

AUSTRALIA-SUEZ SERVICE.

WELLINGTON-SYDNEY CONNECTION, ETC.

No. 70.

The ACTING-SECRETARY, Postmaster-General's Department, Melbourne, to the ACTING-SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,— Postmaster-General's Department, Melbourne, 12th August, 1914.

With reference to your communication of the 15th April last [see No. 132, F.—6, 1914] relative to the late arrival in Sydney of the mail-steamers from Wellington, I have the honour to inform you, in view of the fact that under the contract for the Wellington-Sydney mail-service the Union Company is required to land the mails, it is considered that this Administration should be reimbursed for the expenditure incurred in this respect on behalf of the company during the period 18th November to 27th January last.

2. The Deputy Postmaster-General reports that the expenditure in question amounts to £7 7s. 5d., and I shall be glad if you will be good enough to credit this Administration with that amount in the Money-order Account.

3. As this Administration is put to considerable expense and inconvenience upon occasions of the late arrival of the New Zealand boats on English mail days, and the staff have to be called upon to work considerably beyond their ordinary hours, I shall be glad if you will be so good as to take suitable action to ensure as far as practicable the strict observance of the contract with regard to the time of the arrival of the vessels in Sydney.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES E. BRIGHT, Acting-Secretary.

The Acting-Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

[P. & T. 36/11.]

No. 71.

The ACTING-SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 25th August, 1914.

I have the honour to refer to your letter of the 7th April last [not printed] on the subject of the report by the Commonwealth Post Office that inconvenience was on several occasions experienced owing to the late arrival at Sydney of the mail-steamers from Wellington, and that the work of landing the mails was done by the members of the Post Office staff.

This Department conveyed to the Commonwealth Office the purport of your reply to the representations, and added that under the contract the landing of the mail was the duty of the contractors. The Commonwealth Office now claims the sum of £7 7s. 5d., the expenditure incurred in landing the mails on behalf of your company for the period from the 18th November to the 27th January last. I shall be glad to receive the amount for transmission to the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth Office represents that it is put to considerable expense and inconvenience when the mail-steamer from Wellington arrives on English mail days, and that on those occasions the staff is required to work considerably beyond ordinary hours, and it requests this Department to ensure as far as possible the strict observance of the contract with regard to the time of arrival in Sydney. I shall therefore be glad of your assurance that every effort will be made to land the mails in Sydney on Tuesdays not later than 6.50 p.m., in accordance with the contract.

I have, &c.,

F. V. WATERS, Acting-Secretary.

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

No. 72.

The SECRETARY, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the ACTING-SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,— Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, 1st September, 1914.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th August regarding the landing of mails at Sydney and the expense incurred by the Commonwealth postal authorities.

4—F. 6.