

As we experience great difficulty in filling up vacancies when they occur, owing to there being no supernumeraries on the staff, I would propose as a precautionary measure that the clerks at the Chief Post Offices throughout the Colony be instructed in the art of telegraphy, so that they might be able not only to take appointments in the Telegraph Department when required, but in order that future Postmasters may be enabled to perform the duties of telegraphists in connection with their other offices.

*Changes in the Tariff Rates, and Hours of Business.*

Owing to certain representations made to me by merchants and others using the telegraph, I was induced to propose a new tariff, which, as far as I have been able to learn from those most frequently using it, has given satisfaction. The extending of the hours of business has also given great satisfaction, and will prove in most cases a great advantage to the Department. Some of the minor stations might, however, have the hours of business curtailed, and placed on the original footing without injury to the public service, and with advantage to the Department. I should, therefore, propose making the hours of business at the following stations the same as those of the post offices, namely, from 9 a.m. till 5 p.m. These stations are Tokomairiro, Oamaru, Timaru, Heathcote, Kaiapoi, and Picton, and this change will reduce the salary expenditure of the Department by £250, the amount of salary necessary for five extra messengers required by the long hours, an outlay not at all commensurate with the advantages to be derived.

Wellington, 16th July, 1866.

ALFRED SHEATH,  
Telegraphic Engineer.

### Appendix A.

RETURNS showing the ITEMS of EXPENDITURE on account of LINE WORKS, for the Year ended 30th June, 1866.

<i>Erection of Works.</i>						£	s.	d.
Travelling expenses	...	...	...	...	...	308	19	4
Carriage and freight	...	...	...	...	...	2,401	19	10
Salaries and labour	...	...	...	...	...	3,230	4	1
Contingencies	...	...	...	...	...	337	9	9
Total	...	...	...	...	...	£6,278	13	0
<i>Maintenance and Repairs of Lines.</i>						£	s.	d.
Travelling expenses	...	...	...	...	...	789	4	3
Carriage and freight	...	...	...	...	...	301	18	1
Salaries and labour	...	...	...	...	...	772	15	0
Contingencies	...	...	...	...	...	579	5	7
Total	...	...	...	...	...	£2,443	2	11
Purchase of Port Lyttelton Line	...	...	...	...	...	£560	0	0

ALFRED SHEATH,  
Telegraphic Engineer.

### Appendix B.

RETURN of BUSINESS TRANSACTED at each STATION of the ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT, for the Year ended 30th June, 1866.

STATION.	No. TELEGRAMS.	O. T.	PRESS.	P. G.	G. G.	TOTALS.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Bluff	1,863	176 3 11	236 11 3	13 6 10	45 6 5	471 8 5
Invercargill	2,571	499 7 11	20 9 9	68 14 7	44 1 3	632 13 6
Tokomairiro	314	30 1 5	0 13 6	0 19 10	1 9 10	33 4 7
Dunedin	6,795	1,475 5 8	153 1 7	54 3 11	128 4 10	1,792 16 0
Oamaru	1,897	353 3 3	3 2 11	4 13 4	7 16 2	368 15 8
Timaru	1,140	207 19 3	0 13 6	22 10 0	32 16 0	263 18 9
Christchurch	6,746	1,159 0 1	107 8 9	113 0 0	110 18 4	1,490 7 2
Lyttelton	4,269	505 11 8	13 2 2	31 17 7	91 19 2	642 10 7
Heathcote	117	10 8 6	...	7 5 8	...	17 14 2
Kaiapoi (opened in January)	318	31 18 8	...	1 2 4	0 6 10	33 7 10
Blenheim (opened in June)	86	13 14 10	...	0 13 6	0 12 4	15 0 8
Picton	303	58 1 0	...	...	10 3 2	68 4 2
Nelson (opened in April)	818	177 3 6	27 17 6	0 11 0	9 8 10	215 0 10
Totals	27,237	4,679 19 8	563 0 11	318 18 7	483 3 2	6,045 2 4

ALFRED SHEATH,  
Telegraphic Engineer.