

## No. 17.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the POSTMASTER, Apia, Samoa, and the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 23rd October, 1899.

I have the honour to forward herewith for your information copy of correspondence between the President of the Municipality of Apia and this department regarding payment for the conveyance of Samoan mails by the San Francisco mail-steamer.

I have, &amp;c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

[The Postmaster, Apia, Samoa.]

[The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.]

## Enclosure 1 in No. 17.

The PRESIDENT of the MUNICIPALITY, Apia, Samoa, to the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, Apia, 16th September, 1899.

I have the honour to enclose copy of a letter from the Managing Director of the Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand, dated Dunedin, 18th August, 1899.

I should feel much obliged if you would kindly furnish me with a copy of the agreement made with Mr. Davis, who for several years past has undertaken to forward and receive the Samoan mails.

I have, &amp;c.,

W. H. SOLF, President.

The Postmaster-General, Wellington.

## Sub-enclosure to Enclosure 1 in No. 17.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the PRESIDENT of the MUNICIPALITY, Apia, Samoa.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),

Dunedin, 18th August, 1899.

DEAR SIR,—

I wish to bring under your notice the fact that we have received no payment for the conveyance of mails from Samoa since 1894. The New Zealand Post Office authorities advise us that the following were the values of the mails shipped from Samoa during the period in question: Year ending November, 1895, £93 10s. 8d.; 1896, £52 16s. 7d.; 1897, £51 0s. 7d.; 1898, £65 7s.: total, £262 14s. 10d. I might mention that this amount only represents mailages carried by the San Francisco mail-steamer, and we have not received any remuneration from your Government for value of mails carried by our island steamers.

I shall be glad if you will remit this amount to our Auckland office direct.

Yours, &amp;c.,

C. HOLDSWORTH, for Managing Director.

Dr. W. H. Solf, President of the Municipality, Apia, Samoa.

## Enclosure 2 in No. 17.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the PRESIDENT of the MUNICIPALITY, Apia, Samoa.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 23rd October, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, requesting to be furnished with a copy of the agreement made with Mr. Davis, Postmaster, for the conveyance of Samoan mails by the San Francisco mail-steamer, and to inform you in reply that I am not aware of any agreement with Mr. Davis personally, but the following extract from a letter addressed to me by the contractors for the San Francisco mail-service will perhaps make the position clear to you. The Managing Director of the Union Steam Ship Company wrote: "I notice, however, in statement B, showing the weights of correspondence from the Samoan Islands received by New Zealand Mail-agents, and included in the weights advised on the New Zealand letter-bills, you state that these mails were formerly shipped by Samoa to San Francisco direct, and it is understood no claim was made thereon against Samoa by the Union Steam Ship Company. We have no arrangements to carry Samoan mails free. As a matter of fact, the Municipality of Apia agreed to pay us a certain sum for calling at that port, which was to include the carriage of the Samoan mails, but we have been unable to collect that sum."

From this it appears that an agreement was made between the Municipality of Apia and the Union Steam Ship Company, which covered payment for the carriage of mails by the contract vessels. You will, no doubt, be in a position to ascertain whether such agreement is still in force; or, if abrogated, whether any fresh agreement was substituted making direct provision for mail-conveyance.

I should perhaps state that since September, 1894, Samoan mail-matter for countries beyond the United States has been sent forward on the New Zealand Marine Post Office, and embodied with the mails from this colony.

I may also explain that the accounts furnished by this office to the Union Steam Ship Company are based on the weights advised on the Mail-agents' letter-bills, and, as these include the Samoan correspondence, its equivalent is deducted from the total payments made the contractors by this department. The claim preferred against your office by the Union Steam Ship Company is computed at the poundage rates paid by this colony under the San Francisco mail-service contract,