

## Indiana Gas Was Columbus Light and Coke

Indiana Gas company, which began lighting the streets and homes of Columbus in 1869 as Columbus Gas Light and Coke company, today serves 12,048 customers here.

The company, in addition to providing energy for lighting, also furnished gas for cooking and water heating. In the beginning, it was called "illuminating gas," and was made by baking coal in air-tight retorts or ovens.

The high temperature caused part of the coal to turn to gas. The gas was collected from the ovens and stored in a gas holder for use as needed. What was left of the baked coal was known as "coke."

In 1908, the gas manufactured was "coal-gas and carbureted water-gas," and the company name became Columbus Gas Light company. In 1930 Columbus Gas Light was absorbed by a large interstate holding company known as Interstate Public Service company. This company piped the coal-gas and carbureted water-

gas cross-country from Terre Haute to Franklin and down to Columbus. In 1931, the name of the company bringing gas to Columbus from Terre Haute became Public Service Company of Indiana.

Natural gas, piped from gas fields in Texas and Louisiana to the Midwest reached Columbus in 1940. The gas operations in Columbus were acquired by Indiana Gas and Water company in 1945, the company that was formed to operate the gas and water utility properties being spun off from Public Service Company of Indiana. At that time there were 2,981 gas customers in Columbus. These included 2,730 residential and 232 commercial and 19 industrial customers. Only about 10 per cent used gas for space heating.

The old gas holder, erected at Fifth and Harrison streets in 1927, was a landmark until it was born down in 1950, when it no longer served a useful purpose. This holder was most valuable when gas was manufactured from coal, but, when natural gas was introduced, the holder was too small to be practical.

In September, 1967, Indiana Gas company became the corporate name when the remaining seven water utility properties of the company were sold. The company had never provided water service in Columbus, however. Today, Indiana Gas company serves 290,000 customers in 189 communities

in north central, central and southern Indiana, including the 100,000 customers of its wholly-owned subsidiary, Central Indiana Gas company which was acquired on Dec. 31, 1973.

Today, Indiana Gas company serves 12,048 gas customers in Columbus, including 10,699 residential, 1,322 commercial and 27 industrial customers. Over 96 per cent now use gas for space heating purposes. Gas usage in 1946 was 2.7 million cubic feet. In 1975, 411.4 million cubic feet were used.

Natural gas serves industry in the Columbus area in the manufacture and processing of many products, including metal casting, auto parts, metal specialties, electrical equipment, plastics, engines, bakery goods, feed, flour and grain. In commercial operations and in institutions gas is used for space heating, air conditioning, cooking, water heating and incineration.

In the new Southside junior high school, natural gas provides the total energy requirements, including all electricity. A Cummins Engine company engine, operated on natural gas, generates all electrical requirements. The waste heat from this engine is utilized to provide hot water and steam which take care of heating and air conditioning needs. This total energy package does all this at a much lower cost than any other method.

Indiana Gas company obtains natural gas for the Co-

lumbus area from one of its pipeline suppliers, Texas Gas Transmission corporation, on long-term contracts. Underground storage of gas is an important factor in meeting the heavy demands for space heating in cold weather. During the warmer months, gas from the pipeline supplier is pumped into the company's underground storage field at Unionville, near Bloomington. In severe cold weather, gas is withdrawn from storage to help meet the increased requirements.

The company's commercial office in Columbus has been located at 1405 Washington since 1972. In 1967, a modern service headquarters was constructed at 1460 Jackson.

Arthur M. Shuler is commercial manager of the Columbus district and has an office at the 1405 Washington location. James A. Walsh is the district superintendent.

The Columbus district of Indiana Gas company is a part of the South division which also includes the Bloomington, Bedford, Seymour, New Albany-Jeffersonville and Madison districts. The division office headquarters is located at 70 Brex Park. P. Jack Spoonmore is division manager and Don K. Stevenson is division superintendent.

Due to the nationwide shortage of natural gas, the company has not been taking on new customers whose requirements have been in excess of

420 cubic feet an hour or adding new loads for present customers whose existing requirements equal or exceed 420 cubic feet an hour for several years.

On May 5, 1976, because of the declining amounts of natural gas available to the company from interstate pipeline companies, the Public Service Commission of Indiana approved a new Indiana Gas company tariff rule which restricts the availability of new or additional gas to residential and small commercial applicants who will use gas only for purposes such as cooking, water heating, clothes drying and incineration and whose total connected load would not exceed 420 cubic feet an hour. According to this rule, new or additional gas is no longer available for space heating, cooling, swimming pool heating and lighting for existing homes and it will not be available for these purposes for new home applications received after July 31, 1976.

Summing up for his company, Shuler said, "Natural gas was first brought to Columbus 36 years ago, and its applications are numerous, in home, institutions, commercial establishments and industry. Under current gas supply conditions, we acknowledge the conservation efforts of our customers large and small who make wise use of this premium form of clean energy."

### GAS

A gas company was formed and organized at Columbus in 1869, and entered into a contract with the city to furnish it gas at a price agreed upon. The company erected the necessary buildings, laid pipe, erected all the lamp posts, and on Nov. 6, 1868, the city was first lighted by gas.

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