

C.S.

Postal & Subs No Departmental Post office	
No.	43/30

MAI/GEN/2#12

1930

~~1929~~

10

Mr J. D. Creamer

SUBJECT.

1930

18th Jan.

Previous Paper.

Complaint by Mr J. D. Creamer regarding letters posted in time for despatch by mail to West Falklands 9/1/30, but which were not transmitted.

MINUTES.

- 1-3 Letter from Mr J. D. Creamer 18/1/30
- 4 Letter to Mr. Creamer 21/1/30
- 5-6 Letter from Mr. Creamer 21/1/30

Colonel Patman,
Please report.

- (1) whose duty it was to clear the letter box
- (2) when it was last cleared prior to the departure of the West Falkland mail.
- (3) what rule is laid down regarding the clearing of the box when a mail is being made up.

Subsequent Paper.

SP/13
CS
21. 1. 30

How Col Sec

1. The Post-boy clears the Letter box at 10 A.M. every morning.
2. I have made enquiries and find that the Letter box was cleared at 10 A.M. prior to the departure of the West Falkland mail.
3. The rule is, that the Letter box is cleared at the time the mail closes, in addition to the clearance at 10 A.M.
4. It is my belief that the letters in question were overlooked because they were mixed with the English mail - there is only one Letter box.
5. In order to avoid this delay in the despatch of letters, it might be advisable to have two letter-boxes one marked "Great Britain & Foreign" and one marked "Colony & Dependencies".
This is the usual practice at Home.
6. The two letters in question, were the only letters for the West Falklands as far as can be ascertained.
7. I do not like Mr Creamer's inference that the letters had been removed from the Post-office for some purpose. This puts us all under a cloud of suspicion from which we need protecting.

Falkland 21/1/30

Colonial Postmaster.

Who was responsible for not clearing the Letter Box prior to the departure of the West Falkland mail? Is this duty left to the Post-boy on such occasions?

AKB
AJS
22.1.30

How bel sec

The Letter-box was cleared prior to the departure of the West Falkland mail.

The letters in question must have been overlooked on the sorting table after the Letter box was cleared.

(see para 4 of my previous minute)
The persons sorting on this occasion were Miss Dixon, Miss Atkins, and the Post-boy.

The duty of clearing the Letter-box is left to the Post-boy on these occasions

F. A. Byron 23/1/30.

Y.E.

Submitted. The fault clearly lies
with the Post Office. The letters were
not sent by the mail for which they
were posted. As to the cause I think
Mr. Byrnes' explanation is the most
feasible. In this case the sorting of
the English mail and not the post boy
is to blame. I have spoken to Miss
Carey who has expressed extreme
regret at the occurrence. In the
course of sorting ^{either} Miss Atkins or
Miss Dixon must have put the
letters aside and when the next
mail was being made up forgotten
to include them. The Post Office
Staff will pay the cost of
Mr. Creamer's telegrams as yours

Especially direct.

2. I feel strongly that Mr Creener should be warned he has made an allegation, i.e. that the post office are capable of tampering with correspondence which amounts to libel unless he can show he has better grounds for suspicion than he has already put forward. If your Excellency approves I will refer the matter to the magistrate for his ^{opinion.} ~~decision.~~

3. I think the suggestion in para 5 of Mr Byron's

first minute a good one. New

boxes should I consider be

erected on the south wall of

the Town Hall leading directly

to the Post Office. There is much

which can be done to improve

the Post Office with regard to

which I shall submit ~~recommendations~~

separately.

E. R. H. G.

Capt. P. S.

24.1.30

Hon. C. S.

Please inform Miss Carey, Miss Dixon and Miss Atkins that I have every confidence in them - mistakes will happen in the

best regulated families - undoubtedly the Post Office is to blame but unwittingly. Inform

Miss Creamer we cannot refund cost of telegrams sent by him. There is no authority.

If he had reported the matter to you the P.O. would have telegraphed for him.

I think I am right in saying the P.O. accept no legal responsibility for unregistered letters. As this matter is

yes
of
money
available
P.O.
up
in
the
course

'sub-judice' I can make
no comments but you
should certainly consult the
magistrate

25/30

AM

Even at home letters are
often missed on sorting &
arrive late.

Hon. Mr. C. Craigie - Halkett.

~~Your previous comments re~~
~~Mr. Creamer's statement~~

I shall be grateful for
your opinion on statements made
by Mr. Creamer. It would appear
that he had no just cause
for suspecting the post office
officials of tampering with
correspondence.

W.H.
25.1.30

Hon. Sol. Sec.

I have read the correspondence herein and am of opinion that Mr J. D. Creamer had no just cause for suspecting Post Office officials of tampering with correspondence. It seems clear to me that the delay was caused through an error in sorting.

2. With reference to para: 5 of the Postmasters minute of the 21st inst: I have to point out that we formerly had two letter boxes, but these proved to be a failure and in many instances letters missed a mail through being placed in the wrong box. In many of the London Post Offices one box only is used.

W. Frank Hartnett

27 1. 30

V. G. Submitted ^{with} Dept. letter
to Mr. Creamer. In view
of the case against a former
Post Office official which will
shortly come before the Court,

it would perhaps be inadvisable to take any notice of Mr Creamer's statements in writing. I will, however, take an opportunity of speaking to Mr Creamer personally, Mr Craigie. Dalkett agrees that this is the better course.

2. With reference to Mr Craigie - Dalkett's paragraph 2, the question of an additional letter box will be dealt with separately in connection with the ~~main~~ ^{of} improvements to the Postal Service.

J.H. B.
C.G.S.

29. 1. 30

Hon C.S

Mr Boggs

Approved.

to see.

AM

29
30
1

Letter to Mr. J.D. Greener, 30/1/30

7

Col. Postmaster,

to see.

C. J. Greener
31/1/30

Hon Col see

seen.

Appon 1/2/30.

P.A.
4/2/30

From ROBSON to CREAMER, 11/1/30.

13 words.

Hear you are ill no better (letter ?) what is the matter Robson.

From CREAMER to ROBSON, 12/1/30.

15 words (in code).

M. letter posted to go per Fleurus do you mean it has not arrived stop. Also letter to Babs; has it arrived; enquire and telegraph; intend pursuing full enquiries; M. very well now Denis.

From ROBSON to CREAMER, 14/1/30.

13 words.

No letter to me or Babs per Fleurus glad well Win.

3

Stanley,
Falkland Islands,

18th January, 1930.



Sir,

I regret having to bring to your notice a complaint regarding the Post Office Department.

2. The mails to Fox Bay and Port Howard per "Fleurus" were advertised to close at noon on Thursday, the 9th January. At 9.10 a.m. on that day I posted two letters through the outside slot of the Town Hall letter-box, both addressed to the West Falklands, one being an important communication to my wife's sister, Mrs Robson at Fox Bay.

3. On Saturday, the 11th, I received a radiogram from Mrs Robson stating that no letters had been received from us by the "Fleurus", and I accordingly made enquiries of the Postmaster. On Tuesday Mr Byron reported to me that both the letters were lying in the Fox Bay box at the Post Office, bearing the postmark of the 10th January (the day after the "Fleurus" had sailed).

4. Certain circumstances led me to believe that there was a possibility that one or both of these letters might have been tampered with, and I accordingly requested Mr Byron to keep the matter as secret as possible until we had had an opportunity of putting my suspicions to

The Honourable

The Colonial Secretary,

Stanley.

the test. He and I have since carefully scrutinised the envelopes, with a negative result.

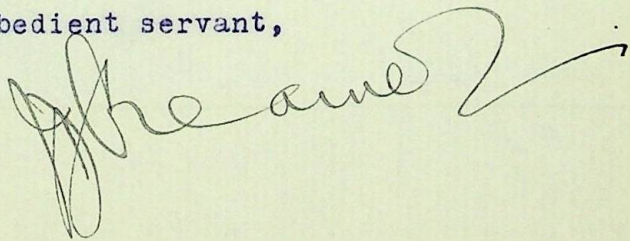
5. The facts remain, however, that the letters were posted in the proper receptacle three hours before the advertised closing of the mail; that they did not go by that mail, and, in fact, were postmarked the day after the mail had left. I am, of course, now prepared to leave the matter in the Head of the Department's or your own hands, for such enquiries to be made as may be thought fit. I would add that Mr Byron has expressed great regret at the occurrence and has shown every courtesy to me in dealing with the matter so far.

6. With regard to the telegrams which it was necessary to exchange with Mrs Robson I feel that I am justified in asking that the cost of these may be refunded to Mrs Robson and myself. I enclose copies of the three messages, amounting in all to 41 words at a cost of £ 1. -. 6.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,



43/30.

21st January, 30.

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 18th of January, I am directed by the Governor to inform you that your complaint regarding the delay in the despatch of two letters posted to catch the West Falkland mail on the 9th of January is being investigated.

2. I am to say with regard to your paragraph 4 that it would assist in the enquiry if you would state the ground you had for suspecting that the letters might have been tampered with.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,



Acting Colonial Secretary.

J. D. Creamer, Esq.,
S T A N L E Y.

(1)

Fort Stanley,
Falkland Islands,

21st January, 1930.

43/30.

Sir,

I beg to thank you for your letter of today's date and in accordance with the request contained in the second paragraph thereof I put before you herewith the grounds upon which I entertained suspicions that the letters referred to might have been tampered with.

(1). The very fact of their missing the mail. Looking at it from an entirely unbiassed point of view one must conclude that they were delayed (a) accidentally, or (b) purposely, with the chances admittedly in favour of the former until the following points come to be considered.

(2). On the Sunday (12th) when I first reported the matter to the Postmaster he searched the "Fox Bay East" and "Fox Bay West" pigeon holes and reported to me that the letters were not there and that, as far as he knew, no new mail bag had been "started" for Fox Bay. The letters were later found in a larger "Fox Bay" box where he had not looked before, and this was reported to me on Tuesday the 14th. Most probably they had been there all the time, but it must be remembered that until that report I had only two clear facts before me, (i) the letters had not reached Fox Bay and (ii) they were not (presumably) in the Post Office; the conclusion therefore

The Honourable

The Colonial Secretary,

Stanley.

might easily be come to that the letters, containing some very secretive and highly "interesting" news, had been removed from the Post Office for some purpose.

(3). The Postmaster reported that he had questioned the boy whose duty it is to clear the letter-box every morning and that he (the boy) was positive, without any shadow of doubt, that he had cleared the box on that particular morning at the usual time or thereabouts.

(4). If the letters had missed the mail through the failure of the boy to clear the box, or through some negligence or mistake on the part of one of the other officials, it would be reasonable to suppose that upon discovery of the error some report would have been made to the Postmaster or myself. But although they were postmarked a day late and had missed the mail for which they were obviously intended no report was made of the matter, and it is feasible to assume that nothing would have been heard of it had it not been for my own enquiries following the receipt of Mrs Robson's telegram.

(5). As far as I am aware no other complaints have been received regarding non-delivery of expected mails by this voyage of the "Fleurus". Surely a reasonably large number of letters to the West Falklands would have been posted between 9 a.m. and noon on the 9th to catch the advertised mail? If these two letters, therefore, were the only ones to miss the mail (which admittedly is by no means proved) the circumstance would certainly give weight to the suspicions already created.

*How many
letters missed
the mail?
AS*

The grounds for suspicion are therefore entirely circumstantial, but having regard to the dates on which the various facts came to light I think the suspicions were really justified although I do not now imply that they are in any way confirmed.

Regretting the length of this letter,

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

J. Beavis

43/30.

30th January, 30.

Sir,

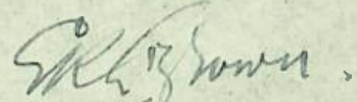
With reference to your letter of the 21st of January, I am directed by the Governor to inform you that on investigation it has been found that the delay in the despatch of the two letters posted by you on the 9th of January was due to an error in sorting. The letters were withdrawn from the Letter Box with letters for the European mail. They were correctly placed in the receptacle in which they were found but inadvertently overlooked when the West Falkland Mail was closed immediately afterwards.

2. I am to add that while any inconvenience you have been caused is regretted the Post Office is unable to accept liability for loss otherwise than in accordance with the rules of the Universal Postal Convention.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,



Acting Colonial Secretary.

J. D. Creamer, Esq.,
S T A N L E Y.