



## *Electronic Pony Express*

Telephone calls and television pictures now flash through the air along a radio-relay skyway from coast to coast. Part of the way the new route follows the trail of the Pony Express, old-time relay, whose riders galloped with urgent dispatches between Missouri and California, sometimes making a one-way trip in nine days. Today, riding microwave beams, long distance calls and television programs are relayed from tower to tower across the continent with the speed of light.

Distance has always been a challenge to Americans. This Almanac tells of some of the efforts at fast communication that have been made since earliest Colonial days. Also portrayed are some of the later steps leading toward radio-relay—the Bell System's most recent answer to the unending challenge.

The new radio-relay system is the seventh telephone highway placed in service across the United States since 1915. Supplementing wire and cable, radio-relay is helping to make America's vast communications network even stronger and more flexible. Tireless research and engineering made it possible.

And the research and engineering must go right on. As you read this, still further improvements and extensions of our service are in the making. For the telephone has become indispensable in the conduct of business, the administration of government, and in home and social life. It adds to national unity, aids national defense. Our responsibility—and our constant endeavor—is to make it always more dependable, useful and valuable to more and more people.