

In telephone business 51 years . . .

J. F. EITZEN, Prominent Businessman, Dies

Jacob F. Eitzen, 79, retired prominent Mt. Lake businessman, died suddenly early Friday evening, Jan. 3, in a Mankato hospital from a cardiac arrest.

Mr. Eitzen had been in the telephone business continuously since May 1, 1922, a period of 51 years, and retired in 1973 and had been the sole owner of the former Mt. Lake North Star Telephone company for 14 years, and in partnership in the firm for 16 years previous.

(An obituary can be found on page five of this issue.)

A World War I Army veteran, Mr. Eitzen was employed with the Union State bank in Omaha, the North Western Bell Telephone company in Omaha and later with the Union Pacific Railroad company, following his discharge in 1917.

In the spring of 1922 he began employment as a lineman and night operator with North Star Telephone company, Mt. Lake, and remained with the telephone business the remainder of his business life.

He was promoted to manager and continued in that capacity until the company was sold to the Pioneer Telephone company in 1926 which had headquarters in Waconia. He remained in Mt. Lake as manager until 1933 when he was transferred to headquarters.

In 1943, during World War II, Mr. Eitzen went into partnership with two Mt. Lake business men, the late L. M. Jungas and the late J. J. Epp, in purchasing the North Star Telephone company in Mt. Lake. He returned here to assume the duties as manager and in 1959 he bought out the shares of his two partners and was soleowner of the firm until he sold his holdings to Universal Telephone company of Milwaukee, Wisc.

In 1972 Universal sold the North Star branches to Continental Telephone company. Mr. Eitzen remained as manager of the Mt. Lake office until his retirement in 1973.

Mr. Eitzen was very active during his business years, both in Mt. Lake and Waconia. He served as adjutant of the Waconia American Legion Post and commander of both the Mt. Lake and Waconia Posts. He was clerk for the Mt. Lake board of education for nine years besides serving on numerous civic committees. During the years of the formation and construction of the Laker Apartments complex Mr. Eitzen was chairman of the Low Rent Housing Authority and at the time of his death was a member of the Mt. Lake Redevelopment committee.

In 1962 he was chosen as the Jaycees "outstanding boss" in the community.

In the 51 years he was connected with the telephone industry he served on the state association board, and assisted in the organizing of the Minnesota chapter of the Pioneer Telephone association. He also served as president of the association and remained a member of the board. Mr. Eitzen became a life member of the National Pioneer Telephone association board of directors.

While in high school Mr. Eitzen took part in many activities including the men's glee club, orchestra, quartet and drama. He was also a member of the 1915 basketball team that was runner-up in the state tournament that year.

In his church, Bethel Mennonite, Mr. Eitzen served on the board of trustees for six years, was church treasurer for six years, and church representative on hospital and Eventide Home finance committee. In Waconia, where