

1887.

NEW ZEALAND.

SUPPLY OF TINNED AND FROZEN MEAT FOR IMPERIAL
TROOPS IN ENGLAND

(CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE AGENT-GENERAL AS TO).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 3rd July, 1885.

The question was asked in the House on Tuesday, "If the Government will, through the Agent-General, endeavour to arrange that all Imperial applications for the supply of tinned and frozen meats be cabled to New Zealand and advertised, care being taken that ample time is given for New Zealand companies to deliver?" which I answered in the affirmative; and I now have the honour to request that you will be so good as to endeavour to make arrangements accordingly with the Imperial authorities,

Sir F. Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 2.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 29th June, 1886.

This afternoon, in the House, Mr. Johnston asked me the following questions: (1.) What had been the result of the Government telegram to the Agent-General on the subject of New Zealand tinned meats? (2.) If Government will instruct the Agent-General to take steps in the direction of obtaining permission for the contractors for the supply of fresh meat to the Imperial troops in England to supply New Zealand mutton.

The first question, no doubt, applies to my letter to you of the 3rd July last, in which I asked you to be good enough to endeavour to arrange with the Imperial authorities so that notice of applications for the supply of tinned meats should be cabled to the colony. You acknowledged the receipt of that letter, but do not seem since to have informed me of the result of any application you may have made to the Imperial authorities. May I request you to be good enough to give your further attention to the matter?

In replying to the questions I stated that I would especially direct your attention to the second. Will you also, therefore, be good enough to give the matter your consideration?

Sir F. Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G., C.B., Agent-General, &c.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 3.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 21st October, 1886.

Adverting to your letter of the 29th June relating to New Zealand tinned meats, I put off answering it because I have never yet been able to make any progress in the sense of the questions put to you in the House of Representatives. The question originally asked, in July, 1885, was, whether it could not be arranged that "all Imperial applications for the supply of tinned and frozen meats should be cabled to New Zealand and advertised, care being taken that ample time was given for New Zealand companies to make deliveries;" but I privately found that such a proposal could not be entertained. The Imperial Government would never agree to telegraph to any particular country for a particular supply. They advertise for tenders here, and it is obviously the business of those who are engaged in any trade affected by the advertisement to have agents here able to send in tenders and to communicate by cable (if necessary) with their principals. It did not seem

to me that any good would be done by getting this put on official record; but, now the question has been repeated in the House, I will make formal application, so as to get a definite answer for you to announce.

With regard to contractors for fresh meat to the Imperial troops in England being allowed to supply frozen mutton, I understand there is not so much difficulty, and I will do all I can to get the permission desired.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

No. 4.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 11th February, 1887.

Since writing to you on the 21st October last, No. 1,290, I have been in further private communication with the Imperial departments on the subject of the supplies of tinned and frozen meats for Her Majesty's forces, which has led to the correspondence of which copies are enclosed. I hope soon to get replies to my letters, when I shall address you again.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

I have, &c.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 4.

Mr. E. MACGREGOR to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Admiralty, S.W., 14th January, 1887.

I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to lay before you the following particulars, and to request that you will favour them with your advice on the subject.

2. At present, salt beef for the navy is obtained from the States of America, in accordance with the conditions of contract, copy of which is transmitted herewith,* the curing of fresh meat at the Royal Victoria Yard, Deptford, having being given up for some years on account of cost, although it can be recommenced at any time if necessary.

3. Three years ago my Lords directed inquiries to be made by the Paymaster in Charge at Sydney as to the feasibility of opening up a fresh source of supply of this article in New Zealand; but the result of the trial was not satisfactory, inasmuch as the two samples sent Home were condemned as unfit for human food, and were sold to the soap-boilers for boiling down.

4. It was further found that the native woods were unfit for being used for salt-meat casks, and that American or Baltic timber must be imported into the colony for that purpose.

5. The Paymaster in Charge reported at the time that he had failed in obtaining tenders either from Dunedin, Christchurch, or Napier, and it further appeared that the meat sent Home had been put up in the height of a New Zealand summer.

6. My Lords are of opinion that the failure may have been due to want of knowledge of the resources and trade of the colony, and that, as much attention and capital seem to have been directed lately to sending meat Home to England, it may be in your power to assist them with your advice as to the best method of attaining the object they have in view.

7. I am to draw your particular attention to the conditions of the contract at present in force for supplies obtained from America in regard to packages and messing.

8. I am to add that the salt beef purchased for Her Majesty's ships on the Australian station gives satisfaction; but this is probably owing to the meat being newly packed and brought into early local consumption; whereas the salt beef which would be contracted for in New Zealand, if the trade of that country competed favourably with America, would remain some considerable time in the various dépôts at home and abroad before it would be brought into consumption. The quantity of salt beef bought annually may be taken as about 500,000lb.

I am, &c.,

Sir Francis D. Bell, K.C.M.G., C.B., Agent-General for New Zealand, 7, Westminster Chambers, S.W.

EVAN MACGREGOR.

Enclosure 2 in No. 4.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, S.W., 31st January, 1887.

I have given careful consideration to your letter of the 14th instant relating to the supply of salt beef from New Zealand for Her Majesty's ships.

Having had the advantage of personal discussion with the Director of Victualling, I mentioned that a material point would be the term for which any contract would be allowed, supposing other conditions to be satisfactory to the Admiralty. Taking the total quantity of salt beef annually required at 500,000lb., and assuming the conditions to be insisted upon of the casks being made either of oak staves or American or Baltic wood, I do not think there would be any inducement for New Zealand colonists to undertake the supply upon a contract extending only to the usual term of one year. I would therefore ask whether the term of contract can be extended, and, if so, for how long. In the meantime I am forwarding the correspondence to New Zealand, with the view of inviting practical suggestions in the colony from persons interested in the salting industry.

My Government will entirely appreciate the spirit in which my Lords are seeking to open up a

* Not enclosed.

fresh source of supply for the navy from New Zealand; and it encourages me to bring before you another matter, to which I would ask their favourable consideration. On more than one occasion questions have been asked in the New Zealand Legislature whether it would not be possible for the Imperial authorities to give such notice of supplies being required of tinned meats as would enable people engaged in that industry in the colony to send in tenders; and it was suggested that such a notice should be telegraphed, sufficient time being allowed to colonial tenderers for delivering the tins in this country. The advantage, which my Lords recognize, of obtaining, as far as possible, the food-supplies for Her Majesty's forces (other things being equal) from the Queen's possessions, is especially clear in the case of tinned meats, a practically unlimited supply of which, both beef and mutton, is at the command of the Imperial services in New Zealand and Australia. The objection may perhaps be admitted to be not without force, that, full publicity being always given here to all requirements for tinned meats, it is the business of persons engaged in that particular industry to have competent agents in this country able to tender for the supply. But the colonists themselves who are in the industry do not know what the average quantity annually wanted really is, nor the countries whose ordinary competition they have to meet, nor the average price that is paid over a given time.

I venture to ask whether these particulars could be given to me, with the view of ascertaining how far New Zealand would be prepared to supply the goods, and to undertake on a larger scale than at present the expenditure necessary for a constantly regular production within a margin of that average price. An essential element, as in the case of salt beef, would be the term of contract, and my Lords may be willing to extend the present ordinary term if other conditions were performed to their satisfaction. I shall be much obliged by any other details regarding the ordinary supply of tinned meats, which my Lords may think would enable my Government to give the best information to the Legislature of the colony.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary to the Admiralty, Whitehall.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 3 in No. 4.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for WAR.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, S.W., 31st January, 1887.

I beg permission to bring before the Secretary of State a matter to which I would ask his favourable consideration.

On more than one occasion questions have been asked in the New Zealand Legislature whether it would not be possible for the War Office to give greater opportunities that at present exist for the supply of tinned meats and frozen mutton to Her Majesty's forces.

As regards tinned meats, it has been suggested that notice of the Imperial requirements should be telegraphed, sufficient time being allowed for colonial tenderers to deliver the supplies in this country. As regards frozen mutton, it is assumed that the War Office would not object to contractors being allowed to tender for the supply of that article when tenders are invited for the supplies of fresh meat.

I am aware that it may be objected that, as full publicity is always given here to all requirements for the Imperial service, it is the business of colonists who may be engaged in the particular industries thereby affected to have competent agents in this country able to tender for the supplies required. But the colonists occupied in the two industries to which I am referring do not know what the average quantities annually wanted really are, nor the countries whose ordinary competition they have to meet, nor the average prices that are paid over a given period, nor even (as to frozen mutton) how far consumption by the army would be permitted. I am very sensible that the Secretary of State would look favourably upon the proposition that it is desirable to obtain, as far as possible (other things being equal), the food-supplies for the army from within the Queen's possessions. As regards both tinned meats and frozen mutton, practically unlimited quantities are available in New Zealand; and I venture to ask that information on the points mentioned above should be given to me, in order to enable my Government to communicate the same to the Colonial Parliament.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of State for War.

F. D. BELL.

No. 5.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the HON. the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 8th March, 1887.

In continuation of my letter of the 11th February, No. 207, I beg to enclose copy of one I have received from the War Office relating to the supply of tinned and frozen meats.

As regards tinned meat, you will observe that (except in times of emergency) the annual War Office requirements are only about 600,000lb., at a price under £2 10s. per cwt., and the contractors have to guarantee the meat to keep sound for two years. Everything depends upon the care with which the meat is canned; and I ought to mention that, only the other day, when New Zealand tinned meats were to be supplied for the emigrants in the steamship "Arawa," the tins had to be rejected. The War Office has requested me to send in samples of the best New Zealand brands, and I am making inquiries accordingly.

As regards frozen mutton, the War Office does not think it advisable to make specific contracts for its supply, on account of the prejudice still existing against its use; but it is nevertheless certain that large quantities of the mutton are actually supplied by fresh-meat contractors as part of their

deliveries, and are satisfactory to Her Majesty's troops. The War Office therefore proposes to leave things to be arranged, as they are now, between the army contractor and the importer; and I feel sure that you will agree that is the best course.

In a day or two I shall receive the answer of the Admiralty. It will practically be to the effect that, although they cannot send out notice of their wants in meat to the colony, they will let me know them in good time, and that, if supplies of the proper quality can be insured, there would be no objection to making contracts for two or three years instead of one.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 5.

The DIRECTOR of ARMY CONTRACTS, War Office, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

War Office, Pall Mall, S.W., 5th March, 1887.

I am directed by Mr. Secretary Stanhope to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st January last, in which you request certain information as to the supply of tinned meats and frozen mutton for army service, in view of placing New Zealand companies in a position to compete for such contracts.

In reply, I am to acquaint you that, except in times of emergency, when large supplies are required for expeditionary forces or for a special reserve, the wants of the department in canned meats are limited to the quantity consumed by the colonial garrisons, which amounts to about 600,000lb. annually, and that it is hoped, as a rule, to be able to give long notice of the dates of delivery of supplies for ordinary service. Recent prices for canned meat, in 6lb. and 2lb. tins, have been under £2 10s. per 112lb. net of meat; and contractors have to guarantee that the meat will keep sound and wholesome for two years from date of delivery. I am also to point out that, for obvious reasons, only meat of approved brands is bought, and that at present not many of the New Zealand descriptions are upon the authorized list; but if you will be good enough to furnish the Secretary of State with a return of what are considered to be the best brands of that colony, and to cause samples to be forwarded, they will be carefully examined, as Mr. Stanhope is desirous of including in the list all proved suitable brands.

As regards frozen mutton, it is not yet deemed advisable to make specific contracts for its supply, there being still a certain amount of prejudice against its use, particularly among the lower classes; and there would be a probability of complaints if frozen mutton alone were contracted for. At present, however, it is believed that considerable quantities are supplied by the contractors for fresh meat, which give satisfaction, and are passed by the troops as coming up to the general conditions of contract; and Mr. Stanhope therefore thinks it is better to leave the supply to be arranged for, as at present, between the army contractor and the importer.

I have, &c.,

EVAN COLVILLE NEPEAN,
Director of Army Contracts.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, 7, Westminster Chambers.

Enclosure 2 in No. 5.

The DIRECTOR of ARMY CONTRACTS, War Office, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, S.W., 7th March, 1887.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, in reply to mine of the 31st January, on the subject of tinned meats and frozen mutton, and beg to express my obligations to the War Office for the same. I shall be glad to make the necessary inquiries respecting the best New Zealand brands of tinned meats, and communicate the result to you. I have informed the New Zealand Government that, in my opinion, the course proposed with regard to frozen mutton is certainly the best, and that things had better be left to be arranged, as they are now, between the army contractor and the importer.

I have, &c.,

The Director of Army Contracts, War Office.

F. D. BELL.

No. 6.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 18th March, 1887.

As indicated in my letter of the 8th instant, No. 342, I have now received the answer of the Admiralty on the supply of tinned meats, and beg to enclose a copy.

The annual consumption of preserved beef in the navy is only 300,000lb.; of mutton 150,000lb., or less than a 250th part of the annual importation of frozen sheep. The Admiralty do not see how tenders can be obtained direct from the colonies; but would be willing to make contracts for two or three years, and to inform me when tenders are being invited. The form of tender specifically names New Zealand meat, and the good brands are, in fact, well known here. In any case there ought to be an agent here fully authorized by a New Zealand contractor. I have now got information as to all the best brands, and am sending it to the Admiralty and War Office.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure.

Mr. E. MACGREGOR to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Admiralty, S.W., 16th March, 1887.

I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to inform you that your letter of the 31st January last, relative to the supply of salt and preserved meats from New Zealand for Her Majesty's ships, has been under their careful consideration, and to state that there would be no objection to make the contract for either salt or preserved meats for two or three years, provided that a clause were inserted freeing the Admiralty if deliveries were not made to time.

2. Forms of tender for preserved beef and mutton are enclosed herewith, from which it will be seen that American, Australian, or New Zealand meat is taken. There is no difficulty in getting competition, and practically all the navy supplies come from the colonies, as America does not export tinned mutton, and does not yet give the quality of boiled beef wanted. Many samples of New Zealand meats have been examined, and, while some have proved satisfactory, others have not come up to the standard of quality.

3. The average annual consumption in the navy of preserved beef and mutton may be taken as 300,000lb. of the former and 150,000lb. of the latter.

4. As, however, the Admiralty buy by sample submitted on each occasion, it is not clear how tenders could be obtained direct from the colonies under the present system, as time would be lost; but I am to state that there would be no objection to your being informed when the Director of Navy Contracts is inviting tenders.

5. My Lords would be willing to cause any samples of preserved meat to be examined that packers might wish to submit, and say whether they are suitable or not; but, as it is believed that every brand comes upon the London market, it is anticipated that nearly all brands have been already examined.

6. It would be essential that the packers should have an agent in England to attend to clearing packages, freight, &c.; and it would be most convenient for any tender to come through an agent, who, in case of rejection, could otherwise dispose of the meat.

7. The average prices paid during the last three years may be taken at 5½d. per pound for beef and 4½d. per pound for mutton.

I am, &c.,

EVAN MACGREGOR.

Sir Francis D. Bell, K.C.M.G., C.B., Agent-General for New Zealand.

Sub-Enclosures.

PRESERVED MEAT.

Admiralty, Whitehall, S.W., 18 .

THE Director of Navy Contracts requests the favour of an estimate on the subjoined form, by 2 o'clock on the , for the goods specified, and would be obliged by the return of this form at once if an offer cannot be made. The tender may be for any part of the goods, and power is reserved to accept the whole or any portion of the tender.

JOHN COLLETT,

Director of Navy Contracts.

Please return in a closed envelope, marked "Tender for Preserved Meat."

ESTIMATE from Messrs. , of .

Description, and Quantity required.	Brand.	Quantity offered.	Net Price (to include Delivery and Cases).	
			Per Pound.	
		Lb.	s.	d.
Beef lb.				
Mutton lb.				

The beef to be furnished in pursuance of this contract to be best American, Australian, or New Zealand preserved beef; the mutton to be best American, Australian, or New Zealand preserved mutton. The meat to be of prime quality, well fed, cut into as few pieces as possible, freed from blood, bone, skirt, excess of fat, and not to be corned, and in every respect equal to sample accepted. No dripping, fat, or gelatine to be added. The meat to be in tins of not less than 5½lb. or more than 6½lb., six tins to a case, and the average weight of meat in each case to be not less than 6lb. per tin. The tins to be cylindrical in shape and made of best tin plates; to be thoroughly cleaned before the meat is placed in them, and to be properly painted on the outside to preserve them from rust. Each tin to have a label, with the brand or name of the firm by whom the meat is preserved, and a description of the contents, printed on it. The weight of each case of six tins for payment and account to be taken as 36lb. The cases to be of well-seasoned spruce, or timber of equal goodness, of ¾in. trade thickness, free from large or loose knots, rents, or shakes, and to be well nailed with 1½in. cut nails: the joints to be ploughed and tongued. The lids to be secured with eight 1½in. screws, No. 9 gauge, so placed as to avoid any possibility of injury to the tins. The cases to be of such dimensions as to hold six tins properly without any packing-material. The meat to be warranted for two years from date of delivery at the Royal Victoria Yard, Deptford, and

all condemned within that period to be replaced by the contractors. Rejected meat to be removed by and at the expense of the contractors, within seven days after notice shall have been given to them of the rejection. The officers of the yard may remove meat not so taken away, and charge the contractors with all expenses incurred in such removal. In the event of a rejection of meat by the officers whereby the contractors may consider themselves aggrieved, a resurvey of the meat by an independent person or persons, to be agreed upon by the parties to the contract, will be allowed on written application to the Financial Secretary of the Admiralty; the losing side to pay the expenses of the arbitration.

We agree to deliver all or any of the goods above named into store at the Royal Victoria Yard, Deptford, at the prices quoted, free of all charges, by the

The Director of Navy Contracts, Admiralty, Whitehall, S.W.

(Signature.)
(Date.)

Notice to Persons Tendering.

- 1. Net prices should be given; all trade discounts being allowed in the quotations.
- 2. Three sample-tins of the meat it is proposed to supply should be sent in for examination at least a week before the date fixed for the receipt of tender.

Instructions for Contractors.

- 1. *Consignment.*—Goods should be consigned to the Superintendent. The posting of the invoices (see below) immediately after the goods have been forwarded will much facilitate receipt.
- 2. *Return of Rejected Meat.*—If desired by the contractors, rejected meat will be returned by the officers without any intervention on the part of the contractors, but at their expense, through the same channel by which it reached the yard.
- 3. *Payment for Supplies.*—It is requested that with every delivery of goods under this agreement invoices* in duplicate be sent to the consignee by the contractors. The duplicate will be returned by the consignee, with the quantities received noted thereon. The contractors should send their claim* for payment to the Director of Navy Contracts, Admiralty, Whitehall. After the necessary examination in office of the claims thus sent, an order for payment of the amount due will be forwarded to the contractors by the Accountant-General of the Navy.

Admiralty, Whitehall, S.W., 18 .
THE Director of Navy Contracts requests the favour of an estimate on the subjoined form, by noon on the , for the goods specified, and would be obliged by the return of this form at once if an offer cannot be made. The tender may be for any part of the goods, and power is reserved to accept the whole or any portion of the tender.
JOHN COLLETT,
Director of Navy Contracts.

ESTIMATE from Messrs. , of .

Description.	Quantity offered.		Net Price (including Delivery).		Value.
			£ s. d.		£ s. d.
AMERICAN SALT BEEF.	Casks of 300lb. each.			Per cask of 300lb.	
Brand,	Casks of 200lb. each.			Per cask of 200lb.	

The meat supplied to be briskets and flanks of prime, heavy, first-grade quality, winter-cured, messed in pieces of 8lb. each, freshly cured and packed, with a sufficient quantity of salt, in casks containing 37½ pieces or 300lb., or in casks containing 25 pieces or 200lb., net weight of meat. The casks to be selected, heavy, freshly-emptied casks of the customary kinds, made from sound oak staves, free from sap and worm-holes, bound each with four iron hoops, placed one on each bilge and one on each quarter, in addition to the usual wooden hoops. The heads of the casks of 300lb. to be as nearly as possible 7in. thick, and the staves 3in. thick in any part, and the iron hoops to be 1½in. wide, and of No. 14 wire gauge. The heads of the casks of 200lb. to be as nearly as possible 3in. thick, and the staves 2in. thick in any part, and the iron hoops to be 1½in. wide and No. 16 wire gauge. Shipment to commence , and to be completed at latest by the . In the event of a rejection of meat by the officers whereby the contractors may consider themselves aggrieved, a resurvey of the goods by an independent person or persons, to be agreed upon by the parties to the contract, will be allowed, on written application to the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty; the losing side to pay the expenses of the arbitration.

We agree to deliver all or any portion of the goods above named into store at the Royal Victoria Yard, Deptford, at the prices quoted, free of all charges.
The Director of Navy Contracts, Admiralty, Whitehall, S.W. (Signature.)
(Date.)

* Forms may be obtained on application to the Director of Navy Contracts, Admiralty, Whitehall, S.W.

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* Forms may be obtained on application to the Director of Navy Contracts, Admiralty, Whitehall, S.W.

[*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing (1,400 copies), £4 17s. 0d.]

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