

(No. 67.)



1870.

T A S M A N I A.

S U B M A R I N E C A B L E.

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, September 13, 1870.



CORRESPONDENCE, Telegrams, &c. connected with the recent withdrawal of the Wind and Weather Reports at Cape Schanck.

[BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.]

31 August, 1870.

PLEASE ask Mr. Warren to let me have an official notification regarding discontinuance of Schanck Report.

F. A. PACKER.

Officer in Charge, Tamar Heads.

[BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.]

31 August, 1870.

THE 1 P.M. Cape Schanck Report is refused to *Mercury* on account of that paper being so unjust and impertinent to Cable Staff.

We have given most positive proof that the Cable is not to blame for delay on *Mercury* Messages, yet the *Mercury* continues to abuse us. It has therefore been decided that no privileges are to be granted to this paper.

W. WARREN, *Superintendent.*

F. A. PACKER, *Esq.*

*Tasmania and Victoria Submarine Telegraph, Launceston,
Tasmania, 31st August, 1870.*

SIR,

YOUR Memo., with certain documents, came duly to hand; and after reading them over, and likewise Mr. Simbert's letter, I forwarded them to Mr. Warren, the Superintendent of the Cable, and I now return them with Mr. Warren's reply.

The cause of Mr. Davies' complaint was partly the stoppage on the Land Line between Victoria and Flinders, which occurred while I was in Melbourne, and likewise his Telegrams are perpetually delivered in the Melbourne Office after the closing time of the Land Lines on this side. I have forwarded the documents to Mr. Warren, and received them back, and shall send them to you, at a very heavy cost of postage to my Company; but I beg it to be distinctly understood that I shall not do so again unless the Cable is in fault, and *that*, up to the present, you are well aware, and Davies likewise, has not been the case. I would further add, and this you may inform Mr. Davies, that if any more *false* charges appear in the *Mercury* against my Company, I shall feel it my duty to withhold all the advantages he is now deriving from the Cable and any others which may take place.

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN WILSON BLACKETT.

F. A. PACKER, *Esq.*

(No. 1A.)

MEMO.

ON 10th August no Telegram was received for *Mercury*, though the Tasmanian Offices remained open till usual hour,—viz., to 8 P.M. by Melbourne time.

On 11th August Correspondent of *Mercury* telegraphed to Editor of that paper saying he handed in usual Telegram at 20 minutes to 8 o'clock on previous evening. Correspondence here-with then passed.

F. A. PACKER.

(No. 1.)

[BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.]

11th August, 1870.

MR. DAVIES is under an impression that *your* office is to blame for non-receipt of last night's *Mercury* Telegram. Please send me an official report as to how it occurred, saying whether you received any notification of the Message being on its way, &c.

Your explanation will probably be submitted to Mr. Warren, so be explicit and accurate.

F. A. PACKER.

MR. HENRY, *Tamar Heads*.

(No. 2.)

AT 8 o'clock last night by "Melbourne time," there being no business on hand, nor any notification of any coming, I closed office according to regulations.

I believe *Mercury* message was not offered to Cable at all.

R. HENRY, *Tamar Heads*.

(No. 3.)

[BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.]

11th August, 1870.

REFERRING to Correspondent's Message to *Mercury* of this morning, in which he alleges that Wednesday's Telegram was handed in twenty minutes before closing time, our Manager at Tamar Heads, C.S., reports that at 8 o'clock *by your time*, there being no business nor any notification of any coming, he closed office according to regulations. Will you be so good as afford what information you can regarding this, as I wish to clear our Lines of unmerited censure? We have given several notices that we close punctually, *unless we are advised of messages coming*.

F. A. PACKER.

Manager Melbourne Office and Manager Cable.

Melbourne Manager's reply marked No. 7; Cable Manager's, No. 4.—F. P.

(No. 4.)

[BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.]

11th August, 1870.

No Message was offered to our Operator at Flinders for *Mercury* last night.

W. WARREN, *Low Heads*.F. A. PACKER, *Esq.*

(No. 5.)

[BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.]

12th August, 1870.

PLEASE reply to yesterday's Memo. *re Mercury's* Message of Wednesday.

F. A. PACKER.

Manager Melbourne Office.

(No. 6.)

[BY LETTER.]

15th August, 1870.

SIR,

I BEG to draw your attention to the enclosed copies of Telegrams which I forwarded to you on the 11th and 12th August, and which remain to this date unacknowledged.

May I request that you will favour me with the explanation asked for (in the Telegram marked A*) at your earliest convenience?

I am, &c.,

F. A. PACKER.

Manager Melbourne Office.

* Copy of my Telegram of 11 August (marked No. 3) enclosed.

(No. 7.)

Chief Electric Telegraph Office, Melbourne, 16th August, 1870.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE no doubt but you will have thought me very rude in not replying to your Memo. of the 12th and those of subsequent dates, respecting the delay in transmitting the report for the *Mercury* on the 10th; but when I have explained the matter to you I trust you will exonerate me from such a charge, and also from such an unbusinesslike transaction.

When I got your Memo. I at once enquired into the matter, and got the united testimony of Mr. Payter, our Assistant Manager, together with that of the Operator in charge of the Line; upon which I sent you a Telegram to this effect:—"That *Mercury* Message of 10th was handed in here at 7.45 p.m.; that we were very busy, all Operators engaged until 7.57, at which time Flinders advised us that Cable was closed for the night."

Imagine my astonishment when I am handed a Memo. from Warren at Low Heads, stating that "*my statement is not true, therefore shall not pass it;*" and again, that "I must alter *tone* of my Memo. before he allows it to pass." As there was nothing in the *tone* of my Memo., whatever there may be in its *tenor*, to warrant Mr. Warren in acting as he has done, I have carefully refrained from answering any of his many Memos. on the subject, as I cannot submit to have my Telegrams to you passed through the Cable on *his* sufferance. It appears that he thinks both the Cable and its Officers are immaculate, and that to bring their conduct or actions under discussion is neither more nor less than sacrilege. It does not appear by his action in this matter that he thinks he has a good case, otherwise he should surely have forwarded my Memo. to you, but accompanied it by his explanation, in order that any wrong impressions which may have been contained in mine might be neutralized. You will perceive in this case that I have the testimony of Mr. Payter and another officer, who most positively assert that it was at 7.57 that Flinders told them Cable had closed, whereas Mr. Warren contends that it was after 8 p.m.,—and that is merely on the unsupported statement of his Operator.

I trust that I have fully explained this matter. I am sorry that I have been compelled to use this means of advising you as to the rights of the case, and I have no doubt you will agree with me that even although my statement was *not true*, as Mr. Warren says, yet that that gentleman acted in a most unbusiness and arbitrary manner in stopping any communication from me to you, no matter upon what subject.

I intend to speak to Blackett on the subject, as I consider Warren's conduct a direct insult. The matter has been fully explained to the *Argus*.

I am sorry that our means of communication have been stopped for the last few days, but hope matters will go smoothly for the future.

Believe me to be,

Yours very faithfully,

JAMES SIMBERT.

F. A. PACKER, *Esq.*, Hobart Town.

[This letter crossed my Telegram No. 6, as will be seen by date.—F.P.]

*Tasmania and Victoria Submarine Telegraph,
Low Heads Station, August 27th, 1870.*

MEMO.

FOR Mr. Packer's information; and I hope he will *now* be satisfied that Cable is not to blame, and that the "*Melbourne united testimony*" falls to the ground. Also have to inform him that a bell is always in circuit at each end of the Cable, and I shall continue to stop all *untrue* Service Messages that have reference to the Cable Staff.

W. WARREN, *Supt.*J. W. BLACKETT, *Esq.*, *Manager*.

LOW HEADS STATION.—EXTRACT FROM DIARY.

August 27th, 1870.

To Segrave, Flinders.—*Re Mercury* Message, 10th instant. Manager, Melbourne, says:—"7.57 p.m., *Mercury* Message offered to Flinders." Operator replied, "*Cable closed for night.*" Refer to Diary for exact minute of closing. Was Message received by Victorian Operator that evening? If so, why was it not handed to you? State when, and time, Message was received by Victorian Operator and handed to you. Give me all the information you can on this subject.

WARREN.

To Mr. Warren.—10th instant, 8 p.m. No signs of *Mercury* Message. Gave Low Heads good night. Few minutes afterwards Victorian Operator reported *Mercury's* Message coming. Communicated

same to Low Heads, who said, "*Tasmanian Stations closed.*" Victorian Operator advised to that effect only, but he apparently reported *Cable closed, in error.* Waited until 8·7 P.M., but A. did not commence *Mercury* Message at all that night, or it would have been received by Cable. Received it on following day at 12·45 P.M. *Note.*—Had A. sent notice before 8 P.M. the *Mercury* Message would have gone through O.K.

SEGRAVE.

Extract from "Mercury," 23rd August, 1870.

GROSS OFFICIAL NEGLIGENCE.—We have repeatedly of late had reason to complain of the great delay that takes place in the transmission of our Cable Message. It was only the other day that a message delivered at Melbourne some 20 minutes before 8 did not reach Tasmania for upwards of half-an-hour. But the negligence seems to be increasing. Last night our message was delivered at Melbourne at 7·45, and did not reach Hobart Town till 8·57, and this without any explanation. Such delay is disgraceful, and we hope that the Manager of the Cable will see that it does not occur again, unless we are to be told that they are independent, and do not care to be attentive to their duties.

WILL Mr. Blackett kindly inquire into this matter? I am informed by our Officer at Tamar Heads that a Message from *Brisbane* "timed" 8·2 was actually received in Tasmania at 8·40; the *Mercury's* Telegram, "timed" 7·45, not arriving until four minutes to 9!

J. W. BLACKETT, *Esq.*

F. A. PACKER,
23 Aug. 1870.

*Tasmania and Victoria Submarine Telegraph, Low Heads Station,
August 27th, 1870.*

MEMO. for Mr. Packer's information.

BRISBANE Message handed over to Cable at 8·25 P.M. Received at Low Heads, and handed to Tasmanian Operator at 8·28 P.M.

Mercury Message handed to Cable at 8·38 P.M. Received at Low Heads, and handed to Tasmanian Operator, 8·46 P.M.

Mr. Packer must enquire of Melbourne *why* the Brisbane Message was sent forward before the *Mercury* Message.

W. WARREN, *Superintendent.*

Copy of Memo. August 26th.

To Simbert, A.—Cannot the delay of *Mercury's* Messages on your line be avoided? Message of last night, timed A. 7·42 P.M., was handed over to us at Fl. 8·13. This is causing much unpleasantness. *Mercury* blames Cable for delay.—WARREN.

To Warren, Low Heads.—I do not anticipate that you will have any further trouble with *Mercury* Messages.—SIMBERT.

Mr. Packer will see that the Cable Company and Staff have done all in their power to get the *Mercury* Messages sent in proper time.—W. W.