

mercantile business, but to farmers only, and to Township Lands.

Mr LONGWORTH, in very strong and pointed language, accused the hon. member (Mr Coles) of seeking to delude the tenantry by bringing forward such a Bill. He said his explanation of his Bill was nothing but "clap-trap," and only intended to go forth to the public as a support to its sinking popularity. He denounced the provisions of the Bill as most ridiculous and absurd. Should they ever go into operation, what would be the consequence? Why, an arbitration at the expiration of every four years or thereabouts. And of what use would it be to increase rent to cover the arrears? The tenant would again go on just as before; and at the end of another four years, further increase of the rent would have to be made to cover the amount of new arrears; and so on again and again, and the proprietor would never receive one fraction of the arrears. A more absurd, unfeasible, or unjust measure it was impossible to imagine or devise; and the hon. member who brought it forward very well knew that there was no greater probability of its ever passing into law, than there was of his seeing his famous scheme for the taxation of wilderness lands take effect. He neither did nor could expect any measure, evidently so absurd, unequal, and unjust to receive the sanction of the three Branches of the Legislature; and his only object, with respect to the Bill, was to gull the tenantry, and, if possible, by so doing to uphold, for a while longer, his sinking popularity.

Mr DOUGLASS would wish to ask the hon. member (Mr Coles) whether he had abandoned his intention to bring forward a Bill for the purchasing the Lands of the Proprietors, and procuring a loan for that purpose from the Home Government. He wished to be correctly informed touching the hon. member's intentions concerning that Bill, for they might operate in his mind to the determining, in some measure, of the course which he should pursue with respect to the present Bill.

Mr COLES replied that the Bill to which the hon. member for Belfast had referred was not abandoned; and, so far was it from being so, that it was then actually in course of preparation. The Tenants' Rights Bill was merely intended to afford the Tenantry something like fair protection, until the Proprietors could be brought into the humor to part with their lands at a fair valuation.

The Bill was then read a first time.

## POST-OFFICE INQUIRY.

IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,  
THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 1851.

**ORDERED,** That the following Documents, having reference to an inquiry into the suspension of the Inland Mails, be inserted once in each of the Newspapers published in Charlottetown.

No. 1. Address of the House of Assembly to His Excellency the Lieut. Governor requesting to be furnished with copies of all correspondence with the Deputy Post Master General on the subject of the suspension of the Inland Mails.

No. 2. His Excellency's Message in answer thereto.

No. 3. Report of the Special Committee appointed to examine and report on the suspension of the Inland Mails.

No. 4. Minutes of Evidence of the Deputy Post Master General, with appendix, comprising a copy of the correspondence between Mr. Owen and the Post Office Department in England on the same subject.

No. 5. Address of the Assembly to the Lieutenant Governor, requesting that His Excellency would order the transmission of the Inland Mails to be resumed.

JOHN MACNEILL, C. H. A.

(No. 1.)

### ADDRESS.

To His Excellency Sir Alexander Bannerman, Knight, Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief, &c. &c. &c.

**MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY;**

The House of Assembly most respectfully request that your Excellency will be pleased to cause to be laid before them, copies of all correspondence with the Deputy Post Master General of this Isla-

nd, on the stoppage of the Inland Mails during the past year, and his replies thereto.

(No. 2.)

### MESSAGE.

A. BANNERMAN, Lieut. Governor.

In reply to the Address of the House of Assembly requesting copies to be laid before them of all correspondence with the Deputy Postmaster General of this Island on the stoppage of the Inland Mails during the past year, and his replies thereto, the Lieut. Governor has to acquaint the Assembly that the Deputy Postmaster General of Prince Edward Island was, and still is, subordinate to the Postmaster General of England, and cannot ask him to do anything which might incur the censure of his superior. But the Lieut. Governor thinks he can give the Assembly all the information, they may perhaps require, having before he left England, made enquiries on the subject, at the General Post Office, London. As the late Lieut. Governor did not give the Deputy Postmaster any specific order to stop the Inland Mails, although he expressed his disapprobation of their continuance to the Deputy Postmaster General, in consequence of the Assembly refusing to grant the necessary Supply, the Deputy Postmaster General continued the usual couriers, and very properly applied for instruction to his superior. The late Lieut. Governor complained of Mr Owen's conduct, the case was referred to the Treasury, and their Lordships decided, that under the peculiar circumstances in which the Deputy Postmaster General was placed by the Resolution of the House of Assembly, they were not prepared to disapprove of the course he had pursued, and they authorised the expense actually incurred on account of this service to be defrayed from the Postage Revenue prior to its being paid into the Colonial Treasury. But their Lordships were of opinion that the transmission of the Inland Mails should be suspended for the future, until provision was made by the local Legislature for that purpose.

April 4, 1851.

(No. 3.)

### REPORT.

Your Committee appointed to examine and report upon the Stoppage of the Inland Mails, as well as to inquire if any order has been given to the Postmaster to pay the Moneys received at his Office into the Commissariat Chest, have to report—That they have examined Thomas Owen, Esq., the Deputy Postmaster General, and are of opinion, from his evidence (hereunto annexed), that the stoppage of the Supplies last year, by the Assembly, did not, of necessity, call for the stoppage of such Mails, as he (Mr. Owen) states, he would have continued the Inland Mails, as well as the inter-Colonial, British and Foreign, if the Government had given him instructions to that effect, as the receipts of his Office, for the two Quarters previous to the stoppage of the Inland Mails, exceeded the expenses of that Department, after paying for the carrying of the Mails by steam to Pictou, and the Couriers up to August last; that he considers the Couriers will have to be paid in accordance with their contracts, as they have continued to go their rounds, and, on one occasion, offered the Government to carry the Mails, and trust to the Legislature for payment, that being the only expense of continuing said Mails; and on account of the stoppage of those Mails a loss of nearly £200 has accrued to the public; that he has received instructions to pay the surplus moneys, after disbursing the authorized expenses of his Office—which consist of Salaries of Officers and incidental expenses, such as Office rent, fuel, &c.,—into the Commissariat Chest: a copy of such instruction, and his reply thereto is hereunto annexed, where it will be seen that the reason for so doing is on account of the stoppage of the Inland Mails, and if those Mails should be ordered to be resumed, he would feel authorized, until further instructions, to pay the receipts on the continuance of said Mails into the Public Treasury; but not to disburse the expenses of running the same.

Your Committee recommend the House

to address His Excellency to cause the transmission of the Inland Mails to be resumed, provided the Postage arising therefrom be paid into the Public Treasury of this Island, to be disposed of as the Legislature shall direct.

GEORGE COLES,  
JOSEPH POPE,  
JOHN JARDINE,  
EDWARD WHELAN,  
BENJAMIN DAVIES.

Committee Room, April 17, 1851.

(No. 4.)

### MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

#### COMMITTEE ROOM,

THURSDAY, April 10, 1851.

Present: Mr. Coles, Mr. Pope, Mr. Jardine, Mr. Davies, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Whelan.

Thomas Owen, Esq., Deputy Postmaster General, called in and examined.

Q. By whom were you appointed, and to whom are you accountable for the discharge of your duties?

A. By the Postmaster General, to whom I am alone amenable for the discharge of any official duties; but by my Instructions I am required to obey any orders which I may, from time to time, receive from the Administrator of the Government, in writing.

Q. Did you receive any instructions from the late Lieut. Governor to discontinue the transmission of the Inland Mails during the past year; and if so state when?

A. I did not receive any written instructions; but His Excellency caused a Letter to be written to me on the 2nd of May last, informing me that no provision had been made by the Legislature for the transmission of the Inland Mails for the current year. In answer to this letter, I stated, that I would immediately inform the Postmaster General of the circumstance—which I did, entering into a minute detail, shewing that although the inland Postage was insufficient to defray the cost of transmission, yet that the general receipts of the Department, paid into the Provincial Treasury, were nearly adequate to defray the total expenditure of the office. After making this statement, I also informed His Lordship that I could not take upon myself the responsibility of suspending the transmission of the Inland Mails—which embraced about one third of the Correspondence of the Colony—and requested His Lordship's instruction for my guidance.

Q. Did His Excellency express any disapprobation at the course pursued by you?

A. He did.

Q. In what way?

A. His Excellency stated that he disapproved of the course I was pursuing, in continuing the Inland Mails.

Q. What answer did you receive from the Postmaster General?

A. I was directed to continue the transmission of the Mails, as usual, and to disburse the expenses from the Receipts of the Office, instead of paying the same into the Treasury of the Island.

Q. After having received the order, did you make up, on the 5th July, your usual Quarterly accounts of the receipts and Expenditure of your Department?

A. I did.

Q. What was the result?

A. I paid the Inland Couriers in full, together with £200, being one third of the annual charge, for carrying the Mails by Steam to Pictou, and had a small surplus remaining.

Q. When did you cease paying the Couriers?

A. About the 20th August.

Q. Did you make any other payment on Account of the Contract for conveying the Mails by Steam to Pictou?

A. On making up the Accounts on the 5th October, I disbursed a second instalment of £200 for that service, besides paying the Couriers, as before mentioned.

Q. What surplus had you remaining?

A. About £25.

Adjourned.

J. B. COOPER,

Clerk Aest. H. of A.

#### COMMITTEE ROOM,

FRIDAY, April 11, 1851.

Present: Mr. Coles, Mr. Jardine, Mr. Davies, Mr. Whelan, Mr. Speaker.

Thomas Owen, Esq., Deputy Postmaster General, called in and examined.

Q. Were the Receipts of your Office, up to the time of stopping the Inland Mails, sufficient to disburse the expenses of the Department?

A. They were.

Q. Was there any surplus?

A. In the Quarter ending the 5th October, there was a small surplus.

Q. What loss of Revenue has been occasioned by the stoppage of the Inland Mails?

A. From £170 to £180.

Q. What extra expense would have occurred, had the Mails been continued as usual?

A. Only the payment of the Couriers. Q. Have not the Couriers continued to go their rounds as formerly?

A. Yes; but no Mails have been forwarded by them!

Q. Do you consider that by the terms of the Contracts you have entered into with the Couriers, they will have to be paid?

A. Yes.

Q. Did the Couriers offer to carry the Mails and trust to the Legislature for payment for their services, subsequent to the death of Sir Donald Campbell?

A. They did.

Q. Did you inform the Government of this circumstance?

A. The offer of the Couriers was made to the Government.

Q. Are you aware of the reason why the Mails were not resumed after this offer was made?

A. No. The letter of the Couriers was submitted to me, to report thereon.

Q. Did you make a report?

A. I did.

Q. What was the nature of that report?

A. That I was prepared to obey any order I might receive from the local Government, and would submit the matter to the Postmaster General.

Q. Did you receive any answer from the Government to that report?

A. No.

Q. Did you receive any instructions from the Postmaster General, respecting the stoppage of the foreign Mails?

A. Yes: I was directed to suspend their transmission.

Q. Did you comply with this direction?

A. I immediately informed the Lieut. Governor thereof; and before it became necessary to obey the order, I received direction from His Excellency to continue to transmit the foreign Mails, as the English and Colonial Postages were equal to the expenditure.

Q. Did you comply with His Excellency's direction?

A. Yes.

Q. Were you willing to continue the transmission of the Inland Mails, had you received similar instructions with reference to them?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you consider that, by the stoppage of the Supplies by the House of Assembly, it was necessary to discontinue the transmission of the Inland Mails?

A. There was no necessity for doing so: I continued to forward them for nearly two Quarters, until ordered to discontinue them by the Postmaster General.

Q. Have you received instructions not to pay any Moneys into the Colonial Treasury, as formerly?

A. I have been directed to pay the proceeds of my Department into the Military chest.

Q. Were any reasons assigned for this change?

A. Yes: The stoppage of the Inland Mails?

Q. Would you feel authorised, on the transmission of the Inland Mails being resumed to pay the proceeds of the same into the Treasury as formerly?

A. I would.

Q. Would you feel authorised to disburse the expense attending the transmission of the Inland Mails?

A. No.