

C O P Y

Letter from **Dr. E. C. Simpson**, dated 25th. June, 1913.

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Meteorological Office.

Simla.

Dear Mr. Gill,

Commander Evans has forwarded to me your letter No.274/F.G. dated 4th. June 1913 and I have much pleasure in giving you the following report on the telephones so kindly presented by the staff of the National Telephone Company to the Expedition.

2. The telephones were satisfactory in every respect and they were very largely used in the scientific work at the base station as well as for connecting Cape Evans to Hut Point fifteen miles away.

3. The connexion between Cape Evans and Hut Point was made in September 1911 by laying the bare aluminium wire along the surface of the snow-covered sea ice. At first the speaking was all that could be desired and there was no difficulty in ringing up by means of the magnetos. As the year advanced and the sun became more powerful difficulty in ringing and speaking was experienced. Although the temperature remained many degrees below freezing and the snow appeared to be perfectly dry large insulation loss became apparent, and this was greatest at about midday. It was possible however to use the telephone between evening and early morning right up to the time the southern party left Hut Point for

Mr. Simpson's letter continued.

the Pole, and I spoke to Capt. Scott for the last time over the wire. Thus the telephones fulfilled the main purpose for which they were taken south.

I should very much have liked to have investigated the loss of insulating power of the snow. It is difficult to believe that it was due to the snow becoming damp for the temperature was very low. I imagined at the time that it was due to the sunlight, but had no time to investigate the matter.

4. The telephones were of the greatest use in the scientific work being used almost daily for taking time. It was possible by the use of the telephones to check the time of the standard chronometers within the hut by the astronomical observations made outside in the cold by Commander Evans. The telephones were also used for giving the time to an ice cave in which pendulums were being swung to determine the force of gravity. In this case the makes and breaks in the electrical circuit of the standard astronomical clock could be clearly heard in the telephone and used by the observer in the ice cave. During these experiments the outside telephone was often between 30° and 40° F. below zero and still spoke quite clearly.

5. If I were starting out again on the same work I should make only one change - I should not take aluminium wire.

Mr. Simpson's letter continued.

The Terra Nova leaked very badly and all the reels of wire got wet with sea water. This gave me a lot of trouble for the wire became very rotten and a great deal had to be thrown away.

6. The total outfit with the splendid assortment of spare parts which accompanied it was, as I said before, satisfactory in every particular and we often expressed during our stay in the south our gratitude to the staff of the National Telephone Company for the useful gift they made to us.

Yours truly,

(signature) E. C. SIMPSON.

To.

F. Gill, Esq.,

16. Hamilton House,

Victoria Embankment,

London, E.C.