

To E. Baker Welch

Mr. Welch:

I went to Rochester to put in double transmitters and waited four days to get a chance, but did not get one until late at night, and then the wires worked very poorly on account of bad insulation, and I came to the conclusion not to wait there on expense any longer but return to New York and wait till they trimmed the line which they are doing now. They will get wires all trimmed to Rochester in about three weeks.²

When I returned I tested my instruments on the Bankers and Brokers,³ but they were made for such a long line (A & P)⁴ and delicate current that they did not give satisfaction to myself although they worked. What delays me here is awaiting the alteration of my instruments which on account of the piling up of jobs at the instrument makers have been delayed and I will probably have to wait one week longer, and then if everything works as it has got to do for I'll never say "fail" I have the Pacific and Atlantic from Phila. to Pittsburg, from Pittsburg to Cincinnati, from Cincinnati to Louisville and Nashville. Two or three sets for the B & B including line to Boston—The Cuba Cable,⁵ all bona fide offers. So you see that there is no use letting anything stand in the way of successfully getting this apparatus perfected. Me and Pope⁶ have experimented considerably upon it and have several improvements only one thing stands in the way now and that is Induction, and my alterations will overcome that, so I have concluded to stick here till I am successful.⁷

What is the matter with the shop? If you only knew how many of those instruments⁸ could be sold here you would make things howl. Five days ago a man who saw the instrument I brought over (which by the way is in very bad condition) came to me and wanted six of them to put on lines where Chester's Dial⁹ was working the lines being 14 miles long and the great objection was the battery. He wanted them immediately and I promised to have them here Saturday. He is very anxious and excited about getting them as Chester's arrangement don't work and it will be to our advantage to have them here quickly or may lose sale to that person although can sell all you send on. Chester Patrick & Co. of Philadelphia wants the exclusive right to sell them in Philadelphia,¹⁰ and as they are a go ahead firm would advise letting them have it. N.Y. appears to be quite different to Boston. People here come and buy without your soliciting. Rochester wants a set. Dyer wants a set. Jacobs here six instruments. Compound Wire Co., set.¹¹ All quick as possible.

Received of E. B. Welch five \$2/00 dollars in consideration of which I hereby agree to assign to said Welch one-half undivided interest in patented and unpatented double transmitters for use on telegraph lines of companies, private firms, or individuals.
T. A. Edison.
New York, May 8, 1869.
Dr. Welch
I went to Rochester to put in double transmitters and waited four days to get a chance, but did not get one until late at night, and then the wires worked very poorly on account of bad insulation, and I came to the conclusion not to wait there on expense any longer but return to New York and wait till they trimmed the line which they are doing now. They will get wires all trimmed to Rochester in about three weeks.
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I wrote full explanation to Field¹²—Rec'd letter from Adams—He says:—Big field here for brokers, am awaiting arrival of instruments—etc—¹³

If you cannot sell any instruments there send them all here and I will sell and deposit proceeds with your brother¹⁴ and George¹⁵ can draw on him for money to build more instruments, or will deposit cost with your brother and remit George net profits. \$225. per set is what I asked. Respy.

Edison^a

I have enough money to last ten days.

TL (transcript), MWalFAR, *Welch v. Edison*. See Doc. 36 textnote. *Followed by "Care Pope, Box 6138 N. York."

1. Edison's return address is that of Samuel Laws's Gold and Stock Reporting Telegraph Co. See textnote a.

2. "Trimming" meant cutting tree limbs away from the wires. *Maver* 1892, 549.

3. Edison did this with fellow telegrapher J. B. Collins. Collins to Stockton Griffin, 27 Dec. 1878, DF (*TAEM* 16:548).

4. Atlantic and Pacific Telegraph Co.

5. At this time there were two cables between the United States and Cuba. The second, from Florida to Havana, had been completed in February 1869. *J. Teleg.* 5 (1869): 77, 92.

6. Franklin Pope.

7. James Ashley, in an editorial in the *Telegrapher* on 16 June (5 [1868-69]: 352), declared that the best double transmitter yet invented was Edison's but noted that it had "not yet been introduced on any line, although it is being tested on the lines of one of our telegraph companies." Edison continued to experiment with the instrument through 1870. Edison's preliminary statements, 27 Apr. 1878 and 31 Mar. 1879, *Nicholson v. Edison*.

8. Magnetographs.

9. The most widely used American-made alphabetic dial telegraph was that of Charles Chester, patented in 1863 (U.S. Pat. 40,324). The firm of Charles and John Chester of New York—"Telegraph Engineers, Manufacturers of Instruments, Batteries and Every Description of Telegraph Supplied"—manufactured the device. They also made Laws's gold indicators. Chester's dial telegraph required a battery to operate, whereas Edison's magnetograph did not. Prescott 1877, 578-79; Charles T. & John N. Chester advertisement, *Teleg.* 5 (1868-69): 300; Reid 1879, 603, 622, 627; *New York Times*, 14 Apr. 1880, 4.

10. Chester, Partrick and Co., owned by Stephen Chester and James Partrick, was founded in 1867 and described in 1869 as a "young but enterprising" telegraph manufacturing company. Partrick had previously served as assistant manager of Western Union's Philadelphia office. Telegraph manufacturers frequently advertised that they were the sole agents for particular inventions. "Miscellanea: A New Firm," *Teleg.* 4 (1867-68): 99; "Chester, Partrick & Co.," *ibid.* 5 (1868-69): 80, 343.

11. Rochester may refer to the Rochester office of the Atlantic and Pacific Telegraph Co. Joseph Dyer was superintendent of the Bankers'

and Brokers' Telegraph Co. in Philadelphia from 1865 to 1871 (Taltavall 1893, 212). Jacobs is unidentified. Regarding the American Compound Telegraph Wire Co., see Doc. 44.

12. Unidentified.

13. Milton Adams left New York in March 1869 for San Francisco, where operators' jobs had been advertised. Milton Adams to E. Baker Welch, 8 Mar. 1869, *Welch v. Edison*; "Personals," *Telegr.* 6 (1869-70): 74.

14. Probably Joseph Welch, a New York lawyer. E. Baker Welch had two brothers living in the New York area. Wilson 1869, 1161.

15. George Anders.