

## Special Unpublished Parcel Rate to Great Britain

By Mark A. Butterline

The author recently acquired what appears to be a full copy of the *Pitcairn Island, The Post Office Regulation 1940* that was actually used on-island at the post office (top of page 1 shown in Figure 1). The document measures 8 1/8 x 13 inches and consists of 11 pages, plus one blank page (at the end). It is held together with two centrally placed staples (i.e., the document opens like a book).

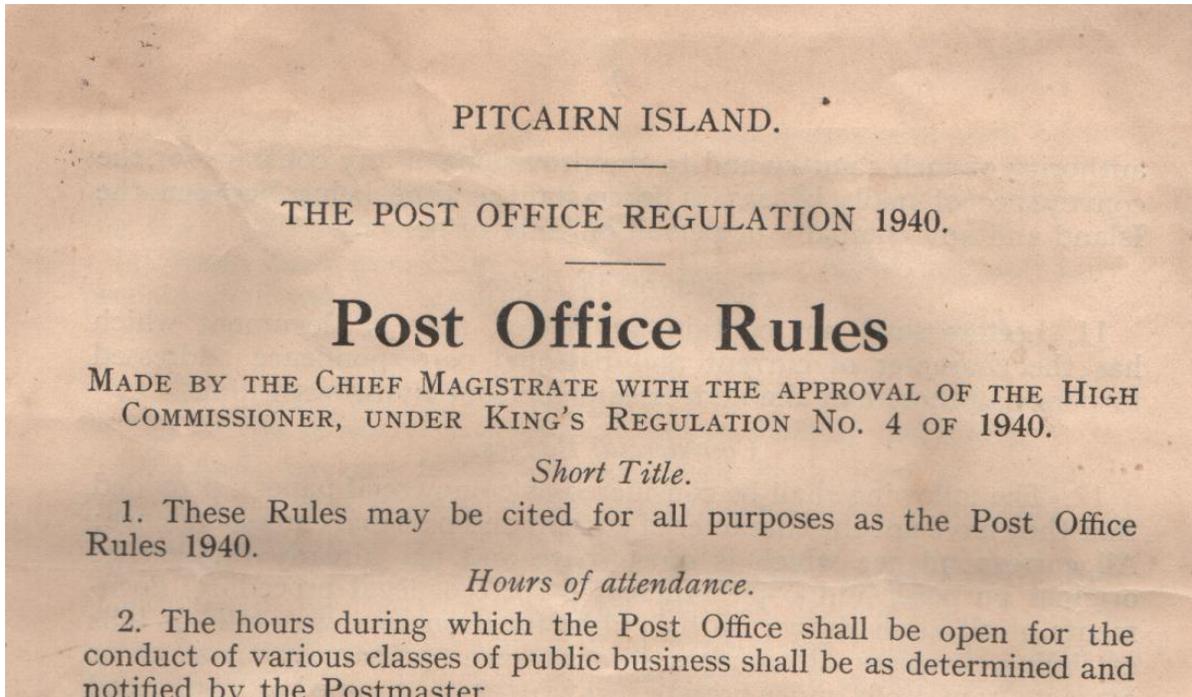


Figure 1 – Top of *Pitcairn Island, The Post Office Regulation 1940*

The reason we know this copy was on island is that there are two Pitcairn Island Post Office handstamps (both Kitching type 2.3) dated July 17, 1941 and August 17, 1943 on page 9 (Figure 2). Also, the weather conditions on the island are reflected in the document's heavy foxing (also shown in Figure 2). Thus, this document appears to have been a "working copy" used at the Pitcairn Post Office.

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12 FEB 1941

FIRST SCHEDULE,  
APPENDIX A.  
RATES OF POSTAGE WITHIN PITCAIRN ISLAND.

Letters.		Post-cards.		Printed papers, comprising books, magazines, newspapers, &c.	Commercial papers, documents, samples.	Parcels.	
First oz. or fraction of oz.	Every succeeding oz. or fraction thereof.	Single card.	Reply card.	For every 4 oz. or fraction of 4 oz.	For every 4 oz. or fraction of 4 oz.	For first lb or fraction thereof.	Every succeeding lb or fraction thereof.
1d.	1d.	1d.	2d.	½d.	1d.	6d.	4d.

Figure 2 – Top of page 9 of *Pitcairn Island, The Post Office Regulation 1940*

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Of particular interest to postal historians is a handwritten entry at the top of page 10 in the section entitled “Appendix C, Parcel Post Tariff – Beyond Pitcairn Island” (Figure 3). The printed entry is divided between parcels going to the Dominion of New Zealand and parcels going to any other country (via the Dominion of New Zealand). The published rate for other countries is 8d. for the first pound and 6d. for each additional pound, PLUS the postage from New Zealand to the destination country. Immediately below that is the following handwritten entry: “G.B. FROM PITCAIRN 1-3<sup>lbs</sup> 2/ 4-7<sup>lbs</sup> 3/4 7-11<sup>lbs</sup> 4/6”.

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APPENDIX C.  
PARCEL POST TARIFF—BEYOND PITCAIRN ISLAND.

To the Dominion of New Zealand—1 lb, 8d.; every additional lb up to 11 lb, 6d.  
To any other country—  
Via the Dominion of New Zealand—  
First 1 lb, 8d.; every additional lb up to 11 lb, 6d.; plus the postage from New Zealand to the country of destination.

G.B. FROM PITCAIRN: 1-3<sup>lbs</sup> 2/ 4-7<sup>lbs</sup> 3/4 7-11<sup>lbs</sup> 4/6

Figure 3 – Top of page 10 of *Pitcairn Island, The Post Office Regulation 1940*

This special parcel rate to Great Britain seems to provide the Pitcairners with a substantial discount over the regular printed rate, as a 3 pound parcel would normally cost 1/8 just to get it to New Zealand, and a seven pound parcel would normally cost 3/8 just to get it to New Zealand. Thus, it appears that some

authority (at the Western Pacific High Commission or the New Zealand Post Office??) made a finding that a special set of discounted British parcel post rates should be instituted and informed the Pitcairn Postmaster of the same. Given the age of the document, this probably occurred during, or shortly after, World War II.

### **Other Unpublished Rates**

Such special (unpublished) rates are not unknown on Pitcairn. On March 30, 1954 an inquiry from a Pitcairn Post Office customer about postal rates yielded a handwritten reply from Postmaster Roy Clark stating that the airmail rate from Pitcairn to the USA is 8d. per ½ ounce. This rate does not appear in either the 1940 or 1954 Post Office Regulations. Also, in July 1977, postal authorities adjusted the Commonwealth letter rate upward by 1¢ when they realized that they had inadvertently set the Commonwealth printed matter rate equal to the Commonwealth letter rate (both 6¢) in the June 1, 1977 Post Office Regulations. Again, this rate revision was not published.

So all this begs the question, has anybody seen an example of the special Great Britain parcel rate in any of their parcel clippings?? Replies to the author are most welcome (mbutterli@gmail.com).

### **References**

Butterline, Mark A., "Early Pitcairn Airmail Rates - Part I," *Pitcairn Log* (January 2008, Vol 35. No. 1), p. 12.

Butterline, Mark A., "Pitcairn Surface Mail Rates 1940-2003 – Part II," *Pitcairn Log* (January 2005, Vol 32. No. 1), p. 8.

Kitching, Cy, *Pitcairn Islands Postal Markings 1883-2008* (Fifth edition), p. 2-1.

Western Pacific High Commission, *Pitcairn Island - The Post Office Regulation 1940*.