

Collection #
P 0600

DELCO-LIGHT PLANT COMPANY MEETING PHOTOGRAPH, 1921

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 1 photograph folder

COLLECTION
DATES: 1921

PROVENANCE: Ms. Avis Morford Hawkins, Greenfield, IN, 2017

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ACCESSION
NUMBER: 2017.0008

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Delco-Light Plant Co. was formed in 1909 as the Dayton Engineering Laboratories Co. (Delco) by Charles F. Kettering. Kettering was an engineer instrumental in the creation of electric ignition starters for cars, and in 1916, he revealed the Delco-Light system. Delco could offer 25 generator systems that could produce between 500 and 3,000 watts. Electricity was made available in rural places and farmland where power lines did not reach. By 1928, over 350,000 Delco-Light plants had been established in rural areas all over the country. The light plants were phased out, however, when Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Administration in 1935/1936 as part of his New Deal initiative, creating over 100,000 miles of power lines for farms, ranches, etc. The subsidiary for the overall Delco company (owned by General Motors), Delco Electronics, was located in Kokomo, Indiana.

Fred Ogborn was a Delco salesman, originally from Ohio. He had a shop, the Delco-Light Plant, in Rushville, Indiana. He married Anna Mary Underwood on 7 June 1905. They had 2 children, the first being Fred Dwight Ogborn, Jr. on 14 August, 1908. He died and was buried in Dayton, Ohio.

Albert Bitner (30 July 1861 - 1 August 1937) was a resident of Rushville, Indiana. He was a customer of Fred Ogborn. He married Mandora Scott on 19 March 1884. They had two sons, Ottie Clarence Bitner on 3 Nov. 1885 and Alva Orville Bitner on 11 Oct. 1889. He and his wife were involved in a serious car crash while pulling into their driveway on 30 May 1930.

Mandora "Dora" Bitner (15 August 1863 - 6 Sept. 1930) was a resident of Rushville, Indiana. She married Albert Bitner on 19 March 1884. They had two sons, Ottie Clarence Bitner on 3 Nov. 1885 and Alva Orville Bitner on 11 Oct. 1889. She was a customer of Fred Ogborn. She was critically injured in a car accident outside of her home on 30 May 1930 and passed away 3 months later.

Lois Hiner (1909 - 1 March 1991) was a resident of Rush County, Indiana. She was a customer of Fred Ogborn.

George Apple (17 Nov. 1895 - 5 June 1983) was a resident of Rush County, Indiana. He married Mazie Marie Newsom in 1917. They had one son, Lawrence Apple on 8 Sept 1923, and one daughter, Emogene Apple on 25 Sept. 1924. He was a customer of Fred Ogborn.

Mazie Apple (31 Oct. 1897 - 31 Oct. 1979) was a resident of Rush County, Indiana. She married George Apple in 1917. They had one son, Lawrence Apple on 8 Sept 1923, and one daughter, Emogene Apple on 25 Sept. 1924. She was a customer of Fred Ogborn.

Charles Trowbridge (? - ?) was a resident of Rush County, Indiana. He was a customer of Fred Ogborn.

Gladys Trowbridge (? - ?) was a resident of Rush County, Indiana. She was a customer of Fred Ogborn.

Leona Clark (2 Sept. 1890 - 22 Dec. 1974) was a resident of Rush County, Indiana. She married Ola Chesterfield Apple on 15 June 1922. They had five children, three of which died before reaching the age of four. She was a customer of Fred Ogborn.

Sources:

Moore, Sam. "The Delco-Light Plant - Farm Life." *Farm Collector*. January 2013. <<http://www.farmcollector.com/farm-shows/delco-light-plant-zmlz13janzbea?pageid=2#PageContent2>>

Ancestry, Federal Census 1920, 1930, 1940. <<https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/>>. Accessed 9 August 2017.

Ancestry, City Directories 1822-1995. <<https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/>>. Accessed 9 August 2017.

Delco-Light Plant. "Our Store is Now Lighted With Electric Lights, Furnished by a Delco Light Plant." Advertisement. *The Daily Republican* (Rushville, Indiana), December 21, 1917. Page 7.

"Richmond Car Collides With Bitner Automobile." *Rushville Republican*, May 31, 1940. Page 1.

Item in collection.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains one photograph of a group of Rush County, Indiana residents who were customers of local Delco salesman Fred Ogborn. Information originally attached to the photograph (included as a photocopy) read "1921.....THE SOLDIERS AND SAILORS HOME....."

"MEETING OF DELCO LIGHT PLANT COMPANY,"

(in cursive: "batteries in basement")

"The man, Fred Ogborn, on left of Charley Trowbridge sold these units for the private farm homes. Those pictured had one in their home to generate electric power. Charley's home was built in 1919.) Some of those known in the area are:

The second child from the left was with George.

1st row: Albert Bitner, Lois Hiner, Baker and son, Merrill, 6 not known, George Apple on the end.

2nd Fred Ogborn, ?, Mazie Apple, Mrs. Newsom, 6 unknown, Dora Bitner

3rd row: Charles Trowbridge, Leona Clark, Gladys Trowbridge (these 3 played violin, piano, and sang for the special music) 4 unknown (the man who looks like Jabez Apple or Chess Rhodes is not" (in cursive: "Lewis")

This collection contains one photograph of a group of Rush County, Indiana residents who were customers of local Delco-Light Plant Company salesman Fred Ogborn. Included is a photocopy with information identifying individuals in the photograph.

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Delco-Light Plant Co. meeting photograph, 1921 and
one photocopy of original information attached

CONTAINER

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