

LLOYD ESPENSCHIED
99 82ND ROAD (NEWBOLD PLACE)
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415

23 February 1968

Mr. Nelson B. Hibshman
Pasadena Apartments
1885 Shore Drive South, Apt. 525
St. Petersburg, Fla. 33707

Dear Nelson:

From yours of the 19th it is evident you are hard at the assignment you took of writing the history of the MERGER, -AIEE-IRE.

About the dates of founding of the European groups of Elec'l Engg,- I think you will find these in the Catalogue of the Wheeler Gift, pub. by AIEE 1909. Thinking you are not likely to have access to that splendid tome, I am sending you by Parcel Post, my working copy. Look in Vol. II, under Section IX. The earliest one I happen to spot is the Electrotechnical Society (Elekyrotechnischer Verein), started in 1879. The International Electrotechnical Exhibition held in Paris 1881, as the electrical power age began, really started something.

The word Society connotes get-together, and this togetherness in modern science and technology may be said to have started in Italy with the Accademia del Cimento 1667. It was a case of curious-minded savants getting together to experiment under the wing of Royalty. The early scientific societies generally were composed of amateur philosephers - those personally interested in prying into Nature,- a spirit that is mostly lost in our modern engineering societies. It was not until science yielded useful things, such as the telegraph, and in turn industry, that electrical engineering societies began to form, naturally enough.

The underlying cause of the MERGER was similar to that which caused the British Society of Telegraph Engineers, formed in 1871, to become the Institution of Electrical Engineers in 1888,- namely the appearance of a great new phase of applied electricity. In our case it was the advent of high-frequency and electronic technology. That development straddled the two societies, largely in the realm of telecommunications, AIEE featuring largely wire communication, IRE radio. The great growth of this new technology that accompanied broadcasting and WW2 forced a readjustment between the two societies, as we well know. I will get made and send you a copy of correspondence I had on this score with Llewellyn when he was Pres. of IRE back in 1946.

The Outline you append appears comprehensive and likely to catch about all the pertinent factors. As you indicate it does not go back to the founding of other societies. The Civil Engrs might well be mentioned, but the reader is not likely to be interested in an inventory of the other societies. Your Outline books as if there might be lost the vital element of growth, into new territory, that dictated the MERGER, - don't let that happen, so healthy an element.

Send up here some of that Spring you are having, -soon!
Cordially,

Lloyd.

11.58.529