

“It makes a light without gas or flame.”

Edison’s incandescent light bulb, *New York Herald*, December 21, 1879

At the intersection of Nicollet and Hennepin Avenues,
the Brush Electric Company installed the first electric street lights in Minnesota.

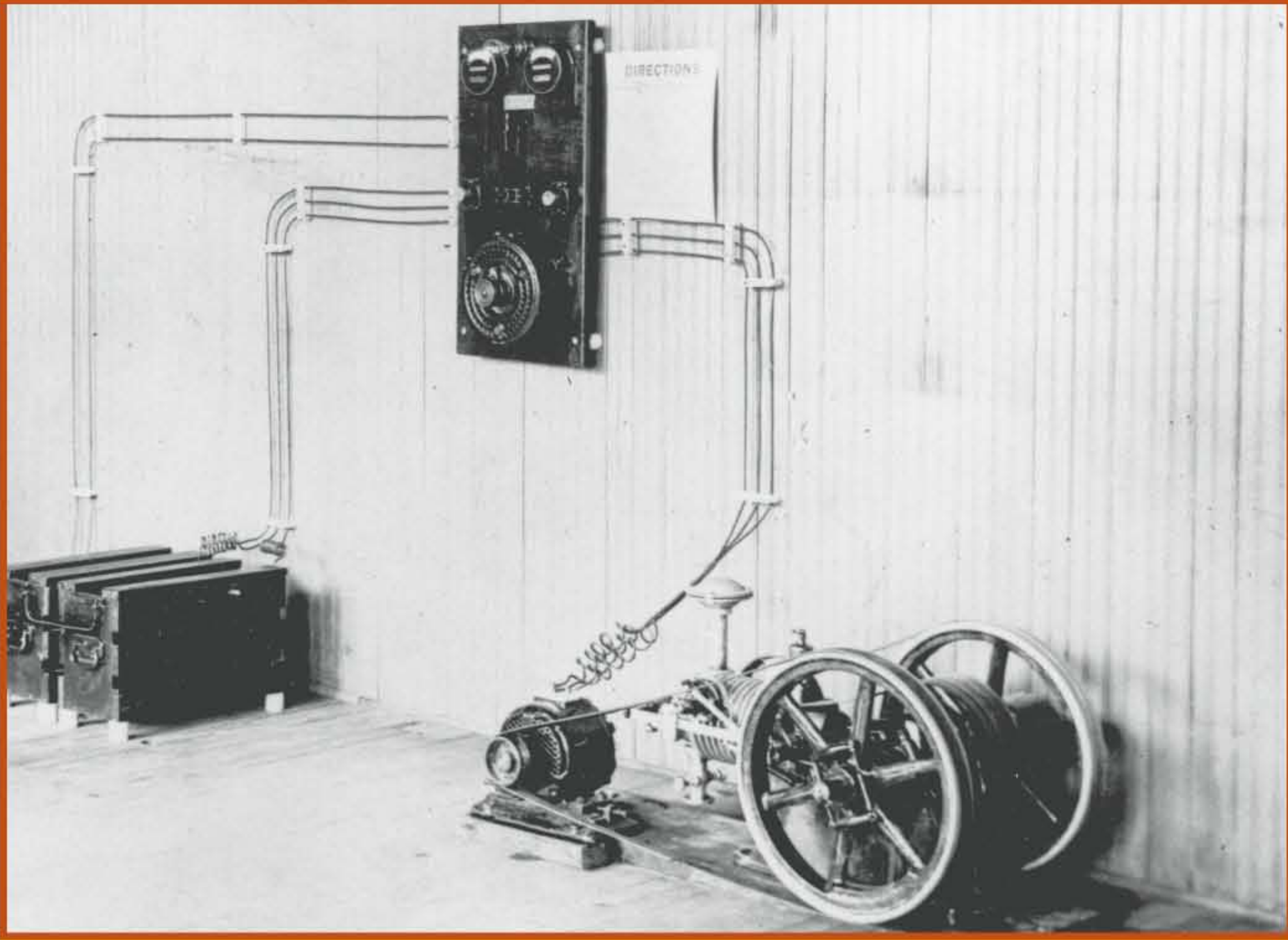
Soaring 257 feet, the mast’s eight arc lamps illuminated the vicinity around Bridge Square. Brush Electric contracted for smaller lamp posts throughout the city—with the gas company stubbornly resisting the competition. Because consumers lit their homes with gas or kerosene and considered electricity dangerous, power companies worked hard to persuade homeowners to adopt this new, electric technology.



Arc light tower at Bridge Square, Minneapolis, 1883

Went over to Coltons (a business) under the electric light last night and caught a new kind of moth and another big bug. . . . Electric lights have been placed two blocks apart on the principal avenues and they are a great improvement on the gas.

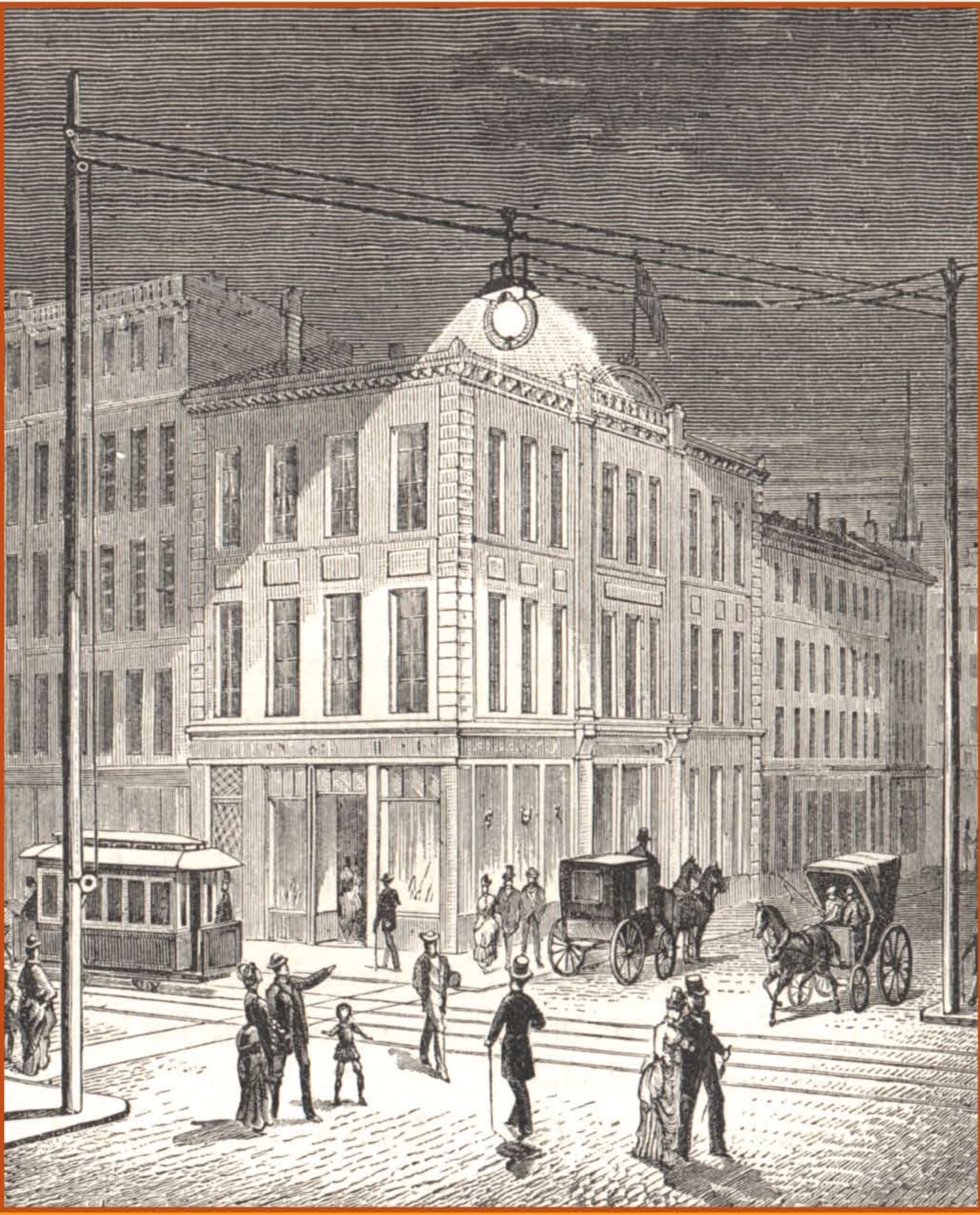
Ezra Fitch Pabody, Minneapolis, MN
Diary entries, September 17, 1882, and April 16, 1885



Home lighting system made by the Peterson Retrum Battery Company, Dawson, MN, about 1911



Lighting structure lowered. The city celebrated the turning on of this new “halo” of light on February 28, 1883.



Street lighting in Minneapolis, about 1890

Earn An Electric Premium By Helping Us Get New Customers

Earn An Electric Premium By Helping Us Get New Customers



Convince Your Friends That They Should Wire for Electric Light

You can talk it over when they drop in for an evening call. Show them the many delightful advantages of electric service in their home—tell them how much it costs, and just what you think of its home-making value. If you persuade them that the electric way is the right way, telephone our Sales Department giving the name and address of your friends and your name and address. Absolutely free.

We will send a representative to place the matter before them in its practical details. If we succeed in getting their order, you may have your choice of the following, absolutely free:

Electric Flatiron—Retail value \$3.50
Electric Toaster—Retail value \$3.50
Electric Table Stove—Retail value \$4.00

Or if you develop for us two housewiring orders you may have your choice of two of the above or a beautiful electric coffee percolator—retail value \$7.50.

This plan makes it easy for our present customers to obtain electric household appliances without cost. Scores have done so already. The housewiring business has had a sudden burst of speed.

Remember—the houses must be on our lines—must be occupied and consist of buildings already constructed. Houses under construction are not included, because all new dwellings have electrical equipment installed when constructed.

Call up our SALES DEPARTMENT for Information or Details

Telephones Main 188 and Center 1320.

The Minneapolis General Electric Company

“Personal Attention to Every Customer.”

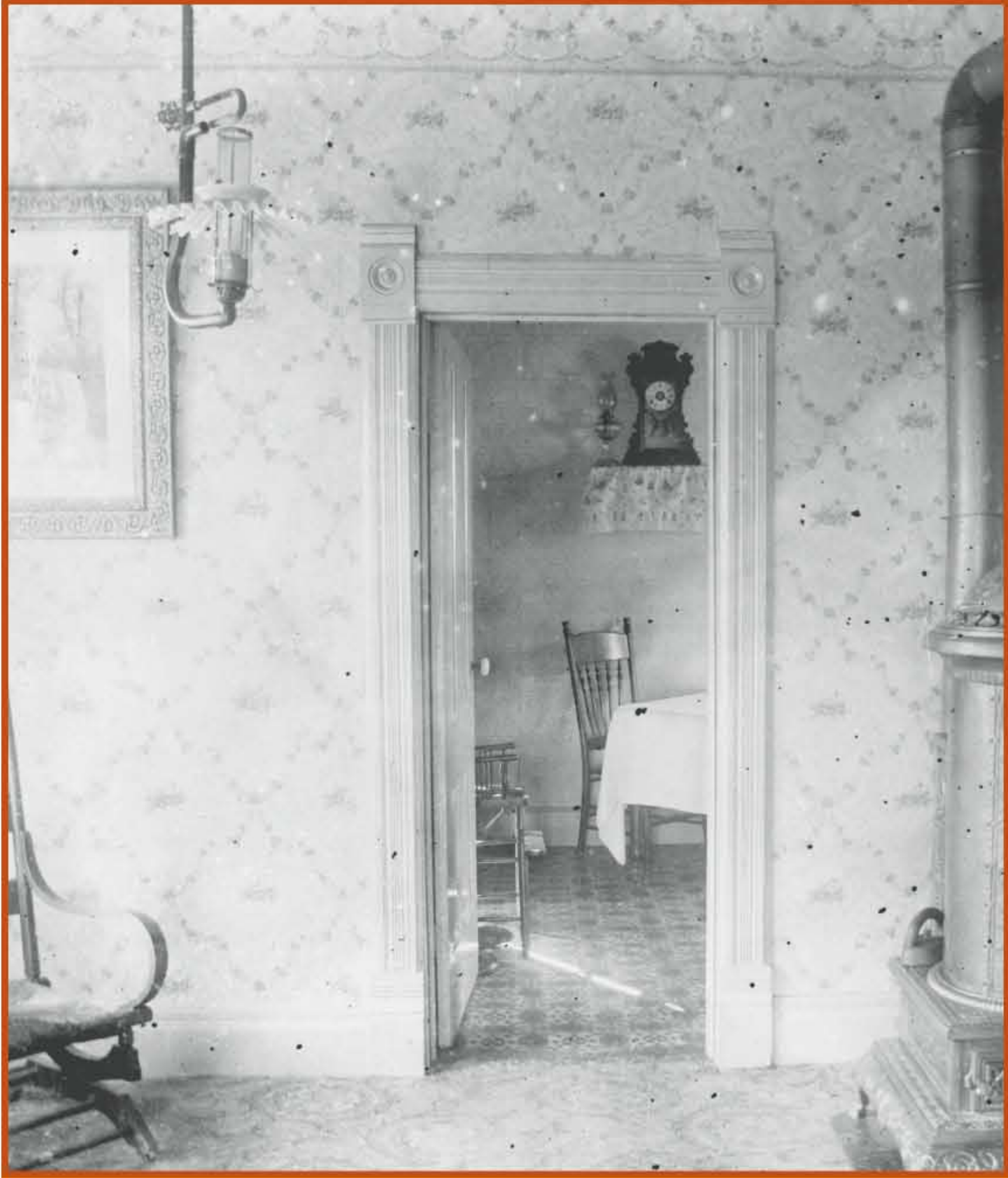
Advertisement, *Minneapolis Journal*,
July 26, 1914

We had electricity in our house in Council Bluffs, Iowa, but not up at the lake in Minnesota. Before I went to a dance at the Balmoral near Ottertail, I would try to put on a little mascara but it was hard to do my makeup while holding a kerosene lamp up to the mirror. I much preferred electric light.

Mary Ellen Stewart, Battle Lake, MN, 1939

“There will be neither blaze nor flame, no singeing or flickering; it will be whiter and steadier than any known lamp. It will give no obnoxious fume nor smoke, will prove one of the healthiest lights possible, and will not blacken ceilings or furniture.”

Thomas Alva Edison



A home in Fulda, MN,
with overhead gas lighting