

Exhibit No. 38. Radio Contacts with the Lae Operator

Francis X. Holbrook

Dear Sir,

Dec. 31, 1969

I regret that it has taken so long to answer your letter but I have been away on my ship and have only returned to Sydney. You see I am still a radio operator on a passenger ship running to The Pacific Islands.

I am afraid that I have no copies of the message that were received or sent to Amelia Earhart during her flight from Lae to Howland Island and I cannot remember any position reports that were received, but contact was made with her flight hourly from 10 am until 6 pm local time and at each sked position reports and height were received from her and as far as I can remember her last position report was somewhere in the vicinity of Ocean Island and at the time she was on course for Howland at 12000 feet and would have been 9 hours flying time since take off from Lae. The reason that she did not contact me after six pm was that she changed frequency of her transmission and this frequency was unsuitable for conditions at Lae account of the heavy static locally, but at every other time two-way contact was perfect (*italics added*) and we requested her to remain on her present frequency but she told me that she wished to contact the American Coast Guard Cutter "*Itasca*" so there was nothing we could do about it but pass the last terminal forecast to her and the upper air report from Ocean Island.

I have not seen this book you mention but believe me she did not keep radio silence and all messages received from her were forwarded to her husband together with some private papers she left with me at the radio station, she also gave me her automatic pistol and ammunition and some radio facility books, but these I do not have now they became lost during the war.

Miss Earhart could not send or receive Morse and neither could her navigator Mr. Noonan, she told me this during her visits to the radio station and I know this would have helped her quite a lot if either of them were competent radio operations as well as flying and navigation and all her messages to me was in voice.

I am sorry that I have been unable to help you but it is so long ago now that it is difficult to remember the details of the messages.

Yours sincerely

/s/ H.J. Balfour

[Note: If Balfour's memory is accurate, this letter would confirm that Earhart's receiver was working properly until she attempted switching from 6540 kc—the Lae frequency—to 3105 kc.]

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