

1874.
NEW ZEALAND.

SELECTION OF SITES FOR PROJECTED COASTAL LIGHTHOUSES,

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

Mr. W. SEED to Captain JOHNSON.

Customs Department (Marine Branch),

SIR,—

Wellington, 13th February, 1874.

I have the honor, by direction of the Commissioner of Customs, to request that you will proceed by the "Luna," on her approaching Southern trip, for the purpose of examining the coast at Oamaru, Moeraki, Cape Saunders, and West Cape, and of fixing on the most suitable sites for the new coastal lighthouses it is proposed to erect at or near these places.

The Marine Engineer (Mr. Blackett) will be unable, on account of pressure of business in the Public Works Department, to accompany you; it will therefore be necessary, after you have fixed on the sites, to obtain certain particulars which he requires to enable him to prepare the plans and specifications for the lighthouse apparatus and buildings. I enclose a copy of a memorandum from him, setting forth what these particulars are, and I have to request that you will be good enough to use your best exertions to procure the fullest and most precise information obtainable on the various points specified therein.

Mr. Wilson will accompany you, and will be instructed to render you every assistance in his power.

The expedition, so far as regards the examination of the lighthouse sites, will be under your directions. Captain Fairchild will be instructed to proceed to such points as you may desire to examine, and to render you generally every assistance.

The various lighthouses on the coast that you will pass, viz. Godley Head, Tairoa Head, Nugget Point, Dog Island, Farewell Spit, and Mana Island, will have to be inspected, if the weather, on arriving off them, proves favourable for landing. It is especially desirable, however, that Dog Island and Nugget Point light stations should be visited, even if a little delay should occur in accomplishing this. The Hon. the Commissioner of Customs has directed that this lighthouse inspection duty should be carried out by Mr. Wilson.

The Commissioner wishes you to understand, that although in the memorandum he addressed to you on the 2nd January, 1873, relative to the proposed new lighthouses, he indicated Windsor Point as the site for one of them, he still wishes to leave your discretion entirely unfettered in choosing the site for a light at or near that part of the coast. The Commissioner considers that you would be greatly assisted in making a judicious selection if you were to confer with the Chief Harbour Master at Port Chalmers and the Harbour Master at the Bluff, on account of their local knowledge, and of the information they must have acquired as to the parts of the coast that vessels usually make for when arriving South about. You will therefore be good enough to confer with these gentlemen on reaching Dunedin and the Bluff. If it should turn out that you have to visit Stewart's Island, you should confer also with Captain Greig, the Customs officer in charge there, who was formerly Harbour Master at Invercargill; and if you should consider it advisable to do so, you are authorized to take him with you to Windsor Point, or such other place as you may find it necessary to visit, as his knowledge of Foveaux Strait would no doubt greatly facilitate your movements.

With regard to Cape Saunders light, you will probably experience no difficulty, as there cannot be any doubt as to the suitability of that locality for a coastal light; but it may be worthy of consideration whether the beacon that is there (which I understand was intended for the tower of the lighthouse) is in the best position that could be selected for the light; for, when viewed from the sea, it has the appearance of standing some distance in from the end of the cape, and at so considerable an elevation as to render it liable to be often enveloped in fog. You will be good enough to look into this question when you visit the locality.