

Zealand Government has reported to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies that the Mail Packet Service between Panama and Wellington will commence next month, but that he has not received any instruction from the Colony respecting the rates of postage to be charged on the correspondence conveyed by this line of packets. He has requested the Postmaster-General, therefore, to take whatever steps His Lordship considers desirable in this respect, and, at His Lordship's request, the Lords of the Treasury have, by a warrant dated the 25th instant, of which I enclose a copy, fixed the following rates:—

1. On correspondence sent from the United Kingdom to New Zealand or Australia:—

On letters, a combined British and Colonial rate of one shilling per half-ounce. Of this sum one penny will belong to this country and eleven-pence to the Colony.

On each newspaper, a combined rate of four-pence. Of this sum, one penny will belong to this country and three-pence to the Colony.

On book packets and patterns, a combined rate of six-pence for a packet not exceeding four ounces. Of this sum, one penny will belong to this country and five-pence to the Colony.

2. Correspondence posted at Panama, or sent to Panama from places other than the United Kingdom, for transmission to New Zealand or Australia:—

On letters, a colonial rate of six-pence per half-ounce.

On each newspaper, a colonial rate of two-pence.

On a packet of books or patterns not exceeding four ounces in weight, a Colonial rate of three-pence.

These sums will belong wholly to the Colony.

A mail for Wellington will henceforth be made up here on the 2nd of each month, and forwarded to Panama by the West India packets containing such correspondence for New Zealand, or for any of the Australian Colonies, as is not addressed to be otherwise sent, and upon which an amount of postage equal to a single rate has been prepaid.

A letter bill will accompany the mail, placing to the credit of the Wellington office its share of the postage on the correspondence forwarded, at the foregoing rates.

The cost of conveying the mails by the railway across the Isthmus of Panama will be paid to the Railway Company by the Agent of this department at Panama, and the weight in bulk of the letters, newspapers, &c., contained in each mail, will be entered on the letter bill, in order that repayment may be made to this office of the amount of such transit, as agreed upon in your letter dated the 29th May, 1865.

It will be desirable that the weight in bulk of the correspondence contained in the return mails for the United Kingdom, sent from Wellington, should in like manner be entered on the letter bill accompanying the mails.

The Agent of this department at Panama will also make up a mail for Wellington on the departure of each packet, containing all correspondence posted at or reaching his office. With each mail he will send a letter bill, placing to the credit of the Wellington office the postage that has been collected on the correspondence forwarded. An acknowledgment of receipt should be sent by you to Panama.

It is desirable that all the correspondence despatched from Wellington by the new line of packets should be made up in two mails, one for London, and the other for Panama.

In the latter should be sent all correspondence for the United States of Colombia (formerly New Granada) Chili, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Guatemala, San Salvador, Mexico, British Colombia, Vancouver's Island, the United States of North America, and the Foreign and British West Indies.

I transmit herewith tables showing the British rates of postage which should be accounted for by you in the letter bill which you send to Panama for the correspondence addressed to any of the foregoing places, and the rates to be accounted for in the letter bill which you send to London for the correspondence intended to pass through the United Kingdom to British Colonies and Foreign countries.

On each single letter addressed to the United Kingdom an inland rate of one penny must be accounted for in the letter bill, and on each book packet and packet of patterns, an inland rate of one penny per four ounces must be accounted for.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

F. HILL.

No. 32.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. F. HILL to the Hon. JAMES PATERSON.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 1st June, 1866.

As it will be useful to this office to possess authentic information as to the time of arrival and departure of the mails conveyed by the new line of packets about to be established between Panama and New Zealand, I have caused a form to be prepared for use in reporting the arrival at Wellington and the departure thence of the main packets proceeding to and from Panama, and of the branch packets proceeding to and from Melbourne and Sydney.

A supply of these forms is sent herewith, and I beg that you will be so good as to cause one copy to be filled up and sent to this office by the first packet after the arrival or departure of mails *via* Panama.

I have, &c.,

The Postmaster-General, Wellington.

F. HILL.

No. 33.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. MORRISON to the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD.

(No. 218.)

Office of the New Zealand Government Agency,

SIR,—

3, Adelaide Place, King William Street, London, E.C., 24th May, 1866.

I do myself the honor to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a letter from the