No. 72.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

(Telegram.) Wellington, 10th June, 1908.

"ULIMAROA" missed connection with Suez mail. She left here 10.40 Friday, and did not reach Sydney until 11 last night. The late departure of steamers during the past month is very unsatisfactory. This failure on the part of the "Ulimaroa" will cause widespread dissatisfaction. Seeing that assured connection at Sydney is of such importance, and that steamers are subsidised, it is most unsatisfactory that fixed time departure from Wellington—namely, 4 o'clock—should not be adhered to. I hope you will be able to give assurance that in future all steamers will leave at proper time.

[P.O. 08/2104.]

No. 73.

The GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,— Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin, 10th June, 1908.

I have to acknowledge your letter of the 8th and telegram of the 10th idem with regard to the sailing-hour from Wellington.

This was originally fixed for 4 p.m., and under ordinary circumstances we can rely on despatching our steamers about that time. On account of shortage of fodder which exists at the present time in Australia, it has been found necessary to draw large quantities of chaff from New Zealand, and the handling of this cargo has interfered to some extent with the despatch of some of the more recent steamers.

We might point out that chaff is not a profitable cargo, on account of its great bulk, and the rate of freight earned is a very low one; but it would be a serious matter to shippers were they debarred from taking advantage to the fullest extent of a profitable trade which is only open to them under exceptional circumstances.

We fully realise the importance of maintaining a regular connection with the outward Suez mail in Sydney, and in support of this I would point out that since the contract was arranged we have never failed to do so except in the case of the breakdown of the "Monowai" while on a voyage to Sydney.

We have renewed our instructions to our branches and officers that no effort must be spared to despatch the mail-steamers from Wellington at 4 o'clock, or as near after as possible, and I think it unlikely that it will be found necessary to keep future vessels (unless under exceptional circumstances) as late as the "Maitai" and "Warrimoo" on the 22nd and 29th ultimo respectively.

As regards the "Ulimaroa," this vessel is, as you know, the latest of Messrs. Huddart, Parker, and Co.'s fleet, and has a reputation for high speed, and I think it probable that it will be found that on the recent voyage to Sydney, when she missed the connection, she encountered unusually adverse weather. I am in communication, however, with Mr. Jones, the New Zealand manager for Messrs. Huddart, Parker, and Co., and have asked him to see you on the subject.

We trust you will be satisfied from the facts as placed before you in this communication, that it will not be necessary to arbitrarily fix the sailing-hour from Wellington as 4 p.m., and in conclusion I can assure you that every effort will be made by us to maintain the connection at Sydney, which, since the initiation of the contract, we have consistently done.

I have, &c.,
C. HOLDSWORTH, General Manager.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

[P.O. 08/2104.]

No. 74.

General Post Office, Wellington, 11th June, 1908.

TABLES SHOWING TIME OF CARRIAGE OF MAILS FROM LONDON TO NEW ZEALAND VIA SUEZ CANAL AND AUSTRALIA.

Present Time of Mails.

	Days.	Hours.
London to Bluff	38	4
„ Wellington	39	0

Under Commonwealth New Contract via *Suez* (*P. and O. commenced February*, 1908; *Orient commences February*, 1910).

London to Bluff.

	Days.	Hours.
London to Adelaide	28	16
Largs Bay to Bluff by 20-knot steamer, 1,540 miles	3	5
	31	21
If by 25-knot steamer, deduct 15 hours, making time	31	6