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deceased noted
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3/30/42

ALEX DOW IS DEAD; UTILITY EXECUTIVE

Chairman of Detroit Edison
Co., Which He Headed, 1912
to 1940, Stricken at 79

DESIGNED CITY LIGHT PLAN

Ex-Boss of Ford Discouraged
Latter's Motor Ambitions—
Started as Messenger

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

DETROIT, March 22—Alex Dow, internationally known utility executive and chairman of the board of the Detroit Edison Company, died of pneumonia early this morning in the University of Michigan Hospital, Ann Arbor, after an illness of less than a week. He would have been 80 years old on April 12 and, until his illness, went to his office regularly.

Mr. Dow was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and received his elementary education there. Before he was 12 years old he was employed in Glasgow as a messenger, and later as a clerk and stenographer for a railroad. When he was 18 years old he went to work for the Cunard Steamship Line in Liverpool as a clerk, devoting his spare time to the study of marine engines.

After a brief period in the British Army Mr. Dow came to this country in 1882, settling in Baltimore, where he was employed in various departments of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. While with the railroad he first became interested in electricity, and in 1888 he joined the British Electric Company of Cleveland, manufacturers of arc-light dynamos and other electrical machines.

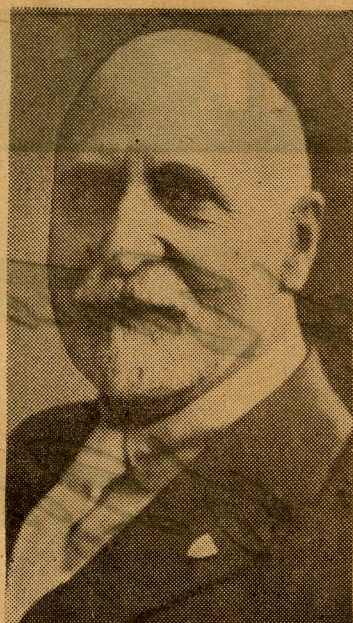
Installed Chicago System

His first assignment was that of installation electrician at the company's Chicago office. During this period Mr. Dow installed the underground lighting system for Chicago's parks.

In 1893, he came to Detroit to design and supervise the construction of the city's public lighting plan. Three years later, he became associated with the Edison Illuminating Company, forerunner of the Detroit Edison Company. He became president of the latter in 1912, serving until 1940 when he became chairman.

It was largely under Mr. Dow's direction that the Detroit Edison Company expanded into the largest public utility in Southeastern Michigan, and one of the foremost utilities in the country. At the turn of the century, when Mr. Dow was chief engineer of the company, one of his subordinates was a young engineer, Henry Ford.

Mr. Ford then was using his spare time to develop his automobile. Mr. Dow sought to discourage the young engineer, who finally withdrew from Detroit Edison to found his motor company.



ALEX DOW

The New York Times

Remained Friend of Ford

In later years Mr. Dow said that Mr. Ford had never neglected his duties while with the Edison Company, and the two remained close friends. Mr. Ford continued to call his old boss "Mr. Dow."

Mr. Dow served several times as a member of the Detroit Board of Water Commissioners, being president from 1925 to 1932. He was a member, and in 1928 president, of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; honorary member of the American Society of Electrical Engineers, the Institution of Electrical Engineers (Great Britain) and the Newcomen Society of England. He was greatly interested in Red Cross work for children, especially Greek children.

In 1936 he received the Edison medal of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers. Mr. Dow was a member also of several other engineering societies and held honorary degrees from the Universities of Michigan and Detroit. In 1932 he was appointed district chief of the Detroit Ordnance District, War Department, and continued to serve in that capacity until his death. In recent years he made his home on his estate near Ann Arbor.

Mr. Dow married in Baltimore in 1883 Vivienne Kinnersley, who survives, as do four children, Lieut. Col. Douglas Dow, Lothrop Dow, Mrs. Margaret Connell of Ann Arbor and Mrs. Dorothy Parker of San Francisco.

Mr. Dow hoped for a Utopia of decentralized but highly galvanized villages as the answer to our social problems and believed that it could be realized if the government refrained from interference.