

“I would call your attention to the fact that the contents of many of the mail bags from London were much damaged by friction, the book packet portion more especially. In many cases, however, the damage mainly arose from the insecure manner in which articles for transmission were made up; book packets, as a general rule, are but indifferently secured.”

I have thought it better to report the above circumstance in case you may consider it desirable to take any steps with a view of remedying the defect in future.

I have, &c.,  
G. ELLIOTT ELLIOTT,  
Secretary.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

## No. 20.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JOHN HALL to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 16th April, 1867.

I have the honor to acquaint you that the existing arrangements for the transmission of correspondence sent and received *via* Panama to and from the Colonies of Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, and South Australia, have been found very inconvenient and embarrassing to the Post Office in Sydney, and that the Postmaster-General of New South Wales is anxious that the correspondence in question should henceforward be sent in closed mails between the Colonies referred to and the British Post Offices in Panama and London, and that each Colony should keep its own accounts with the Imperial Government.

The contracting Colonies of New South Wales and New Zealand would not, under such arrangement, claim any part of the sea postage on correspondence sent by the Panama steamers to or from Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, and South Australia, being reimbursed in other ways for the sea conveyance of such correspondence.

I trust you will inform me at your earliest convenience whether the desired arrangement can be effected, and if so, that you will cause it to be introduced at once, so far as the despatch from London and Panama is concerned.

In this case I will undertake to make the necessary communication to the Post Office authorities of the non-contracting Colonies, and forward to them copies of the instructions and tables of rates which you have furnished to this Department.

In the event of its being considered inexpedient to comply with this application, I beg to request that the correspondence for the non-contracting Colonies abovementioned may be included in the New Zealand mails, so as to enable it to be made up in closed mails in the Marine Post Office on board the Panama steamers. I trust, however, that this course will not be necessary, as the preparation of these mails would be an unadvisable addition to the heavy work already devolving on the Marine Post Office.

Should closed mails be made up as requested in London and Panama, I shall feel obliged by your causing me to be furnished with copies of the Letter Bills accompanying those mails.

I have, &c.,  
JOHN HALL,  
Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

## No. 21.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JOHN HALL to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 16th April, 1867.

I have the honor to forward to you the enclosed copy of correspondence between this Department and the Panama Railroad Company, from which you will perceive that the Company has been induced to make a considerable reduction in its present charges for the conveyance across the Isthmus of that portion of the mail which consists of newspapers, book packets, and pattern parcels.

As the information contained in this correspondence will have been sent to you from New York direct, I trust you will have taken the necessary steps for abolishing the increased rate of postage on newspapers for New Zealand sent *via* Panama, which was imposed with a view of defraying the excessive transit charge made by the Railroad Company.

If however such has not been done, I shall feel obliged by the postage collected for account of that Colony being reduced to one penny for each newspaper with as little delay as possible.

I have, &c.,  
JOHN HALL,  
Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

## Enclosure No. 1 in No. 21.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. G. ELLIOTT ELLIOTT to the MANAGER, Panama Railroad Company.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 7th December, 1866.

I am directed by the Postmaster-General of New Zealand to request that you will have the goodness to bring under the notice of the Directors of your Company the question of the present high rate of charge for the conveyance of mails across the Isthmus of Panama, and the expediency of making a reduction on this charge with regard at least to that portion of the mails between New Zealand and Great Britain, which consists of newspapers, book packets, and pattern parcels. The payment of this charge, although made to the Railroad Company in the first instance by the British Post Office, has to be repaid to that Department by the New Zealand Post Office.

Mails are now sent monthly between Great Britain and New Zealand both by way of Suez and Southampton and by the Isthmus of Panama. At present the postage on newspapers sent by both