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# The BULLETIN of the NATIONAL DISTRICT HEATING ASSOCIATION

ORGANIZED 1909

VOLUME XXXIV

OCTOBER 1948

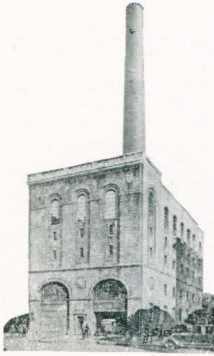
NUMBER 1





# Centennial Celebration in Rochester

LANDIS SHAW SMITH



This year the Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation of Rochester, N. Y. is celebrating its 100th birthday and formal exercises will commemorate the event in October and November.

The Rochester Gas Light Company was incorporated in May 1848, and the first street lights were turned on in December of that year. The original gas plant was located on Mumford, now Andrews, Street, on the site which is now occupied by the R. G. & E. Service Building.

The gas light era continued for more than 60 years, although electric illumination began to displace it along in the 1880s. The first electric lights were exhibited in the city in January 1879 and the newspapers were quite excited about this marvelous new lighting medium.

In 1880 leading citizens organized the Rochester Electric Light Company and at one time there were as many as 9 different electric and gas companies operating in the area. In the interests of economy and efficiency, mergers were effected and out of these grew, in 1919, the present Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation. It is a far cry from the early days of three flickering gas street lights to the present area served by the company, which includes 8 counties, 2 cities, 65 towns, and 165 villages and hamlets.

Today the R. G. & E. has an investment in property, plant and equipment of \$102,800,000 and is serving 160,000 customers. During all

these years the company has taken an active part in the development, growth and prosperity of the communities it serves and it begins its second century of service with the determination to continue and expand that same policy.

The company has one of the most modern gas manufacturing plants in the country and supplements its output with large purchases of natural gas from the Texas fields. The R. G. & E. is completing construction of a new electric generating station on the Lake shore, which will add more than 50,000 horsepower to its present generating capacity.

The company is third in the list of the pioneers of the district heating industry, having started service in 1889. It now serves 400 steam customers, including many of Rochester's nationally known commercial and industrial concerns, from four district steam plants. It is the fifth largest steam service system in this country due to its large industrial loads.

Present head of the R. G. & E. is Alexander M. Beebe who rose from the ranks to the top position in the local utility. Of 15 directors, 12 are Rochester men, leaders in local industry and community life. Herman Russell is chairman of the Board of Directors following his retirement after 19 years as president and more than 40 years of service with the company.

The company has more than 2,500 employees of whom more than 125 have been with the company for more than 35 years. Its welfare and pension system is regarded as one of the best in the country and has been copied by many other utilities and industries. It maintains a Home Service Department for the purpose of helping the homemaker to get the greatest possible benefit out of the gas and electric service she uses and to be able to operate her appliances more efficiently. It also maintains an Industrial Department for helping local industries with their problems concerning use of electric, gas or steam service. Likewise, the Farm Service Department helps farmers to make farming more productive and prosperous through wider and better use of electricity.