

FURTHER PAPERS

RELATIVE TO

THE PANAMA MAIL SERVICE.

(IN CONTINUATION OF PAPERS PRESENTED 9TH JULY, 1867.)

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, BY COMMAND OF
HIS EXCELLENCY.

WELLINGTON.

—
1867.

FURTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE PANAMA MAIL SERVICE.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE IMPERIAL POST OFFICE.

No. 1.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. F. HILL to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,— General Post Office, London, 18th April, 1867.
With reference to my letter of 31st January last, proposing an arrangement for the exchange by weight in bulk of the correspondence transmitted between the United Kingdom and New Zealand, by way of Panama, I am directed by the Postmaster-General to inform you, that special accounts of the correspondence so forwarded having been taken, the Receiver and Accountant-General of this Department estimates as follows the rates which should be mutually accounted for by the Imperial and Colonial Post Offices respectively, per ounce for letters, and per pound for newspapers.

The Imperial Post Office to account to the Post Office of New Zealand on correspondence sent to the Colony *via* Panama:—

For paid letters, at one shilling and fourpence per ounce.

For newspapers, at one shilling and sixpence and three-sixteenths per pound.

For book packets, at one shilling and one penny per pound.

The Post Office of New Zealand to account to the Imperial Post Office on correspondence sent from the Colony to this country *via* Panama.

For paid letters at threepence and three-eighths per ounce.

For book packets at fivepence and seven-eighths per pound.

His Grace requests to be informed whether you agree to these rates.

A similar letter has been addressed to the Postmaster-General of New South Wales.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, &c., Wellington, New Zealand.

F. HILL.

No. 2.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. F. HILL to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,— General Post Office, London, 1st June, 1867.
I am glad to be enabled to inform you that the Panama Railroad Company have consented to reduce their charge for the conveyance of the British Mails across the Isthmus, so far, at least, as regards newspapers, books, and patterns, from elevenpence to fourpence per pound.

The postage upon newspapers sent from the United Kingdom to New Zealand, *via* Panama, will, therefore, be at once reduced from fourpence to twopence per four ounces; but as the postage charged upon books and patterns sent *via* Panama has been, at your request, already fixed at the same amount that is charged on similar articles sent *via* Suez, no alteration will be made in this respect.

In order that the letter bags conveyed across the Isthmus may be distinguished from the newspaper bags, all the bags from this office containing letters will be marked with the word "Letters," immediately following the address; and, in like manner, you will, no doubt, cause all the letter bags forwarded by the New Zealand packets to Panama, to be distinguished from the bags containing newspapers, &c.

Of course, this alteration in the rate of postage on newspapers for New Zealand, will render necessary a revision of the rate per pound proposed in my letter of the 18th ultimo, as the rate to be accounted for by this office to the New Zealand office on newspapers according to their weight in bulk, and as soon as a fresh estimate can be prepared a further communication shall be made to you.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, &c., Wellington, New Zealand.

F. HILL.

No. 3.

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

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 7th June, 1867.

I have the honor to forward herewith for your information copy of a letter which I have received from the Postmaster-General of New South Wales, having reference to the transmission by the Sydney and Panama mail steamers of mails to and from the Colonies of Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, and Queensland, on which subject I addressed a letter to you on the 16th April last, No. 67.

I have, &c.,

JOHN HALL,

Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

FURTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO

No. 4.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. F. HILL to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 25th June, 1867.

Having submitted to the Postmaster-General your letter of the 16th April last, and its enclosures, I am desired to inform you that His Grace has anticipated the suggestion contained in your letter, that the postage collected in this country on behalf of the Post Office of New Zealand, upon newspapers sent *via* Panama, may be reduced to one penny for each newspaper—having already sanctioned the collection of a reduced rate of twopence instead of fourpence upon such newspapers.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, &c., Wellington, New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

F. HILL.

No. 5.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 1st July, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th April last, No. 342 S., specifying the rates which you propose should be mutually accounted for by the Imperial and Colonial Post Offices, on correspondence transmitted between the United Kingdom and New Zealand by way of Panama, and I beg to agree, on behalf of this Department, to the rates proposed, although I should have been glad if the use of fractional parts of a penny could have been avoided.

With regard to the rate for newspapers, however, I would observe, that as the Colonial postage to be collected in Great Britain on such papers when sent *via* Panama is now reduced to one penny, I presume the rate to be accounted for by the Imperial Post Office will be one-third of the amount stated in your letter under reply, viz., sixpence one-sixteenth per pound.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

I have, &c.,

JOHN HALL.

No. 6.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. F. HILL to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 1st July, 1867.

With reference to the last paragraph of my letter of the 1st ultimo, I have to inform you that, in accordance with a fresh estimate which has now been prepared by the Receiver and Accountant-General of this Department, the rate per pound at which this country should account for the postage in bulk upon newspapers sent *via* Panama to New Zealand and the Australian Colonies will be sixpence one-sixteenth instead of one shilling and sixpence three-sixteenths as heretofore.

Although, as you are aware, the transit rate has been similarly reduced upon book packets and patterns, no reduction of postage has been made upon them, for the reason given in my letter of the 1st ultimo; and they should accordingly continue to be accounted for at the same rate as heretofore, namely, one shilling and sixpence three-sixteenths per pound to the credit of the Colonies.

I request you will be good enough to inform me whether you agree to the amended rate in regard to newspapers.

A communication similar to this has been addressed to the Postmaster-General of New South Wales.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, &c., Wellington, New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

F. HILL.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

No. 7.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. J. DOCKER to the Hon. J. HALL.

SIR,—

New South Wales, General Post Office, Sydney, 18th April, 1867.

I have the honor to transmit for your information a copy of the Circular (dated 18th April) which has been addressed from this Department to the postal authorities at Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Hobart Town, intimating to them the arrangement, lately agreed upon, of charging twenty shillings per pound on the gross weight of all mails to or from those Colonies which do not contribute to the subsidy paid for the Panama Mail Service.

2. You will observe that the date proposed for the arrangement in question to take effect, is from the 31st May next.

3. As Wellington and Sydney will be responsible for the cost of the Isthmus transit, both on the inward and outward mails of the Colonies in question, the plan which it is proposed to adopt is to take the weight of these mails at the office through which they pass, and to calculate the same at elevenpence per pound, the amount so calculated to be accounted for as the Isthmus transit either by this Colony or New Zealand as the case may be.

4. The weight computed at twenty shillings per pound to be credited by the Colonies concerned either to New South Wales or New Zealand, as the case may be, and the amounts thus credited to be placed in the accounts between your office and this, with the view to their being shared.

5. In conclusion I have to request that you will take the steps necessary to apprise the London Office of the position in which the various Colonies stand in regard to the mode of accounting for the Isthmus transit rate, and of any other details connected with this arrangement you may deem it needful to communicate.

I have, &c.,

J. DOCKER,

Postmaster-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 7.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. S. H. LAMBTON to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 18th April, 1867.

A Despatch has been forwarded from the Government of this Colony to the Government of the neighbouring Colonies, intimating that if they decline to contribute to the cost of the Panama Mail Service, the sum of twenty shillings per pound will be levied by New South Wales, on the gross weight of the mails from or to those Colonies, and requesting that simultaneously with the levying of this charge direct mails might be made up by the Colonies in question for transmission *via* Panama.

As the copy of the Circular Despatch addressed to the Government has doubtless reached your office, I am directed by the Postmaster-General to inform you with reference thereto that unless other arrangements are entered into in the meantime for the transmission of your mails by the Panama route, the charge of twenty shillings per pound will be levied on all mails to and from your Colony which may pass through this office, or the Post Office, Wellington, after the 31st May next.

For your guidance in making up direct mails I have the honor to transmit copies of various communications received from the London Post Office, which with the following particulars will, it is hoped, enable the matter to be clearly understood by your Department, viz. :

1. It will be optional with you to forward your mails through Sydney or Wellington, or to receive them by way of Sydney or direct from Wellington; but in either case you will be charged twenty shillings per pound on the gross weight of mails by this Colony or New Zealand as the case may be.

2. Apart from the charge of twenty shillings per pound (which includes the Isthmus transit rate) you will account to Great Britain on your outward mails for—

One penny per half ounce letter,
One penny per four ounce packet;

and on your return mails it is presumed that the London Office will credit you with—

Fivepence per half ounce letter,
Fourpence per four ounce packet.

3. The London Office has been requested to make up direct mails for your Colony, but should it decline to do so, the amounts last specified above will be credited to you by the Colony through which you may receive your mails.

4. It has been decided to use in the Sydney Office a Letter Bill for the London mails similar to that used by the London Office, and in order to promote uniformity of action on the part of the Colonies it is suggested that the same description of Bill be used by you.

When printed, some copies of the Bill referred to will be forwarded to you. I now enclose a few copies of the Bill used for the Panama correspondence, should you deem it expedient to adopt such form of Bill for your mails for Panama.

You will of course understand that the making up of direct mails by you and the levying of twenty shillings per pound by this Colony will commence simultaneously, and will take effect, unless otherwise arranged, with respect to all mails which shall pass through this office after the 31st May next.

I have, &c.,

S. H. LAMBTON,
Secretary.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, &c., Wellington.

No. 8.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New South Wales.

SIR,—

New Zealand, Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 16th May, 1867.

Adverting to the correspondence which has taken place on the subject of the contract between the Government and the Panama New Zealand and Australian Royal Mail Company, for the Panama Steam Postal Service, and of the agreement in reference thereto entered into by the Governments of New Zealand and New South Wales, I have the honor to remind you that on the 15th of May, 1866, I forwarded to you the draft of the contract in question, with a view to the suggestion of any alterations which it might appear to you to require, and that, after further correspondence on the subject, Mr. Crosbie Ward, the special Agent of the New Zealand Government, left with you, while he was in Sydney, the draft contract—the Government of New South Wales undertaking to revise and forward it, together with any alterations suggested therein, for the consideration of this Government. In March last the Postmaster-General of New Zealand went from Melbourne to Sydney, the principal object of his visit to the latter place being to obtain this document; and he informs me that he was assured by you that it would be sent by the "Egmont," which was to leave Sydney on the 6th of last month.

As this document has not yet been received here, and as considerable inconvenience has arisen from the consequent delay in the execution of the contract for a service which has already been in operation for eleven months, I have to request you to be good enough to cause it to be forwarded to this office by the first opportunity.

I have, &c.,

E. W. STAFFORD.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

No. 9.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. J. DOCKER to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 20th May, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 12th ultimo, enclosing a copy of a letter from the Secretary of the General Post Office, London, and your reply thereto, upon the

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subject of the preparation of mails for despatch to and from Australia and New Zealand *via* Panama, and in reply have to inform you that the Government of this Colony have agreed to the proposal of the Postmaster-General of Great Britain.

I have, &c.,

J. DOCKER,

Postmaster-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 10.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. J. DOCKER to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,

New South Wales, General Post Office, Sydney, 20th May, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th ultimo, forwarding a Memorandum in duplicate of the points of detail agreed upon during your recent visit to Sydney, and return one copy duly signed, as requested.

I have, &c.,

J. DOCKER,

Postmaster-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

(Memorandum printed as Enclosure in No. 53, page 23, of Papers presented 9th July, 1867.)

No. 11.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. W. TURNER to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Melbourne, 27th May, 1867.

In consequence of a notification received from the Government of New South Wales with reference to the despatch of the mails from this Colony for transport *via* Panama, such mails will be forwarded on the present occasion per "Tararua," to sail to-morrow, and in future will be sent direct to Wellington, in lieu of *via* Sydney as hitherto.

I have the honor to request that you will give directions for the due despatch of the mails arriving at Wellington from this office.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM TURNER,

Deputy Postmaster-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 12.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JOHN HALL to the Hon. POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Sydney.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 29th May, 1867.

I have the honor to inform you that the Manager of the Panama New Zealand and Australian Royal Mail Company, has asked me to agree to some provision for a contingency which does not appear to be as yet satisfactorily met in the arrangement already entered into with that Company, viz.,—that of the steamer from Southampton failing to arrive at Colon for several days after she is due there.

Captain Benson is willing that in such a case the Company's vessels should wait at Panama until the arrival of the succeeding mail, say fourteen days; but, as such a course would cause a considerable loss on the Company's insurance account, he requests that by way of compensation for this loss, this Government should forego all penalties on his vessels from Sydney to Panama, if they succeeded in effecting the necessary connection with the mail steamer for Southampton,—in other words, if their late arrival at Panama, did not extend beyond one or two days.

Captain Benson also requests that if, in consequence of the steamer's detention at Panama, waiting for the mails from Southampton, she should reach Sydney too late to render it practicable for her to take the next return trip, the Company may be allowed to send their next best vessel, the "Otago," to Panama on that occasion.

The arrangements proposed by Captain Benson seem to me, on the whole, the best which can be made for the contingency above alluded to; and I propose, therefore, to accede to them, unless I hear from you that they are objected to on the part of the Government of New South Wales.

I have, &c.,

JOHN HALL,

Postmaster-General.

The Hon. Postmaster-General, Sydney.

No. 13.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. S. H. LAMBTON to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 1st June, 1867.

A Despatch from the Colonial Secretary of New Zealand to the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, in which was enclosed a copy of your Memorandum on the subject of the receipt and despatch of mails of non-contracting Colonies by the Panama Steamers, has been forwarded to me.

With reference to the last portion of the Minute referred to, I have the honor to inform you that the various Colonies having been already informed of the new arrangement, which will permit them, after the 31st May, to send and receive their mails either through Wellington or Sydney, it is deemed expedient by the Government of this Colony to adhere to it.

By the terms of the Circular dated 18th April, to the non-contracting Colonies (a copy of which has been forwarded to you) you will perceive that, whichever alternative they adopt—namely, whether

they pay the twenty shillings per pound, or contribute to the service in another way, it will be optional with them to receive or transmit their mails from and to Wellington.

I have, &c.,
S. H. LAMBTON,
(for the Postmaster-General.)

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 14.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. J. DOCKER to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 1st June, 1867.

Referring to my letter of the 18th April, I have the honor to inform you that the Melbourne Postal Authorities have informed me by telegram that they are despatching mails by the "Tararua," from Melbourne to meet the "Kaikoura," at Wellington, and have requested that I would intimate the fact to you, in order to ensure their mails being forwarded from Wellington.

I have telegraphed in reply that the new arrangement was understood by you.

I have, &c.,

J. DOCKER,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

Postmaster-General.

No. 15.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. T. W. JACKSON to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Melbourne, 5th June, 1867.

Adverting to my communication of the 27th ultimo, respecting the despatch of the mails from this Colony for transmission *via* Panama direct to Wellington, instead of *via* Sydney, I have the honor to request that you will also give directions for the mails *via* Panama received at Wellington for Victoria to be in like manner sent direct to Melbourne by the branch contract Steamer, in lieu of being forwarded on to Sydney as heretofore.

I have, &c.,

T. W. JACKSON,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, &c., Wellington.

(*pro* Deputy Postmaster-General.)

No. 16.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JOHN HALL to the Hon. J. DOCKER.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 7th June, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 2294, of the 18th April, transmitting for my information a copy of a Circular addressed from your Department to the Postal Authorities in those Colonies which are not parties to the Panama Mail Contract, respecting the transmission of mails to and from those Colonies *via* Panama.

I have forwarded a copy of your letter to the Secretary of the London Office, referring him at the same time to my letter of the 16th April, of which a copy was forwarded to you on that date. I have not yet heard whether the last-mentioned letter has been received by you.

There is some difficulty in understanding the exact meaning of the third paragraph of your letter under reply, and I shall feel obliged if you will favour me with a more precise intimation of your intention as to the subject it relates to.

I enclose for your information copies of the Letter Bills used by this office, which have been adopted from the Form used by the offices at London and Panama, and which on comparison will be found to differ from those which accompanied your Circular.

As it is very desirable that the same Form should be used by all the Colonies, I would suggest whether it would not be advisable so far to modify your proposed Letter Bill as that this object may be attained.

I have, &c.,

JOHN HALL,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Sydney.

Postmaster-General.

No. 17.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JOHN HALL to the Hon. POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Melbourne.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 2nd July, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter F. 67-243, of the 5th ultimo, requesting me to give directions that the mails for Victoria received in Wellington *via* Panama may be forwarded direct to Melbourne, in lieu of being forwarded on to Sydney as heretofore.

Instructions have been given to the mail agents to give immediate effect to your request, so far as regards letters received from the Packet Office at Panama, but I regret that at present I am unable to give effect to your request as regards English letters, as they are enclosed by the Imperial Post Office in the mail for New South Wales. On the 16th April last, however, I addressed a letter to the Secretary of the General Post Office, London, a copy of which is enclosed, requesting that the necessary steps might be taken for having direct mails made up for Victoria and the other non-contracting Colonies.

I have, &c.,

JOHN HALL,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Melbourne.

Postmaster-General.

Postmaster-Gen.,
N.Z., to Secretary,
Post Office,
London, *vide* No.
20, f. 11, E.—No. 3.

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No. 18.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JOHN HALL to the Hon. J. DOCKER.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 2nd July, 1867.

Vide ante.

I have the honor to enclose for your information copies of a letter received from the Postmaster-General, Melbourne, and of my reply thereto, having reference to the transmission of mails for Victoria, received by way of Panama, direct from New Zealand to Melbourne, instead of by way of Sydney as heretofore.

I have, &c.,

JOHN HALL,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, New South Wales.

Postmaster-General.

No. 19.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. J. DOCKER to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,—

New South Wales, General Post Office, Sydney, 5th July, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter F. 67-108, dated 7th June last. In reply I beg to state that your letter dated the 16th April was duly received at this office, but unfortunately it has been mislaid, I shall therefore feel obliged by your furnishing me with a copy thereof at your early convenience.

With reference to the alleged ambiguity of the third paragraph of the letter addressed to you from this office, bearing date of the 18th April, I have to state that the intended meaning of the paragraph in question is, that as Sydney and Wellington are jointly to be responsible for the Isthmus transit cost upon all mails received and despatched, when the portion of mails for the non-contracting Colonies passes through Wellington your office will take the weight and bring it forward in the accounts, and when the non-contracting Colonies' portion passes through Sydney, this office will take the weight and bring it forward in the accounts between the Sydney and Wellington Post Offices.

The Letter Bills enclosed in your letter have been carefully compared with the Bills now in use by this office. The London Bill is found to be the same as yours; but it is thought that our Panama Bill better meets the circumstances of the case, and, moreover, as copies of it have been forwarded to the non-contracting Colonies it is presumed that they use our Form.

I quite concur in your observation that it is desirable that the same form should be used by all the Colonies, and would suggest that the Sydney Bills be generally adopted.

I have, &c.,

J. DOCKER,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

Postmaster-General.

No. 20.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. S. H. LAMBTON to Mr. G. ELIOTT ELIOTT.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 12th July, 1867.

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to state that a Despatch has been received from the Tasmanian Government addressed to the Colonial Secretary of this Colony, signifying the acquiescence of that Government in the twenty shillings per pound arrangement, so far as the mails despatched from Tasmania *via* Panama are concerned, but raising objection to the levying of that rate upon the inward mails on the ground that no advantage is conferred in the shape of postage, while the payment of twenty shillings per pound is a clear loss, as the postal laws of Tasmania do not enable the Government of that Colony to collect the amount from the receivers of the correspondence upon which the charge is made.

I am to enclose a copy of my letter to the Under Secretary on the subject (which will no doubt be embodied in a Despatch to the Tasmanian Government) explaining that in consideration of the payment of twenty shillings per pound, credit will be given to Tasmania by the London Office, for the regular rates agreed upon for this route.

It is hoped that this explanation will prevent any further difficulty in the matter.

I have, &c.,

S. H. LAMBTON,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

Secretary.

Enclosure in No. 20.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. S. H. LAMBTON to the UNDER SECRETARY, Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 10th July, 1867.

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to state, for the information of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, with reference to the last paragraph of the Despatch from the Colonial Treasurer, Tasmania (herewith returned), that from correspondence lately received from the London Post Office, it appears that since January last a sum sufficient to cover the cost of the Isthmus transit has been credited to New South Wales on all correspondence received at this office for Tasmania *via* Panama.

There is therefore no objection to remit the cost of this transit (at the rate of elevenpence per pound) which appears in the books of this office to the debit of Tasmania on correspondence despatched from England subsequent to January last, and received at Tasmania prior to the charge of twenty shillings per pound coming into operation.

On the mails despatched from England in January last, and previous thereto, no rate was accounted for to this office on newspapers (of which the bulk of the mails consists), and the rate accounted for on letters, viz., fivepence per half-ounce, was considered to belong to this Colony and New Zealand in lieu of a contribution from the other Australian Colonies, and cannot therefore be remitted.

As to the charge at present made on inward mails, viz., twenty shillings per pound, it was notified to the Tasmanian Postal Authorities, at the time when this arrangement was communicated to them, that the London Post Office had been requested to make up direct mails for Tasmania and the other Colonies, and that on this being done, these Colonies would be credited with those rates on their correspondence that were previously credited to New South Wales, the Colonies, in lieu thereof, paying twenty shillings per pound on the gross weight of the mails.

Pending a reply from London as to the making up of direct mails, any sums that this Colony or New Zealand may have been, or will be, credited with, on account of correspondence for the non-contracting Colonies, will, of course, be recredited to those Colonies.

I have, &c.,
S. H. LAMBERTON,
Secretary.

The Under Secretary, Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney.

No. 21.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD to the Hon. J. DOCKER.

SIR,— Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 25th July, 1867.
I have the honor to call your attention to my letter No. 188, of the 16th May last, stating that the draft contract left with you by Mr. Crosbie Ward, between this Government and the Panama, New Zealand, and Australian Royal Mail Company, for the Panama Postal Service, had not been returned by you, and that considerable inconvenience had arisen from the consequent delay in the execution of the contract.

As the document in question has not yet been received from you, and as grave inconvenience arises from its continued absence, I have to urge on you the necessity of its being returned without further delay.

I have, &c.,
E. W. STAFFORD.

The Honorable Colonial Secretary, Sydney.

No. 22.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JOHN HALL to Mr. S. H. LAMBERTON.

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 30th July, 1867.
I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter 67-4751 of the 5th instant, and in accordance with your request I enclose a copy of my letter of the 16th April last, No. 67-68.

With reference to the form of Letter Bill to be used for the mails transmitted by way of Panama, I beg to enclose a Memorandum on the subject from the Inspector of mails; and for the reasons stated therein, I do not think it would be advisable to alter the form of Letter Bill now in use between this Department and the Post Office at Panama.

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

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Sydney.

Enclosure in No. 22.

Memorandum by INSPECTOR OF MAILS.

I still think the New Zealand form of Letter Bill is the best.

I attach a copy of the Panama Packet Agent's Acknowledgment of the New Zealand Mails, also a copy of the New Zealand Acknowledgment for the Panama Mails, from which it will be seen that the practice at Panama is to enumerate in detail, according to the different rates of postage. Besides, Article 3 in the Sydney Form is unnecessary, as all letters, &c., contained in the mails for Panama are forwarded thence to destination free of cost to this Department, excepting the items for which credit is given in the Letter Bills.

W. GRAY.

No. 23.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. H. PARKES to the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD.

SIR,— Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, New South Wales, 1st August, 1867.
In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, I have the honor to inform you that, as therein requested, the draft contract left with me by Mr. Crosbie Ward, between the Governments of New Zealand, and the Panama New Zealand and Australian Royal Mail Company, for the Panama Postal Service, shall be transmitted to you in a few days.

I have, &c.,
(for the Colonial Secretary),
HENRY HALLORAN.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

No. 24.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. S. H. LAMBERTON to Mr. G. ELIOTT ELIOTT.

SIR,— General Post Office, Sydney, 17th September, 1867.
I am directed to state, with reference to the letter of the Hon. the Postmaster-General of Wellington, dated the 16th April last (copy of which he was kind enough to forward), that by the

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existing arrangements between this Colony and New Zealand, mails *via* Panama for the non-contracting Colonies can be sent either direct from New Zealand or through this office, as may from time to time be considered expedient by those Colonies.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington, New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
S. H. LAMBTON,
Secretary.

No. 25.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY,
New South Wales.

SIR,— Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 17th September, 1867.
In your letter No. 67-169 of the 1st ultimo, in reply to my letters, No. 188, dated the 16th May last, and No. 260, dated the 25th July, you informed me that the draft contract left with you by Mr. Crosbie Ward between the Government of New Zealand, and the Panama New Zealand and Australian Royal Mail Company, for the Panama Postal Service, would be transmitted to me in a few days.

I have not yet received the promised document, and I have again to direct your attention to the great inconvenience which this continued delay in its transmission occasions.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

I have, &c.,
E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 26.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. CROSBIE WARD to Mr. BIDWELL.

SIR,— Panama, 13th June, 1867.
Before leaving New Zealand I was made aware that a communication had been received by the Government of that Colony from the Panama Railroad Company, undertaking, in compliance with a request previously made by that Government, to reduce the transit charge by railway across the Isthmus of Panama from twenty-two cents a pound to fourpence a pound on newspapers, book packets, and pattern parcels, contained in the New Zealand and Australian mails.

Confidently trusting that the undertaking so made would be promptly given effect to, the New Zealand Government at once reduced the postage rate on newspapers from that Colony to Great Britain from threepence to one penny per copy. The result was a great increase in the number and weight of the newspapers despatched by the last mail, and received here by the s.s. "Mataura," and at the same time a considerable proportionate reduction in the postal revenue received from them.

I am informed that no instructions have yet been received by the local Manager of the Railway to make the reduction in the charges above referred to. But I am confident that it is not the intention of the Railroad Company, after the communication made to the New Zealand Government, to continue to press the payment of the old rate of charges, and so to involve the Government in an unexpected and considerable loss on each mail. I have therefore the honor respectfully to request, on behalf of that Government, that you will take such steps as are best calculated in your opinion to remove the misapprehension which appears to exist on the subject, and to cause the promised reduction of charges on the heavy portion of the mail matter to take effect from the 1st instant, so as to include the mail received from New Zealand by the steamer "Mataura."

C. T. Bidwell, Esq., British Packet Agent, Panama.

I have, &c.,
CROSBIE WARD.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH CAPTAIN BENSON.

No. 27.

Copy of a Letter from Captain BENSON to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

Panama, New Zealand, and Australian Royal Mail Company (Limited).
Wellington, 31st May, 1867.

SIR,— On the 28th of January last, I had the honor to receive a letter from you, intimating that the Panama Contract had been sent to Sydney for the approval of the Government of New South Wales; that Mr. Crosbie Ward had been unable, for certain reasons, to bring it back with him in December last; and that on your then intended visit to Australia to attend the Postal Conference, it should receive your attention.

I now respectfully remind you that on the 15th proximo the Panama Mail Service will have been one year in operation, and the contract yet remains unsigned.

On behalf of my Directors, I earnestly hope you will be good enough to let me have the document in question at your earliest convenience, for transmission to them, they having on several occasions lately drawn my attention to its long delay.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
H. B. BENSON,
General Manager.

No. 28.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JOHN HALL to Captain BENSON.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 4th June, 1867.

In reply to your letter of the 31st ultimo, on the subject of the contract for the Panama Mail Service, I have to express my regret that I have as yet been unable to send you this document, although no exertion on the part of this Government has been spared to ensure its completion.

As I promised in my letter of the 28th January last, I used my best endeavours when lately in Australia to obtain from the Government of New South Wales the draft contract which had been submitted for its approval some months since, and I proceeded from Melbourne to Sydney chiefly for this purpose. The document in question could not then be furnished to me, but a promise was given that it should be forwarded by the then next opportunity. As this was not done, a further communication was addressed to the Government of New South Wales on the 16th ultimo, a copy of which is enclosed, calling attention to this fact, and requesting that the contract may be returned by the first opportunity. *Vide ante.*

The above statement will, I trust, satisfy you that the New Zealand Government is not responsible for the delay which has taken place in the completion of the contract, and which I very much regret.

I shall feel obliged if you will inform me whether the suggestion contained in my letter of the 28th January, viz., that the completion of the contract would be greatly expedited if you were furnished with authority to sign the contract or deed on behalf of the Company on its being signed on behalf of the Colony by His Excellency the Governor, has been brought under the consideration of your Directors, and whether any decision has been arrived at on the subject.

I have, &c.,

JOHN HALL,
Postmaster-General.

Captain Benson,
General Manager, P.N.Z. and A.R.M. Company, Wellington.

No. 29.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. G. ELIOTT ELIOTT to Captain BENSON.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 8th August, 1867.

I am directed to forward for your information the enclosed copy of correspondence with the Government of New South Wales, respecting the contract for the Panama Steam Mail Service. *Vide ante.*

I have, &c.,

G. ELIOTT ELIOTT,
Secretary.

The General Manager, P.N.Z. and A.R.M. Company, Wellington.

No. 30.

Copy of a Letter from Captain BENSON to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

Panama, New Zealand, and Australian Royal Mail Company (Limited),
Wellington, 12th August, 1867.

SIR,—

I desire to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, covering correspondence between the Honorable E. W. Stafford and the Honorable the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, respecting the Panama Contract, and to return my thanks for the same.

I have, &c.,

H. B. BENSON,
General Manager.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

