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Dr. Mr. Konshak

I am proudly donating my Grandfather's K&E slide rule to your museum. Grandpa was a self-made man. He came to the USA from Germany with his father circa 1888; he was six years old at the time. He began public school but dropped out somewhere around the sixth grade which, in these days, probably would have spelled the end of having any chance of making it in life. Not for him though. The ensuing years are not known to me but I know that he eventually found work with the Delaware and Lackawanna Railroad (D&L) as a telegrapher and from that position rose up to become Chief Telegrapher with an office in Scranton, PA. During this period in time, radio was invented by Marconi who believed that radio was useful only for communication between ships at sea. Enter Lee De Forest, the self proclaimed "Father of Radio". Dr. De Forest believed that radio communication between land-based entities was possible and set about to prove his theory. That's where Grandpa got involved. I suppose because of its close proximity to the D&L railroad to De Forest's lab in New Jersey that the D&L would be part of the experiment. The rest is history.

I have taken the liberty to include one of the newspaper articles (Including Grandpa's photo) describing the event.

Graf Sends Message

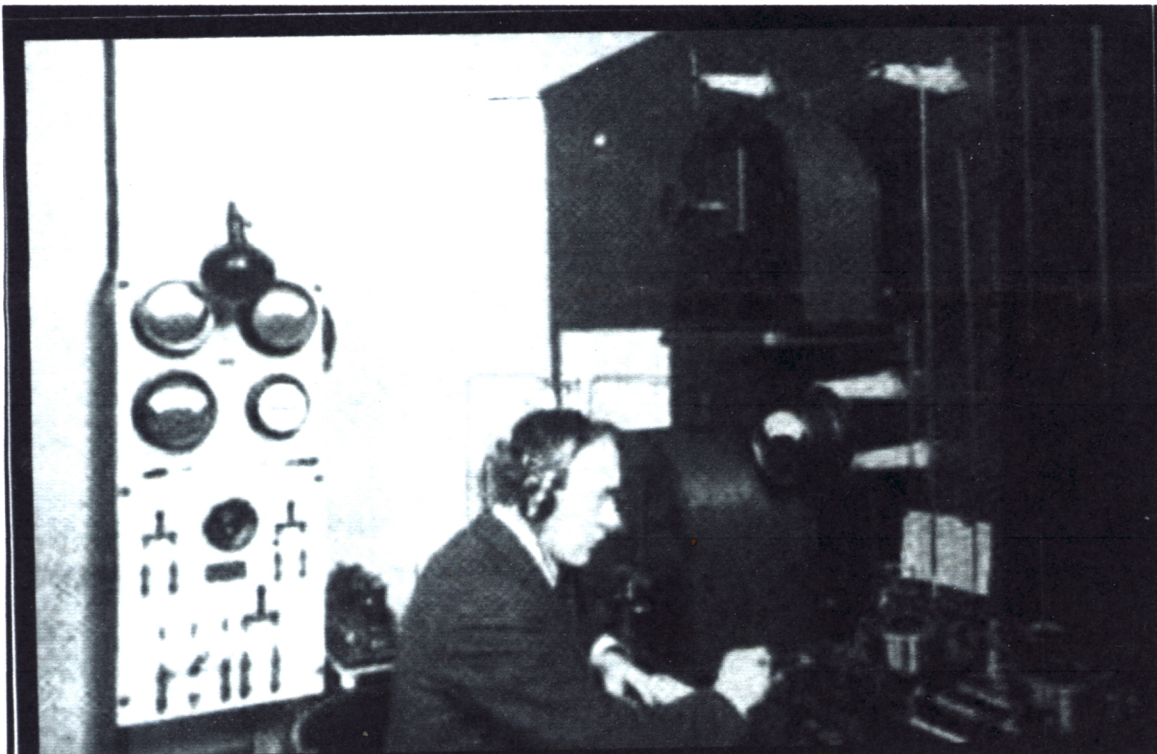
"Binghamton, Oct. 23, 1913

P.N. Place, Supt., Scranton.

494 on time - Had 7 loads west - 141 tons - 486-478 report later.

F. CIZEK."

This message was sent by Joseph J. Graf Sr from the Lackawanna railroad wireless station in this city, received at the Scranton station by S.S. Stone and repeated back to Mr. Graf this morning.



The sending and receiving of the message marked the establishment of wireless communication between the Binghamton and Scranton stations of the Lackawanna railroad.

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It also marked the first occasion in the world's history that a railroad train ore was transmitted by wireless.

Lackawanna is Pioneer.

The Lackawanna is thus the pioneer in the business of putting into successful operation along its line apparatus for the sending and receiving of wireless messages.

L.B. Foley, superintendent of the telegraph for the Lackawanna railroad company; David Sarnoff, chief inspector of the Marconi Wireless Company of America; Louis R. Krumm, chief radio inspector of the Bureau of Navigation, Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.; Joseph J. Graf Sr, telephone engineer for the railroad; S.H. Dailey, of the Binghamton Light, Heat and Power Company, and others were present when the first message was sent out from the local station.

The Government and Marconi officials were here to inspect the apparatus and see that it was in perfect working order.

Certain rules and regulations governing radio communication, made by the United States Government have to be complied with before a license to operate a station of this kind can be secured.

Everything was found to be in satisfactory condition by both officials and the license for the Binghamton station will be granted at once.

On account of the unusual interest attached to the wireless stations in this city and in Scranton and the fact that this is the first time that a railroad has ever attempted to use the system, it was thought necessary by the Marconi Company and officials of the Lackawanna railroad to have the chief representative of the government make the inspection.

All stations and operators and all transmitting amateur operators, according to the new law must be licensed. This is to reduce radio interference with other stations.

Emits Waves of 1,600 Meters.

Mr. Krumm used a Kolster decimeter to measure the length and quality of the waves emitted from the apparatus. The first test showed 1,390 meters. It was afterwards brought up to over 1,600 to comply with the requirements.

The Binghamton and Scranton stations can work under 600 or over 1,600 meters. Anything between these figures is reserved for the government. The normal ship length is 600 meters.

Licensed operators furnished by the Marconi Company will have charge of local and Scranton stations temporarily until employees of the railroad company can qualify for the positions. Mr. Graf soon will take an examination which will make him a licensed operator.

Mr. Krumm, after he had thoroughly inspected the wireless installation in the station, said that the type of equipment used by the Marconi Company here is the latest and best used by the company. He also said that the station is one of the most powerful inland stations he has ever inspected.

Government Will Fix Calls

Mr. Krumm announced that the government officials will decide upon the letters by which the Binghamton and Scranton stations will be known on the list of wireless stations on file in Washington. The railroad company can use any three letters beginning with W to designate the Binghamton station. The same applies to the Scranton station.

The train equipment will be ready in about ten days. Mr. Foley stated that he expects the railroad company to employ one trainman who understands the Morse or Continental codes to operate the train wireless apparatus.

*Binghamton Press
January 21, 1915*

*Best regards,
Joseph J. Graf III*