

ment advertisement of a Land Sale, we were again applied to; and not only gave him the use of our forms gratuitously, but altered them to suit his columns.<sup>48</sup>

But Elliott suffered severe page shortages, and was forced on many occasions to print the *Nelson Examiner* on tea paper.

We have for several weeks past been under the painful necessity of printing the *Examiner* on a wretched species of tea paper, owing to a disappointment in getting our customary shipment from England; and from the scarcity of the article, not only in this colony, but in the neighbouring one of New South Wales, we have been unable to supply our wants from other sources. Miserable as the paper has been we have had to make use of, even this is now so nearly exhausted, that we are driven to the necessity of publishing only a single sheet until the arrival of the *Spray* from Sydney, which may be expected in about ten days. In order as far as possible to compensate our subscribers, we have printed an extra number of copies of the *Government Gazette*, the matter from which we are in the habit of transferring to our columns, and shall enclose a copy to each.<sup>49</sup>

Unreliable supply of printing paper made it difficult for Elliott to make accurate business projections:

We stated a few weeks ago that it was our intention to commence the additional issue of our paper on Wednesday, the 23rd instant [March 1853], but we are sorry to say that our present very limited supply of paper will not suffer us to do so. The long-delayed arrival of a ship from England, to which we have been looking for a supply, and a disappointment in another quarter, have put us to great shifts to obtain paper for our regular issue, and it would be useless therefore to commence an additional publication until we are supplied with paper sufficient to enable us to carry it on. We hope that this delay will be but for a short time, as we are very anxious to redeem the promise we have made.<sup>50</sup>

Many other colonial printers in New Zealand suffered from paper scarcity. The *New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator* was reported by T. M. Hocken<sup>51</sup> to have been printed on red blotting paper although no such copies appear to survive in Wellington.

All forms of communication in the pioneering settlements were poor and rudimentary. Roads were narrow, often impassable in bad weather, and bridges were few or non-existent. An act of God such as the natural swelling of the Waiiti and the Wairoa Rivers could create all sorts of crippling business problems for the printer.

We have to offer a very humble apology to our subscribers for robbing them today of one-half of their customary sheet. The reason of our short-coming is, that having gone into the country on Sunday last, we were caught by a flood, and were unable to get back before Thursday. The Waiiti and the Wairoa rivers, though 'unknown to song', are well understood here to be at times an effectual barrier to those who are on the wrong side of them, particularly when the ferry-boat gets swept away, as was the case in the present instance. Our situation was therefore as helpless as the starling's, for like him we sung, 'I can't get out'. As the small returns of our paper, by compelling us to keep down the expenses of our establishment to