ordered and the route was ordered surveyed."

"There will be five stations on the line, viz: Albion, Fair Haven, Carlton Station, Two Bridges and Oak Orchard Harbor. The instruments will consist of Bell telephone transmitters and receivers, each using a single cell battery and provided with a magnetic call bell, and the line will be

equipped in a first-class manner."

"Mr. Selheimer moved that the company be known as the Albion-Carlton Telephone Co., Carried. The chairman presented a paper for the signatures of those wishing to take stock in the company and the stock was taken as fast as the names could be written. A committee was appointed to survey the line consisting of Messrs. Warner, Black and Over and the following were named as directors: E.K. Hart, Ashley Blake, R.S. Selheimer, Fred Beach, C. Warner, H.C. Murray and B.D. Powler."

The construction for the line progressed rapidly for on Aug. 25 the line was completed and this item in the Republican on that date:

"On Saturday last, just three weeks from the date of origination, the Albion-Carlton telephone line was completed. As soon as the instruments were adjusted at the northern terminus word was sent to the other stations and for the rest of the day an unceasing stream of communication was maintained."

"On Monday the line was opened for business. Following are the stations: At Albion the Western Union Telegraph Office; Fair Haven at Geo. Over's Store; Carlton Station at Selheimer and Beckwith; Two Bridges at B.F. Fowler's Store; and Oak Orchard at H.C. Murray's Store."

A side-light on the above story is the cost:

- 10 miles of wire: \$132.00
- Brackets and Insulators: \$38.00
- Five Batteries: \$7.50
- Two hundred and thirty four poles: \$46.80
- Setting poles: \$23.40
- Rental of five Bell phones: \$50.00
- Five call bells: \$42.50
- Labor Inc.: \$50.00