John E. Howell, an executive of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation who had been active in company affairs in Latin America and Europe for twenty years until he joined the local headquarters about a year ago, died yesterday in the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center after a brief illness. Mr. Howell's office was at 67 Broad Street and his home was at 231 West Eleventh Street. His age was 45.

Mr. Howell was born in Decorest, Ga., and was graduated in 1927 from the University of Toronto. He then joined the I. T. & T. system as an engineer. He served I. T. & T. in Austria and then in Cuba, after which he was traffic manager and general plant supervisor of the Mexican Telephone and Telegraph Company, vice president and general manager of the Puerto Rico Telephone Company, assistant general manager of the United River Plate Telephone Company of Argentina and vice president and general commercial manager of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation, South America.

Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Louise Howell; his father, Henry Howell; three sons, Spencer, Edward and Peter Howell, and a sister, Mrs. Alma M. Howell.