

You will observe that the British mails for the colonies will now arrive at San Francisco on Wednesday at 8.45 p.m., and no doubt arrangements could be made for the steamers to leave immediately thereafter. I shall therefore be obliged if you will communicate with Messrs. Spreckels with the view of having Wednesday substituted for Thursday as the sailing-day whenever the arrival of the mails will render this possible.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company  
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

(No. 3.)

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the RESIDENT AGENT for New Zealand, San Francisco.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,  
Wellington, 20th December, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, of the 11th current, relative to the announcement of an accelerated train-service from Chicago to San Francisco, and the effect of the saving of time on the movements of the mail-steamers to New Zealand.

If the proposed fast train-service can be relied upon arrangements should be made for the mail-steamers to leave on Thursday morning, and the change advertised. Indeed, if it is considered certain that the connection could always be made on the Wednesday that day should be substituted for Thursday as the sailing-day. Should the Wednesday departure be found practicable, you will perhaps be good enough to notify the change to the Washington Post Office, which will, of course, advise the New York and San Francisco Post Offices. I have written the Union Steam Ship Company, asking that arrangements be made with the Messrs Spreckels for the Wednesday departure if this should be found practicable.

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I have, &c.,

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq.,  
Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco, California.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

(No. 4.)

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),  
Dunedin, 26th December, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 20th instant suggesting that, in view of the acceleration of the train-service between Chicago and San Francisco, the sailing-date of the steamers from San Francisco for Auckland should be made Wednesday instead of Thursday, as at present. By the outgoing mail I sent a copy of your letter to Messrs. Spreckels and Brothers, and I am sure that if your suggestion can be acted upon they will view it favourably; but, of course, they, being on the spot, are in a better position than we are to say whether or not it would be advisable to adopt the change.

I have, &c.

W. Gray, Esq.,  
Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

T. W. WHITSON,  
For Managing Director.

(No. 5.)

The RESIDENT AGENT FOR NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, 9th January, 1896.

Reverting to my communication of the 11th ultimo, I have the honour to report that, as a result of correspondence with Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Brothers, agents for the contractors in this city, I have obtained their consent to despatch the contract steamer conveying the outward British and United States mails from this port at midnight upon such date as the final instalment of mail shall arrive here upon Wednesday evening. Since then, however, I have ascertained, by telegraphic communication with the New York agents of the Cunard Steam Ship Company (whose vessels usually convey the outward mails across the Atlantic), that the R.M.S. "Aurania" is appointed to leave Liverpool upon the dates arranged for the despatch of the colonial mails from that port—up to and including the 16th May, 1896. This steamer being a notoriously slow vessel I have not deemed it necessary to press for any alteration in the advertised dates of departure from this port, as, under these circumstances, it is extremely improbable that even with the acceleration of speed of the overland transit the final instalment of through mails will be received before Thursday evening.

It is much to be regretted that the action of the Cunard Company, in arranging their winter time-table so as to cause the "Umbria" to convey the Australian mails, should deprive us of the advantage of the increased speed in overland carriage.

I have, &c.,

W. Gray, Esq.,  
Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington, N.Z.

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,  
Resident Agent.