

## **Signor Marconi and Wireless Telegraphy**

Signor Marconi is today the most celebrated man in the world and his name stands out in bold prominence above all others as the greatest genius of the age. He has achieved a success that, in the words of Paul Kruger, has staggered humanity. Wireless telegraphy at long distances is an accomplished fact, for Marconi has spoken to a man one thousand nine hundred miles away, with no other medium than that which existed on the morning that Noah came out of the ark. Nature grudgingly gave out THE GREAT SECRET; but bit by bit Marconi made the bold venture and subdued the hidden secrets of dame nature to obey his own will. The very thought of it sets one aghast. The humble genius who received the Telegram reporter at the Cochrane Hotel makes no vain-glorious boost about what he has achieved. He is as modest as a school boy, and one would not think he was the wizard who wrought this all-inspiring wonder of science, that at once realizes the tales of the Arabian nights and the stories of Jules Verne. It is no wonder that New York stood astounded and refused to believe the news when it was flashed over the wires on Saturday night. Newspapers were skeptical and before sending the report to their printers wired for CONFIRMATION OF THE NEWS. The citizens of St. John's even doubted the truth of it on Saturday night. They had cast an occasional glance up at Signal Hill the past few days while the experiments were going on. They had seen electrically charged kites whirling in the storm-tossed air over Signal Hill now and then. But they did not attach much importance to the matter. They knew that Mr. Marconi was making experiments, but up to Saturday they had failed. This was not the case, for he had succeeded in getting from the Lizard, Cornwall, the letter S ( . . ) of the Morse Code distinctly at 11:30 on Wednesday, TWENTY-FIVE DIFFERENT TIMES, and the same success was expected on Thursday. In order that there would be no doubt about the genuineness of those messages, Mr. Marconi cabled to friends in charge of the transmitting apparatus at the Lizard to verify the signals and have them reported at a prearranged moment. This made assurance doubly sure, and there remained no doubt in the mind of Mr. Marconi that what he dared hope to do when he established an elaborate apparatus at Cornwall last August, was accomplished. It was the faith and confidence in himself that prevailed on the company to allow the establishment of a station at Lizard Point, on the coast of Cornwall. This was kept in the background FEARING A POSSIBLE FAILURE. The published object of Marconi's visit to our shores was to install on Signal Hill or some other favourable point the necessary machinery to communicate with the ocean liners passing the coast of Newfoundland. The Chart of the Wreck published by Mr. Murphy, superintendent of Marine and

Fisheries Department, had awakened the world to the advantages that would be derived from establishing a wireless station on this coast to warn ocean-going steamers from their threatened doom of being lost on the rocks in the vicinity of Cape Race. From experiments made at NANTUCKET, NEW YORK, AND OTHER PLACES, Mr. Marconi knew that his success would be repeated here and he would be able to pick up ships two hundred and fifty or two hundred miles to the south. This is the summer route of the ocean liners. Perhaps if the atmospheric, topographical and mineralogical conditions at Signal Hill, St. John's, were favourable, Mr. Marconi would be able to reach even the winter track of steamers, four hundred and fifty miles to the south. Marconi had all this outlined in mind, but his greatest hope was centered at the Lizard, in Cornwall, nearly two thousand miles away. Whilst having great confidence in this he dared not give it out to the public through newspaper representatives, fearing a possible failure. He had installed in August last an electrical transmitting apparatus OF THIRTY HORSE POWER at Lizard, in a way so quiet that it attracted very little attention. Now it has accomplished its work and astounded the world. In telling about it to a Telegram reporter last night, Mr. Marconi said that if the distance had been ten miles greater it may be that the power would not be sufficiently strong to transmit the message, and that the thirty horse power apparatus was taxed to its full capacity in making the recorder give an intelligible sound at Signal Hill. The sound was quite distinct, but very faint, and it was only frequent and uniform repetition of the letter S (. . .) of the Morse Code that could leave no doubt. This could be easily remedied, and, as the principle had been exhibited, the triumph was in NO WISE THE LESS. Wednesday the eleventh of December, 1901 will be put down as the memorable day in the history of the world—the day on which one of the greatest achievements in science was accomplished. It will be a proud boast for the people of Newfoundland to say in the words of the poet when looking back upon it, *Magna pars quorum fuimus*. We heartily congratulate Signor Marconi on his success. There is a fascination in imagining him sitting at his table in the building on Signal Hill, with watch in hand, waiting for the hand to point to the moment agreed upon with his friend on the other side of the Atlantic. The hand moves slowly around, the scientist's mind is STRUNG TO A POWERFUL TENSION. Will the dreams of his life—of his soul's ambition—be realized? A quiver like all angel's breath breathes over the receiving instruments, and the delicate recorder begins to move, low as a whisper of a dying child at first, but in half a minute gaining strength. The secret of the ages was being yielded grudgingly, as it were, to the listening ear of the high

priest of electrical science—Signor Marconi. The sounds were now distinct, and what ravishing music they made when the three dots of that letter S (. . .) were repeated, GROWING STRONGER EACH TIME. A new spirit was born to science with a tip of its wing on each side of the ocean. The old Atlantic cable heard the news; quivered and groaned. Telegraph cable stocks slumped on the market Saturday evening, and there was fever heat excitement among business men. As soon as Signor Marconi had made up his mind there was no doubt about the success of his experiment, he called on his excellency Governor Boyle Saturday afternoon and gave him the first information which was immediately cabled to THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE ADMIRALTY. Among foreign newspaper correspondents, Mr. T.J. Murphy was the first to get a message, one hundred and fifty words off to the New York Journal, and MA. Devine to the Montreal Star. Both these papers cabled yesterday for five hundred additional words, and photographs of Signal Hill, etc. All the big newspapers sent for special despatches, the news being regarded as the most important that has ever fallen on the world of science. Mr. Marconi said last night “Some of the New York people refuse to believe it”, well, that’s not to be wondered at. No doubt they will believe by and by.

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Source: Unknown, *The Evening Telegram* (December 16, 1901).