

A HISTORY SHORT Electric Lights



COMPILED By:  Pine City Area History Association

In February of 1897 Pine City had a special election to vote for bonds to bring electricity to town. This was the second vote to bond for electricity. The first vote had passed but the company for whom the bonds were for had backed out and the bonds were declared null and void.

as possible.

—There will be a special election held on next Friday, Feb. 19, to vote bonds for the lighting of the streets by electricity. The bonds voted for before have been declared null and void, on account of the backing out of the parties for whom the bonds were voted. The parties coming now and asking for the bonds are from St. Paul, and agree to build a grist mill and furnish an electric light plant for a bonus of \$2,000, one thousand dollars to be paid as soon as the mill is completed, and the balance in two years. This is a good thing, and every citizen who has the good of the place at heart, should turn out and vote for it. There are some of our citizens, however, who are so narrow-minded that they can not see how the enterprise is going to help the place any, and are afraid of the increase in their taxes. To be sure it will increase the taxes somewhat, but then the mill will have to help pay the tax. One thousand dollars is not very much, and by the time the other thousand is due, we should have saved enough to very nearly pay it. If, for instance, we put aside the license from one of our saloons for the two years, we will have enough to pay it without issuing the bonds for the other thousand.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
FEBRUARY 12, 1897

There was enough concern that there were two pleas in the paper urging people to vote.

—Do not forget to turn out on Tuesday the 19th and cast your vote for the issuing of bonds for the grist mill and electric light plant; the plan as adopted by our council is simple and one that the burden will not come on the tax-payer at once, as described in another column of this issue. It is for your interest as much as anyone; the contract will be drawn up in such a manner that the tax-payers will be protected. The gentleman who asks for the bonus has put up mills elsewhere, and more than lived up to his contract as was stated by parties living in these towns while in correspondence with some of our council and business men. We cannot afford to let this chance slip. Cast your vote and be sure it reads "yes."

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
FEBRUARY 12, 1897

—On last Tuesday evening the citizens of this place expressed themselves in regard to the issuing of a bonus of \$2,000 for the purpose of lighting our village with electricity and the building of a grist mill. According to the vote, there were only nineteen out of ninety-five of our citizens who were opposed it, so that it was carried by an overwhelming majority. The PIONEER said two weeks ago that there were a few sore heads, and it was proved on Tuesday last, but there are a few more than we thought there were at the time we made the assertion. It is now a settled fact that we will in a short time have our streets lit by electric light, and the farmers will not have to take their grain to Rush City to get it ground. Our village will look quite civilized when we get our electric light plant started, and no more dark streets.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
FEBRUARY 26, 1897

The vote passed and the town eagerly looked forward to the arrival of not only electric lights but a mill as well.



Pine City Area History Association

Following the election the city council considered two proposals and chose the firm of Allen, Dewar & Co. to provide Pine City with a grist mill and electricity.

PINE CITY, MINN., MARCH 12, 1897.

THE NEW GRIST MILL.

At the meeting of the Council on Saturday evening to consider the propositions presented for the building of a grist mill and furnishing a dynamo for lighting up our streets by electricity, two propositions were received; one from O. F. Sherwood, of St. Paul, and one from Allen, Dewar & Co., of Minneapolis. O. F. Sherwood's proposition was to build a hundred barrel mill and furnish power for thirty incandescent lights for the village. Allen, Dewar & Co.'s proposition was to build a mill 32x48 feet three stories high and a basement and will grind 80 barrels of wheat flour, 30 barrels of rye, graham and buckwheat, and 20 tons of feed per day.

A vote was taken which resulted in Allen, Dewar & Co.'s proposition being accepted. The recorder was instructed to notify them to that effect and have them have their contract drawn up and have it ready for the council to ratify or reject at its next meeting. Councilman Spahr introduced the following resolution which was adopted:

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MARCH 12, 1897

The city then adopted a resolution that stated all their expectations.

WHEREAS: Allen, Dewar & Co. are about to erect a flour mill in the village of Pine City; and

WHEREAS, The common council of said village of Pine City deems it advisable that the streets of said village should be lighted by electricity, now, therefore, with a view to procuring such electric lights,

RESOLVED: That if said Allen, Dewar & Co shall put in said flour mill, and in connection therewith the necessary machinery and dynamo necessary to generate electricity sufficient to furnish lights for said village, and shall furnish such number of lights to said village as the common council shall deem necessary, and as the actual cost thereof for the term of two years, and thereafter at a reasonable price, and at such time as it shall erect poles, place the wires and connections therefor, and demand of said Allen, Dewar & Co., or their assigns, that they so furnish said lights, then the common council of said village shall cause to be paid to said Allen, Dewar & Co. the sum of not to exceed \$2,000, at times and in the manner following, to-wit: \$1,000 on the completion of said flour mill building, and \$1,000 two years thereafter, and shall also deed to said Allen, Dewar & Co. the four lots belonging to the said village, on which the village jail is located, said deed to be made on the fulfillment of the above proposition.

RESOLVED, further, that the Recorder cause to be drawn a contract for the above purpose between said Allen, Dewar & Co. and the common council, to be approved by the common council.

The council then adjourned to meet tomorrow evening in the village hall at 8 o'clock.



Pine City Area History Association

As so often happens there were some citizens that complained about the project. The paper tried to calm everyone, and laid out support.

NEW GRIST MILL.

The Contract Signed, and Building Will Commence as Soon as Weather Permits.

At the meeting of the common council on Saturday evening Mr. Allen, of the firm of Allen, Dewar & Co., was in attendance, and signed the contract prepared by the village attorney, S. G. L. Roberts, with a few modifications, one of which was in regard to the amount of the bonus, Messrs. Allen, Dewar & Co. paying two hundred dollars for the four lots belonging to the village, on which they propose to build the new grist mill, deducting that amount from the bonus, making it \$1,800 instead of \$2,000 as was formerly agreed, and Mr. Allen said that as he was to become a citizen of this place, anything that was for our benefit was also his.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MARCH 19, 1897

President Breckenridge and the members of the council left no stone unturned that would be for the benefit of the village, in the contract, but made it as binding as it was possible to make it, all of which Mr. Allen agreed to. Messrs. Allen, Dewar & Co. mean business, and the council should receive the hearty support of all of our citizens, and when it comes to the spring election next month, enough of the present council should be retained, to see that the contract is carried out to the letter. We have been informed there are several of our citizens that are opposed to the mill, and that they are making their boasts that as soon as election is over they will knock the whole thing in the head. If they had anything to say in opposition to the mill, why did they not come out like men and say it before the council, and not wait until everything is settled, and then make their boasts, that they are going to elect a ticket that will cause the thing to fall through. Every citizen that has the good of the village at heart should see to it that they do no such thing, and as we said above, when they vote this spring, vote for men who will see that every thing is done that can be for the advancement of our village. And as the PIONEER has said time and time again, a good grist mill is something that we are sadly in need of, and will add materially to the growth of this place, therefore it is for the benefit of our citizens, each and every one to see that we have a council that is heartily in favor of the mill.

Mr. Allen appears to be a very fine gentleman, and a thorough business man, and we can well feel proud in securing such a citizen.

Work began:

—Ole Gilberts, who has the contract for furnishing the stone for the basement of the new grist mill, hauled the first load on Wednesday afternoon.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
APRIL 2, 1897

Mr. Allen & Mr. Dewar, owners of Pine City Milling & Electric Company came to town to check on progress.

—Messrs. Allen & Dewar, of Minneapolis, the proprietors of the Pine City Milling & Electric company, arrived in this place on Wednesday morning, and will commence operations on their mill just as soon as possible. The rock is being hauled for the foundation and engine room, and the building will be pushed as rapidly as possible until completed. Messrs. Allen & Dewar were looking over the village with Recorder Axtell, and express themselves as highly pleased with the looks of the place.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
APRIL 9, 1897



Pine City Area History Association

Work continued over the next few months.

—Ground was broken for the new grist mill on Monday of this week, but Mr. Allen told a reporter of the Pioneer that they would do well if they were able to turn a wheel by the 15th of August.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MAY 7, 1897

—In another week, weather permitting, the foundation and stone work for the engine room for the new grist mill will be completed. The engine room will be quite a structure of itself, being 18x26 feet, and 18 feet in height, built of solid stone. Just as soon as the stone work on the foundation is completed, Mr. Allen informs us they will put on a force of carpenters and erect the woodwork as rapidly as possible, as the part of the erection of the mill that takes the time is the putting in and setting of the machinery.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MAY 14, 1897

—The new grist mill is looming up in great shape. Messrs. Allen and Dewar have already got the frame work up to the roof and when the ten foot attic is put on and a cupola of ten feet it will be the highest building in the town.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MAY 28, 1897

—The iron roof is on the new grist mill, and it is about all sheeted up. The engine room is about completed, and it will only be a matter of a few days before the machinery arrives, and they will at once commence placing the same. The building is being put up to stay, and will be used as an elevator as well as a grist mill. Messrs. Allen & Dewar are putting up a first-class structure, and all that remains now is for the farmers to plant and grow the grain to keep it running the year around.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
JUNE 11, 1897

—Two car loads of machinery arrived for the new grist mill, and Mr. Dewar is superintending the placing of the same. They expect three car loads more in the near future, besides the engine and boilers, which will take about three cars more. When completed, the Pine City Milling & Lighting Co. will have as good a mill as there is on the line of the St. Paul & Duluth Railroad, or anywhere in the northeastern part of the state.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
JUNE 25, 1897

—The new grist mill is fast nearing completion and will be ready in a few more weeks to grind all the grain that the farmers can draw to it. Messrs. Allen & Dewar will have when completed the finest mill this side of Minneapolis as it is fitted with all of the latest machinery.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
AUGUST 13, 1897

—The new grist mill is completed and the proprietors inform us that they will be prepared to receive grain the first of the week.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
AUGUST 27, 1897

—On and after Saturday, Sept. 4, the Pine City Roller Mills will be ready for business. Grist work will receive prompt attention. First class results guaranteed.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
SEPTEMBER 3, 1897

Finally in September the grist mill was ready for operation.



Pine City Area History Association

Farmers!

The New Roller Mills

At Pine City
Are now in Full Operation.

Bring in your grists.

We will guarantee Satisfaction.

Feed Grinding of All Kinds.

PINE CITY MILLING COMPANY.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
SEPTEMBER 10, 1897

—On Tuesday the Roller Mill took in over two hundred bushels of wheat from the farmers in this vicinity.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
SEPTEMBER 10, 1897

—The side track to the grist mill was completed on Monday. The whole of the railroad reserve will be a network of tracs before long if they keep on putting in tracks each year.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
SEPTEMBER 17, 1897

—The Pine City Milling company started up their mill on Thursday and are now grinding. Mr. McDowell, their head miller is here and will no doubt give satisfaction as he is a miller of long standing and is up to date in all its branches. The name of the flour they will put upon the market next week will be, patent, "Pride of Pine City", and 'Bakers'. Beside these two brands they will have what is called straight or exchange flour. If this mill does not do good work it is not the fault of the machinery, as every thing is the best and latest patents out, and was put in place by experts, the work being done in a neat and substantial manner. Our village can now justly feel proud of having the best flouring mill on the line of the St. Paul & Duluth railroad. The electric light plant will be put in as soon as it will be possible to get in the machinery. Mr. Allen Sr. is up looking after the finishing touches and seeing that everything is all right. Farmers bring in your grain, as they are now prepared to take care of all you bring.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
SEPTEMBER 3, 1897

Pine City was soon producing its own brands of flour.

Do You Know

The Pride of Pine City

Is manufactured by the Latest Machinery?

Do You Know

That we have a Roller Feed Mill with which we can grind feed as fine or as coarse as you want it?

Do You Know

That our Rye Flour Mill is in operation, and that we are manufacturing a Fine Quality of Rye Flour?

Come and look the mill over—we will be glad to show you around.

PINE CITY MILLING COMPANY.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
SEPTEMBER 24, 1897

Our Brands are

Pride of Pine City.

(A Fancy Patent.)

Batter Cap.

(Second Patent.)

and Upper Ten.

(A Fancy Baker's.)

ALSO PURE RYE AND GRAHAM FLOURS

The above Brands are for sale by all Merchants, and are warranted.

PINE CITY MILLING COMPANY.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
OCTOBER 1, 1897

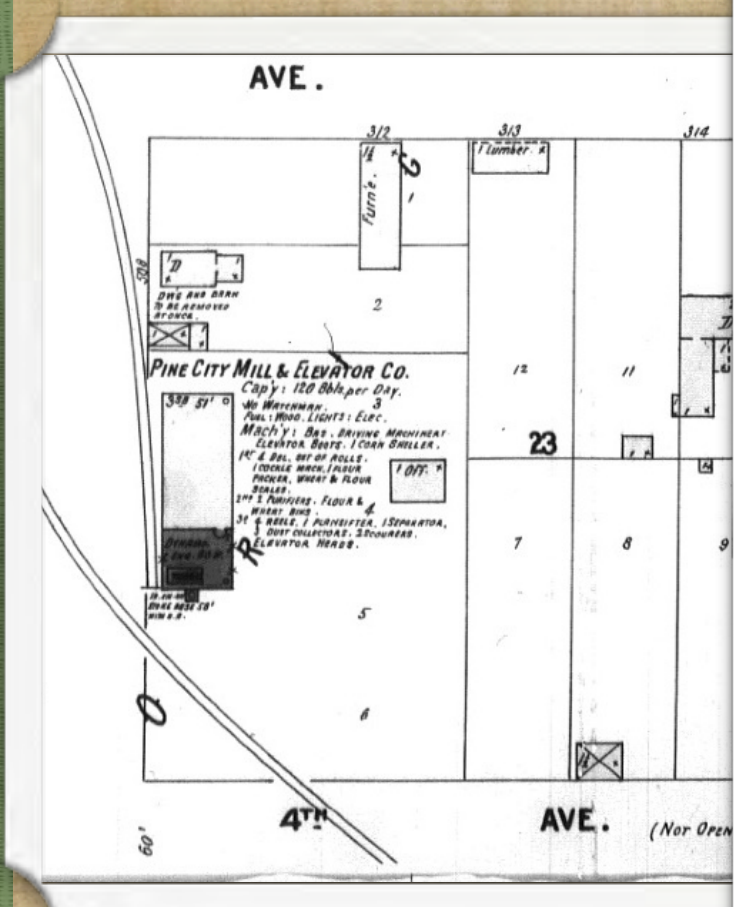


Pine City Area History Association



photo courtesy of Jim Foster

PINE CITY AFTER CONSTRUCTION OF THE FLOUR MILL



1899 SANBORN MAP

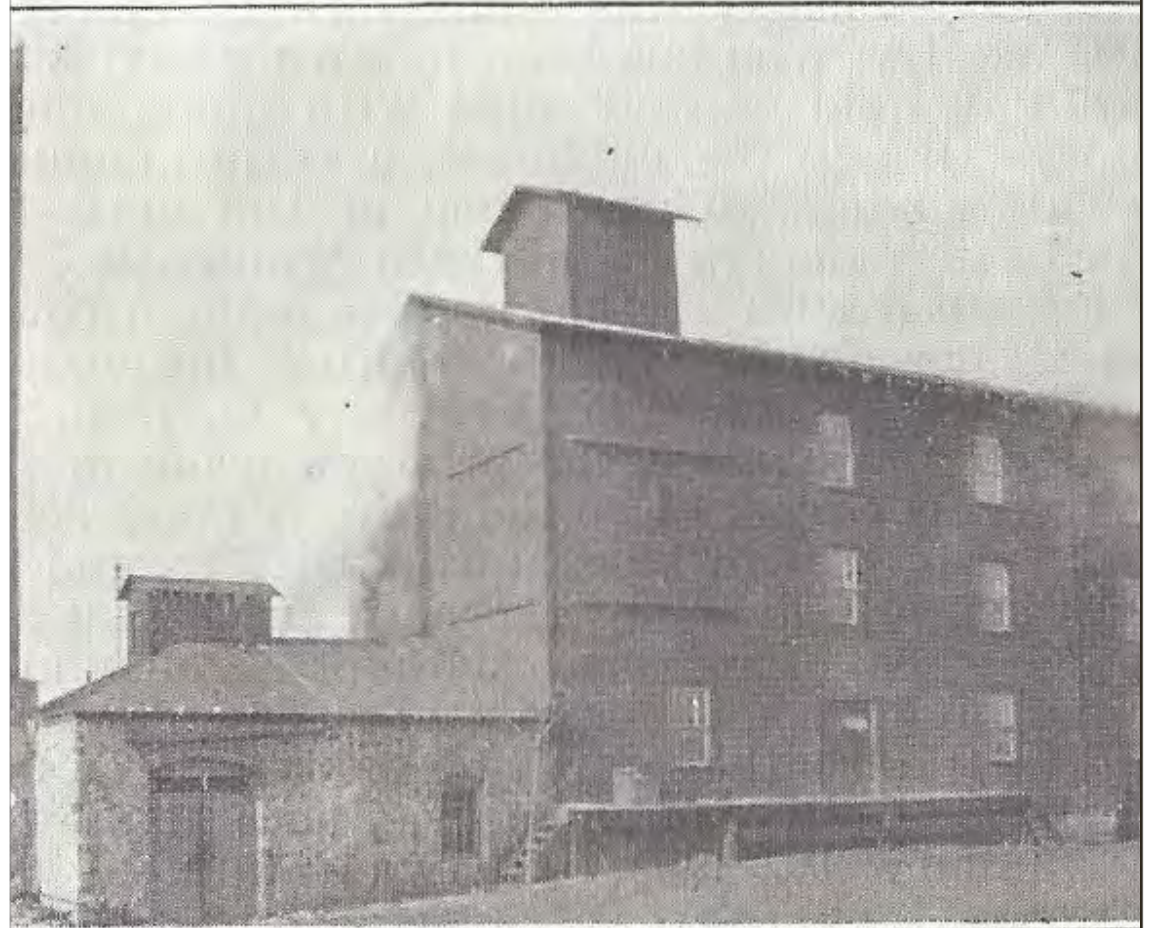


photo from 1901 Souvenir Booklet

PINE CITY ROLLER MILL AND ELEVATOR CO.

Work towards bringing electricity to town continued.

—The dynamo at the Pine City Milling company's mill is being put in as rapidly as possible and it will be but a short time before we will have electric light in our village.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
SEPTEMBER 17, 1897

—The electric light plant at the grist mill is in good running order and does better work than was expected from this sized dynamo. Mr. Allen informed a reporter of this paper, if he can secure the contract he is figuring on he will keep the mill running night and day to its fullest capacity.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
OCTOBER 1, 1897

R. N. Allen left on Monday for Minneapolis, where he goes to purchase the pipes and other apparatus for the heating of the grist mill.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
OCTOBER 15, 1897

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
OCTOBER 22, 1897

ELECTRICITY AND WATER WORKS

Pine City to be Lighted by Electricity and Have a Water Works System in the Near Future.

A Twenty-Year Franchise Granted Burger Bros. by Village Council. Work to be Rapidly Pushed.

At a special meeting of the village council, held on Tuesday evening the city fathers gave Burger Bros. a franchise for twenty years to use the streets of the village for the purpose of laying water mains and erecting poles on which to place wires for the purpose of lighting the village with electricity.

We have been informed that the dynamo has been ordered, and that it is to be shipped from Ohio by fast freight over the Burlington, and will be here in a short time. Burger Bros. will use the engine they have in the saw mill to run the dynamo, and the work of setting up the poles will be commenced at once, and will be pushed as rapidly as possible.

This will add greatly to the appearance of our growing village, and our citizens will not have to stumble along in the dark. The capacity of the dynamo will be 600 16-candle power incandescent lights, and 100 large arc lights for street use. We are glad that some of our citizens have enterprise enough about them to start such a venture and we bespeak for them the liberal patronage of the village and private individuals. The water mains will not be laid until the electric plant is in full operation. The water system will fill a long felt want as well as

Then a snag was hit, the city decided not to install street lights and it was found not enough citizens were willing to commit to the lighting of their places of business. The arrival of electricity was put on hold.

—On Monday Reuben Allen, our enterprising grist mill man, was canvassing among our citizens and merchants to see how many of them would light their places of business with electricity. He made a thorough canvass and found that he could only get one hundred and twenty-five lights and that is just about half the number he figures

would pay him, and as the village did not see fit to have the streets lit he concluded to let the matter drop for the time being at least. It is a shame that the best town on the line of the St. Paul & Duluth railroad should grope along in darkness when such towns as Rush City and White Bear Lake can have their streets as light as day. The people of this place should rise up and demand that the village be lit up by electricity or sufficient lamps so that it will be possible to walk along the sidewalks without keeping your hand on the fence to keep from running into the ditch.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
FEBRUARY 11, 1898

PINE CITY TO BE ILLUMINATED.

Mr. F. McCormack, of Duluth, Completes Arrangements for Putting in an Electric Light Plant.

On Saturday last Mr. F. McCormack, of Duluth, was in Pine City interviewing our village council and business men in regard to putting in an electric light plant. All that he asked from the village was permission to erect poles and string wires thereon in the village, and the promise was made him that at the next meeting of the council his request would be granted. He left on Sunday for his home to prepare for coming down, which he intends to do at once. He informed us that he would put in lights so cheap that it would not pay anyone to burn oil, and the danger of lamps exploding will be done away with. He will erect a building of his own, and put in an engine and boiler to run the dynamo. He says that if he has his own power he can run it as he wants it, and will not have to depend on anyone else.

The exact location where he will erect the plant is not yet known, but it will be somewhere in the heart of the city. Work will be commenced at once, and poles put up and wires strung so that when the power is in readiness they can at once commence lighting up the residences and places of business that take advantage of using the lights.

The installation of this enterprise marks another step in Pine City's march of advancement, and we bespeak for the management a liberal patronage from our citizens. May success attend the venture.

Pine City remained in the dark until January of 1899 when Frank McCormack of Duluth came to town and made the village council an offer they couldn't refuse.

Shortly after the village council met and passed an ordinance to allow Frank to erect poles for the wires.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
JANUARY 27, 1899

ELECTRIC LIGHTS
WITHIN TWO MONTHS.

F. McCormack Meets With Our
Village Council on Monday
Evening.

Permission Granted to Erect Poles, and
Four Arc Lights are Bar-
gained For.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
FEBRUARY 10, 1899

On Monday afternoon Mr. McCormack, of Duluth, arrived in this village and met with our village council, at which time they granted him the privilege of erecting the poles, and an ordinance was passed to that effect.

Mr. McCormack left on Tuesday for Duluth to get his plant ready for shipment, and arrived the latter part of the week with the same. He will commence the erection of the building as soon as he can secure a suitable lot on which to locate the same. He says that if the weather moderates enough to enable the work to go ahead, he will have the plant ready to start up inside of two months.

Four arc lights were contracted for by the council, to be located by direction of a committee consisting of James Hurley, Robert Wilcox and Joseph Veverka. The lights will be located in the best places possible to give the whole of our residents the benefit. One of these lights will throw a good bright light about six hundred feet, and with that number the most thickly settled portion of the village can be fairly well lighted, and when the benefit derived from them are seen there is no doubt but what more will be contracted for by our village. Every business place in Pine city should be lighted with electricity, as it is cheaper in the long run than any other light. There is no danger of fire from lamps exploding. Do not wait to be urged, or wait until you see your neighbor's light, but come in with the first, and secure a good, bright light.



Pine City Area History Association

Less than a week later Frank and his family arrived in Pine City, ready to begin.

—F. McCormack, the electric light man, and family, of Duluth, arrived in this place on Wednesday's limited. He has come to stay and will at once commence the erection of his power house on the St. Paul & Duluth right of way, on the west side of the track near the river. Mr. McCormack has rented the rooms over F. J. Rybak's store recently occupied by Geo. N. Osborn. We are glad to welcome Mr. McCormack and family to our village and hope that he may never have cause to regret locating here. Mr. McCormack informs us that he expects to have his plant in running order in about thirty days.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
FEBRUARY 17, 1899

—F. McCormack is stringing the wire for the lighting of of Jas. Hurley's block this week. He informs us that he has the contract for lighting most all of the business blocks and a great many of the private residences.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MARCH 10, 1899

—F. McCormack, the electric light man, has been stringing the wire in some of our business houses during the past week. J. Y. Breckenridge will have twelve lights in the drug store, which will make it as light as day.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MARCH 3, 1899

Breckenridge Pharmacy was scheduled to get 12 lights.

—Mr. McCormack broke ground on Wednesday afternoon, for his new power house, which he will at once erect on the lot he purchased opposite Mrs. O'Brien's residence.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MARCH 3, 1899

—The boiler for the electric light plant arrived on Tuesday night and was taken up to the power house on Wednesday by A. F. Brackett. If this weather continues, the poles will be set at once, and in less than two weeks our village will be lit with that great invention of Edison's—electric lights.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
APRIL 7, 1899

—The engine and poles for the electric light plant arrived on Wednesday evening, and will be set in their respective places as soon as possible. Mr. McCormack is pushing the plant to completion as rapidly as possible, and it will only be a few days before this place will be as light as day on the darkest nights.

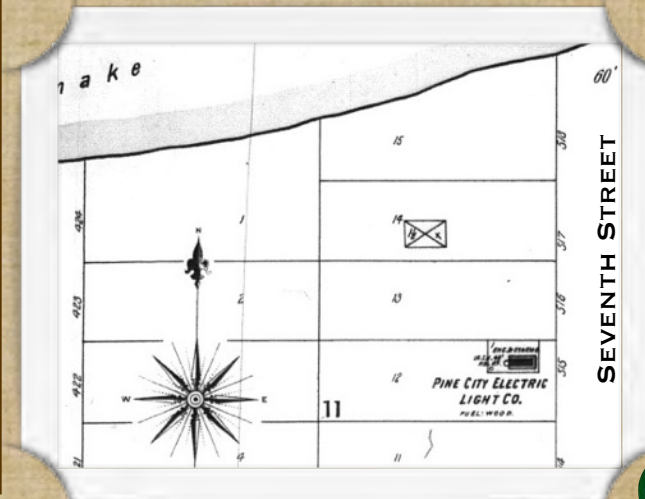
PINE COUNTY PIONEER
APRIL 21, 1899

The boiler arrived and in less than two weeks and there would be lights.

Some more equipment is installed.

Just a few days!

And then



The moment arrived!

—F. McCormack had up steam at the power house on Wednesday eve. and tried the machinery, which ran as smoothly as could be expected for new machinery. There was found to be a little more work necessary, to put the plant in running condition, which was done on Thursday, and on that evening the streets and some of the business houses were lighted for the first time with that great illuminator of the latter part of the nineteenth century, electricity. The arc lights on the streets gave more light than was expected by a number of our residents, and without doubt as many more will be put up before fall, which will light up our village in good shape.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MAY 5, 1899

There were a few kinks in the first try. The second attempt a day later was more successful and many were surprised by the difference the lights made in the streets.

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT A SUCCESS.

Pine City no Longer in Gloom, as the great Invention of the Nineteenth Century has Dispelled it.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MAY 12, 1899

The success of the lights was lauded in a front page article on May 12.

For some time the citizens of this place have been anxiously looking and waiting for the electric spark that was promised them by the council last winter, to dispel the gloom, and make it possible on a dark night to walk on the sidewalk without falling into the ditch or hanging onto the fence. About five months ago a gentleman from Duluth came down and asked permission to erect poles and stretch wires on our streets, which was granted to him, and ever since that time our citizens have been anxiously waiting and watching for the light. On Monday Mr. F. McCormack, who put in the plant, sent down an expert electrician, who looked the

plant over, and said everything was all right, and on Monday evening L. L. Fairbanks, the engineer, started up the engine and dynamo at early candle light, and ran continuously until 12 o'clock, which speaks very highly for Mr. Fairbanks as an engineer, and for Mr. McCormack, who placed the wires and got every thing in running order. Mr. Fairbanks is an engineer of no mean ability, as he has had amply proved by the manner in which he has set the engine and got the pump to working so he can start the engine and pump to work at the same time, and the water in the glass will not vary a quarter of an inch in a six hour run. Lee is a fine young man, and we wish him success in his new position. He has a chance now to work himself up to be a first-class electrician. He is a young man that learns easily, and we bespeak for him a successful future in his branch of the business.

Our citizens are all well pleased with the lights and it will not be long before every business house, and a large proportion of the residences will be lit with electricity.

Further back in the May 12th paper was another bit of news about Frank McCormack.

—Frank McCormack, the electric-light man, departed on Sunday afternoon for Duluth, where he has gone to resume operations on the dredges, of which he is the owner and operator. His family moved back to the above named place on Wednesday.



Pine City Area History Association

Lee Fairbanks was hired on as an engineer to run the plant.

—John McCormack will have charge of the wiring and supervision of the electric light plant, for a while at least, until Lee Fairbanks has had a little more experience, when he will take exclusive control.

—L. L. Fairbanks, the popular engineer at the electric light plant, was seen sitting in front of one of our hardware stores on a pile of grind-stones one day this week. We wonder if he thought by so doing he would sharpen his wit?

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MAY 12, 1899

And the new plant was off and running. Electric lights had arrived in Pine City.

Things ran smoothly for a few days. Then the May 19th paper explained the problem.

—The electric light plant shut down Friday evening at a quarter past 9 o'clock, on account of the engine shaking so much, the engine bed being deemed by Engineer Fairbanks unsafe to run. On Saturday the bed was torn out, and a good, substantial bed of rock and brick put in, and on Monday evening the lights were it just as though nothing had been the matter. There will be no danger of the plant having to shut down on account of the engine bed again, as they put in a first class bed, digging down about six feet, and setting the timbers in cement, and then putting solid masonry of hardheads and brick on top, and all around the timbers, so as to make them as solid as possible. A reporter of the PIONEER visited the plant on Tuesday evening, and the vibration of the engine was hardly perceptible, while before it was like riding on a locomotive to stand on the floor.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MAY 19, 1899

Problem solved, they got on with running the plant.

Wires were hung, wood was bought.

—The wire was strung on the east side of the track on Wednesday, and that portion of the village will be lit with electricity the latter part of this week or the first of next.

MAY 19, 1899

Farmers, Attention!--Wood Wanted

Cash paid for soft wood at the electric light power house. Inquire of
LEE FAIRBANKS,
Pine City, Minn.

MAY 26, 1899

WOOD WANTED.

I will pay the highest cash price for good dry bass wood delivered at the Electric Light Plant.
JOHN McCORMACK, Manager.

MAY 26, 1899

Then in January 1900, the following appeared.

—The electric light plant has been closed down pending further improvements. The plant has not been giving satisfaction for some time past and the owners have decided to make several improvements before starting up again.

JANUARY 5, 1900



Pine City Area History Association

Pine City was again without electric lights.

—James Richardson owner of the electric light plant was in town the first of the week and made arrangement to remodel the plant and start it up May 1st. Mr. Richardson has tried to run the plant in its present condition but owing to faulty machinery has decided that it will not pay and will go to work at once and remodel the whole plant by putting in a new dynamo, switch board, heavier wires on the poles and new arc lamps. He will also put in a well so that he will not be bothered for the lack of water as heretofore.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MARCH 30, 1900

The Electric Light Plant changed ownership. The new owner made an attempt to run the plant but it was determined that new equipment was needed.

—Jas. Richardson the electric light man was here again the first of the week, and says that he will have the plant renovated and rebuilt by the first of May and promises to furnish the village with first-class light. Mr. Richardson is an a No. 1 electrician and when he gets through with the plant will be sure that it will run all right.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
APRIL 6, 1900

It appears that this was a task Mr. Richardson was not keen on assuming. Two weeks later the paper announced that he had sold the business.

The purchaser was R.P. Allen of the Pine City Milling Company, the company that had come to town two years before with the intent to bring electricity to town until the city council had failed to uphold their end of the deal.

THE VILLAGE TO BE LIGHTED.

The Pine City Milling Co., purchased the Electric Lighting Plant.

The latter part of last week the Pine City Milling company purchased the wires and poles of the Pine City Lighting company and will in about thirty days be in shape to run. A new dynamo of 220 volts has been ordered and heavy main wires for use in the main part of town. The plant will be put in the grist mill and will be run all night. Mr. Allen informs us that he will endeavor to give the best of service and will try and serve everyone alike on good business principals. A competent expert will be on hand to put the plant in running order and do the wiring and when the plant is started up, it will be for good and not as heretofore, run one night and shut down three or four. The dynamo is being built express for Mr. Allen and specially adapted for a town of this size.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
APRIL 20, 1900

The council appeared more eager to cooperate this time.



Pine City Area History Association

—Wednesday evening the council held a special meeting to designate what should be done in regard to lighting the village. There will be four arc lights and twelve incandescent thirty-two candle power, distributed in different parts of the village.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
APRIL 20, 1900

The city wasted no time meeting and deciding what was needed.

—R. P. Allen commenced to take down the electric light wires on Monday afternoon, preparatory to putting up larger wires with which he intends to wire the village, as the wires taken down were not large enough for the central part of town and will be used on the outskirts. Mr. Allen informs us that his dynamo will be here in about two weeks and that he thinks he will be prepared to start up the plant in about a month.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
APRIL 27, 1900

R.P. Allen wasted no time getting the job started.

—R. P. Allen is busily engaged in stringing the electric light wire, the wire in the main part of town is what is called double aught and is twice as heavy as the old wire. The dynamo arrived last week and is a dandy. Mr. McKusick an electrician from Minneapolis, came up and set the dynamo and switchboard and has charge of the wiring. Mr. Allen expects to turn on the electric current Monday night May 21.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MAY 18, 1900

Less than a month later Pine City had electric lights again.

(—R. P. Allen started up the new electric light plant on Saturday evening and run for about an hour and a half, on Monday he started up for good and ran all night. The light that Mr. Allen gives the village is far ahead of that furnished by the Pine City electric light company. Mr. Allen should be thanked for giving the village the light he does and should receive the hearty support of the citizens.)

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
MAY 25, 1900

One Year's Run. The Pine City Electric Light Plant makes a good Run.

On May 22nd the electric lighting plant in this village owned by Mr. Allen had run one year and not for one minute during that time had the plant been shut down during the times the lights were in use. Once the east side of town was in darkness, but only for about half an hour, and that was the time the lightning struck the wires. Mr. Allen has done all in his power to make the plant a success and there is no doubt but that he has accomplished it, and has given the best of satisfaction to his patrons. During the summer Mr. Allen will make some improvements in the plant, which are needed, and when completed Pine City will have as good a plant as any town of its size in this section of the state.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
JUNEL 14, 1901

This time the lights were on for good.



Pine City Area History Association



PINE CITY MILL & ELECTRIC

photo from R.P. Allen Photo Album, PCAHA