

29th Jan. 1973.

Dear Dr. Gossick,

I travelled down to Whitstable last Friday morning and reached Josephs' house around 11a.m., as previously agreed with him. He proved very kind indeed, going so far as offering to put me up for the night, but I said I would stay with my relatives ten miles away. I left around 7 p.m., so I was there a long time. He gave me a book on Quaternions that he didn't need any more, and also his only copy of his lectures on Heaviside Calculus dated around 1926. I gave him CATT CONCEPT. So it was all very friendly.

There were two references to you, rather vague. In one he gratuitously said w.s.t. Vietnam that you said the U.S. should never have been there. There had been no need for him to bring in your name when the subject was Vietnam. There seemed a tiny touch of a feeling that perhaps since I had been in the U.S. I had some connection with you, but that was all. I did not say I knew you.

I was rather bad at taking notes and getting what I wanted out of the interview, partly because he gave me a martini at the start and the three of us (the third being Miss Bruce - or some name like that - she lives a little way away and cooks lunch for him. But we went out to a nice lunch overlooking the sea) finished off a bottle of wine shortly after.

In spite of the wine, I did grasp that his attitude to scientific method and the way scientists work and the way they think they work was similar to mine. His source for these ideas is Pepper, which he fished out of his bookcase. He was disconcerted when I talked about Eds towards the end, and said he would have to think about it.

He said he was not an academic and said I was. In fact, I regard him as much more academically (mathematically) inclined than I am. He kept saying he was not an academic, that he was a backroom boy.

He said the IEE ought to be shot for that bad way they had looked after the Heaviside material. They sent it to Wales during the war and a pipe burst above them and water dripped all over them. He said that he restored the 'fourth volume'.

He told me to go away and read a lot of stuff, and then come back. In particular, read his write-up on Heaviside, of which he has one copy and the other copy is in the IEE library. Presumably it is his joint work with you.

I am sure this bitty account will be frustrating to you. However, I intend to get a better picture of the situation when I go next time in a month or so, and then perhaps you will get a more useful report.

In a strange way, after visiting him, I now feel that the Josephs-Gossick clash is a tragedy for me as well. I did not expect to feel so sorry about it as I do now, after the visit to Whitstable.

He said ~~plea~~ told him to go to Tony as his representative to get the Heaviside papers that were found



SUMMARY DESCRIPTION SHEET

Reference	
S.C. Mss.	
5	Heaviside Collection

I Primary Collection

1. 21 notebooks (numbered 1, 1A, 2, 2A, 3, 3A, 4-18) in Heaviside's hand, mainly consisting of mathematical equations and calculations.
2. 4 boxes of miscellaneous pamphlets and other publications by Heaviside and others, mainly relating to telegraphy. Many are annotated by Heaviside.
3. 5 boxes containing 19 folders of repaired papers, mostly loose notes, some drafts of papers, some correspondence with the Electrician (folder 9), all in Heaviside's hand.
4. Miscellaneous items, including a leather bound document presenting Swedish medal, 1924; a copy of German honorary doctorate, 1905; and official copy of Heaviside's birth certificate.
5. 5 bundles of notes in Heaviside's hand on backs of old letters, receipts, etc., c. 1890-1893.
6. 55 envelopes of letters to Heaviside from various correspondents. (Handlist available).

II Material found at Paignton in 1957

1. Preliminary drafts of articles for "Electromagnetic Theory".
2. Annotated galley proofs of "Electromagnetic Theory".
3. Miscellaneous correspondence (handlist available).
4. Miscellaneous papers, including calculations on backs of accounts, etc., and a Christmas card.....from Freddie.

BOX - LIST AVAILABLE

41, Inyoni Heights,  
98, Vause Road,  
Durban.4001. S.Africa.

Oct. 15th. 1981.

Dear Mr. GATT,

My cousin, Elaine Heaviside, has passed on to me a copy of correspondence concerning your research on Oliver Heaviside.

I understand that you have already been in touch with Dr. Mercer of Southampton University and so you will have obtained knowledge of correspondence and original documents which I gave to him to retain for safe keeping. This in 1976.

The most complete history of Oliver is contained in :-

- a. The Heaviside Centenary Volume.
- b. The autobiography by Rollo Appleyard in the Electrical Communication journal - Oct 1928.

I am one of the few people alive today who actually knew my great-uncle Oliver, having visited him as a child with my parents, when he was living at "Homefield" in Torquay.

My husband, who has researched the Heaviside family tree from private records of relatives, has been unsuccessful in tracing descendents of the Torquay branch of the family founded by Oliver's brother - Charles Heaviside (1846). He owned a music shop there and raised 5 children :-

Rachael, Ethel, Charles, Frederick, Beatrice.

Some of them carried on the business, but Rachael married a Mr. Williams and they ran the Bay Court Hotel, which was destroyed by bombs during the last war. We stayed with them there in the early 30's but since immigrating to South Africa in 1948, we have lost all trace of this family. Contact with the Torquay Council, who have some records and a plaque in Oliver's memory in the Town Hall, may reveal more local news.

I trust that this information will be useful to you, naturally we shall be most interested to hear of your findings there and will be only too pleased to help further on hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,  
Muriel Philips (Mrs) - nee Heaviside.

*Muriel G. G. Philips*

31, Mayfield Avenue,  
West Ealing,  
London, W13 9UP

19th August, 1981.

Dear Mr. Catt (if I have read  
your signature correctly!),

My great-uncle OLIVER HEAVISIDE.

I have received your letter of the 15th instant, from which I assume that - as Dr. Mercer will have told you of the sources from which he compiled his biographical essay in 1976 of Oliver Heaviside - what you are now seeking for your and your Wife's proposed full biography is some more personal details of my great-uncle's life in Torquay, but I regret that it seems very doubtful whether my brothers and sisters or our cousins are likely to be able to help you very much (I myself as the youngest of our clan - at 66! - was too young during the First World War even to visit our grandparents when they then lived in Torquay, with Oliver close by) for the branch of the Heaviside family which had lived and carried on business in Torquay moved from there, I believe, many years ago, and the last we heard of them from cousins nearer us was that they (our cousins) had completely lost touch with the Torquay relatives. However, I am sending a photo-copy of your letter to one of our cousins, just in case she or her surviving sister remember anyone in Torquay who was likely to have known Oliver.

In any event, as there is a plaque on one of the buildings in Torquay in which Oliver had lived, you may be able to trace through the local Council who were his neighbours there and possibly the present whereabouts of their descendants who may remember their parents' tales of their one-time neighbour's eccentric behaviour - for an "eccentric genius" Oliver certainly was and, as children, both my sisters and my cousins thought he was quite mad; a view more or less confirmed when one of our cousins, now

living in South Africa, happened to meet the author Beverley Nichols in 1968 during a voyage to the Far East, for as she and her husband and Beverley Nichols were table companions during the voyage, in the course of conversation it was discovered that as a boy Beverley Nichols had lived in Torquay next door to Oliver Heaviside and he related many amusing anecdotes of his strange neighbour - in fact subsequently, in an autobiography ("Father Figure" published in 1972) pages 82-84 are devoted to describing Oliver's peculiar habits and way of life at "Homefield," Lower Warberry Road, Torquay.

Yours sincerely,

*Alain L. Heaviside (Miss)*

# *Durban woman remembers scientist as 'monkey man'*

STILL HAS SOME OF  
HEAVISIDE'S PAPERS

(Sunday Tribune Reporter)

# STILL HAS SOME OF HEAVISIDE'S PAPERS

(Sunday Tribune Reporter)

**A DURBAN** woman remembers Oliver Heaviside — the eccentric but brilliant English scientist whose story was published in the Tribune last week—as “the monkey man,” because of his odd appearance.

*Mrs. A. Philips, of Spring Grange Road, Westville, a great-niece of the red-headed recluse who, it was recently discovered, was 60 years ahead of Einstein, still treasures a folder of his papers—jottings, parts of a diary, photographs and pamphlets.*

When she was young Mrs. Philips and the other children visited her grandparents in Torquay and used to call on “Uncle Oliver.” They knew nothing of his genius but were well aware of his eccentricities.

Mrs. Philips recalls that he made her a swing and then got on it himself. “He was dressed in pyjamas, dressing gown and slippers, and, as he swung, one part after another of his scanty, loose clothing fell off.”

Among the papers Mrs. Philips has in her home are posters in German advertising lectures by Heaviside. He was invited by the Kaiser to visit Germany, and was also invited to America and Italy.

## LADDER DEATH

“Of course, he was always very poor, and I know that my father lent him about £500 at one time. Whether it was for research or to help him with his livelihood, I don't know, but I have received



**SCIENTIST HEAVISIDE.** This photograph was taken when he was about 50.



**MRS. PHILIPS, of Westville . . . she has a treasured legacy.**

royalties from his books because of this loan.

“Oliver was always inquisitive and interfering—and these traits caused his death in 1925, four years after he had received the first gold medal awarded by the Society of Electrical Engineers for being ‘the greatest living authority on electricity.’

“Some workmen had come to do repairs to the house and had left a ladder or two about the place in their lunch hour. This, of course, was too much for Uncle Oliver—he had to go and investigate. He climbed one ladder and slipped and fell to the bottom. He refused medical attention and only allowed himself to be carried indoors. He died shortly afterwards.”

Some pages of his diary reveal a vindictiveness towards some of his contemporaries, and there are repeated suggestions that there were men of his time set against him.

In 1950 Mr. Philips was invited to attend the centenary of Heaviside's birth in London, but was not able to go.

Much rain, & very stormy today. Can hardly get out more than once a week, & then it is very muddy. I had a nice Xmas dinner, consisting of 3 potatoes boiled in their skins, and a glass of milk. Perhaps it was the most frugal ~~of~~ dinner in all England on that day; even in prisons they give them something better. But I did not feel any the worse for it.

Yours sincerely,

Olive Heaviside

HERE IS A LETTER written in Heaviside's tiny but clear hand to Mrs. Philips's late father, Basil Bell Heaviside. The part reproduced here reads: "Much rain and very stormy today. Cannot get out more than once a week, and then it is very muddy. I had a nice



# US DIED PENNILESS

THE SU

# SCIENCE GENIUS DIED

## Far ahead of Einstein, he was scorned, hid papers in attic

(Sunday Tribune Correspondent)

LONDON, Saturday.

**D**ISCOVERY of dusty papers under the floorboards of an attic above a bank at Paignton, Devon, has established that a man who died penniless from near-starvation 34 years ago was one of the world's most brilliant scientists.

*Unable to get his work published, he became a bitter and eccentric recluse. For the last two years of his life he lived on condensed milk and biscuits.*

Children jeered at the bearded, shambling old man, whose brain made possible long-distance telephoning and helped towards the goal of atomic power.

He was the first man to realise

that a layer of electrically-charged atmosphere hundreds of miles up was reflecting radio waves and making long-distance radio communication possible.

Only with that one discovery did

the layman associate his name—**Oliver Heaviside. It became known as the Heaviside layer.**

Now Mr. Henry Josephs, an expert at the post office research station at Dollis Hill, London, has finished analysing the papers found in the Paignton attic.

### YEARS AHEAD

Heaviside was without doubt one of the world's great scientists" says Josephs. Examination of the papers has shown that he was 60 years ahead of Einstein in attempting to explain certain aspects of gravity

**One of his theories is being fed into an electronic brain to help scientists design a trans-Atlantic telegraph cable.**

The papers first came to light a year ago when a Cornish schoolmaster visited a friend in Palace Avenue, Paignton, who disclosed that a scientist named Heaviside had once lived in the house and that "there are dozens of papers belonging to him under the floorboards in the attic."

### SACKS FILLED

The floorboards were torn up, and three sacks were filled with more than 2,000 sheets of paper. The sacks were passed to the Institute of Electrical Engineers, who chose Henry Josephs to "translate" Heaviside's scribbled notes. Josephs, after a year's work, has described Heaviside as one of the most neglected geniuses in his-