

Long-term agreement ends telephone war

"... Purity Butterine, partly creamery, 20¢ per pound at Blakey's. No phones." Classified ad in the *Bloomington Evening World*, Feb. 22, 1908.

As the telephone war of 1908 continued in Bloomington, subscribers to a new, locally owned company were informed by the *Evening World* that their monthly bill might remain at \$1 per month, instead of the \$1.25 asked for by the existing company, the Home Telephone Company. Even a casual scanning of the local newspapers gives the impression that the City Council-granted franchise to Home was no longer worth the paper it was printed on. Angry Bloomingtonians had disconnected their phones and set up a new company called "Citizens."

Meanwhile, the strike of local phone users had attracted some attention. As early as Feb. 7, the *Telephone* reported that a district representative of the Bell



Looking back

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Company had arrived in town to confer with the leaders of the newly formed Citizens. When asked about his conversations with the Citizens committee, the Bell man said it concerned a hook-up with the local company — whichever one it turned out to be — for long distance service. Too, representatives of the New York Electrical Lines Company were in town to put in their bid for a new local franchise. They promised "\$1 a month phones and unlimited service."

But Home Phone Company — despite its unwillingness to back down on its proposed 20 percent

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