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Superintendent's Office, Auckland,
February 27th, 1857.

THE following Correspondence, on the subject of Inter-Colonial and Inter-Provincial Steam Communication, is published for general information.

J. WILLIAMSON,
Superintendent.

15, St. Mary-Axe, London,
12th December, 1856.

SIR,—

I beg to enclose for the perusal of yourself and your friends a copy of a letter I forward by this mail to his Excellency the Governor respecting an efficient and regular steam service for your Colony.

I hope my proposition will meet with your approval and support, and I pledge myself to carry it out in a manner which will ensure the perfect satisfaction of the Colonists, if the requisite subsidy be voted by the House of Representatives.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,
FRED. F. GIBBS.

His Honor the Superintendent,
&c., &c., &c.
Auckland.

(Copy)

15, St. Mary-Axe, London,
December, 1856.

SIR,—

I have the honor to address your Excellency for the purpose of submitting to your

notice a plan which I am endeavouring at the present time to perfect, for providing the colonists of New Zealand with a regular and efficient system of Inter-Colonial and Inter-Provincial Steam Navigation.

2. I beg to inform your Excellency that I visited the various Provinces of New Zealand, in a steamer called the *Ann*, about four years ago, with instructions respecting this subject from Captain Sparks, the Superintendent of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's Works at Sydney. I was received in every Province with much cordiality and a hearty welcome, and I on that occasion pledged myself to carry out the wishes of the colonists, as they were explained to me, to the utmost of my power.

3. On my return to England, after my visit to New Zealand, I laid the various communications on the subject of Steam Navigation before the Directors of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, but was informed by them that their agent in Sydney had exceeded his instructions in sending me to New Zealand, and that they were not prepared to do anything in the matter.

4. I then brought the subject before the notice of some influential and wealthy gentlemen in London, who entered willingly into my plans; but, on the breaking out of the late war, I was called away to take the command in the Black Sea, and the negotiations remained in abeyance until my return home.

5. The delay which has hitherto taken place has been quite unavoidable. Even if I had remained in England instead of taking up my command I should have been prevented by the state of the money market from forming a

company for the purpose which I have in view.

6. I am happy, however, to be in a position at the present time to inform your Excellency that the difficulties which have hitherto checked my efforts, have been surmounted and that within a month after the receipt of a favourable reply to this letter I shall be prepared to send out to the Colony the first ship of the New Zealand Inter-Colonial and Inter-Provincial Steam Navigation Company.

7. The Company proposes to put on two steamers, each of them being not less than 800 tons burden and 200 horse power, to run monthly between New Zealand and Australia; these boats would meet the European steamers bringing the English mails and would convey them direct to the seat of Government in New Zealand, wherever that may be, and return again to Australia in time to put the mails on board the homeward bound mail steamer. The Company will engage, under penalties as may subsequently be agreed on, that their mail steamer shall sail from either port within 12 hours after the mails are put on board, unless prevented by stress of weather or an unavoidable break down of machinery.

8. The Company proposes also to put on two other steamers, each of them being not less than 400 tons burden and 100 horse power, to meet their mail steamer on her arrival from Australia, and to carry the mails both English and Provincial to the various Provinces of New Zealand, returning from each trip in time to put the Provincial mails on board their Inter-Colonial steamer before she sails for Australia. It is not possible at present to mark the exact course of each steamer as this must depend somewhat upon the seat of Government in New Zealand, but I may state that it is the intention of the Company to give service to each Province of the Colony, and to make Auckland and Wellington the ports to and from which the Inter-Colonial steamers would run.

9. There would be, therefore, two steamers, of not less than 800 tons each and 200 horse power, running between New Zealand and Australia, and these would be constantly employed in the Inter-Colonial service, and there also would be two steamers of not less than 400 tons each, and 100 horse power, running up and down the coast of New Zealand, and these would be solely engaged in the Inter-Colonial service.

10. Your Excellency is of course aware that steamers cannot be employed with any satisfactory result to their owners unless they receive a subsidy for carrying the Mails. And the express object of this letter is to ascertain the views of your Excellency's government upon this important question. I must be allowed to state frankly that a subsidy guaranteed for a certain number of years by the New Zealand Government is absolutely requisite for the establishment and support of an efficient Steam service, and I trust that the proposition which I am about to make on this subject, will obtain the consent and approval of your Excellency's Government.

11. The Company would propose to carry out the whole Steam service both Inter-colonial and Inter-provincial for one subsidy, to be paid by the General Government of the Co-

lony, leaving the Provinces to arrange their quota of the expences with the General Government. This would be far more convenient and satisfactory than to have one contract with the General Government for the delivery of the English Mails at some place in New Zealand, and another contract with the Provincial authorities for delivering the Mails at the respective Provinces of the Colony.

12. The amount of subsidy which would be required for the performance of the whole service would be Twenty Thousand Pounds (£20,000) per annum, and it would be requisite that this sum should be guaranteed for at least five years. And I trust that Your Excellency's Government will consider this a reasonable amount taking into consideration the nature of the services to be performed. I feel bound to add that a less sum would not be sufficient for the purposes of the Company which I propose to establish.

13. I am aware that a proposition has been or is about to be made to your Excellency by the Directors of the West India Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, who are endeavouring to establish an Australian Mail Service, via Panama, to drop the English Mails at Auckland on their way to Australia and to call for the home Mails on the return of the steamer to Panama. It is at present considered very doubtful whether they will be in a position to carry out their wishes at all, but should such prove to be the case, I submit to your Excellency that their steam service, if accepted, will confer but very inadequate advantages upon the Colony of New Zealand. They contemplate merely a delivery of the English Mails at Auckland. The company with which I am concerned proposes not only to carry the Mails but also to provide accommodation for the passengers and mercantile traffic of the whole Colony, and other beneficial results will accrue to the colonists if the terms which I now have the honour to submit to your Excellency be accepted.

14. Your Excellency is aware that the fuel at present used for domestic purposes throughout the whole of New Zealand is wood. Every year it exists in less quantity near the towns, and has to be brought further from the interior of the country. During the winter season, particularly, owing to the state of the roads, it is scarce and dear. It is at all times an expensive fuel. When I was in New Zealand, my attention was particularly directed to this subject, and I devoted several weeks to the exploration of the coal fields and the discovery of a good quality of coal. I was very successful in my investigations, and since my return to England I have submitted the specimens which I brought home with me to the analysis of a gentleman who has recently returned from Borneo, where he had been specially engaged by his Excellency Sir James Brooke to superintend the opening act and the working of the coal fields at Labnan. I mention this circumstance to shew that I speak from good authority. This gentleman assures me that the specimens of coals upon which I have requested his opinion are of a very superior quality, and would, if properly worked, become a valuable source of wealth to the Colony.

15. This valuable source of wealth the Company, with which I am connected, intends to develop in connection with the Steam Service, and thus to provide at once a two-fold boon for the Colonists. It is proposed to have two good sized steam colliers to convey coals for the use of the Company's steamers, and also to supply by their means the various Provinces with the best fuel at an exceedingly moderate comparative cost; so that not only will private families be saved much trouble and expense, but facilities also will be afforded for working mills and machinery of all kinds, with much greater convenience and at one-half of the present outlay, and in the course of a few years all the principal towns in the Colony, together with their Government offices, hotels, shops, and private houses will be lighted with gas.

16. I therefore confidently submit to your Excellency that the Company with which I am connected presents advantages to the Colonists infinitely superior to those which may be offered by the West India Mail Company. We are prepared to carry out our services with the strictest punctuality, and to enter into penalties for the due performance of the terms of the contract, if your Excellency's Government should think fit to guarantee the requisite subsidy.

17. The Company will send out to the Colony, immediately upon the receipt of a satisfactory reply to this letter, the six vessels alluded to above, viz. :—two steam vessels for the Inter-Colonial Service, two other steamers for the Inter-Provincial Service, and two large and powerful Steam Colliers for the Coal Service. An average speed of not less than 8 miles an hour will be guaranteed, under penalty for all the steamers, and the Mail boats will also be under penalty to leave their ports whenever it may be within 12 hours after the mails are put on board, stress of weather and unavoidable break down of machinery alone excepted. Power will be reserved to the Government to vary the course of the steamers, or to employ them in carrying troops or ammunition if the public service should require it, and any extra service so rendered should be paid for by special agreement, or failing that, by arbitration. The Company would protect either by purchase or otherwise the existing interests of the proprietors of any suitable steam vessels at present engaged in the Colonial service. A moderate scale of passengers' fares and of charges for goods would be adopted, so that the colonists may have every inducement to be satisfied with the arrangements entered into on their behalf. All the steamers would be new boats, and great care would be taken to appoint such officers to command them as were well known for their attention to the comfort and convenience of their passengers.

18. It would be requisite that the subsidy should be paid every quarter of the year, but the first payment would not be required till the steamer had been running for six months. The Company will enter into a contract to continue the Service for five years under a penalty of £5000, together with the loss of that portion of the subsidy which might be due at the time they failed to carry out their contract. The contract must be made for five years

certain, and subject to termination at that time, or in any subsequent year, after twelve months' notice has been received from either party of the desire of the Government or the Company to terminate it.

19. Your Excellency will not fail to perceive that although the Government would, by such an arrangement, pay away the sum of £20,000 per annum, yet in reality the Company would expend a far larger sum in their various works in the Colony, so that the Colony would actually gain by the contract. Trade, also, would be developed—population increased—intercourse facilitated—and the natural highway of the country would be traversed with speed, regularity, and safety.

20. I have only further to add that I should esteem it a great favour if a reply to this letter be forwarded to me at the earliest possible opportunity. It may perhaps increase Your Excellency's confidence in me, if I inform you that I have been forty years at sea; and that for nine years I commanded a steamer which belonged to the Directors of the first Steam Company in the world—the Peninsular and Oriental Company. I hope I may therefore say that I have the fullest experience, which it is my intention, if your Excellency's Government will guarantee the moderate subsidy which I have asked for, to come out to the Colony, and as Marine Superintendent to the New Zealand Inter-Colonial and Inter-Provincial Steam Navigation Company, to arrange and to carry out under my own personal supervision the due performance of the proposition which I have now the honor of submitting for your Excellency's consideration.

I have the honor to be,

Your Excellency's most obedient
humble servant,

(Signed) FRED. F. GIBBS.

His Excellency the Governor,
&c., &c., &c.
Auckland, New Zealand.

Superintendent's Office, Auckland,
27th February, 1857.

I HEREBY notify for general information that His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to leave to their operation the undermentioned Acts, passed during the 6th Session of the Provincial Council, viz:—

"Thistle Act," No. 1, Sess. 6.
"Education Act," No. 2, " "

J. WILLIAMSON,
Superintendent.

NOTICE.

Superintendent's Office, Auckland,
27th February, 1857.

I HEREBY notify that I have appointed Mr. EDWARD BOLGER to be Harbour Master for the Port of Russell, vice Mr. Bateman.

This appointment to date from the first proximo.

J. WILLIAMSON,
Superintendent.

