

## No. 56.

The SECRETARY, Chamber of Commerce, Christchurch, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

Canterbury Chamber of Commerce (Incorporated),  
Christchurch, 31st August, 1905.

SIR,—

Following upon my letter of 29th August on the subject of the delay in forwarding Brindisi mails from the Bluff, I am directed to call your attention to the enclosed paragraph from the *Lyttelton Times* of the 30th August.

With regard to the latter portion of the paragraph, business men can hardly think that this explanation is the correct one, as a delay of say ten minutes would have enabled the whole mail to be put on board the train, which would easily have made up the loss of time on the road.

The matter is of great importance to business people, and I trust that the circumstances will be carefully inquired into.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

H. ANTILL ADLEY, Secretary.

## Enclosure in No. 56.

[Extract.]

A TELEGRAM from Invercargill states that in receiving and despatching the Australian mail by the "Waikare" yesterday morning a mistake was made which will cause disappointment in the north. A special train was waiting to receive the whole mail when the boat arrived, but only the Southland parcel was placed thereon. The missing portion arrived at Invercargill an hour too late for the express, and therefore did not reach Dunedin until seven o'clock last night, and will not reach Christchurch till to-day. A telegram from Wellington says: "The statement made in the Press Association telegram from Invercargill that a mistake was made in transmitting the 'Waikare's' mail at the Bluff this morning is contradicted by the Postal Department. The official explanation is that the steamer did not reach the Bluff until 7.5 a.m., and the Invercargill mail was the only portion landed in time to connect with the special train, which would not wait for the northern mail-bags."

## No. 57.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, Chamber of Commerce, Christchurch.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 5th September, 1905.

I have been directed to refer to your letters of the 29th and 31st ultimo, in connection with the failure of the Australian and Brindisi mails for Christchurch to connect with the first express trains from Invercargill on the 22nd and 29th idem, and, in reply, to inform you that the matter had already been taken up by the Department, which is alive to the importance of the mails by steamers from Australia being promptly forwarded from the Bluff. I am to assure you that everything practicable is being done to this end. The failures mentioned by you can scarcely be charged against the Post Office.

In the case of the "Wimmera's" mails, the company's agents had advised the Invercargill Post-office that the steamer was not expected to reach the Bluff until about midday, therefore an early special to connect with the 8 a.m. express from Invercargill was not arranged for. The vessel, however, made an unusually fast passage.

In respect of the "Waikare's" mails, the steamer made fast to the wharf at 7.9 a.m., and the first sling of mails was landed at 7.12. The special train was timed to leave Bluff at 7.5 a.m., but was detained ten minutes, and could not be held longer. There were about 170 bags to land, and it was not possible to land the whole of the mails in time for the special. It was 7.30 before the last of the mails was landed, and to have held the special train meant detaining the Invercargill express, which was not favoured by the Railway Department, and also delaying the second express from Dunedin for Christchurch.

I am to express regret that the circumstances were unfavourable to the earlier despatch of the mails in question.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Secretary, Canterbury Chamber of Commerce, Christchurch.

## No. 58.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the GENERAL MANAGER, Railway Department, Wellington.

(Memorandum.)

General Post Office, Wellington, 13th September, 1905.

I BEG to bring under your notice the frequent complaints made from Christchurch owing to the mails by the Melbourne steamer missing connection with the first express from Invercargill while passengers are able to catch the train.

A case in point is that of the mails received at the Bluff by the "Waikare" on the 29th ultimo. The steamer was made fast to the wharf at 7.9 a.m., and the first sling of mails landed at 7.12. The special train was timed to leave the Bluff at 7.5 a.m., but was detained until 7.15, later than which it could not be held. The last of the mails was landed at 7.30 a.m., and if the express from Invercargill had been held for fifteen minutes the special would have been enabled to wait longer.