

ASHRAE HISTORY SUBMITTAL

for

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W.P. Bettendorf Residence

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Mississippi Valley Chapter 123**

The year was 1915 in Bettendorf, Iowa, a small growing community on the Mississippi River. Johnson Service Company, division of Johnson Controls, entered into an agreement with Mrs. W.P. Bettendorf on January 11, 1915. The agreement appears to have originated out of the Chicago Office.

The agreement stated:

“For the sum named herein, we hereby propose and agree to provide W.P. Bettendorf residence Bettendorf, Iowa with Johnson System of Temperature Regulation and Humidity Control, to consist of 21 Radiator Valves”. The agreement goes on to state “We agree to furnish the above number of valves and make all the necessary air connections to the present thermostats. It is understood that your heating contractor will make the steam connections between the valves and the radiators. We also agree to thoroughly overhaul the present system of regulation and guarantee the complete job against original defects of material and workmanship for a period of three years, and guarantee to make any repairs whatever and make inspections of the system for a period of one year without any cost to the owner”. The agreement goes on to state “The price for the above work and material to be TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY SIX (\$226.00) Dollars, payable on completion of the work.

The agreement is signed by J.A. Cutler of Johnson Service Company and signed by O.C. Staby for Mrs. W.P. Bettendorf.

An interesting note on the agreement refers to the compressed air source (although not part of the agreement) stating “A suitable connection for either steam or water supply and exhaust or electric current is to be furnished to us, without expense, and it is agreed that steam pressure supplied shall not be less than 40 lbs., or water pressure less than 25 lbs. per sq. inch for the operation of said air compressor above mentioned”. Other buildings in the Quad Cities of approximately the same age are known to have had steam-driven ventilation fans and electric motor driven air compressors.

Another interesting note is that this was not a new installation, but rather “overhaul (of) the present system of regulation”. Buildings of the

same era in the Quad Cities were known to be controlled by the Powers Regulator Company. Which system was original is unknown.

Whether or not this was a successful proposal for Johnson Service Company is unknown; however, accompanying service tickets indicate that it was certainly not a trouble-free installation. The first ticket from Johnson Service Company, dated April 3, 1915, is the initial invoice for \$226.00 for "Repairs to heat regulating apparatus per contract. Invoice to O.C. Staby".

On November 11, 1915 there was a work order for adjusting thermostats ordered by H.J. Gilson. The report indicates the work was completed that day, 5 hours, performed by workmen __ Smith and H.F. Willis, OK'd by Heinrich Micheel.

The next work order is dated Feb. 24, 1916 taken by Henry Micheel from O.S. Staby (sic) for 'Adjust system - locate leak'. The resulting report states 'Locating leaks in valve diaphragms and exchanging same. Adjusting job. Completed Feb. 24. 8 hours. Material - 3 No. 3 Valve Diaphragms, 3 No. 9 lead gaskets.'

Another work order from December 9, 1916 saw N.R. Wilson dispatched for 'Cleaning pump (compressor?) and adjusting thermostats' ordered by Moline Heating Company and OK'd by Henry Micheel. Taken From Stock ticket lists: 1 - 6-in. cup 35 cents; 1 - 4-in. cup 20 cents; 3 - 2-in. cup 30 cents; 2 - 1/2-in. cup 8 cents; 2 - patent leather checks 4 cents; 2 - 3-way valves 30 cents; car for 20 minutes? or miles? / Total \$1.27

The subsequent work order on March 19, 1917 sent N.R. Wilson back for 'Adjusting Thermostats', ordered by Moline Heating & Construction Co. (also described as Moline Cheating & Destruction Co. by one former employee). The report indicates 4 hours for adjusting thermostats and changing diaphragms, OK'd by Henry Micheel. The Taken From Stock ticket appears to say 10 old style thermostats and one 3-way valve for 15 cents.

On October 9, 1917 a work order was written to 'Inspect, repair, and adjust system' ordered by phone call from Mr. Staby. The work was started on October 10, but not finished until November 28, and totaled 20 hours by E.V. Wilson and OK'd by Ernst Lebermann. Taken From Stock

included: 1 – 6” cup 45 cents; 1 – 4” cup 25 cents; 3 – 2” cups 45 cents; 2 – 1/2” cups 8 cents; 2 – 1/2” ____ 4 cents; 12 - No. 5 Valve Diaphragms (6 Positive Relay Diaphragms 24 cents and 6 Positive Movement? Diaphragms 24 cents); 4 - No. 3 Valve diaphragms 1 dollar; 8 - thermostat gaskets 32 cents; 2 – thermostat ports 20 cents; 1 – positive 3-way valve 15 cents; 2 – Parlor Thermostats / total \$3.42.

Another work order was initiated nearly a year later on October 16, 1918 by Mr. Staby. This ticket was for ‘Repair Heat Regulation’ and was completed on October 17 by E.V. Wilson, OK’d by Ernst Lebermann. No hours are listed. The stock list included: 9 –No. 2 Valve diaphragms 1 dollar 71 cents; 22 - positive thermostat diaphragms 88 cents; 8 – thermostat gaskets 32 cents; 3 Positive 3-way valves 45 cents; 2 – thermostat ports 20 cents; 1 – relay lid spring 3 cents; 6 positive head? seats 3 cents / total \$3.62.

Again nearly a year passed before the next work order, on June 2, 1919. E.V. Wilson was ordered by Ernst Lebermann for ‘Repairing piping, resetting fresh air and re-circulating draft regulator, repairing thermostats, valves, and draft regulators’. The work was begun on September 12 and completed on September 15, for a total of 20 hours. The Stock ticket for this repair included: 1 – 6” cup; 1 – 4” cup; 3 – 2” cups; 2 – 1/2” cups; 2 – check valve seats; and 1 – aux. Rod packing, all for 1 dollar 58 cents; 3 – No. 1 Draft Reg. Diaphragms 81 cents; 10 – No. 2 Valve diaphragms 2 dollars 50 cents; 6 – positive therm. Diaphragms 24 cents; 4 positive therm. 3-ways 80 cents; Gaskets 24 cents; diaphragm 12 cents, gasket 2 cents; 4 – thermostat leak port cap screws 12 cents; 1 adj. Therm. Knob 5 cents; for a total of \$6.57.

Soon after, another work order from Mr. Staby appears, this time on November 20, 1919 requesting E.V. Wilson address ‘pump (compressor) won’t keep up – air’. The report, OK’d by Ernst Lebermann stated: (Nov. 26 – 5 hrs.) ‘Replacing 4 broken No. 9 unions broken by steam fitters. This is the first ticket that included materials: 4 – No. 9 brass union for 30 cents each; and also listed 5 hours labor at \$1.25 per hour, for a total invoice of \$7.45. A brief memo to Supt. of ____ - Chicago Office to Moline, IL states: “Dear Sirs—found trouble on above job was caused by steam fitters breaking off 4 – No. 9 unions when they changed radiators from pressed steel to cast iron. Very truly yours, E.V. Wilson”. I guess the control guys were blaming the fitters even back then.

In the Roaring 20's, on January 29, 1920 the next work order called in by Mr. Staby was for "Adjust draft control and inspect valve on Rad changed". E.V. Wilson responded that day for 4 hours for "Adjusting and repairing draft control and valves on Radiators now changed from press steel to cast Rad". The Stock ticket was for a whopping 40 cents. The typed invoice to Mrs. W.P. Bettendorf on January 31 listed labor at 1.35 per hour, and included "carfare" of 42 cents hand-written at the bottom, for a total of \$6.68.

Those repairs must have lasted until the next heating season, for on November 17, 1920 a work order asking "repair and adjust apparatus" took two men Dohue and Wilson 8 hours, for a total of 16 hours. A referenced EVW letter of 11/16/20 is missing. 10 more valve diaphragms were installed.

Again a year passes before the next work order is issued, this time on October 17, 1921 when Mrs. Bettendorf called for "repair system". The work was completed by October 19, and included 24 hours labor by Lagerhof? and 4 hours by Wilson for "Repairing compressor, changing diaphragms, and adjusting". The ticket was OK'd by O. Fasbender? Stock ticket lists 13 more valve diaphragms and 14 regulator diaphragms and various other parts for a total of \$8.65 in materials.

Less than a month later, on November 14, 1921 another work order for "adjusting thermostats" was requested. Carl Lagerhof? Responded for 6-1/2 hours, using one thermostat gasket for 4 cents. A note states: wants new thermostat and button.

That must have done the trick for another heating season, as the next work order appears on September 26, 1922 from O.S. Staby for "Make nessianary (sic) repairs and adjustments". The work, performed on October 3rd and 4th includes 2 hours by Wilson, and 16 hours by Giswhite? and OK'd by O. Fasbender. Now I see the pattern...Wilson is training new workers? Stock ticket lists: 1 - 6" Lether; 1 - 4" Lether; 3 - 2" Lether; 2 - #3 check V. Lether; 2 - 1/2" cup; 21 gaskets; 7 more valve diaphragms; 3-way valve; adj. knob; all for \$3.84.

That worked until February 7, 1923, when Mr. O. Staby called to order "adjust system". E.V. Wilson responded for 3 hours of 'adjusting

system' however the ticket is marked No Charge and OK'd by Heinrich Micheel.

We now move into the era of Preventive Maintenance, for on April 18, 1923 a work order is initiated for 'Inspect System'. The work takes place on July 10, 1923, including 2 hours by E.V. Wilson noting "System satisfactory last season. Repair and adjust system this fall.

The next work order is dated August 11, 1923 and includes a notation "Make notation re: change in Name of Owner. The name of W.P. Bettendorf is crossed out and replaced with Oscar Staby, initialed by EVW. Another 12 hours of work is performed on September 18 and 19 for "repairing and adjusting system" by Jms. M. Wilson and OK'd by P.D. Pruitt. More cups; more packing; more valve diaphragms; more gaskets; for total of \$3.66.

The next work order is dated September 22, 1923 for "Replace one parlor thermometer". The report lists 2 hours by Jms. M. Wilson for "Replacing Parlor thermometer. Mrs. Staby asked me to look at Radiator in Maid's room. This is not a Johnson Valve---Found Rad air bound".

The next work order comes in on March 24, 1924 for "Inspect System". My Dad was born in 1924. J.H. Dohue performs 8 hours of work between May 24 and May 26, 1924 and includes a note "Have Wilson inspect system in fall. Repair and adjust. EVW".

The next work order closes the loop on a long and storied system. EVW writes "Bettendorf Residence Davenport Iowa, (Now Stabey Res.) Make necessary repairs and adjustments this fall. See insp. order. The report, signed by Jms. M. Wilson states: Nobody living in house – This property is sold to Masons for a home for the aged. The last piece of correspondence is a work order for 2 hours stating: Call at Bettendorf Bldg. Bettendorf IA, securing letter from Mr. Soule for Mr. Ward, signed by E.V. Wilson, and marked No Charge.

Further research may be conducted to determine what has happened to the Bettendorf Residence since the time of this report. I'm not sure of the definition of a lemon—but this system certainly required a lot of maintenance over the years. I guess labor was cheap back then, either that, or Mrs. Bettendorf made some awfully good cookies. – S. Sweeney