

New Zealand, No. 25.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 10th January, 1913.

I have the honour to transmit to you, for the information of your Ministers, a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's representative at Panama furnishing information as to some of the permanent projects for the future facilities at the Atlantic and Pacific entrances to the Panama Canal.

I have, &c.,

Governor the Right Hon. the Earl of Liverpool, &c.

L. HARCOURT.

Sir C. MALLET to Sir EDWARD GREY.

(Received in Colonial Office, 18th December, 1912.)

(No. 33.—Commercial.)

SIR,—

British Legation, Panama, 8th November, 1912.

I have the honour to transmit herein a cutting from the *Canal Record*, the official organ of the Isthmian Canal Commission, describing some of the permanent projects for the future facilities at the Atlantic and Pacific entrances to the Panama Canal.

In addition to the steel wharf, 1,000 ft. long, built by the French Canal Company at Balboa (Pacific terminus), one pier is to be constructed for the present with a length of 1,000 ft. and a width of 200 ft., for commercial purposes.

Two wharves and one pier are actually under construction at Christobal (Atlantic terminus), 1,000 ft. long and 209 ft. wide, each wharf. These wharves will be added to should there be enough traffic after the canal is completed to justify it.

The main dry-dock is to be at Balboa, and will be large enough to accommodate any vessel that can pass through the canal locks, and a 40-ton locomotive crane will form part of its equipment. There will also be a smaller dry-dock 350 ft. in length for vessels of a smaller type.

The old French dry-dock at Mount Hope, on the Atlantic, is to be retained. It has a usable length of 300 ft., and a width entrance of 50 ft., and a depth over the sill of 13 ft. at mean sea-level.

Fuel, fresh water, and supplies of all kinds are contemplated in the plans. The main coaling-station will be at Christobal, where 200,000 tons of coal can be stored, with a possible increase of 50 per cent.; 100,000 tons of the total normal storage is subaqueous. There will be a subsidiary coaling plant at Balboa, capable of handling 100,000 tons of coal, with a possible increase of 50 per cent.

Facilities will also be provided at Christobal and Balboa for the supply of fuel-oil, and steel tanks for the storage of 160,000 barrels have been ordered in the United States.

The main repair-shops are to be at Balboa, and are designed to maintain—(1) Lock, spillway, and power-plant machinery; (2) water and land equipment retained for the maintenance of the canal; (3) rolling-stock and equipment of the Panama Railway; (4) mechanical apparatus connected with the coaling plants, fortifications, cold-storage plant, wireless stations, &c.; (5) the making of repairs, &c., required by commercial vessels and by private corporations and individuals; (6) the making of such repairs as may be required by vessels of the United States Navy. All the machinery will be electric-driven.

The dry-dock shops for making repairs on the Atlantic side will be retained until experience shows the extent and character of repair facilities necessary.

The floating equipment is also provided for as regards tugs, floating cranes for wrecking purposes, and barges and lighters to supply coal, fuel-oil, and fresh water alongside vessels.

I have, &c.,

C. MALLET.

[Enclosure.]

PERMANENT PROJECTS.

*Description of Future Facilities at Atlantic and Pacific Entrances.*

The permanent facilities at the Atlantic and Pacific entrances to the canal will include the following projects:—

*Piers.*

The piers for commercial use at Balboa will be built at right angles to the axis of the canal, with their ends about 2,650 ft. from the centre-line of the canal channel. They will be about 1,000 ft. long, and 200 ft. wide, with 300 ft. slips between, and with landings for small boats at the head of each slip for the full width between piers. The construction of one pier only will be undertaken at first. The old French steel wharf, about 1,000 ft. long, will be retained for some time in the future for commercial purposes.

Two wharves and one pier are under construction at Christobal, behind a mole and break-water, built out from shore toward the canal channel, and paralleling the boundary-line between Canal Zone and Panamanian waters. An article on these docks, including their superstructures and cargo-handling appliances, was published in the *Canal Record* of the 16th October, 1912. Primarily, these docks are to meet the commercial requirements of the Panama railroad, but should there be enough traffic after the canal is completed to justify it, four other piers, each about 1,000 ft. long and 209 ft. wide, with 300 ft. slips between, will be constructed.