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**Good cause for delay—difficult domestic circumstances**

Claim for benefit was delayed because claimant was living alone in a new district, and while suffering from tracheo-bronchitis had no one to attend to her at first and later had to rely on a neighbour with whom she was only slightly acquainted. Until her doctor's second visit she did not know where to send her medical certificates.

*Held* that the claimant had proved good cause for delay.

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1. My decision is that the claimant was not disqualified for receiving sickness benefit from the 12th to the 18th December, 1953 both dates included.

2. The claimant lived alone and became incapable of work on the 12th December, 1953 by reason of tracheo-bronchitis. She remained incapable of work until the 2nd January, 1954, but she did not make any claim for sickness benefit until the 23rd December, 1953. She has explained the reason for her delay by saying that, living alone as she did, she had been unable to get anyone to look after her needs for two or three days. She had been living in the district for only three months and did not know where to send a medical certificate for the purpose of claiming sickness benefit. A doctor came to see her on the 14th December, 1953. She was suffering from a loss of voice. Messages, which she had written and given to someone who came in to help her, had not been delivered, with the result that her employers did not receive a message from her and that added to her illness and worry. When her doctor saw her a second time on the 21st December, 1953 she appears to have found out from him where she ought to send her certificate.

3. The claimant was, I think, in a very real difficulty.

4. It has been suggested that she might have written to the local office of the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance and asked her neighbour who came in to attend to her to post it, but as she did not know to what address she should send the letter I do not see how she could do that. Living alone as she did in a new district, apparently suffering from loss of voice and with no more than a neighbour, with whom she was obviously very slightly acquainted, doing what was necessary for her I do not think that the delay which occurred before she submitted her claim for sickness benefit to the local insurance office was unreasonable in the circumstances. Having to rely on a neighbour for essential services she might well have hesitated to impose on her further by asking her to make inquiries as to the address of the office to which she should send her claim for sickness benefit and further she was suffering from tracheo-bronchitis in circumstances in which the conditions were very difficult for her.

5. I am satisfied that I should hold that she has proved good cause for her failure to claim benefit before she did.

6. I allow the claimant's appeal.

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