

to Sacramento, a distance of about 130 miles. This was done in order to catch up with the usual early mail train for New York, which had left San Francisco a little time before our arrival in that port:—

“We notice the extra exertion of the Pacific Mail Company in sending your mail by special car to overtake the regular train, and for which we learn, from Mr. Dean’s letter of the 15th October, and from the Pacific Mail Company’s accounts, they are charging us \$150. We think this should be a charge against the Government.

“There will be no object in making a rapid passage of the steamer if the profit of it is to be mulcted to expedite the mails on land.

“We hope you will press this view on Messrs. Williams, Blanchard, and Co., and, if necessary, also on Messrs. Gilchrist, Watt, and Co., to obtain the amount from the Colonial Governments.”

I have, &c.,

Messrs. Gilchrist, Watt, and Co.

W. CARGILL.

No. 19.

Mr. HUTTON to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Sydney.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 23rd May, 1878.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 3rd instant, forwarding a copy of a letter, and its enclosures, received from Messrs. Gilchrist, Watt, and Co., respecting a charge of \$150, the cost of a special train from San Francisco to Sacramento, for the purpose of enabling the mails, which arrived at the former place per s.s. “Australia” on the 17th October last, to overtake the mail train for New York, and desiring to be informed whether this Department is of opinion that the amount should be made good to the Contractors by the two Governments.

In reply, I am to inform you that the Department agrees that the amount should be repaid the Contractors, but the claim for payment should have been made by the Contractors, and not through Messrs. Elder and Co. It would be impolitic, in the opinion of the Postmaster-General, to recognize these gentlemen in matters properly affecting the Contractors. Under these circumstances, it is suggested that the refund, if made, should be to the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, by whom the matter could be formally adjusted as between the Company and Messrs. Elder and Co.

I have, &c.,

J. A. HUTTON,

(for the Secretary.)

The Secretary, General Post Office, Sydney.

No. 20.

Mr. CREIGHTON to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, California, 19th January, 1878.

I have the honor to transmit copy of a letter addressed by me to H. B. Blanchard, Esq., Agent for the Pacific Mail Company (his partner being in New York), in reference to the mail contract. The letter explains itself. Be good enough to bring this matter under consideration of the Postmaster-General, as it is of the utmost consequence to the contracting colonies.

I have, &c.,

ROBT. J. CREIGHTON.

W. Gray, Esq., Secretary, Post Office, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 20.

Mr. CREIGHTON to Mr. BLANCHARD.

SIR,—

San Francisco, California, 9th January, 1878.

Referring to my conversation with you and General Coey yesterday, relative to the freight charges on the New Zealand and Australian mail matter across the continent, I find that the arrangement under which the Imperial Government pays the present charge of 33 cents per pound (less $3\frac{1}{4}$ cents per ounce on letters, and 6 cents per pound on newspapers, which the contracting colonies contribute), expires on the 29th May proximo. It would be desirable to make some arrangement at Washington, if practicable, whereby the rates charged upon British closed mails to San Francisco should, in future, not exceed the rates charged up to December, 1875, when a change was made by the Hon. the Postmaster-General. I enclose copy of a memorandum submitted by me to the United States Postal Commission during their session here in 1876, which explains the exact position of the question.

Should Captain Williams and the Pacific Mail Company be able to obtain this concession, in the interest of American commerce, the contracting colonies will be deeply indebted to them.

May I request you to inform me of the result of your own and Captain Williams’s action in this matter.

I have, &c.,

ROBT. J. CREIGHTON,

Agent for New Zealand Government,

H. B. Blanchard, Esq., San Francisco.