

it might be well, in view of the difficulty of bringing our members together, for him to make a definite offer for the line, and I will submit it.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES HUNTER,

Secretary, Wairio Railway and Coal Company (Limited).

Messrs. Watson and Haggitt, Solicitors, Esk Street.

DEAR SIR,—

Invercargill, 17th June, 1913.

Replying now to your letter of the 29th April, I have to say that your questions were submitted to a recent meeting of shareholders of this company, and I was instructed to reply—

(1.) That, owing to various uncertainties, many of them arising out of an agitation for the Government to take over our line, we are quite unable at present to come to any definite decision regarding the matter referred to by you. When, however, these uncertainties are settled we shall welcome an opportunity of discussing the matter of an extension with your clients.

(2.) The shareholders of this company have no desire to sell the railway.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES HUNTER,

Secretary, Wairio Railway and Coal Company (Limited).

Messrs. Watson and Haggitt, Solicitors, Esk Street.

DEAR SIR,—

Invercargill, 18th October, 1913.

In course of your interview with the Minister of Railways at Nightcaps on the 21st April you are reported as having asked the Minister, *inter alia*, to decline to let our company have the use of Government coal-trucks unless we charged Government haulage rates. Up to that time no question as to the withholding of trucks had arisen, but although we have made several applications to the Department for an assurance that we would have the use of the trucks when our line was finished, we have not so far got a definite answer, although, as mentioned by Mr. More to Mr. Rodger, they have granted us the use of ballast-trucks and M wagons during the construction of the line. We believe that the action of the Government in withholding the use of trucks for the railway haulage is due to your representation, and our object in now writing to you is to ask that you will kindly write the Minister of Railways withdrawing your request that the trucks should be withheld, as until we know whether we are going to get them it is impossible for us to deal with the matter of rates for carrying coal or of linking up with our line. An early reply will oblige.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES HUNTER,

Secretary, Wairio Railway and Coal Company (Limited).

W. J. A. McGregor, Esq., Mount Linton, Nightcaps.

DEAR SIR,—

Invercargill, 13th December, 1913.

With reference to our conversation regarding rates for carrying coal on our railway when it is completed: We propose to regard the authorized rate of 5s. 6d. per ton as the carrying-rate, but propose to give rebates depending on the total amount of coal carried over the line in each year. These I am now working out to submit to a meeting of our directors on Saturday night next, 20th instant, and I hope to send you the figures on Monday, the 22nd.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES HUNTER,

Secretary, Wairio Railway and Coal Company (Limited).

Mr. Joseph Johnston, Leet Street.

DEAR SIR,—

Invercargill, 22nd December, 1913.

*Re* haulage rates for loose coal on Wairio Railway: I have been instructed to reply to your inquiry that our rate is 5s. 6d. per ton for truck lots, but we are prepared to make rebates depending on the total quantity of coal carried in each year. I enclosed list of rebates, and have to point out that these rebates will only be given if we get the use of Government trucks at ordinary rates. If we have to supply trucks ourselves the rebate will in each case be 6d. per ton less.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES HUNTER,

Secretary, Wairio Railway and Coal Company (Limited).

Mr. Joseph Johnston, Vulcan Foundry, Leet Street.

DEAR SIR,—

Invercargill, 4th March, 1914.

*Re* haulage rates for loose coal on Wairio Railway: I have been instructed to reply to your inquiry that our rate is 5s. 6d. per ton for truck lots, but we are prepared to make rebates depending on the total quantity of coal carried in each year. I enclose list of rebates, and have to point out that these rebates will only be given if we get the use of Government trucks at ordinary rates. If we have to supply trucks ourselves the rebate will in each case be 6d. per ton less.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES HUNTER,

Secretary, Wairio Railway and Coal Company (Limited).

Mr. Joseph Johnston, Vulcan Foundry, Invercargill.