

P A P E R S

RELATIVE TO

LIGHTHOUSES IN FOVEAUX STRAITS.

RETURN TO AN ORDER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF 18TH JULY, 1862.

(Mr. Dillon Bell.)

[Return made 24th July, 1862.]

PAPERS RELATIVE TO LIGHTHOUSES IN FOVEAUX STRAITS.

No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SOUTHLAND TO THE
COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Superintendent's Office,
Invercargill, August 22nd, 1861.

SIR.—

I have the honor to enclose a Resolution passed by the Provincial Council of Southland in its late session, and in doing so, make some remarks thereon.

1. The necessity for lights in Foveaux-Straits is a subject which has already been under the consideration of the General Legislature and the first increase which will certainly take place in the trade through those straits in the next few months renders it all the more necessary that steps should be taken without delay calculated to lessen the danger of its navigation. I am not yet in possession of such information as would authorise me to recommend any particular site for a light-house there; when the information is obtained I will again communicate with you on the subject.

* * * * *

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary,
Auckland.

I have, &c.,
J. A. R. MENZIES,
Superintendent.

Enclosure in No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF SOUTHLAND,
FIRST SESSION, MORNING SITTING, 16TH AUGUST, 1861.

“Resolved, That a respectful Address be presented to His Honor the Superintendent, requesting him after he can procure the necessary information as to the best site for a Coast Light to impress on the General Government the necessity of erecting a Light-house on Dog Island, or some other convenient place in Foveaux Straits.”

No. 2.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SOUTHLAND.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
November 5th, 1861.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the date quoted in the margin, on the subject of Lights in Foveaux Straits, and to inform your Honour that the subject is under the consideration of Government.

His Honor the Superintendent,
Southland.

I have, &c.,
HENRY SEWELL,
For the Colonial Secretary,

No. 3.

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SOUTHLAND TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Superintendent's Office,
Southland, October 8th, 1861.

SIR,—

In continuation of my letter of 22nd August, I have now the honor to enclose copies of

letters from Captains Howell, Stevens, and Robertson, on the subject of lights in Foveaux Straits; the two former have had a longer experience on the coast than any other ship master, and I am disposed to attach the greatest weight to the communication of Capt. Stevens, supported as it is by the opinions of Capts. Brown and Printz. I trust that your Government will concur in recognising the necessity of establishing as soon as possible at least one light in those straits.

J. R. MENZIES,
Superintendent,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary,
Auckland.

Enclosure 1 in No. 3.

MR. STEVENS TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SOUTHLAND.

Riverton, August 28th, 1861.

SIR,—

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter concerning the best suitable positions for Light-houses in Foveaux Straits. Being Master mariner for 14 years, and sailing out of all these harbours and whaling in all the bays and coast of Foveaux Straits.

1. I have always considered that two lights were required to direct Masters of ships through these straits.

2. In coming in from the Westward a light on *Centre Island* would direct you past the sunken rocks and reefs in the immediate neighbourhood of Centre Island, and as this is the narrowest part of the straits and a reef running off Stewart's Island abreast. These are dangerous, we are always on look out, for when abreast of this a ship could steer for Saddle Point, or shape the course for Bluff, if bound for that Port, or shape her course for the light on Ruapuke which would pass the danger off Dog Island.

In coming from the Eastward, a light on the north east points of Ruapuke would direct ships to keep an offing off Stope Point, on the main also rocks and reef lying off Ruapuke, and this light would direct you clear of Dog Island and then you could shape your course to Saddle Point or direct to Centre Island and lead you clear of all dangers.

3. Should only one light be erected, one on Centre Island would be the most suitable place, where most all the danger lies with the reef lying off Smokey Cape point, Stewart's Island.

4. I should not recommend any lights on Saddle Point, as ships running in from the Westward in thick weather and not having made Solander, should they make the land near to Cod Fish Island or Raggety point would not be able to see the light on Saddle point and would be in danger of the reef off Raggety point or Smokey Cape point.

I have also had a consultation with Captain Brown and Captain Printz, who have commanded vessels and sailed out of these ports many years, and they are of the same opinion as myself.

WILLIAM STEVENS.

His Honor the Superintendent,
Southland,

Enclosure 2 in No. 3.

MR. HOWELL TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SOUTHLAND.

Riverton, Aug. 26th, 1862.

SIR,—

In answer to yours of the 24th, I have the honor to state that it is my opinion that there is no necessity for a light on the Solander.

The place where lights would be most useful would be Saddle Point, Stewart's Island and the Bluff Head so as to enable a ship to heave-to between them till daylight.

I have, &c.,

His Honor the Superintendent,
Southland.

JOHN HOWELL.

Enclosure 3 in No. 3.

MR. ROBERTSON TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SOUTHLAND.

S. S. Pirate,
New River, October 5th, 1861.

SIR,—

I received your letter of the 24th August, and have the honor to state in reply that I think

two lights would be required for the safe navigation of Foveaux Straits, one fixed light on Dog Island, and say 100 feet high or even 70 feet, one revolver of first class for Solander, as that Island from its position is admirably adapted for the guidance of all ships from the westward especially.

If I can find a large chart of the Straits, I shall be happy to bring it before your Honor.

I have &c.,

THOMAS ROBERTSON.

His Honor the Superintendent,
Southland.

In the event of there being only one light it would be advisable to have it on Dog Island, but I would in that case propose a first class Revolver.

THOMAS ROBERTSON.

No. 4.

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SOUTHLAND TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Wellington, July 17th, 1862.

SIR,—

In continuation of my former communication, on the same subject, I have now the honor to enclose a copy of a letter from the Harbour Master of Southland, on the subject of Light-houses in Foveaux Straits.

I have, &c.,

J. R. MENZIES,
Superintendent of Southland.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary,
Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 4.

MR. MORRIS TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SOUTHLAND.

Harbour Office,

Invercargill, June 16th, 1862.

SIR,—

In reply to your Honour's inquiries with reference to Light Houses in Foveaux Straits, I would recommend the erection of one on Dog Island ; it is very low and not seen till close upon it, a fixed light there would enable vessels to pass through at night with confidence.

If another lighthouse is to be erected I think the North end of Stewart's Island would be a preferable site to Centre Island.

I have, &c.,

A. F. MORRIS,
Harbour Master.

His Honor the Superintendent,
Southland.
