



Dots & Dashes

What

Hath

God

Wrought

The Official Publication of the Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.

Vol. 45, Issue No. 4 • Fall 2020

THE U.S. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PROCESSING MTC APPLICATION

by Jim Wilson

As your *Dots & Dashes* editor for these past sixteen years, I have often thought that the valuable and original articles in *Dots & Dashes* should be shared with researchers world-wide. The publication of *Dots & Dashes* began forty-five years ago. The official publication of the Morse Telegraph Club, our *Dots & Dashes* newsletter contains historic information and wonderful stories by our knowledgeable members.

For many years, I mailed a copy of each issue of *Dots & Dashes* to the Library of Congress. But this was informal and those past issues were likely tossed into the trash.

Our International Secretary-Treasurer, Richard Williams, has filed an application with the U.S. Library of Congress to have an official ISSN number assigned to *Dots & Dashes*. McClung Printing Company, the folks who print each issue for us, advised Richard how to proceed in applying for the ISSN.

So, you ask, what is an ISSN and what's the MTC application status?

An ISSN is an International Standard Serial Number for serial publications, an eight-digit number used to uniquely identify a serial publication such as a magazine like *Dots & Dashes*.

Currently, the Library of Congress notes, "Due to steps by the Library of Congress to limit the spread of COVID-19, the staff members of the U.S. ISSN Center are teleworking. We are still processing ISSN requests, but our responses may be delayed, especially requests sent by post or delivery service. We have limited ability to monitor phone messages, so please send email whenever possible. Thank you for your patience during this difficult time."

Eventually, MTC will have official status and will have our journal available for researchers worldwide. Remember, the telegraph marked the start of the communications revolution. The short time that the telegraph was in use will now be documented and available to curious minds hundreds of years from now!

LIBRARY

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Dots & Dashes

The official publication of

The Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.

Jim Wilson - Editor, *Dots & Dashes*

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Dots & Dashes is published quarterly as a benefit of membership. Nonmembers may subscribe at prevailing membership dues rates. Articles in Dots & Dashes (unless copyrighted or are themselves reprinted from other sources) may be reprinted, provided proper credit is given. A copy of the publication would be appreciated.

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Note: If possible, please include a copy of an obituary and other available information about his/her career and relationship to telegraphy and/or the telegraph industry.

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Local Chapter Members: Members of local chapters should send all correspondence regarding address changes, membership renewals and similar information to their local Chapter Secretary/Treasurer. If you do not know your Chapter Secretary/Treasurer, please inquire with the International Secretary/Treasurer to obtain the necessary contact information.

Your Articles and Stories: MTC is always looking for original photographs, stories and articles about your experiences in telegraphy or radiotelegraphy. Please send articles and news stories to the Editor of *Dots & Dashes*.

Telegraph Talks and Demonstrations: If you or your local chapter should schedule any demonstrations, talks or other special events, please notify the International President so he can publish your event in our on-line calendar.

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The next issue of *Dots & Dashes* is scheduled for publication on December 30th, with submission deadline three weeks prior to that date.

➡ This ad runs routinely in the *World Radio News*:

Morse Telegraph Club

Landline Morse is Alive and well!

Dots & Dashes newsletter
The Ace Holman national telegraph office & hub
Internet Telegraphy Railroad Telegraphy
Morse Telegraph demonstration

Learn more about the history of the telegraph or simply enjoy using American Morse Code and authentic telegraph equipment.

www.morsetelegraphclub.com



Sidewire

Comments from the
Editor of *Dots & Dashes*

By Jim Wilson



More than half a year has passed since the coronavirus spread worldwide as a pandemic. I hope and pray that each of you, our valued MTC members, are well and have avoided the COVID-19 disease. The world and our lives have changed,

possibly forever.

On the positive side, we have more time to catch up on long neglected chores and we have extra time to practice our telegraph skills. Eventually, the pandemic will end and we will return to doing live telegraph demonstrations for the public benefit. So, keep on keeping on.

I look forward to hearing from you and look forward to the Library of Congress assigning us an official registration number for *Dots & Dashes*. Your stories and telegraph experiences will add meaningful information which will be available to future researchers. I hope that the folks who write future books and who make future movies which include the telegraph will use our information to help ensure accuracy.

Meanwhile, continue to avoid crowds, to wear your face masks in public, to wash your hands frequently, and to stay in touch with people whom you value in life.

And I promised to tell you more about that mint condition 1914 KOB that I purchased in its original box with the original instruction booklet. Maybe in the next issue I'll include a photo and comments. Hot ziggity!

Oh, and please keep reading *Dots & Dashes* journal and encouraging new members to join MTC!

Jim Wilson

President's Line

Jim Wades, President
Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.



I recently had the opportunity to present a talk on railroad signal and communications at a nearby high school. With 50 minutes allocated for the talk, I decided to offer some historical context starting with the telegraph and train orders and moving through mechanical and electro-mechanical interlocking systems, CTC, to modern 21st Century dispatching using computers, networking and PTC.

In order to quickly and easily explain the concept of telegraphy, I first transmit a few phrases in American Morse Code on standard telegraph instruments. I then invite a few students to introduce themselves by typing their names on a CW keyboard while I turn away. I then tell them their name. The International Code is used during the latter exercise, but it is illustrating the concept that matters. With the CW output speed set to 30 or 35 wpm, the student instantly and intuitively grasps the relative speed and efficiency of telegraphy versus such familiar methods as text message exchanges on their smart phones. The method also doubles as a bit of a "parlor trick," adding some entertainment to the presentation.

Interestingly, the talk was well received. The goal, of course, is to encourage the students to grasp the connection between education and training and future career goals. Maybe a few of the students will pursue a career in the rail and transit industry, and perhaps a few might someday be curious about telegraph history.

Photos:

Do you have photos of the telegraph offices in which you worked? How about photos of colleagues or ORT meetings? Such photos are excellent content for *Dots & Dashes* and they serve as an excellent way to memorialize those who once worked in the industry.

Now and then, one sees scrapbooks of photos appear on auction sites such as eBay. These are

continued on next page ➡

A hobby of President Jim Wades



often cut apart and destroyed to maximize profit for someone who, quite bluntly, could care less about the history the scrapbook contains.

In recent months, I have started sending scans of photos to Jim Wilson to share in *Dots & Dashes*. Some have been shared in other publications as

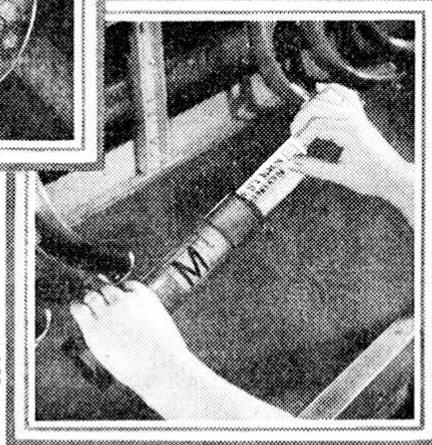
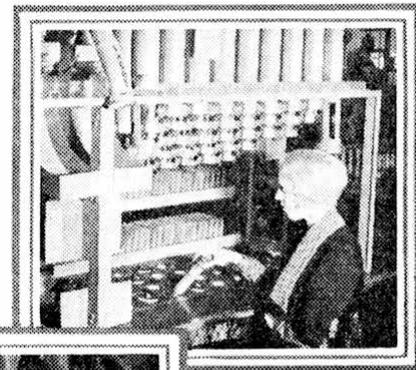
well. The goal is to preserve history and encourage others to consider the once vibrant and extensive telegraph industry. Don't let these memories end up in the trash can or hidden in some railfan's basement. Share them through our Quarterly Journal, *Dots & Dashes*.

COVID-19

I hope everyone is doing well amidst the global pandemic. It has been a lonely and perhaps frightening time for many. Consider using some of the time trapped in your house to either build or procure a MorseKOB interface and get active on the wire. If you have never worked as a telegrapher, there are plenty of options for learning American Morse Code. If you have a telegraph background, it's a great way to enjoy using the "mother tongue" once again.

Stay healthy everyone!

73!



At left—Container dropping from tube upon arrival at receiving tube center in heart of Western Union operating room, after speeding under the city streets from a branch office. Center—Girl removing message from container, after which she will drop it on one of the moving belts just beyond the tubes. Message then goes to operator for transmission to distant city. At right—Tube sending-center in operating room. Container being dropped into tube by girl will shoot through underground tube network to a Western Union branch office in the city.

40 YEARS A RAILROADER

By MTC member Bert Johnson of Winnipeg, Manitoba

Growing up next to the tracks and experiencing the many moves that a railway family makes, it was probably a given that I would become a railroader.

I was born into a railway family. At 18 years old, my father immigrated to Canada from Norway in the late 1920's to work as a track laborer for the Canadian Pacific Railway.

My grade school years began in Lac Du Bonnet, Manitoba, followed by Kenora, Ontario. When my father was set up as a section foreman, we moved to Dymet, Ontario, where I completed grade school. I remember the drive to Dymet from Kenora with my younger brother Einar in our 1929 Pontiac.

My father had purchased a two-story log house on 15 acres of land for \$500. We didn't have hydro until after I left for high school. This generation would find it hard to comprehend – no TV or telephone and no running water. The introduction of gas lamps was a big deal. Then there was a two mile walk to a one-room schoolhouse with an outhouse which used Eaton's catalog for toilet paper. I wonder if a ten-year-old boy now would trade his cell phone for a trap line. I had a visit from a game warden for selling a mink pelt that was out of season, and I had to explain that it was caught while trapping for muskrats.

At age 15, I began my railroad career by working as a track laborer during the school summer holidays in 1948. Growing up with the opportunity to listen in on the train dispatcher's line, I was intrigued with the interaction between the train dispatcher and the operators, issuing and repeating train orders. During this time, I decided this was the career that I would peruse.

Bert Barsby, the operator at Dymet, encouraged me. Bert gave me a practice set for me to learn the Morse code. Graduating from high school in 1949, I continued on the track, writing my "D rules" exam and getting permanent section man positions at Raith and at Tache, Ontario.

With the advent of the 40-hour work week and the need for train order operators, I enrolled in telegraphy classes taught by Don McKinnon in

Kenora. Upon completing the course in the Spring of 1950, I was assigned to Ignace, Ontario as an apprentice under station agent Bill Duncan. I continued working at this position until the next Spring, when I was then 18 and could be hired on as a train operator.

On May 21, 1951, my first relief operator's assignment was the day operator at Keewatin, Ontario. (Not many relief operators can say they began their career working a day job!) This turned out to be some initiation. The Winnipeg commercial office was calling with a check 200 plus code message for the Keewatin flour mill. This was followed by copying crossover orders all day because of a sinkhole in the track bed on the Keewatin sub.

My first permanent operator's position was the Ignace/Raith swing. This included two-day shifts, two third tricks at Ignace and then I made my way 80 miles to Raith for my last third trick.

Raith was at the top of the grade from Fort William. Westbound freight trains double headed to Raith, took on coal and water and dropped off the head end engine and engineer to return to Fort William.

During one of my first midnight shifts at Raith, a west-bound passenger train after taking on coal, backed into the station and brought the engineer into the station, unconscious and bleeding, to leave him on the waiting room floor. He had fallen off the tender while helping the fireman push down coal. There as a pusher engineer waiting to return to Fort William that was able to take the passenger train west. It was a long two hours waiting for the ambulance from Port Arthur. The engineer died before he got to the hospital. This was a traumatic experience for an 18-year-old.

In 1953, I was loaned to the Fort William terminals, reporting to the third trick current river tower, also working Fort William depot and yard office positions. While working third trick at Port Arthur, one of my duties was to copy the train news to deliver to the eastbound passenger trains. The news was my introduction to the Phillip's

code. The Toronto Telegrapher operator, being very patient, explained the short forms as he sent them.

In 1954, Marilyn, married me. We had met while working as an apprentice at Ignace. (She made the best banana splits at the local ice cream parlor.) I then bid in second trick at Broadway, Saskatchewan as far west as my seniority would take me. (I jokingly told my in-laws that I needed to get as far away as possible from them!)

Our daughter, Jane, was born in Broadway in 1956. One of the memories of working at Broadway was sending the press accounts of football games between the winning blue bombers and the Saskatchewan Roughriders, that sports writers dropped off on the teams return trip to Winnipeg. Leaving Broadway in 1958, I returned to the agency at Raith. (Having worked at Raith as a section man, operator, and now as the agent.)

Our son Jeff was born in 1958. At 10 days old, we had to rush Jeff back to the Fort William Hospital with staff infection. Jeff spent another 10 days strapped down in an oxygen tent, draining the infection from his lungs. At one stage, the doctors informed us that if he survived, there was a probability of brain damage. (Jeff retired in 2019 as managing partner for PWC Consulting, so the infection didn't affect his brain too much.)

Bidding on a relief dispatcher's position in Brandon, Manitoba, I left Raith to work relief dispatching positions in the Brandon office, also working as an operator at Minnesota and Souris, Manitoba until being set up as a permanent dispatcher in Brandon on May 21, 1961. This was exactly ten years from my permanent operators' seniority.

In 1961, while I was working in Brandon, my daughter Jane, who had been diagnosed with Leukemia, passed away. Then in 1966, we were blessed with twin girls, Janice and Jennifer. We had no idea that we were having twins! The same doctor that had looked after Jane during her illness, delivered our twins. He was almost excited as we were. Yes, the world turns in mysterious ways.

The railway began consolidating dispatching offices, first the Kenora office into Winnipeg in 1970, followed by the Brandon office into Winnipeg in 1972. At that time, I was promoted to second trick chief dispatcher in Winnipeg. The in 1986, I was set up as a Rules Instructor and subsequently as the director of rules for the Prairie Region.

In 1988, another consolidation took place, when the Moose Jaw and Saskatoon dispatching offices

moved into Winnipeg. So, I was then back into the Winnipeg dispatching office with the title of Director of Train Operations Heavy Haul System at the Winnipeg dispatching center. Besides the consolidation, it was a busy time with the installation of the double track centralized traffic control system between Winnipeg and Fort William (now Thunder Bay) and the introduction of the computerized manual block system on the Branch lines.

In 1989, with Winnipeg office scheduled to be moved to Calgary, our family had to decide whether to move with the office or to take the buyout that was offered. At 56 years old and with 40 years of service, I decided to take my pension, effective October 1989.

Reflecting on 40 years of railroading, I witnessed the many changes, the 40-hour work, week, the transition of steam to diesel, doing away with the caboose, and going to a 5-man crew to 2 crew members on the head end. (I recall when each permanent conductor was assigned to their own caboose.) The operator's position where I began no longer exists. The last Morse line was replaced by teletype in 1972.

Train dispatchers in Calgary now work from computer screens with the ability to move control sections at will. What next? Perhaps train movements will be controlled from a satellite. If the computer system failed, who would be around to move trains the old fashion way, by right class and direction?

Following my retirement in October, 1989, I accepted a one-year contract with CPCS (CP Consulting Services) in Indonesia, leaving the Island of Sumatra in November. I then took a 15-month contract in Sudan, returning to Canada for a short-term contract with the S&H in Albany, NY. Until I turned age 60, I continued my career working for Transport Canada as a Prairie Region rules and safety inspector

Having now drawn a railway pension for over 30 years and reflecting on 40 years of railway memories, I feel fortunate to have experienced this era in railway history. For the past five years. I have been enjoying serving the MTC Winnipeg "WG" Chapter as their Secretary-Treasurer. This has given me a connection with some of the old timers who continue to escape the Silent Key section of *Dots & Dashes*. It's been a good life.

CHAPTER NEWS

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, everyone has become isolated. All planned chapter events have been cancelled. But some chapters have begun meeting via the Internet using the Zoom program. Check with your chapter to see if this is a possibility for you.

~Jim

PS: It's a new world out there.



Dear J. Chris Hausler, Dale Lichtblau, Jim Wilson and other Representatives of the Morse Telegraph Club in the Northern Virginia Area,

The Herndon Historical Society would like to thank you for your assistance and generous donations in helping us establish a new telegraph exhibit in our Herndon Depot Museum.

Our Society is a non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve and showcase the cultural and historical heritage of the Herndon, Virginia area. We bring together those people who are interested in our history. We discover, document, and collect material that may help establish or illustrate the history of Herndon. The Society also manages the Depot Museum and the nearby caboose. We help ensure the preservation and accessibility of the records and archives of the Herndon community and of its institutions; support the preservation of historic buildings, monuments, and markers; and use the media to increase public interest in Herndon's history.

Our museum is located in a c. 1857 train station that was once part of the Washington and Old Dominion Railroad. We believe that telegraph service started in our town after The Virginia Telegraph Company was first incorporated in 1870, operating a telegraph line that ran from Alexandria to Loudoun County, which would have run through Herndon. That company was later purchased by Western Union, c. 1878. Our Town was incorporated in 1879.

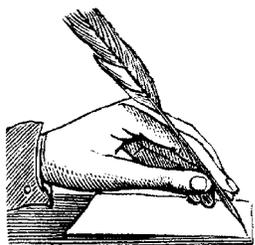
We are very grateful that you helped us bring a new telegraph exhibit into our Depot Museum. This will allow visitors (especially children) to learn what a telegraph is, what Morse code is, how a telegraph works, and how telegraphy was once an important form of communication in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Our Museum re-opened for the 2020 season on March 1, and our visitors very much enjoyed seeing the new telegraph exhibit.

Thank you again for your assistance and generosity. The new exhibit has really enhanced our Museum. A photo of it is at right.

*Sincerely,
The Herndon Historical Society*





Letters to the Editor

June 30th

Just as a bit of background, several of us have spent hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars out of our own pockets to recruit ham radio operators.

For many years, a group of us, including Chris Hausler and myself, traveled to Dayton, Ohio for the annual Hamvention attended by 21,000 to 31,000 radio amateurs. Each year, we set up a nice display, demonstrating telegraphy. During these three days, we met countless people, potential members of MTC. But total new members obtained were typically in the range of five or so. We also traveled to Orlando, Florida for their Hamvention and traveled to the 100th ARRL Anniversary in Hartford, Connecticut, plus to other smaller ham conventions such as the Richmond, Virginia Frostfest.

On an almost monthly basis, I promote MTC on various CW operator email lists such as "SKCC," and radiotelegraph operators, "NAQCC," via the Radio Relay International group newsletter and so forth. I also used to write a column for World Radio Magazine until it was purchased by "CQ Magazine" some years ago.

Most of our new members do come from ham radio groups, but the return on investment for reaching out to them is staggering when compared to the number of new members recruited.

On a related note, I have tried to recruit hams as volunteer docents at museum telegraph exhibits such as the Monticello Railroad Museum, the Hesston Steam Museum, and others. Results have been close to zero here too.

However, the small number of ham operators that have joined MTC have really helped us a lot. Frankly, there just aren't enough of them. And I can't think of anything else to try to generate interest!

Of course, I may be overlooking things, so I am open to new ideas.

73, James Wades, International President of the Morse Telegraph Club

July 14th

I have much to do here and have been wanting to write to you. I'm in fishing clubs and I write a newsletter. We push hard for digital only; we now only mail about 65 hard copies. How many members do you mail it to?

I really enjoy reading *Dots & Dashes* and would hate for it to go to only 3 times a year. How short is MTC on money? Do you have a collection of the older newsletters that you can send out in some type of file?

I will have pictures and a story about last Saturday when we hooked up to the KOB box and our sounder started clicking away! I gotta find a Prince Albert cigar can to add to my sounder.

It was very exciting for the four of us to hear the message that came from the B&M. I believe Rick put a key on the desk 18 inches from the end just like it was supposed to be. We now have gone back to the time was reading the latest issue of *Dots & Dashes* yesterday and noticed something that probably needs to be changed in the MTC Contact information on page 2. That is the mailing address for retired International Vice President George J. Nixon, Jr.

We now have gone back from between 1896 till about the 1920's with that. Rick hooked up the old phones as well as scissor phone and speaker that came next and was used till 1960's. A member said he has the green phone and speaker that came next and will donate it. That was used till about 1984 when the tower closed.

**73,
John Springer**

July 31st

Hey guys, here is something for *Dots & Dashes* newsletter. My friends, Kathy Slinsky and her husband, are volunteers at the tower and have seen our Morse code project. Kathy came across this and sent it to me. I will share it with you.

Kathy says she is making herself a pearl necklace and was researching a particular type of clasp when she came across this article in one of

the beading magazines. Who knew there was such a thing? See these code necklaces at www.firemountaingems.com.

John Springer

August 6th

Here is a possible article for a future *Dots & Dashes*. The attached pictures are at Edgerton. Feel free to use it if and when you want to, but don't feel obligated! Hope you are well and keeping safe.

**Ted,
WB3AVD**

Readers: Ted's article, titled "All in the Golden Afternoon," with photographs can be found on page 11.

August 7th

I love to tell the story about my great grandfather, a Union Army Civil War veteran. He got shot thru the neck in the Wilderness Battle, thrown in the prison hospital by the Rebels in Richmond, Virginia.

My grandfather worked on the PRR for 45 years, followed by my dad, who worked on the B&O RR for 40 years as a Conductor. I personally qualified in 16 interlockings along the Baltimore Division of the B&O RR. I served 14 years before leaving the RR for a day job with Uncle Sam and going to night college.

**Richard Williams,
International Secretary-Treasurer**

August 12th

During the COVID-19 restrictions, not much is happening. I lost my brother, Lawrence, age 72, to cancer on June 6, 2020. He worked and retired from the Canadian National Railroad at a TMC.

Jim Rosychuk, the son of our late member, Peter Rosycuck, had his dad's telegraph sets in storage. He called me to see if I could give them to some



Alvin Gordon and Louise Bergerud being presented the telegraph set by me on June 24, 2020 at Edgerton.

museum so that they would be displayed. So, I picked them up from him, changed them over from electric power to battery power and donated them to the museum at Edgerton, Alberta ad Paradise Valley, Alberta.

Conversion was required because there was no electric power at these stations. The Edgerton museum has the original C.N. station and the one at Paradise Valley is an original C.P. station next to an elevator, which is a climb through time museum. The museums are both very interesting. People are welcome to visit.

**Bill Tchir,
Edmonton Chapter**

September 1st

This letter is sent to remind folks that the Railway Mail Service Library Foundation (RMSLF) and the Boyce Railway Depot Foundation (BRDF) will be conducting annual meeting on Saturday October 17, 2020. Since membership is widely dispersed, the meetings will be conducted via FreeConferenceCall.com

**MTC Member,
Dr. Frank R. Scheer**

September 5th

I'd like to subscribe to *Dots & Dashes*, which I imagine might be included with MTC membership, so maybe I should restate that as saying I'd like to join MTC. Please let me know the process for doing so. I was a member of MTC for several years, probably a decade or so ago. My email address is ad7i@ad7i.net, and I always respond within 48 hours. So, if you don't hear back from me, please check the spam folder.

I'm a retired electrical engineer having spent most of my career at Bell Labs in New Jersey designing communications equipment of various types. As for telegraphy, I was never a professional. I learned International code when I studied for



Presentation by me to Gary Warrington, their railway display officer on July 8, 2020 at Paradise Valley.

my Novice ham license as a 15-year-old, and now can copy on a radio up to about 18 WPM, but I wouldn't say that I'm a proficient CW operator. About 25 years ago I had taught myself to copy most all the letters (but not numbers or punctuation) of computer-generated American Morse on a sounder at about 12 WPM [Words Per Minute].

In the 80's and 90's I was fortunate to have been acquainted to a Bell System retiree who was proficient with both American and International Morse code on a sounder and International on a radio (tones), as well as several former railroad telegraphers, dispatchers and one electrical engineer (all of who have passed, unfortunately). I'm very thankful for the landline telegraphy knowledge that they all generously shared with me.

I'm mostly interested in the land line telegraph (and American Morse) for a history of electrical communications perspective. A few days ago, while cursing the Internet, I found Les Kerr's terrific MorseKOB website. I quickly build a Loop KOB Interface very similar to the one Les designed, making a few component changes in order to use parts I already had on hand. With the assembled KOB Loop Interface operational, one of my sounders, which sits on the top shelf of

my radio table, has been pounding out code form circuit #109 (BBC at 20 words per minute) 24/7 for several days now. I can't copy it, although I can pick out the Ls and Ps, and can recognize the occasional "the" and "this." But even though I can't yet copy it, it sounds wonderful. A big THANK YOU to Les for such a fabulous system.

So, returning to the original subject, please let me know the process for joining MTC. Thanks for your help.

***Sincerely,
Paul Newland,
Middletown, N.J.***

September 24th

I got this link from the California Historical Radio Society. This silent movie shows the operation of a major telegraph company, including news of installing and repairing overhead wired and undersea cable. It is mostly straight key telegraphy, but a little about the printing telegraph.

Here is the link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fu6-jrzOyM&feature=youtu.be.

I thought it was great!

***MTC Member,
Harold Hallikinen***



A photo of the Bothwell station on the CN / Wab Chatham Sub as the station is on the north side with the westbound top rail taken in the summer (I believe 1965) .

The truck on the left is Stan's personal truck and the 1958 Olds my vehicle that I put on 40,000 miles in 1 1/2 years while on the spare board.

~ Robert Weare

ALL IN THE GOLDEN AFTERNOON...

By Ted WB3AVD

• • • thus began the poetic prelude to Lewis Carroll's immortal 1865 tale "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." Perhaps it was that vision which lingered in my mind as I began work on my second "ornate" KOB. Or was it the picture conjured by Joanne Harris? ... "it was one of those red-gold early October days, the air crisp and tart as heady as applejack, and even at dawn the sky was the clear, purplish blue that only the finest of autumn days brings." Regardless, this next in my series of KOBs based conceptually on the seasons (the first was a "late winter" device which appeared in Summer 2019 *Dots & Dashes*)--in which I've sought to substantially embellish the traces of ornamental treatment which sometimes appeared on older instruments--went firmly down an Indian-summer path (along with a few hundred hours of hobby-machining time!).

Let's have a closer look, from the ground up (see attached photos). We begin with a base of red acrylic maple (maple imbued with colored resin in a vacuum pot), finished with a dozen or so coats of lacquer to yield a "you-can-see-yourself-in-it" wet-look finish which suggests a glowing sunset on a brilliant fall day.

Upon this sit the electromagnets which are wound with red-enameled magnet wire ... evoking sugar maples, perhaps, blazing in the autumn sun.

Next up is a metal filigree "deck" upon which some of the KOB's adjustments and electrical binding posts reside. This is based on a Victorian

Christmas ornament design scroll-sawed out of 1/8" aluminum plate. Base-coated with an orange powder-coat and subsequently decorated with reds, oranges, and yellows, it suggests autumn leaves on a forest floor ... as though (said Charlotte Bates) "the heart of autumn must have broken here, and poured its treasure upon the leaves."

Between the base and the deck, the KOB's

straight key is visible: a length of drill rod which truncates in a brass maple leaf which serves as a paddle. And above the deck at the center of the key, sits the KOB's sounder ... a brass "cross" tensioned by a horizontal return spring which seems almost as delicate as a spider's web glistening in the dew; the sounder's 'hammer' being capped on each end with a blossom (a bright yellow sunflower and a purple-blue aster). The azure arch which surmounts the KOB (done with a transparent powder-coat over polished aluminum) serves both as the sounder's 'anvil' and as the horizon of "a sky so blue you could drown in it" (Diana

Gabaldo).

Finally, you may note a few of the instrument's adjustments: the small travel limit knobs for the sounder and straight key levers again portray blossoms, while the binding posts (two of which sit atop the filigree deck) mimic autumn mushrooms. An acorn sits atop the sky's arch (it plugs a screw-driver access hole!), and leaves of maple and oak reach up from the KOB's base.



The 'autumn' KOB, with the maple-leaf-shaped paddle of its straight key projecting at left. The sounder with its horizontal return spring can be seen at the center of the photo (between the raised filigree 'deck' and the blue arch of the sky). One of the electromagnet coils is visible in the foreground; the red-and-white mushroom is one of the binding posts. Various knobs on the blue arch include contact spacing and travel limits for the sounder armature, a plunger which adjusts the return spring's tension, and the pivot for the armature.



The KOB from the rear. The two large 'blossoms' (yellow sunflower on the left and blue aster on the right) are on the sounder's armature. The two mushrooms (on white stalks) are binding posts. The small adjustments at foreground center (between the wood base and the metal filigree deck) control the straight key's tension and travel limit.

The final finishes—the ones which capture the eye and bring the key to life—were applied by Altoona (Pennsylvania) artist Frank Modico. Frank worked in the heart of Pennsylvania Railroad country as a boilermaker-welder during its Penn-Central to ConRail years. He built these finishes up layer-by-layer over a period of many months using tiny brushes and a magnifier headband, finally yielding finishes which mimic stained glass and fired ceramic.

So there we stand on a radiant day ... “Beneath such dreamy weather ... Beneath the setting



A close-up showing the KOB's riot of fall colors!

sun” (Lewis Carroll again), in an autumn which “painted the countryside in vivid shades of scarlet, saffron, and russet, and the days ... clear and crisp under harvest skies” (Sharon Kay Penman). I hope you’ve enjoyed the journey! What’s next: the third in this series of ornate KOBs is shaping up to convey a blazing hot summer day, and I’ll admit, I’m intrigued by eventually doing a Halloween KOB! Stay tuned ...

THE TELEGRAPHER OF CANYON DIABLO

By MTC Member Bob Houf

Chapter 1: The End of the World

“El fin del mundo...”

Sam muttered that out loud with a few choice expletives under his breath as he stood on the edge of the canyon and watched the sun set over the mountain peak north of Flagstaff – 34 miles west of the end of the world. Vivid orange turned fire red as the sun dropped below the horizon and dust in the air changed the hue to a golden glow – then to a shade like a champagne sky as the first stars appeared overhead.

The canyon stretched out before him was now his world – ‘the end of the world’ as the Spanish said when they first encountered Arizona.

It was the world of rails and telegraph poles that he had been working on for the past 15 years.

The telegraph wasn’t new to Arizona – the US Army had strung iron wire across the southern and central part of the state as far back as 1871 when General Crook set out to tame the Apaches. His need for communications put in motion a vast network of iron wire and telegraph operators that did for the Apache Wars what they did for the Civil War – the first networked communications operations supporting military operations forever changed warfare – those who knew, won - those who were out of communication, lost.

The limited smoke signals of the Apache communicators were no match for the brass pounding over the iron wire.

Sam was never in the military; he hadn’t served as a soldier in the Civil War but had done his part as a telegrapher in Grant’s army. Now he was glad

to be on his own in the civilian world, even if it meant he had once again to be the sharp end of the spear in building the railroad across northern Arizona for the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad Company in the year 1880.

He walked back to his tent set up a hundred yards from the canyon’s edge and threw back the flap. It was early February and the rails were put down nearly to the canyon’s edge where they stopped – almost 250 feet above the canyon bottom and 600 feet across the gorge.

It was cold out in the desert.

“What a devil of a place”, Sam thought, as he mused on the name first given to the spot when it was discovered by an Army surveyor, a Lieutenant Whipple in 1853 who was surveying a possible route across northern Arizona for a rail line along the 35th parallel.

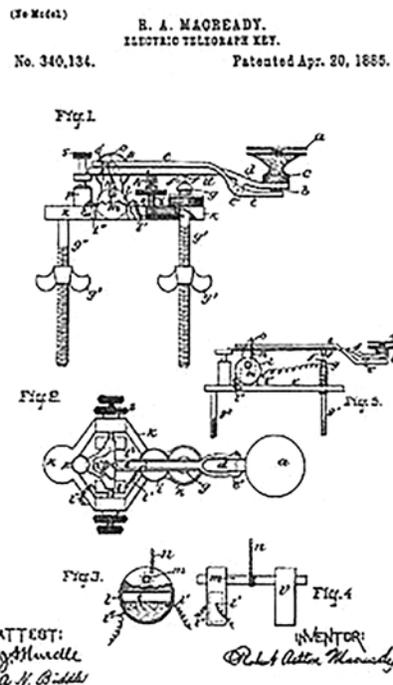
The Lieutenant named it Canyon Diablo on his survey – the Devil’s Canyon, and little could he have known how presciently he had named the place.

Canyon Diablo would become one of the most famous railroad construction projects in the

newly developing west and in the process make a name for itself as the town too tough to live.

In the annals of the wild west, Tombstone would live on in infamy - but the newly forming outpost of Canyon Diablo would out-do, out-gun and out-wild not only Tombstone, but Dodge City, Silver City and any number of other notorious towns of the west in its short life.

And Sam Hensel was there to put it on the line – not online as we say today, but on the line – the iron wire that connected the great endeavor of bridging the Canyon Diablo with a railroad trestle and a telegraph line.



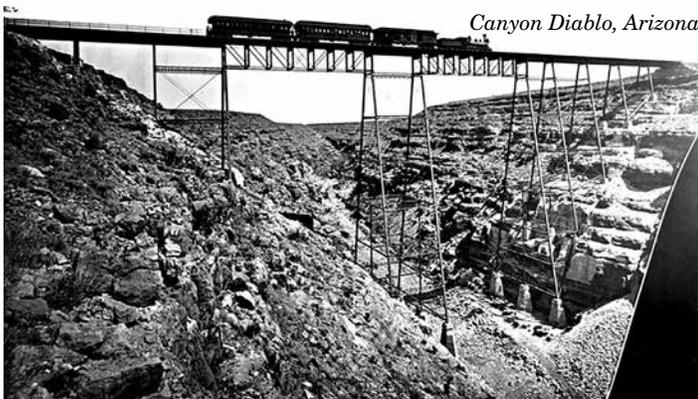
Sam threw a piece of pinyon pine into the iron stove in the corner of the tent and checked the stovepipe to make sure the fire was pulling properly. The coals were still hot from earlier in the afternoon and the log flared up, snapped, popped and began to give off the fragrance of the Southwest.

He sat down on his roughhewn chair, lit the lantern over his head, and his pipe, and pulled up to the tiny desk and began to send his report back up the line.

The battery voltage was low, and he was having trouble copying the operator in Winslow so he checked the ground connection and adjusted the sounder as best he could - he was barely able to complete the message that he was now in place at the canyon and would begin to handle traffic for the construction workers, the train and the boss.

It was 7PM on a Tuesday night and as he began to chat with KL in Winslow about what it was like out on the edge, he heard his first gun shot at Canyon Diablo. It would not be his last.

He was comforted by the Colt Peacemaker strapped on his gun belt as he sent code on his key...



Canyon Diablo, Arizona

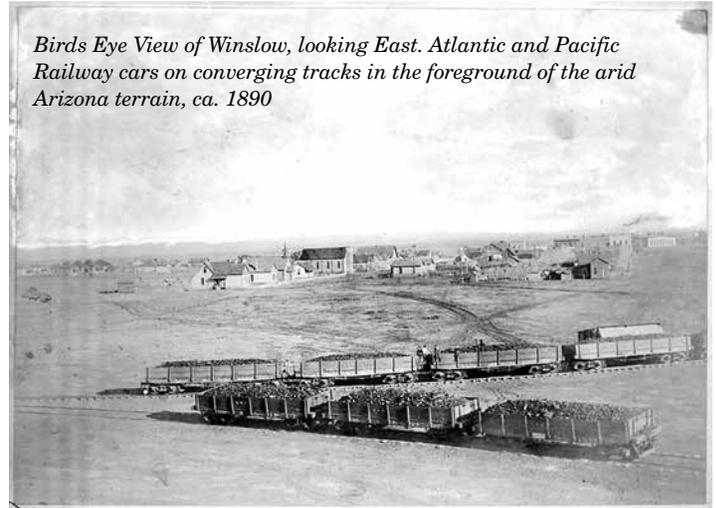
Chapter 2: Winslow, Arizona 1880

“KL” Williams was a tall drink of water from Amarillo, Texas.

The ladies found him irresistible and men found him a true friend and hard worker.

He leaned against the corner of the depot in Winslow, Arizona and watched the flat cars roll by loaded with ties and telegraph poles headed to the end of the line at Canyon Diablo, 26 miles west of town.

He flicked the remnant of his cigarillo into the dirt, ground it with the toe of his cowboy boot and twisted the ends of his handlebar mustache as he



Birds Eye View of Winslow, looking East. Atlantic and Pacific Railway cars on converging tracks in the foreground of the arid Arizona terrain, ca. 1890

turned on his heel and sauntered back into the station, hat tilted back on his blond head.

“Station” was a bit too glamorous for the shack that did duty for the hard-scrabble collection of buildings that made up Winslow in the early 1880’s. Once the line was completed it would grow into a fine stop in the northern desert and eventually become home to the luxurious La Posada, a Fred Harvey hotel made famous by overnight stays from movie stars and other notable clientele as they passed between LA and the big cities out east.

Albert Einstein, John Wayne, Betty Grable, Amelia Earhart, FDR and many others enjoyed the hospitality of Fred Harvey in his flagship hotel.

But now, it was a mere frontier town in the young west - albeit with a milder temper than the lawless rail camp being set up further down the line at Canyon Diablo.

A cold winter wind blew out of the west, kicking up dirt and tumbleweeds as KL slammed the door shut and plopped down at the telegrapher’s desk.

He had a good view out either side of the bay windows and it gave him pleasure to sit there, warming himself by the wood fire in the stove in the corner.

Now that he had finished checking the batteries earlier in the morning - a daily chore - and topping them off to deal with the issue he had the other night when working SG out in the canyon, he called Sam on the wire.

“SG SG KL KL” ... clicked out of the sounder and he closed the switch on his key to wait for Sam to reply with his di-dit di-dit.

The two had known each other for years, both having worked at various depots in the same division of the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad.

And when the A&P would later become the Sante Fe - actually, the Atchison, Topeka & Sante Fe Railroad - they would both still be lightning slingers, reminiscing about the build-out of the line through the canyon. It was a rich harvest of nearly unbelievable stories which many youngsters heard, then passed on into the twentieth century.

Some of the best of them - although true as the day is long and the sun is bright in the Southwest - became mythical and were told with a twinkle in the eye and a wink and a nod, giving the

impression they were just more cracker-barrel fodder by a pot-bellied stove in a railroad depot.

What Sam sent back on the wire to KL made him utter a low whistle - Sam's fist was shaky and KL knew he was shook up bad. His dits were stuttering and the dahs were too long. Clearly, whatever had happened to Sam had deeply affected him.

And now KL himself wished he had a revolver on a gun belt...

This is How Cablegrams are Sent and Received

1 Cable operator (1) taps the typewriter-like keys of his instrument thus perforating a tape (2) which passes through the automatic transmitter at his left. Electrical impulses controlled by the perforations flash through the cable. Instantly the tiny glass tube of a siphon recorder in a distant operating room (3) marks a wavy line of ink on a paper tape (4) which is translated and recorded on a cablegram blank by the receiving operator. High speed automatic apparatus (5) is now used in sending and receiving messages on Western Union's permalloy cables illustrated in No. 7. An operating scene in the Western Union main office in London is shown in picture 6. The method of laying a cable is illustrated in No. 8. No. 9 is a picture of Western Union Cable Ship Lord Kelvin. No. 10 shows Western Union Cable Ship Cyrus W. Field laying the shore end of a cable.

2 A piece of the perforated cable sending tape
WESTERN UNION

7

- Copper wire core
- Flexible copper tape
- Permalloy tape
- Gutta-Percha
- Jute wrapping
- Eighteen steel armor wires
- Tarred hemp cords

Then the soft ooze of the ocean floor

8

DEPTH IN FEET

3,000
9,000
15,000
21,000

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 1100 1200 1300 1400 1500



Welcome Aboard!

NEW MEMBERS OF MTC

Nicholas Moe of Bloomington, MN

Dr. John Schike of Lake Oswego, OR

Charley Blair of Mineral Wells, TX

Joey Ferguson of Pawleys Island, SC

Mark Haskell of Velrico, FL

Patrick Dirks of Monte Serando, CA

Ray Wemple of Schenectady, NY

Paul Newland of Middletown, NJ

New Wireless Pioneers of Grand Island, NY

Thank you anonymous donor for the contribution of \$100 to the Morse Telegraph Club. Note that because the Morse Telegraph Club is a 501-c-3 organization, all contributions are fully tax deductible. Your donation will provide operational funds needed to extend the future of our Club and will support Dots & Dashes.

DID YOU KNOW?

Do you know that Nuclear War is a likelihood?

The “Doomsday Clock” (www.doomsdayclock.org) just moved ahead, close to the hour when a nuclear war is likely. Most people have not been paying attention to this alarming fact.

Currently, the world is vulnerable with the conditions of rapidly spreading deadly COVID-19 disease, with many countries in economic collapse, with permanently damaged weather systems, with strong polarization of public opinions, and with various dictators seizing political power.

Today, nine countries: The United States, Russia, France, Britain, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea, have nuclear weapons, about 14,000 hydrogen bombs total. These are enough weapons to kill most of the 8 billion people currently living on planet earth, and to make the planet unlivable for hundreds of years to come.

Nuclear war could ruin your day. My advice is to get educated and to write a letter to your Congressman.

“30” SILENT KEYS

News of our brothers and sisters who have closed the key



Emory Mulquin “PD” Chapter

DAROLD J. MADSON of Gladstone, Oregon, age 89, passed recently. Bud was born on February 15, 1931 in Stanley, North Dakota. After high school, Bud and a couple of his friends attended trade school to become telegraphers. He completed the schooling in 1950 then hired out with the Great Northern Railroad as an Operator.

Bud worked at various railroad locations until he landed in Williston, North Dakota, where he met Lillian, who became his wife of 66 years. In 1962, Bud and Lillian moved to Oregon where Bud worked for SP&S RR and also operated a summer mobile ice cream truck business. Later, Bud became computer operator; he retired from the BN in 1991 at the age of 61., after 47 years of RR service. Bud was active in the Portland-Vancouver Morse Telegraph Club chapter.

Thanks to Rich Wornath, Secretary-Treasurer of the Emory Mulquin PD Chapter for this information.

Maple Leaf “ON” Chapter

PETER CRATE of Hastings, Ontario, age 81, became a silent key on Independence Day - July 4, 2020. He was born in Hastings on December 2, 1939. Pete learned the telegraph in Hastings well enough to join the Canadian National Railroad, Hornepayne Division in 1958, where he worked at various stations in this Division until 1960. That year, Peter returned to the Belleville Division of the Canadian National Railroad. He worked for nine more years as an Operator and Relief Agent. During that time, he was Agent at Bonarlar and Norwood. Peter is survived by his wife, Sharon.

Thanks to Donald Laycock, Secretary-Treasurer of the Maple Leaf “ON” Chapter for this information.

PETER JOSEPH BOHAN, age 86, of Miramichi, New Brunswick, Canada, passed away on March 7, 2020. He was born on February 23, 1934. Peter grew up in the village of Barnaby River. After Peter finished his education, he began his 38-year career with the Canadian National Railroad, starting in Rogersville, NB, about 20 miles from his home. He initially began working on the spare board, but in a few weeks, he

had bid on an operator’s position in Northern Ontario.

All the time learning the Morse code, he enjoyed sending and typing on the old Underwood typewriter, which seemed to be the standard in Morse stations. Peter moved around, finding board in houses at interesting places. He took a dislike to Cheese Whiz sandwiches!

Each station was unique, like Wyoming, Ontario and Oil Springs, Ontario. At the hub in Toronto, Ontario, Peter was working midnight shifts when Hurricane Hazel struck, knocking out power, bringing everything to a standstill.

Peter worked Cherry Street tower levers and had to deliver hand written orders to passing trains. That was in 1955.

Peter was interested in all aspects of railroading. In 1957 his new city was Woodstock, Ontario, where he met Shirley, who became his wife, who shared his interest in trains. Peter and Shirley enjoyed 60 years together, raised six children, and had fun on many train trips.

Petr’s career took him full cycle, working his last years before retiring in 1989 in Newcastle, NB, about 30 miles from Rogersville, where it all started.

Thanks to Shirley Bohan, wife of Peter. She adds, “I could write a novel about the wife of a railroader.”

Grand “GC” Chapter

JAMES ALFRED KEESLER, age 77, passed away on May 22, 2020. He was born in Lansing, Michigan. Jim spent his childhood on the family farm in Rives Junction, graduating from Northwest High School in Jackson, Michigan in 1961. Next, he attended Western Michigan University, where he met his bride-to-be, Pamela Gibson. Jim and Pam married then graduated together in 1966. Next, they both joined the Peace Corps and spent three years serving together in Afghanistan. Then they settled down in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Jim went to work for Fetzer Broadcasting as radio station WKZO, spinning the platters and running the control room. After about three years, he transitioned to the local television station WWMT. He kept Channel 3 running smoothy. In 1985, he became the Assistant Chief Engineer at WMT, a position that he retained until his retirement at the end of 2008.

Following his divorce in 2002, Jim connected with Jena, someone who was a former farm neighbor and school mate. Jena and Jim married in December 2004 and they moved back to their farm neighborhood where he and Jena helped his new mother-in-law run her family farm.

Over the years, Jim had a number of hobbies. While still in school, he was a square dance caller, although as a dancer, he had two left feet!

Interested in amateur radio at a young age, Jim earned his FCC license at age 14. He was also a Skywarn weather spotter for many years, and he held various offices in several radio clubs. He was also involved teaching amateur radio classes in Kalamazoo and in Jackson and he helped with public service events. Amateur Radio Field Day every June was the highlight of his ham radio year. Jim also held a pilot's license and he loved all things railroad.

Thanks to Jena Keesler, Jim's wife, for this information.

Jena adds that Jim was proud of and loved his Amateur Radio license and affiliation and the Morse Telegraph Club. Jim was licensed for about 63 years. His callsign was K8EXF. Jena says her husband was a huge influence in helping others learn about ham radio and obtain their license.

JUDGE ROGER Curtis McKee, age 89, passed away on May 29, 2020. He was born in Waterloo, Iowa on February 11, 1931. Judge McKee served as a Magistrate Judge for the United States in labor relations in 1958, Southern District California in San Diego from 1983 until 1997. He continued to serve the

court on recall status from 2001 to 2006.

Roger also served as a Navy ROTC instructor and retired as a U.S. Navy Captain. He attained a Master of Science degree in 1958. While in college, he met the love of his life, Bobbie. They were married for 63 years before her passing on January 3, 2018. After Bobbie's death, Judge McKee relocated to Granite Bay, California to live with his son Brian's family. There, he worked as a labor relations associate at Northern Illinois Gas Company until 1960. Then he and his family relocated to San Diego to work for General Dynamics Atlas Missile program. From 1964 to 1968, he attended night law school at the University of San Diego, graduating with a Juris Doctor degree in 1968.

Judge McKee practiced law from 1970 to 1983. At that time, he was appointed by the federal court to the San Diego based bench. Judge McKee served the U.S. courts during transformative years after the passage of the Civil Justice Reform Act by the U.S. Congress. Because of this, the role of magistrate judges changed dramatically.

Following retirement, Judge McKee and Bobbie traveled widely. They were also very active in their Presbyterian Church choir. During retirement, Judge McKee also took flying lessons and obtained his pilot license.

In 1949, he had worked for the Illinois Central Railroad as a telegraph operator. He never lost his love of trains or telegraphy.

Thanks to Brian McKee, son of Judge McKee, for this very interesting life story.

A WARNING FROM HISTORY: THE CARRINGTON EVENT WAS NOT UNIQUE

By Dr. Tony Phillips

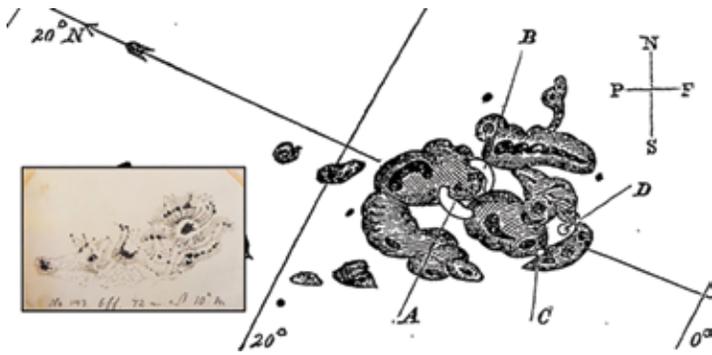
Sept. 1, 2020: On Sept. 1st, 1859, the most ferocious solar storm in recorded history engulfed our planet. It was "the Carrington Event," named after British scientist Richard Carrington, who witnessed the flare that started it. The storm rocked Earth's magnetic field, sparked auroras over Cuba, the Bahamas and Hawaii, set fire to telegraph stations, and wrote itself into history books as the Biggest. Solar. Storm. Ever.

But, sometimes, what you read in history books is wrong.

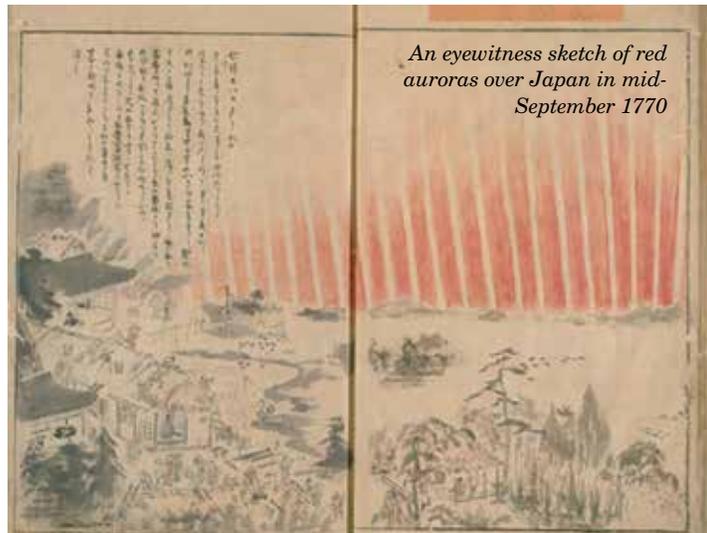
"The Carrington Event was not unique," says

Hisashi Hayakawa of Japan's Nagoya University, whose recent study of solar storms has uncovered other events of comparable intensity. "While the Carrington Event has long been considered a once in a century catastrophe, historical observations warn us that this may be something that occurs much more frequently."

To generations of space weather forecasters who learned in school that the Carrington Event was one of a kind, these are unsettling thoughts. Modern technology is far more vulnerable to solar storms than 19th-century telegraphs. Think about GPS, the



Drawings of the Carrington sunspot by Richard Carrington on Sept. 1, 1859, and (inset) Heinrich Schwabe on Aug. 27, 1859.



internet, and transcontinental power grids that can carry geomagnetic storm surges from coast to coast in a matter of minutes. A modern-day Carrington Event could cause widespread power outages along with disruptions to navigation, air travel, banking, and all forms of digital communication.

Many previous studies of solar superstorms leaned heavily on Western Hemisphere accounts, omitting data from the Eastern Hemisphere. This skewed perceptions of the Carrington Event, highlighting its importance while causing other superstorms to be overlooked.

A good example is the great storm of mid-September 1770, when extremely bright red auroras blanketed Japan and parts of China. Captain Cook himself saw the display from near Timor Island, south of Indonesia. Hayakawa and colleagues recently found drawings of the instigating sunspot, and it is twice the

size of the Carrington sunspot group. Paintings, dairy entries, and other newfound records, especially from China, depict some of the lowest-latitude auroras ever, spread over a period of 9 days.

“We conclude that the 1770 magnetic storm was comparable to the Carrington Event, at least in terms of auroral visibility,” wrote Hayakawa and colleagues in a 2017 *Astrophysical Journal Letter*. Moreover, “the duration of the storm activity was much longer than usual.”

Hayakawa’s team has delved into the history of other storms as well, examining Japanese diaries, Chinese and Korean government records, archives of the Russian Central Observatory, and log-books from ships at sea—all helping to form a more complete picture of events.

They found that superstorms in February 1872 and May 1921 were also comparable to the Carrington Event, with similar magnetic amplitudes and widespread auroras. Two more storms are nipping at Carrington’s heels: The Quebec Blackout of March 13, 1989, and an unnamed storm on Sept. 25, 1909, were only a factor of ~2 less intense. (Check Table 1 of Hayakawa et al’s 2019 paper for details.)

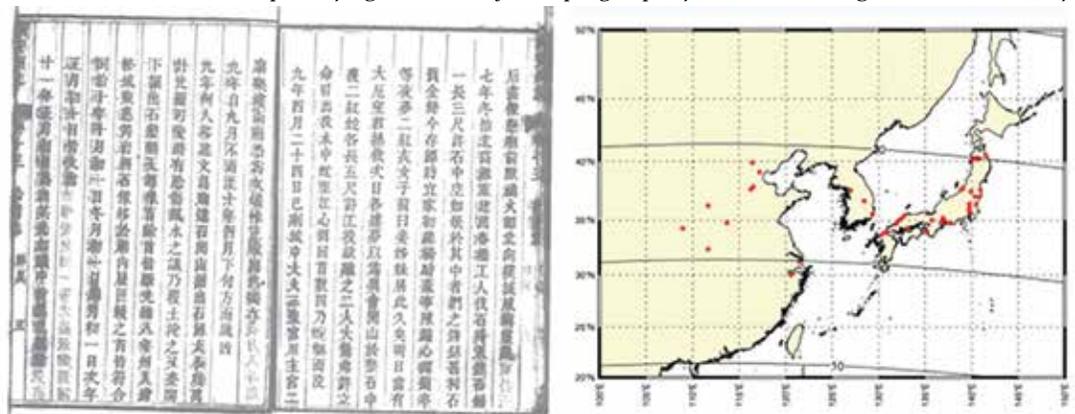
Contextualizing the Carrington Event has become a busy niche in space weather research. One team led by Jeff Love of the USGS recently confirmed the near equality of Carrington to the May 1921 superstorm. And Hayakawa’s team has just unearthed new records of extreme auroras in South America.

Are we overdue for another Carrington Event? Maybe. In fact, we might have just missed one.

In July 2012, NASA and European spacecraft watched an extreme solar storm erupt from the sun and narrowly miss Earth. “If it had hit, we would still be picking up the pieces,” announced Daniel Baker of the University of Colorado at a NOAA Space Weather Workshop 2 years later. “It might have been stronger than the Carrington Event itself.”

History books, let the re-write begin.

Oriental reports of a giant naked-eye sunspot group (left) and auroras (right) in Feb. 1872. [Ref]





J. Chris Hausler's BOOK & MOVIE REVIEWS



For this column I'm taking a look at a book and a PBS series which both examine what the PBS series calls the Matthew Effect from Matthew 25:29 which says, "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away." Or, in simpler terms, "The rich get richer and the poor get poorer". The book and video together examine the rise of three media, printing and the press, the Morse telegraph and the Internet. Although originally seen as liberating forces, as Morse said, "One neighborhood of the whole country", all three came or have come to be dominated and controlled by a few centralized organizations for their own benefit.

News over the Wires

The Telegraph and the Flow of Public Information in America, 1844-1897

Menahem Blondheim

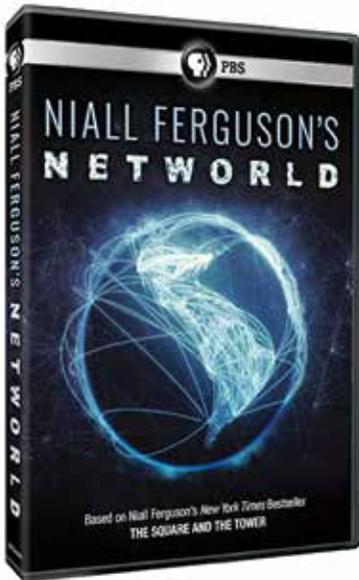
The book is *News over the Wires, The Telegraph and the Flow of Public Information in America, 1844-1897* by Menahem Blondheim, published in 1994 by Harvard University Press, ISBN-10: 067462212X. When Morse first conceived the telegraph he saw it as facilitating free and open

communications between individuals. But any new technology, particularly one of communications, can change how people relate to each other. This book examines how the telegraph was appropriated by the press associations, most notably the Associated Press, to centralize the gathering and distribution of news. There was effort to avoid editorial opinions from creeping into, "the facts and just the facts", but both by errors of omission and commission the news became slanted toward the opinions of the press association. The author points out that due to their republican leanings they may very well have affected the outcomes of a number of political elections in the latter period discussed in the book. Fake news is nothing new.

The book examines in detail the development of the press associations from the beginnings of the penny press in the 1830's to the Morse's invention of the telegraph which provided a means for the rapid and wide dissemination of information. But what information? The telegraph companies and the press associations quickly became partners. There was even a period in time when it looked like Western Union might have gotten control of the press association but WU was by then being attacked by the "postal telegraph movement". This movement accused WU of being a monopoly and advocated that the government take over the telegraph network. Their goal was to make the telegraph network part of the post office as had been done in many other countries. Seeing the danger Western Union stepped back. However the press associations became the first great patron of the telegraph. Ultimately the AP became a news monopoly, a funnel through which all news was gathered, selected for content and then distributed. Western Union of course still benefited from this as the AP became their major single source of revenue.

Although a story about the press, a number of well known telegraph pioneers who were involved are analyzed including Francis O. J. Smith, Henry O'Rielly, James D. Reid, Ezra Cornell and that favorite financial speculator Jay Gould who was involved in both the press and, as sometime owner of Western Union, the telegraph. The book's editor refers to Gould as an "habitual fisher in troubled waters." The book is a fascinating and entertaining look at the battles, the players, the winners and the losers in how all this came about. I think you will enjoy.

The PBS series, *Niall Ferguson's Network* was just presented earlier this year and is available on a DVD. It consists of three parts, *Disruption, Winner Takes All* and *Network War*. As the telegraph was first imagined by its creators as one common decentralized neighborhood of the whole, so was the Internet. However, just as



the telegraph came to be monopolized by certain organizations and individuals, so has the Internet.

In *Disruption*, the program analyzes the nature of networks and their ability to destabilize the status quo. It starts by examining how the invention of the printing press allowed Martin Luther to widely communicate the ideas at the core of the protestant

reformation. This allowed the rapid development of a homophily, large network of like minded individuals, which in turn could successfully attack the centralized oligarchy of the Catholic Church. Like the telegraph from about 400 years later the printing press became a social media as has the Internet today. And all three media could, and have been, co-opted for both good and evil.

Winner Takes All examines how the telegraph and Internet networks came to be dominated by a few strong companies. The rapid expansion of the telegraph and cable networks in the nineteenth century led to a concentration of control. Scotsman John Pender with his Eastern Telegraph Company, came, by his death in 1896, to own one third of the world's cable telegraph network. Western Union became the elephant in the room in the U.S. This is where the Matthew Effect comes into play. To demonstrate the Matthew effect the program looks at the efforts of our old friend Jay Gould and how he came to control Western Union as well as how William Randolph Hearst came to control many newspapers and magazines. Publishers Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer were accused of "yellow journalism" in their competition to increase their respective readerships by publishing lurid and frequently phony facts, what today we call fake news. It is said that Jay Gould by his ownership of Western Union was monitoring the communications of his competitors to understand their actions so to profit by this understanding.

Winner Takes All then goes on to look at modern corporations and their principal owners like Amazon with Jeff Bezos, Facebook with Mark Zuckerberg as well as Google. As did Western Union for the telegraph and the Associated Press for news, these corporations have come to dominate the Internet, especially social media. And just like with the postal telegraph movement there is a movement to for government to regulate these firms. The program points out that as John D. Rockefeller became known for Standard Oil and the resulting call to regulate that business, folks calling for regulation today are calling Google "Standard Data", Amazon "Standard Commerce" and Facebook "Standard Social".

Networld War, the third and final part, examines how the employment and control of the Internet and social media is expanding from large corporations to dangerous political entities such as ISIS and bad actor foreign governments. It examines the influence of Russian hacking on the creation of fake news and its effect on the 2016 presidential election. They did this by surreptitiously creating and stoking inflammatory opposing points of view on social media, and their efforts continue to this day. But in fact it was the social media platforms which allowed US citizens to attack each other which probably had the largest impact. Finally it investigates the growing influence of China on the Internet around the world in the development and marketing of both network platform equipment and software. In particular the Chinese are investing heavily in artificial intelligence development and the program examines how they are using it in very Orwellian ways to control their population. This becomes an attractive option for many totalitarian regimes to whom the Chinese are offering to sell this technology. It points out that China graduates ten times more engineers and scientists annually than the United States. As predicted by the Matthew Effect if these trends both in education and scientific infrastructure investment aren't reversed, the U. S. may lose its technological and thus political lead. We really are in a net world war and the end of this story has yet to be written if it ever will. Scary times ahead...

HOUSE TRACK Want Ad Section

For Morse Telegraph Club Members

AVAILABLE: Book *Tales of the American Telegraph*. Issue #3 includes a photo layout. John B. Ryan, 11017 E. Sprague Avenue, Spokane, WA 99206.

WANTED: Re-enactors for Locust Grove, the Samuel Morse Historic Site in Poughkeepsie, NY. Please contact Andrew Stock, Curator of Education and Public Programs at a.stock@morsehistoricsite.org or (845) 454-4500 x13 if you are a Signal Corps re-enactor who may be interested in participation in history of telegraphy, including the annual Civil War weekend.

AVAILABLE: Period attire for telegraph operators of any era. Authentic reproduction hand crafted clothing will be made to your exact fit by a certified seamstress at reasonable prices. Several MTC members already have attire provided by this talented and well educated lady. Contact Valerie Mathers at (410) 768-3162.

AVAILABLE: Pen & ink railroad drawings on stretched canvas, frame print, art print and greeting cards. See these on the website of *Dots & Dashes* member Peter Hamel at Peter Hamel Fine Art American.com. Telephone (705) 472-8860.

AVAILABLE: Book. Hubert Jewell, President of the Washington-Baltimore Chapter, offers us his biography titled, *Working on the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad*. This book is chalked full of facts and descriptions of railroading and of Morse code communications. Hubert's book is available from the RF&P Historical Society, Inc. PO Box 9097, Fredericksburg, VA 22403-9097 or from the web site www.frandp.org. The price is only \$25.15 postage paid.

WANTED: Any information about the Texas and Red River Telegraph Company formed in 1853/4. This author is completing a book on the company. Contact MTC Member D.M. Roth via email at roth.durrell@gmail.com.

AVAILABLE: WD-1 commo wire, steel insulated wire in coils, about a mile long. Good for telegraph demos. FREE! Contact Walt Mathers by phone at 410 768-3162 or by email at Whirlygigger@msn.com.

AVAILABLE: The equipment is part of a very large collection gathered over 60 years. It was from a family member who has passed but was a very long time and well known MTC member. I have included three pictures of the hardware. I would like to sell it as a collection. There are several rare west coast as well as many early rare pieces. \$12,500. Dave Ball (408) 805-0065



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KEEP IN TOUCH...

Your participation in *Dots & Dashes* is important. We need your stories, club news, announcements and reminiscences to keep it lively and interesting for everyone.

Jim Wilson, Editor
Dots & Dashes

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For membership changes, address updates, dues and other information dealing with membership or with chapter operation, contact your local Chapter Secretary or:

Richard Williams
International Secretary-Treasurer

PO Box 181591, Coronado, CA 92178
runnerrichard@hotmail.com
(619) 818-9017

Please do not send address changes for Dots & Dashes, dues renewals, etc., to the Editor. All mailing lists and membership rosters are prepared through the office of the International Secretary.

Ham Radio Web Sites

For those of you who are amateur radio operators, here are four current web sites that I find useful:

www.arnewline.org
www.usrepeaters.com
www.qth.com
www.qrz.com

NOTICES & INVITATIONS

Morse Telegraph Club, Inc.
Dial-Up Information

MORSE KOB PROGRAM
on the web at www.morsekob.org
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U.S. First Class postage \$20.00

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Canadian is now by chapter

Foreign Air Mail postage \$26.00



**“My computer at work is so old,
the keyboard only has dots and dashes.”**



Dots & Dashes

What

Hath

God

Wrought