

# I WAS THERE

*Note: This is one of the special "I was There" series recommended by Joe Martino for The Engineer each month during his absence.*

It was back in 1940 when, at the age of 27, and as co-founder, Chief Engineer and General Manager of Burlington Instrument Corp. of Burlington, Iowa, that the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) was providing rural areas throughout the U.S. with electrical power sources. The first TVA plant provided in desert area was in Desert Springs Valley, NE of Tombstone. As my company had received a contract for the proper controls for four diesel engine-generator power units installed there, we built the required voltage regulators, engine load controls, plus a special frequency regulator to provide constant 60-cycle frequency for electrical clocks throughout the system.

We ordered a grandfather-type highly-accurate master clock, built the necessary voltage, current and frequency regulators, and when completed, my wife and I drove to Douglas and out into the desert, where I spent several days installing and adjusting the system to give rural customers the same power as obtained in major metropolitan areas. The swing of the master clock pendulum regulated the governors of the four diesel engines to provide the constant 60-cycle frequency required to maintain electric time.

It was always a joy to receive such a letter of appreciation as the one attached, from the Sulphur Valley Plant (1487) Superintendent, Mike Bennett.

*Wilson A. Charbonneaux*

*(See copy of 1940 letter below)*

## New Menus



We introduced new lunch menus in the Main Dining Room. We have added a "Specials" column and some "Heart Smart" items identified with a ♥. Here is a sam-

pling of some new items:

♥ **Painter's Palette**—A colorful array of fresh fruit with chilled strawberry soup.

♥ **Marinated chicken in Pita**—Sliced baked chicken breast marinated in curried yogurt with herbs, served in pita bread with lettuce, Bermuda onion and cottage cheese. Served with warm mango relish.

Come in and see the entire menu soon!

Attention all companies who entertain at the Club—Take a camera to your next meeting. Send us a clear crisp picture of your group with a short article about the event and we'll publish it in the next issue (if space allows).



*NIS-GAS Delegation from Yugoslavia visits The Engineers Club as guests of Transwave International.*

Burlington Instrument Company August 9, 1940  
Burlington, Iowa

Attention: Mr. W. A. Charbonneaux  
General Manager

Gentlemen:

The installation of our Burlington frequency and load control system has been completed, and we are very well pleased with the performance of the frequency regulator, master clock, time-error compensation, and the five load division regulators.

With this equipment and the Burlington synchronizer previously purchased from you, together with other high grade control equipment, we believe we have one of the most modern plants ever built.

Our frequency control is no longer a problem, and our five units divide the load equally. Our customers' electric clocks never vary more than a few seconds from the correct time.

We appreciate your kind cooperation in connection with this installation, and we hope that you will call on us whenever you are in this vicinity.

We are pleased to enclose our check covering the cost of this equipment.

Very truly yours,  
Mike M. Bennett, Superintendent

MMB:BJC  
Enclosures