

1885.

VICTORIA.

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# EUROPEAN MAIL SERVICE.

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PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT BY COMMAND OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

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## MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT MADE BETWEEN THE COLONIES OF NEW SOUTH WALES, VICTORIA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, TASMANIA, QUEENSLAND, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, AND NEW ZEALAND.

It is agreed as follows :—

1. This agreement is primarily entered into by the three colonies first named, and unless all three of such colonies sign or agree to the same it shall not be considered binding on any one or more of such colonies who have signed or agreed hereto.

2. As soon as the three first-named colonies shall have assented hereto, the other colonies before mentioned shall be invited to become parties hereto.

3. The colony of New South Wales shall invite the colonies of Queensland and New Zealand to become parties hereto. The colony of Victoria shall invite the colony of Tasmania to become a party hereto; and the colony of South Australia shall invite the colony of Western Australia to become a party hereto.

4. This agreement is entered into as preliminary to a joint answer being sent by the colonies to the telegram of Lord Derby, of the 4th February, 1885, to the Governors of the various colonies *re* postal matters, and in order to secure joint and concerted action on the part of the colonies in reference to the postal matters referred to in such telegram.

5. As soon as the first three colonies named have assented hereto, a telegram shall be sent to the British Government in answer to the said telegram of the 4th February, suggesting the following arrangements between Great Britain and the colonies, on the termination of the present agreement between Great Britain and the Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company:—

First. Great Britain to invite tenders on behalf of herself and the contracting colonies for a mail service, or mail services, to be performed by British ships.

Second. Tenders to be called—

(a) For a weekly service.

(b) For a fortnightly service, to alternate with another fortnightly service, so as to secure a weekly service.

Third. Such service or services to be from Brindisi, Naples, or some other port in Europe, to be named by the tenderers and approved of by the other contracting parties, to Sydney, *via* King George's Sound, Adelaide, and Melbourne.

Fourth. The tenders (whether confined to any particular companies or open) to be called for separate and distinct from any other service.

Fifth. Tenders to be invited from London to the Semaphore, Adelaide, and *vice versa*, in 29 days, in 31 days, and in 33 days.

Sixth. The mail matter of any colony desiring it to be landed at Adelaide, and forwarded by rail to Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, &c., 10d. per lb. for letters and 1d. per lb. for other mail matter, to be paid to each forwarding colony. South Australia to guarantee that there shall not be delay of more than six hours at Adelaide, and, if necessary, to employ special trains. South Australia and Victoria to arrange as to specials between Adelaide and Melbourne, and Victoria and New South Wales between Melbourne and Sydney.

- Seventh. The mail steamers to continue on to Melbourne and Sydney.
- Eighth. The tenders to include the local transit rates across Egypt, but the tenderers may carry mails by what route they may think best if they carry them in the specified time.
- Ninth. All mail matter to be tendered for at per lb. of letters and per lb. of other matter, the amount to be given by the tenderers.
- Tenth. Penalties of £4 per hour for non-arrival in time, and bonuses of the same amount for arrival before time (between the port of departure in Europe, and the Semaphore, Adelaide).
- Eleventh. Great Britain and the contracting colonies to send by the contracting steamers all mail matter not specially directed to be sent by a particular route.
- Twelfth. Great Britain to retain all her own postages, and pay cost of transit through to destination of all mail matter, including premiums on voyages from Great Britain; the contracting colonies to do the same in connexion with the trips from the colonies to Great Britain.
- Thirteenth. If any other colony not a party hereto sends mail matter by contracting steamers, it shall be carried at the same rates as for contracting colonies, and on the same terms, including a share of premiums and penalties.
- Fourteenth. Premiums on mail matter despatched from the colonies by any steamer to be paid by colonies sending letters by such steamer in proportion to letters carried, and accounts to be adjusted quarterly.
- Fifteenth. In the event of the contracting colonies joining the Postal Union, any loss which may accrue in consequence of being obliged to carry mail matter for Union countries at Union rates to be paid one-half by Great Britain, and the other half by the contracting colonies, in the proportion of weight of letters carried for such colonies, taking an average of three months.
- Sixteenth. No contract to be accepted without the consent of the three first-named colonies.
- Seventeenth. The tenders to be for five years.

6. It is also agreed that the contracting colonies shall urge upon Great Britain the desirability of taking all possible steps to reduce the exorbitant rates now paid for the land transit of the Australian mails across Italy and France, namely, 16f. 50c. per kilo for letters, &c.

7. This agreement is made subject to ratification by the respective Parliaments of the colonies parties hereto.

Dated this 21st day of August, 1885.

[Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; Printing (760 copies), £2 5s. 0d.]

By Authority: JOHN FERRES, Government Printer, Melbourne.