

(APPENDIX.)

APPENDIX TO REPORT OF POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

COPIES OF, AND EXTRACTS FROM, OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE SECRETARY TO THE
GENERAL POST OFFICE AND MR. SHEATH.

Extract from Specifications of Contract for supply and delivery of 4000 poles between Hurunui and
Nelson:—

Christchurch, August 26, 1864.

“For the several works required in the supply and delivery of 4000 telegraph poles, more or less, for a line of Electric Telegraph to be erected between the River Hurunui and the City of Nelson as per Contract appended:—

1. The poles to be 25 feet long, not less than 6 inches diameter at the top, and not less than 8 inches diameter at the base.

2. The poles to be of Totara, Black Pine, Manuka, Blue Gum, and Birch, where approved of by the Telegraphic Engineer.

3. The whole of the poles to be straight, sound, free from shakes and loose knots, and charred and tarred for a length of six feet from the butt. * * *

A. SHEATH.

Extract of letter from Mr. SHEATH to POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

Christchurch, August 15, 1864.

* * * I must remark that when I have allowed the use of black birch I admit of nothing but the heart of the wood which is considered durable.

The sap of the birch I have not the least confidence in; in fact I object to saplings of all kinds of Australian and New Zealand woods, as I do not consider them at all durable; but where they can be easily renewed they may be allowed. * * *

In fixing the route in the neighbourhood of the Hurunui I have taken the opinion of several gentlemen well acquainted with the locality. * * *

The Honorable E. Stafford was of opinion that the line should be carried more into the heart of the country; but as this would incur greater length of line, as well as in places passing over high ground, a circumstance often detrimental to telegraphy, I deemed it prudent to choose the route advertised. * * *

Copy of letter from the SECRETARY to the General Post Office to Mr. SHEATH.

Sir,—

Auckland, December 13, 1864.

I have to inform you that the attention of the Postmaster-General has been particularly directed to the question of the character of the posts which are being erected throughout the Middle Island in the construction of Electric Telegraph line. He has been informed on very good authority that some of the posts, perhaps a majority, are of young wood, containing little heart and therefore almost worthless, especially between Blenheim and Nelson.

I have to call your particular attention to this point. The Postmaster-General will feel it necessary to withhold his approval from any item of account which is not in strict accordance with the contract; and I have to impress upon you the grave responsibility resting with you for any advice and recommendation you may offer in connection with this important work.

I have, &c.,

G. ELIOTT ELIOTT.

Extract of letter from Mr. SHEATH to the Honorable the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

Sir,—

Christchurch, January 25, 1865.

It was the wish of the late Postmaster-General (Mr. Gillies) to try saplings, and it was in fact that gentleman who penned the advertisement calling for tenders for the poles between the Hurunui and Nelson. * * *

The only deviation made from that advertisement is in the nature of the wood. This deviation would not have taken place had I not received letter No. 64, 223 of July 23, 1864, informing me that red birch would answer my purposes very well for Telegraph posts. * * *

You will see that I received these letters on July 23 and July 29; and when the contractor came to sign his contract on the 7th September, I felt myself authorised to insert, and fully justified in supplementing the name of birch as of the specified woods. * * * This arrangement so far suited the Contractor that he allowed the clause “When approved of by the Telegraphic Engineer,” to be inserted. * * * Among the posts