

[Fluhrer, Howard W.]

PRES. FLUHRER OF PHONE CO. DEAD
Otsego & Delaware Telephone Official Dies in Oneonta
After 8 Weeks' Illness—Outstanding Citizen

Howard W. Fluhrer of Oneonta, president of the Otsego & Delaware Telephone Company, died Saturday afternoon at the Fox Memorial Hospital, Oneonta, following an operation. He had been confined to his bed eight weeks and the operation was performed as a last resort to preserve his life. The wife [Helen Barnard], and one daughter [Helen, wife of Caleb Brackett] survive.

The funeral was held at the Fluhrer home in Oneonta on Monday afternoon, Dr. Fred L. Leining of Syracuse, state superintendent of the Universalist church, a personal friend of the deceased, conducted the funeral. Burial was made at Albion, N. Y.

Howard Fluhrer was born in New York City 59 years ago, the son of Reverend Charles Fluhrer and Julia A. [Bishop] Fluhrer. Most of his youth was spent in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He entered the employ of the Western Union Telegraph Company at the age of 17 years. In 1895 he installed the first automatic telephone exchange in Albion, N. Y., where his father was minister. For 13 years he was manager of the automotatic [sic] telephone exchange in Auburn.

Mr. Fluhrer went to Oneonta in 1912 as general manager of the Otsego & Delaware Telephone Company, succeeding to the presidency of that company in 1924. He was highly successful in this executive position and the business and good will of the company steadily increased under his direction. The patrons of the company, and satisfactory service to them, were ever uppermost in his mind.

During his years in Oneonta he displayed a deep love for his personal home and his home city. The many civic duties he was called upon to perform were done ably and cheerfully. He was a Master Mason, an Elk and a member of the Chapin Memorial Universalist Church in Oneonta. The Oneonta Star said of him: "A full measure of service to the municipality which was his home was also rendered by Mr. Fluhrer. He was for many years a member of the police commission, and was later a member of the water board. During the World War he served untiringly as chairman of Oneonta Chapter of the American Red Cross, feeling intensely the necessity for the work of this organization and transmitting this interest effectively to the community.

"To a man whose activities and service are as well known throughout this vicinity as are those of Howard Fluhrer, no tribute may be fitting: he has made an enduring name in the progress of the city and in the development of many of its outstanding organizations which will long be revered by the entire community."

Richfield Springs Mercury, Richfield Springs NY, Thu. 11 Feb 1932

Transcribed on 4 Mar 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY

[Fluhrer, Howard W.]

MR. HOWARD W. FLUHRER

On February 6, Mr. Howard W. Fluhrer could not recover from an operation performed at the Fox Memorial Hospital, Oneonta. An eight weeks' illness in bed had greatly weakened him yet it was hoped that an operation would bring relief. It was the last resort and his death gave the city a deep sorrow for he was in fact one of its leading citizens. The memorial service was conducted on February 8, in his home on Elm street by Dr. Fred C. Leining, a personal friend, assisted by the Rev. Hugh S. Tigner, pastor of the Chapin Memorial church. On the following morning, the body was taken by the family to Albion, where a service was conducted on Wednesday morning in the Pullman Memorial church, with the Rev. L. H. Robinson, pastor, officiating.

Mr. Fluhrer was the son of the late Dr. and Mrs. Charles Fluhrer. He was born in New York City. His father was a Universalist clergyman, serving the Universalist church in Grand Rapids, Mich., and then as the first minister of the Pullman Memorial church in Albion. The son was always interested in electricity and in his seventeenth year entered the employ of the Western Union Telegraph Company at Grand Rapids. In 1895, he was called to Albion to install the first automatic telephone exchange in New York State. This was the year in which his father began his pastorate in Albion. In 1899, he went to Auburn as manager of the automatic telephone company for a period of thirteen years. He began his work in Oneonta in 1912 as general manager of the Otsego and Delaware Telephone Company and since 1924 he served as president as well as general manager. Under his leadership, this branch of the New York Telephone Company became a leader in efficiency and good will. Even in this period of depression, it was able to report an increase in business. Officials from New York City and Syracuse attended the memorial service as their tribute to their fellow-worker.

Mr. Fluhrer was first a home man and his home was an inspiration to the neighborhood. He was a member of the Chapin Universalist church which he served for many years as trustee and chairman of the board. His other affiliations were: The Masonic fraternity (Auburn), Oneonta Country Club, Rotary, and the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks. He was recognized as the god-father of Oneonta Rotary. He was a charter member of the Elks and served the lodge as its first exalted ruler. He also served as president of the South Central district. Mr. Fluhrer always served as chairman of the Elks memorial service and his electrical effects in this service made it a model in Elkdom. The children's Christmas parties were always a delight to him and he gave them great prominence in the benefactions of the lodge. He was for many years a member of the city police commission and the water board.

[Fluhrer, Howard W.]

During the World War, he served as chairman of the Oneonta Chapter of American Red Cross.

"The Oneonta Herald," Feb. 11, made the following tribute to Mr. Fluhrer:

"To a man whose activities and service are as well known thruout this vicinity as are those of Howard Fluhrer, no tribute may be fitting; he has made an enduring name in the progress of the city and in the development of many of its outstanding organizations which will long be revered by the entire community."

He is survived by Mrs. Helen Barnard Fluhrer, who became his wife at Albion in 1899; a daughter, Mrs. Caleb P. Brackett, and an uncle, Dr. William Fluhrer of Mountaindale.

As was said of Edward Bok's grandfather, Mr. Fluhrer made the world more beautiful and better because he has been in it.

Empire State Universalist, Cortland NY, March 1932

Transcribed on 26 Mar 2013 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY