

VICTORIA.

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## GEELONG MAILS.

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*LAI*D upon THE COUNCIL TABLE by THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by Command of HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, and ordered by THE COUNCIL to be printed, 19th January, 1854.

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General Post Office,  
Melbourne, 5th January, 1854.

SIR,

I have the honor to forward you herewith for the information of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, a letter which has been addressed to me by the commander of the mail contract ship *Neleus*, with reference to his detention at the Heads on the 24th ultimo, for the purpose of delivering the mails for Geelong.

I have, &c.  
A. McCRAE,  
Postmaster General.

The Honorable  
The Colonial Secretary.

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Hobson's Bay,  
30th December, 1853.

SIR,

I beg to lay before you a few remarks regarding the law which compels a ship having a general Colonial mail on board to stop, under any circumstances, at Port Phillip Heads for the purpose of landing the Geelong mails. The facts attending my case will, I trust, be sufficient to shew the public how such a regulation militates against the general interest of the Colonies, and may be briefly stated as follows.

I arrived, with the Australian mails on board, at Port Phillip Heads at ten o'clock in the forenoon of Saturday, the 24th instant, and took a pilot on board for Melbourne; and as time very materially affected my remuneration for the mail service, my first inquiry, as a matter of course, was, if he could take my ship to Hobson's Bay in time to admit of my landing the mails that day. He told me he could, but that the law on port regulation compelled him to stop until the Geelong mails were put on shore. Now, my contract with the Home Government contained no such stipulation, but that I had to proceed to Melbourne, and there land the whole of the mails, and from thence forward the Sydney and Adelaide portions; thereby having nothing to do with any of the other mails. I therefore would not have recognized any such regulation: but being an entire stranger, with my ship drawing nineteen feet six inches water, and a gale of wind blowing at the time, I was obliged to submit, and in doing so I lost my best bower anchor by the chain breaking, and nearly got my ship ashore in consequence. Thus far it affected me: I will now shew how it affected the public interest. As I before stated, I could have been in Hobson's Bay, and had the whole of my mails landed the same afternoon, instead of which I could not, from the state of the weather, get under weigh until it moderated at five in the afternoon; it was therefore dark before I got to Hobson's Bay, where I was compelled to come to anchor, far out, having but *one* available, and from the state of the weather the following day I could not get my mails landed until noon of the 26th instant, thereby causing a detention of forty-eight hours of 226 bags, containing mails for the whole of the Colonies, and all in consequence of having to land twelve bags of Geelong mails at Port Phillip Heads. Now, Sir, all I have stated are incontestible facts, and will, I trust, be efficacious in doing away with such a regulation, which, besides being a nuisance in itself, is attended with much annoyance to ships carrying a mail and bound for Melbourne; and if viewed as affecting the commercial interest, it will be easily seen to militate against them, particularly when time is of such value and importance to every one in Australia.

I have been led to make these remarks partly from a feeling of justice to the public, as well as to myself, for I have good reason to complain of such a one-sided regulation, and trust that it will not be longer tolerated.

I am, &c.  
P. BURNETT,  
Master of Ship *Neleus*.

Alexander McCrae, Esq.,  
Postmaster General,  
Melbourne.

A.—No. 43.