

Life of the Phone Girl Is A Happy One



Unusual Comforts and Conveniences Provided Phone Employees

Dancing, Music, Library Rest Room, Hot Meals

Elaborate Training School Equips Girls to Earn a Better Livelihood

A little over a year ago she was just another of the great army of unemployed American girls—clean, bright-eyed, alert and eager to grasp an opportunity. But she—like thousands of her sisters—lacked the one thing essential to a young woman's speedy success in the industrial world—a business education.

Today—just fifteen months later—she has a proud record of four promotions in as many seasons, and ranks as one of the successful Assistant Toll Instructors of the Bell Telephone Company.

Her rapid rise was due to the business education she received at the hands of the telephone company.

That—in a word—is the story of the remarkable success of Miss Elisabeth Greenwolt, who in January, 1919, was a student in the educational department, located in the great telephone building at Meridian and New York Streets, and who is today occupying the responsible well-paid position of Assistant Toll Instructor.

It is not an unusual story. As a matter of fact it is one that is duplicated many times among the nearly a thousand happy young women who make it possible for Indianapolis to have telephone service.

CONTENTED TELEPHONE EMPLOYEE EXPLAINS ADVANTAGES OF THE WORK.

According to Miss Greenwolt, the lot of the telephone employee is a most pleasant one. She smiles most affably as she tells you that not for the world would she trade places with other young women in offices and factories. "But," she adds, "it is a work any girl of ordinary intelligence can learn in a few weeks—and best of all—she doesn't have to lay out any money for her telephone education. Instead of that, the company sends her to its own school and pays her while she is learning. As soon as she is out of the school her pay is substantially increased, and if she keeps her mind on her work there is no limit to the possibilities for advancement. I'm sure many girls would not be willing to work in offices and factories if they knew how attractive telephone work really is."

The visitor to any of the telephone buildings in the city—there are many of them scattered over Marion county—finds plenty to substantiate Miss Greenwolt's statements. The life of the telephone girl is a happy one—at least, insofar as the telephone company can provide for the happiness of its employees.

A GLIMPSE OF THE TELEPHONE GIRL OFF DUTY.

For instance, on top of the "Main" building at Meridian and New York streets there is a big glassed-in rest room where the girls spend their spare time. You can find little groups of them here at all hours, comfortably chatting, reading, resting on the wicker couches, writing to the "folks at home," playing the piano or dancing to the tunes produced on the perfectly modern Victrola.

You always find dancing in the rest room—no matter what else is going on. The happy youthful spirits of the bright-faced girls seem to respond eternally to this well-named "poetry of motion."

Of good books there is a plentitude, supplied by the well-stocked shelves of a circulating library. The latest newspapers and magazines are also conveniently placed to while away an idle hour.

Unlike most employees in other occupations, the telephone employee has access to this rest and recreation department at times other than the noon hour. She is employed for two periods of four hours each, each day. A fifteen-minute rest period is provided in the middle

of these work periods, in addition to the full hour allowed for lunch. In this way the girl may visit the rest room once every two hours if she so desires.

Should she feel indisposed—quiet nook in another part of the building is provided with hospital beds and cots. She can lie here in absolute quiet—subject to the ministrations of the capable first aid department at any time her health seems to demand it.



AND, OH GIRLS, THE HOME COOKING OF THE PHONE LUNCH ROOM.

At meal time she can buy a home-like hot lunch at even less than it would cost her to bring the cold viands from home. She may have her noon meal in this lunchroom—or she may take all three meals here every day—at a cost much lower than she would have to pay in lunch rooms or boarding houses that are maintained for profit.

At every meal she finds kindred spirits at her right and left hand. Girls of her own age, interested in the very things that engage her own interest. It is an environment that must stimulate any alert young woman.

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PLenty of work for those who can not report at 8 and leave at 5.

Another thing that makes telephone work attractive to young ladies who could not afford to seek other employment is the great adaptability of the hours. This is particularly advantageous to students—whether in high school or college—who find that the telephone company can give them fascinating and lucrative employment that will in no way interfere with their school work. Many an ambitious girl has paid her way through

the years by working in a "laboratory," that is

an actual switchboard room in miniature. Here, before a practical working switchboard, she receives and transmits calls just as she will later do when she gets into the actual work. The only difference lies in the fact that until she is absolutely sure of herself she gets no calls from the subscribing public. Her "number, please," is spoken into a phone, at the other end of which is an instructor, whose sole interest in life is to make the learner a more efficient operator.

Should the student make mistakes in her practice work she is shown how to correct them—and how to avoid them in the future. She learns exactly what to do and say under all circumstances. Every condition that can possibly arise when she is seated before the big switchboard taking her instructions from the general public, is duplicated over and over again before the schoolroom switchboard. And her education is stimulated by the fact that other girls, to right and left of her, are doing the same thing.

At first the calls are given to her slowly. As her efficiency increases, they are speeded up until at last she is handling calls as rapidly as they are ever handled even in the rush hours. And then she is ready to graduate into the actual work.

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From the moment the prospective employee steps into the enrollment office she is met in a way to assure her that she need have no fear of being embarrassed with her new occupation. For weeks she is schooled in the mechanics of telephony from the standpoint of both the local and long distance operator. She is taught the extreme simplicity of what to outsiders at times seems to be a hopelessly complex operation. She has it demonstrated to her that it is easy to give a subscriber the right number—and to do it quickly. She is taught what the various signals and signs of telephone mean—and how they operate.

And long before she is asked to take her position in front of the great switchboard she is given practical experience work in a "laboratory," that is

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