

F. B. JEWETT
CHIEF ENGINEER
E. B. CRAFT
ASSISTANT CHIEF ENGINEER
E. H. COLPITTS
ASSISTANT CHIEF ENGINEER
J. L. McQUARRIE
ASSISTANT CHIEF ENGINEER
W. F. HENDRY
ASSISTANT CHIEF ENGINEER
E. P. CLIFFORD
COMMERCIAL MANAGER

Western Electric Company,

INCORPORATED

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
463 WEST STREET
NEW YORK



December 4, 1920.

IN REPLY REFER TO

REPLYING TO

F. L. HUTCHINSON, Secretary,
American Institute of Electrical Engineers,
33 West 39th Street, New York, N.Y.

My dear Mr. Hutchinson:

Attached hereto is copy of a letter from Dr. Whitney to me and copy of a letter from Dr. Weintraub to Dr. Whitney. You will note that they refer to the straitened circumstances in which Oliver Heaviside is living.

I am looking into the matter of what the telephone interests can and should do along the lines indicated by Dr. Weintraub. In connection with Heaviside's circumstances in life I seem to have a hazy recollection that this matter came up some years ago while I was on the Board of Directors of the A. I. E. E. and that something was either done or proposed to be done by Electrical Engineers in the direction of providing him with a sufficient yearly income to satisfy his very moderate desires.

If you have information on any such proposition I would appreciate it if you could let me know at your early convenience just what was actually done.

Yours truly,

F. B. Jewett
Chief Engineer.

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C O P Y

GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY

Research Laboratory

Schenectady, N.Y.

December 3, 1920

Dr. F. B. Jewett

Western Electric Company

New York City

Dear Dr. Jewett:

I should like very much to enlist your personal efforts on behalf of Oliver Heaviside, and so I am sending you copy of the letter from Dr. Weintraub which aroused my interest, as well as copy of the letter that I wrote Mr. Swope on the subject.

I have not gone at this in accord with any well laid plan, altho I know I could find any number of engineers glad to express appreciation of Heaviside's work.

Do you see a way by which your Company might co-operate?

Yours very truly,

(Signed) W. R. WHITNEY.

WRW C

C O P Y

Paris, November 5, 1920

Dear Dr. Whitney:

During my present trip to Europe, it was a shock to me to learn of the poverty in which the great English physicist, Oliver Heaviside, is living. He is very old, sick, and relies largely on help from admirers, one of whom happens to be a friend of mine.

I know the esteem in which you hold men of the type of Heaviside, and I promised to try to enlist your help in the noble cause of securing substantial assistance for the great old man.

Companies like the General Electric, and especially the Western Electric, which has largely benefitted by Heaviside's work, would honor themselves by contributing to a fund sums small for them, but big for Heaviside. I know that if a sum of a few thousand dollars were collected in the United States and offered to Heaviside as a token of appreciation, it would be gratefully received. Mr. Heaviside's address is Homefield, Torquay (England).

My permanent address in Europe is care Marius Latour,
8 Square Desaix, Paris (XV)

Hoping to hear from you, I am,

Yours sincerely,

E. Weintraub.

C O P Y

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NEW YORK

EXECUTIVE
FILE

OLIVER HEAVISIDE.

December 8th, 1920

Col. F. B. Jewett, Chief Engineer,
Western Electric Co., Inc.,
463 West Street,
New York City.

Dear Col. Jewett:

I have just received a letter from Mr. F. L. Hutchinson, of which a copy has been sent to you, regarding Oliver Heaviside.

On different occasions, some of Heaviside's friends and devotees endeavored to obtain funds to relieve his distressing condition. During the war, this condition had become so bad that he had become a permanent invalid without the means for decent warm clothing and the food suited to the sick-bed. I tried on different occasions to make him accept on one pretext or another that it should be used for the completion of his work on the "Electromagnetic Theory," sums of a few hundred pounds, but he was immovable. The late Prof. Perry and I tried again a short time before Perry's death, but Perry was rebuffed rather rudely, while Heaviside wrote me whimsically giving his grounds, virtually to the effect that he refused charity so long as that which was his due had never been given him.

You, no doubt, realize and fully appreciate that Heaviside has felt very bitter in view of the fact that his work, as was proved so completely from photostatic copies of his writings at the time he was elected an honorary member of the Institute, anticipated the work of others who received the financial compensation, part of which should surely have gone to him. He has felt particularly that, since his great work has found so brilliant a field of application in America, he was in a sense deprived of his birth-right and he now looks upon any gift from this side of the Atlantic as selling this birth-right for a mess of pottage.

I certainly, as one who have known Heaviside for thirty years, welcome any effort which you can make to try again to alleviate the suffering of one of the most brilliant minds since Maxwell. Unless Heaviside's spirit is greatly broken, he will rebuff most unceremoniously any attempt at aiding him which is not based on what he considers the equity in the situation.

I do not know how closely familiar you are with his brilliant writings; I do not know how fully you realize that Heaviside completely anticipated the loading of telephone cables, even to the point of speaking of "lumping inductances"; how he stated that these "lumped inductances" should be distributed

Col. Jewett -- #3.

12/8/20

closely enough so as to take care of the smallest wave lengths, explaining in detail that the idea of this "lumping" was the simulation of a cable with uniformly distributed inductance. In the circumstances, there is little wonder that a man who so completely mastered this field and so brilliantly exhibited the theory should view with considerable bitterness the success that has come to those who have reared a structure on his discoveries.

Let me assure you, dear Col. Jewett, that anything I can do in this matter to co-operate with you will be most enthusiastically undertaken. I fear that Heaviside will take the position that, if the engineering fraternity will give him charity where it should have given him his due, he will decline the former. He took a similar attitude in connection with the honorary membership in the Institute, and the labor and ingenuity expended in persuading him to accept this honor would fill a small book of correspondence. The war helped at the time to make him realize that it was his patriotic duty to work for a closer relationship between the best minds of England and America. Otherwise, I fear that he would never have accepted.

With kindest regards, I am

Very truly yours,

(Signed) B. A. BEHREND

GN

SUBJECT: Oliver Heaviside

October 15, 1921

Mr. B. A. Behrend
Room 1011, 85 Devonshire Street
Boston, Mass.

Dear Mr. Behrend:-

I am enclosing herewith original letter from Mr. J. D. Lyon, Chairman of the Cincinnati Section, under date of October 8th, in which he refers to the straightened circumstances of Oliver Heaviside, and asks what, if any, steps have been taken by the engineering profession in the matter.

In view of your great interest in the work of Heaviside, and also on account of the fact that you personally have called attention to the unfortunate financial condition of Heaviside, and have had considerable correspondence on the subject previously, I shall be very glad if you will write directly to Mr. Lyon regarding the matter.

Very truly yours

FLH:C

Secretary.

Copy to -
Mr. J. D. Lyon, Chairman
Cincinnati Section AIEE

- C O P Y -

1954

B. A. BEHREND

85 Devonshire Street
Boston, Mass.

October 18, 1921

SUBJECT: Oliver Heaviside.

Mr. F. L. Hutchinson, Secretary
American Institute of Electrical Engineers
33 West 39th Street, New York City

Dear Mr. Hutchinson:-

I am greatly obliged to you for your kind letter of October 15th, forwarding to me an original letter from Mr. J. D. Lyon, Chairman, Cincinnati Section, A.I.E.E., dated October 8th and referring to the distressing circumstances of Oliver Heaviside.

I am returning to you this letter herewith and I regret extremely that it seems impossible individually to do much in this matter. I am inclined to think that the only way in which any material aid could be extended to him would be through the agency of an organization like the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. Whether they wish to do this or not, is a matter in regard to which I cannot venture an opinion. I even doubt whether Heaviside would now, in his present frame of mind, accept aid if tendered from this source.

Thanking you again for advising me in regard to Mr. Lyon's sentiment and suggesting that you forward this letter to Mr. Lyon, I am

Yours very truly

(Sgd) B. A. BEHREND

Consulting Engineer

Original to Mr. Lyon 10/19/21

