

THE PENINSULAR AND ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY AND HER MAJESTY'S POSTMASTER-GENERAL—EAST INDIA, CHINA, AND AUSTRALIA MAILS.

CONTRACT.

Articles of agreement under seal made and entered into this 25th day of May, 1897, between the Most Noble Henry, Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal and Hereditary Marshal of England, K.G., Her Majesty's Postmaster-General (hereinafter called "the Postmaster-General," in which term his successors in the office of Her Majesty's Postmaster-General for the time being shall be deemed to be included), on behalf of Her Majesty of the one part and the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, whose office is situate at 122, Leadenhall Street, in the City of London (hereinafter called "the company," in which term their successors and permitted assigns shall be deemed to be included) of the other part.

THESE presents witness that, in consideration of the matters hereinafter appearing, it is hereby agreed and declared between and by the parties hereto, and the Postmaster-General (as to the covenants, agreements, and stipulations hereinafter contained on his part) doth hereby covenant and agree with the company, and the company (as to the covenants, agreements, and stipulations hereinafter contained on their part) do hereby covenant and agree with the Postmaster-General, in manner following (that is to say):—

INTERPRETATION OF TERMS.

1. For all the purposes of this agreement,—

The term "mails" means and includes all bags, boxes, baskets, or other packages of letters and other postal packets, including parcels (each parcel not exceeding the maximum weight of 11 lb.), without regard either to the country or place to which such packages may be addressed, or to the country or place in which they may have originated, and also all empty bags, boxes, baskets, or other receptacles, and all stores and other articles used or to be used in carrying on the Post Office service.

The term "postal packet" means any article for the time being transmissible by post, and includes a parcel.

The term "parcel" means a parcel within the meaning of "The Post Office (Parcels) Act, 1882."

The term "mail-ship" means a vessel provided for the conveyance of mails under this agreement.

The term "Adelaide" means the signalling-station (known as "Adelaide Semaphore") at or off the port of the City of Adelaide, in South Australia.

The term "the Admiralty" means the Commissioners for the time being for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom.

SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED.

2. (1.) Subject to the provisions of this agreement, the company shall during the continuance of this agreement, at their own cost and charges in all respects, convey by means of mail-ships all mails which the Postmaster-General or any of his officers or agents shall from time to time and at any time or times require to be conveyed—

(a.) Between Brindisi and Bombay, and

(b.) Between Brindisi and Shanghai, and

(c.) Between Brindisi and Adelaide, and

(d.) Between all other ports from which the mail-ships shall start, or at which they shall call or arrive under the provisions of this agreement, or for the purposes of the company.

(2.) All such mails shall be conveyed at the respective intervals of time and on the three several routes specified in the First Schedule hereto (which routes are hereinafter referred to as "mail routes").

(3.) For the purpose of this clause of this agreement the postal authorities of the several possessions or colonies of India, Ceylon, Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, the Straits Settlements, and Hong Kong, and their respective officers and agents, shall unless and until the Postmaster-General shall give notice to the company to the contrary be deemed the agents of the Postmaster-General.

3. (1.) Subject to the provisions of this agreement, one of the mail-ships shall at such intervals as are specified in the First Schedule hereto in the case of each mail route put to sea from the port or place of departure on each of the said routes, at such day and hour as the Postmaster-General shall from time to time appoint, or so soon after such day and hour as the mails are embarked on board such mail-ship, and the mails conveyed by such mail-ship shall be delivered at the several ports or places of call, and at the port or place of destination on the said route in the order indicated in the said route, and shall be delivered at the port or place of destination on the said route at such day and hour as the Postmaster-General may from time to time appoint.

(2.) The days, hours, and times of departure and arrival in this clause referred to may be appointed by the Postmaster-General, either by a time-table or time-tables, to be from time to time approved by him, or in such other manner as he shall think fit.

(3.) With respect to mail route No. 3—

(a.) The company shall use the Princess Royal Harbour at the Port of Albany whenever the use of such harbour is practicable.

(b.) The company shall (if requested by the Postmaster-General so to do) substitute the Port of Fremantle, in Western Australia, for the Port of Albany as a port of call under this agreement as soon as the mail-ships can use the Port of Fremantle with safety, and