

No. 15); leave Omaha by Union Pacific line at 8.50 a.m. (train No. 1); arrive at Ogden at 1 p.m. (noon, Pacific time); leave Ogden by Southern Pacific Railroad at 12.30 p.m., and arrive at San Francisco at 5.15 p.m.

From the above you will note that the connections at Chicago only give one hour to connect, at Omaha fifty-five minutes (which includes the conveyance across from the Union Pacific transfer to Omaha), and at Ogden thirty minutes. From this it would look as if Omaha connection was the one from which there is the greatest danger of misconnection, and may be responsible for the numerous delays from which we suffer.

You would confer a favour if you would cause some attention to be given to the whole matter, with a view of securing our connection for the Australian mails on the four-weekly periods when an uninterrupted transit is so essential to the continuity of the service. It would also be esteemed a favour if you would kindly inform me, for the information of my Government, of the cause of serious delay reported to the Australian mails leaving New York on the 23rd December last, which resulted in the detention of the contract steamer at this port from 8 p.m. on the 27th until 10.40 a.m. on the 28th ultimo.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

N. M. Brooks, Esq., Superintendent of Foreign Mails, Washington.

Enclosure 2 in No. 55.

The SUPERINTENDENT of FOREIGN MAILS, Washington, to the RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco.

Post Office Department, Office of Foreign Mails,

SIR,—

Washington, D.C., 5th March, 1900.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th January last, relative to certain delays and misconnections lately occurring in the overland carriage from New York to San Francisco of mails destined for the Australian Colonies, and asking to be informed of the cause of the serious delay reported to the Australian mails leaving New York on the 23rd December last, which resulted in the detention of the contract steamer at San Francisco from 8 p.m. on the 27th until 10.40 a.m. on the 28th December.

In reply, I have to inform you that this department makes every effort possible to transport between New York and San Francisco by the speediest trains and without any delay whatever *en route* the closed mails passing between Great Britain and the Australasian Colonies, and when delays do occur it is, as a rule, on account of accidents which cannot be foreseen or guarded against.

In the case of the mails forwarded from New York on the 23rd December last which did not reach San Francisco until fourteen hours after they were due there, I have to inform you that the delay was caused by the wrecks of two other trains, one of which occurred near Albany, New York, and the other near Blue Canyon, California.

I am, &c.,

N. M. Brooks, Superintendent of Foreign Mails.

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

No. 56.

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

SIR,—

Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 18th April, 1900.

I have the honour to enclose for your information some correspondence lately passing in connection with the delay to mails for Honolulu, Apia, Tahiti, and New Zealand, which missed connection with the last steamer. The delay, as explained by Superintendent West, of the Chicago division of the Postal Railroad Service, would seem to have been inevitable. Other matters in connection with the furnishing of necessary details in case of future detentions I hope will receive attention.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 56.

The RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco, to the SUPERINTENDENT of the RAILWAY MAIL-SERVICE, San Francisco.

SIR,—

Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 30th March, 1900.

Reverting to the misconnection of some thirty-five sacks of mail destined for trans-Pacific ports reported from Chicago on the 19th instant, which caused some confusion at this end, and resulted in serious consideration of the question of detaining the contract steamer at this port on the 21st instant, I would seek your good offices in an endeavour to secure the co-operation of your department to the end that a general instruction may be given to all railway mail superintendents located on the line of transport from the eastern seaboard to this city. The instruction desired is to the effect that, in case of a misconnection at any point *en route*, it shall be the duty of the