

No. 147.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the GENERAL MANAGER for the COLONIES, New Zealand Shipping Company, Christchurch.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 21st February, 1899.

VANCOUVER service: Have you had any advice that a three-years contract has been made with Queensland Government commencing March next? If so, does this mean that the service will no longer embrace New Zealand?

No. 148.

The GENERAL MANAGER for the COLONIES, New Zealand Shipping Company, Christchurch, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Christchurch, 21st February, 1899.

We have no information from either London or Sydney regarding a contract between the Canadian-Australian Company and the Queensland Government. Will inform you immediately we receive advice concerning same.

No. 149.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the GENERAL MANAGER for the COLONIES, New Zealand Shipping Company, Christchurch.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 24th February, 1899.

VANCOUVER service: Important I should know at once decision your company. If no intention renewing, quite time we were advised, especially in the face of reported contract with Queensland, which will exclude New Zealand.

No. 150.

The GENERAL MANAGER for the COLONIES, New Zealand Shipping Company, Christchurch, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Christchurch, 24th February, 1899.

HAVE cabled London for instructions regarding extension Vancouver mail contract. Requesting immediate reply; also asking if rumour correct regarding contract with Queensland Government.

No. 151.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the GENERAL MANAGER for the COLONIES, New Zealand Shipping Company, Christchurch.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 3rd March, 1899.

ANYTHING definite yet re renewal or withdrawal of Vancouver service? Very urgent; should have immediate and definite reply.

No. 152.

The GENERAL MANAGER for the COLONIES, New Zealand Shipping Company, Christchurch, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Christchurch, 3rd March, 1899.

SYDNEY agents cabled yesterday no reply yet from Government [of New South Wales]. Expect definite arrangement in few days:

No. 153.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the GENERAL MANAGER for the COLONIES, New Zealand Shipping Company, Christchurch.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 3rd March, 1899.

THANKS. But your principals should have enabled you to reply definitely ere this. "Warrimoo's" mails are to close in London on the 25th, and, if she is not to return here, Agent-General should already have been advised. Have just seen *Brisbane Courier* of 21st ultimo, containing speech delivered by the Premier the previous night. In reference to the Canadian-Australian mail-service, he is reported to this effect: "He had much pleasure in announcing that that day he had issued a letter to the Canadian-Australian Steamship Company, accepting the terms under which they offered to visit Brisbane on their monthly and tri-weekly trips. Their contract with New South Wales and New Zealand expired at the end of this month, and they found that they would be able to have a more rapid mail-service by coming to Brisbane instead of going to Wellington. He had accepted the company's terms for three years on condition that New South Wales agreed to the same term." It would therefore appear that your company had made a definite offer which involved cutting out Wellington, and that this offer has been accepted conditionally. I am constrained to say that your principals have not treated the Government with that courtesy which it had a right to expect. It is now urgent that Government should be definitely informed of the intentions of your company without further delay.