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REA Has Remarkable History In North Carolina

Rural Electrification Administration is an agency of the Department of Agriculture. It was established on May 11, 1935, by Executive Order of the President under authority of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935. The Rural Electrification Act of 1936 gave REA permanent status and authorized a lending program. In 1944 Congress indefinitely continued the program. The act annually makes available to REA funds from the Treasury.

It is headed by an Administrator who is appointed by the President for a 10-year term. His duties are confirmed by the Senate and in his official actions he is responsible to the Secretary of Agriculture. The present Administrator, Claude R. Wickard, of Indiana, took office in 1945.

REA is empowered to make loans to qualified borrowers, with interest to nonprofit and cooperative organizations and to individuals. Loans are made to the full cost of constructing lines and other electric facilities to serve persons in areas who are without electric service. The interest is 2 percent and the term of the loan is not over a maximum of 25 years.

REA itself operates no rural electric facilities, and no grants are made. It is involved in its loans. Its loans are repaid by the operating revenues of the electric facilities. A part of each individual borrower's monthly electric bill is paid off the Government. REA serves principally as a technical agency to the local systems. Its functions are to lend money and give technical advice where needed in the construction and operation of the electric facilities.

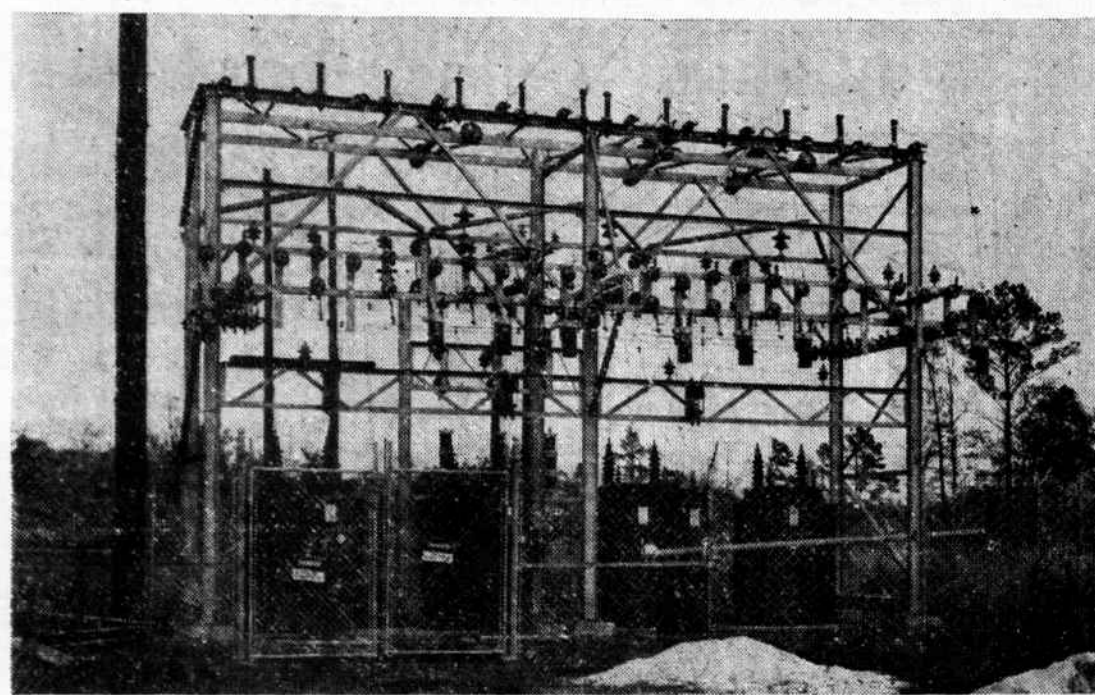
REA electrification had advanced very slowly in the United States during the 53-year period when the first central station electric system went into service in 1890. By 1935, when REA was established, a few farmers were connected to central station power. World War I. The early electrification job remains to be completed. However, the REA program has succeeded in establishing a pattern which eventually can provide virtually every unserved farm in the country with electric service.

As of Aug. 31, 1949, REA had approved \$1,867,949,858 in loans to 1,054 borrowers. They include 965 cooperatives, 41 public power districts, 23 other public bodies, and 25 commercial power companies. At that time, REA had on file or in process in the field, additional loan applications totaling \$424,111,000 for new system construction and various line improvements. Most of these applications are for expansion of existing systems financed by REA.

Some 968 of these REA borrowers had rural electric facilities in operation. Their facilities included 870,951 miles of line serving more than 2,871,701 farms and other rural consumers in about 2,500 counties of 46 states, Alaska, and the Virgin Islands. Additional lines are being built more rapidly now than ever before.

Of all the loans thus far ap-

Brunswick REA Sub-Station



Located below Brunswick on Highway 130, this sub-station was erected by the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation as a part of its program to meet the power needs of REA members in the counties of Bladen, Robeson, Columbus and Brunswick. (Photo by Baldwin-Gillespie Studios)

proved by REA, over 85 percent have been for electric distribution facilities, to borrowers who buy their power at wholesale rather than generate it themselves. REA makes generation and transmission loans only when borrowers are unable to purchase an adequate supply of power or cannot buy it at reasonable wholesale rates. Only about 13 percent of the REA loans have been for construction of generating plants and transmission lines. About one per-

cent of the loans have been made to power system operators for retooling to their consumers to finance installation of wiring, plumbing and electrical equipment and appliances.

Membership in rural electric cooperatives is not confined to farmers. It is open to all people in a rural area who can be reached and who want electric service. More than three-fourths of all consumers on REA-financed

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REA Membership Meeting Is Held At Ash School

Chairman Of Rural Electric Authority Looks Forward To Extension Of Telephone Service To Rural Areas

BISHOP SUMMARIZES WORK OF TEN YEARS

Congressman Praises Membership Of Cooperative For Its Great Demonstration Of Grass-Roots Democracy

"Let there be light!" North Carolina will not be content until every farm home has the opportunity of electric service.

This was the central thought advanced Friday at the tenth anniversary meeting of the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation by Gwyn B. Price, chairman of the North Carolina Rural Electric Authority, and Representative F. Ertel Carlyle of Lumberton before an REA audience which packed the auditorium of Waccamaw High School in Brunswick County.

Both speakers went beyond this vision of the future. Price declared he looked forward to the extension of rural telephone service on a scale comparable to that attained by rural electrification, and Carlyle looked ahead to the day when television would enable farm families to learn better ways of doing things by watching the great experts de-

REA Members Hear Report



While Manager E. D. Bishop, President J. L. Robinson, directors and members listen attentively, Attorney R. B. Mallard of Tabor City reads a report at the annual meeting of the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation. Shown on either side of Mallard (standing) are the merchandise prizes which were given away as attendance awards. The meeting was held at Waccamaw High School in Brunswick County. (Photo by Baldwin-Gillespie Studios)

monstrate. The meeting opened about 1:45 o'clock Friday afternoon.

R. B. Mallard of Tabor City, legal counsel to the Brunswick cooperative, read the minutes of the 1948 annual meeting which were approved as read. The reports of J. L. Robinson, president, and W. M. Hewett, treasurer, were then read and accepted as information.

E. D. Bishop, who has been manager of the cooperative since its formation in 1939, gave a

summary of progress during the 10 years of operation and declared "our job is not done until the last rural home in our operating area shall have been served."

Price and Carlyle echoed this sentiment later in the program. Citing the 17 to 20 per cent of unserved homes as an objective, Representative Carlyle asserted that a "good-sized task still remains." He then added: "You will readily recognize that this is a more difficult job than the one which existed previously. For, already you have gone through rich territory, and now you have to develop ways and means to go into the leaner territory where there are less members per mile."

you are still isolated." The REA authority made it clear that he looked forward to the extension of telephone service on a scale comparable to the progress already made in rural electrification.

"We're in about the same condition today with respect to telephone service that we were in 11 or 12 years ago in rural electric service," he said. He emphasized that the public utility companies would be given an opportunity to supply the need for rural telephones, but said the machinery had been set up for telephone cooperatives.

On a show of hands, approximately 80 per cent of the Brunswick REA membership indicated that they would welcome telephone service.

Price sounded a call for diversification in farming in relating an account of his visit to a farm home in the mountains where an electric line was being cut-in for the first time. There he found milk cows, beef cattle, sheep, brood sows, cabbage, other farm produce, and burley tobacco. This was the kind of farm, the REA chairman asserted, which would always keep electricity. Dependence on one or two crops could work otherwise, Price inferred.

Characterizing the REA record as "a remarkable achievement, unparalleled by any other activity in the public utility field," Representative Carlyle lauded the farm people for their cooperative movement. "This is grass-roots democracy," he said. "You have demonstrated conclusively that here at home you have the skill, the initiative, and the know-how to develop and run successfully one of the most complicated things in modern life—electricity."

He eloquently defined democracy: "Basically democracy means the right to work for freedom. It means the opportunity to do things yourself without harming your neighbor. The highest form

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Five Angles Of Approach To REA Program



This bit of trick photography provided Manager E. D. Bishop of the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation an opportunity to list "My five angles of approach to the REA program." These are: "1. Firm in the belief that the REA program is one of the greatest opportunities ever offered to rural America. 2. Electric service to the farm home encourages the use of modern conveniences and brightens the outlook for the farm youth. 3. Electric power to the farm promotes the use of labor-saving devices and lends increase to the farm income. 4. Increased productivity of the farm area, resulting from electric service to home and farm, provides additional farm income to be shared by the dealers and merchants of the villages, towns and cities in our area. 5. Turning one's back upon those who, for selfish purposes, might seek to undermine our cooperative's structure and jeopardize its success."

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