

WHALING

1923

C.S.

No. 498/23

S. of S. No. 51

SUBJECT.

1923

BRAGUETA WHALING COMPANY

4th June

Enquiry regarding existence of:

Previous Paper.

MINUTES.

- S of S despatch No. 51 of 4th June 1923 ————— Encl (1)
- Letter from Southern Whaling & Sealing Co
of 4th May 1923 ————— " (1a)
- Letter to Southern Whaling & Sealing Co:
of 22nd May 1923 ————— " 1B
- Letter from British Legation (A) 7 June 1923 (2)
- Letter from Messrs Chadwick Weir & Co
30 May 1923 (2a)

M.S.
Submitted.
To send copies of Encls 1a & 2a to
Mr. Steel with request for explanation?
In copying (2a) concluding sentence
of para 2 might be omitted.

W.H. 105
D.C.F.S.
13 July 1923.

*Yes please and report if
an early explanation is not given.*

ttttt 14 July '23

Subsequent Paper.

Letter to Mr. Steel, 16 July, 1923. Encl. (3)

2/2

Mr Steel called this afternoon and showed me his correspondence. The facts appear to be that he tried to negotiate the purchase of the George Coy in the hope that he would be able to dispose of it to some other company on the condition that he would be allowed to retain a substantial interest in the new concern. His option with the George Coy closed on 31st May.

As regards the licence, the wording of the telegrams is open to ~~misconstruction~~ ^{misinterpretation}.

Mr Steel has requested the favour of an interview in order that he may place before Your Excellency all his correspondence.

G.W.H. 13

O'Casey

18 July 1923

I will see Mr. Steel at noon tomorrow but I would like him to bring an explanatory note of the circumstances of the misunderstanding drawn up by himself if will be found enough to do so.

TTTTT 20 July

Letters (2) from Mr. Steel, 20 July, 1923. Encl. (4) (40)

78.
Mr. Steel will attend at Court House tomorrow at noon and bring with him the explanatory note required by Your Excellency.

G.R.H.

Di'c'sec

20 July 1923

Despatch to S. of. No. 92 of the 26th July, 1923. Encl. (5)
Statements made by Mr. Steel. Encl. (6)

79.
Submitted

G.R.H.

Di'c'sec

3 August 1923

80.
Submitted with draft despatch to Sr. Ministro Buenos Aires. It is practically a copy of Your Excellency's despatch No. 92 of 26th July (Encl. 5)

G.R.H.

Di'c'sec

7 Aug 1923

H.H.H.
8 Aug. '23

Letter to H.M. Commercial Secretary,
Buenos Aires, 8th Aug, 1923.

(7)

V.S. Submitted

G.R.H.

Öicfa

9 Aug 1923

DUPLICATE

861

①

FALKLAND ISLANDS

NO. 51

Downing Street,

4 June, 1923.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to you for your consideration, copy of correspondence with the Southern Whaling and Sealing Company relative to an offer made by Mr. Mitchell Steel of Port Stanley to sell the Brackets Company and a licence for whaling at the South West end.

2. I shall be glad to receive any explanations that you may be in a position to furnish with regard to this matter.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient
 humble servant.

(Signed) DEVONSHIRE

THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING
THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

copy

THE SOUTHERN WHALING AND SEALING COMPANY LIMITED
A 18 Exchange Buildings
Liverpool

1A

4th May, 1923.

The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies,
Colonial Office
London, S.W.1.

Sir,

We have the honour to inform you that a Mr. Mitchell Steel of Port Stanley, Falkland Islands, has sent a cable to us to the effect that he has bought the Bragueta Company South Shetlands and that he is prepared to sell the Company and Licence to us. He states that the Licence is in his own name and that the Fleet consists of one large steamer and five whaleboats.

We have not heard of this Company before and the object of this letter is to ask you if you will be so good as to inform us whether the Company under the name of the Bragueta Company, has a Licence to operate in South Shetlands with five whale catching boards, and also whether such Licence is in the name of Mr. Mitchell Steel.

We are at a loss, at the moment, to understand the position, as this Company if it does exist, is entirely unknown to us.

We have etc.,

The Southern Whaling and Sealing Co., Ltd.,

(sd) W. Charles Watt

Managing Director.

copy

22461/23

1B

Downing Street,

22nd May, 1923.

Gentlemen,

In reply to your letter of the 4th May, I am directed by the Duke of Devonshire to inform you that the Braguete Company is not known to this Department and that so far as the Secretary of State is aware no Company of that name has been granted a whaling licence for the Falkland Islands.

2. Enquiry on the subject will however be made of the Governor.

I am, etc.,

(sd) G.Grindle.

7th June 1923

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to enclose copy of a letter from Mr. E.A. Woodward, Managing Director of the firm of Chadwick, Weir & Co. Ltd. Buenos Aires, who are anxious to obtain some authentic information as to a concern called the Bragueta Company, of the Falkland Islands.

Messrs. Chadwick, Weir & Co., Ltd., are a British firm of ship-owners of high standing, while Mr. Woodward is Chairman of the British Chamber of Commerce in Buenos Aires.

I should be very grateful for any information which your Excellency may cause to be furnished me for transmission to Messrs. Chadwick, Weir & Co., in reply to their enquiry.

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's

most obedient, humble servant,

J. M. Commercial Secretary.
H.M. Commercial Secretary.

His Excellency The Governor,

Port Stanley,

Falkland Islands.

Chadwick, Weir & Cia., Lda.,
25 de Mayo, 516,
Buenos Aires.
30th, May, 1923.

H.O.Chalkey, Esq.,
Commercial Attaché,
British Legation,,
City.

Dear Sir,

My Company has received a cable from one Mr. Mitchell Steel at Port Stanley - Falkland Islands - offering to sell the "Bragueta Company - Shetlands" which he said he has bought.

From his cables it appears that Mr. Steel has for sale a steamer of 7,500 tons, fifteen new press boilers, five whaleboats and a whaling license in his name. (The information we have been able to glean about this gentleman does not lead us to believe that he has the means to buy a Whaling Company but he may be acting as an Agent.)

My object in writing to you on this matter is to ascertain if you can obtain for me from the Falkland Islands any information regarding a Company called the "Bragueta Company" and about Mr. Steel. Amongst the items of information that would be useful are

- 1.- The Registered Office of the Company.
- 2.- The number of years the license has to run.
- 3.- The name of the floating factory.
- 4.- The names of the whaleboats.

and I will be glad of any other information that is available.

Yours faithfully,

(signed) E.A.Woodward.

498/23.

3.

16th July, 23.

Sir,

I am directed by the Acting Governor to attach herewith copies of letters from the Southern Whaling and Sealing Company, Liverpool, and Messrs Chadwick, Weir & Company, Limited, of Buenos Aires respecting an offer which it is stated you made to them by telegraph to "sell the Bragueta Company - Shetlands."

2. I am to request that you will inform me without delay of the exact terms of your offer of sale, and that you will furnish full particulars regarding the property and interests which you have represented as being at your disposal.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

G. R. L. Brown,

for Colonial Secretary.

Mr. Mitchell Steel,
Stanley.

Office in Charge
Colonial Secretaries
Office
Sir.

(4)
July 20th 1923

With reference to your letter dated July 16th 1923 No 498/23. I beg to state the following. Early in April I had at my disposal the Norge Whaling Co of Larvik & being anxious to reconstruct it as a British company I called the Managing Director of the Southern Whaling & Sealing Co of Liverpool asking him if he would take over the whole of the Company & I would invest £5,000 & I also asked him to receive £5,000 for shares in Falklands & that the Licence I would hold myself. Mr. Watt the Managing Director of the Southern Whaling & Sealing Co asked me the name of Co & boats & I informed him & have had no further information. Mr. Watt has made a false statement by saying I offered to sell to their firm the Praqueira company, as the

word Traqueba was not mentioned
in any of my cables to W. Wall.

I am
Sir
Your Obedient Servant.

Mitchell Steed.

The Office in Charge
Colonial Secretary's
Office
Sir.

(4a)
July 20th 1923.

I reference to your letter dated July 16th 1923 No 498/23. I beg to state early in April I had at my disposal the George Whaling Co of Larvig & knowing Messrs Chadwick Weis & Co of London were interested in the industry & myself being anxious to reconstruct it as a British company I called them mentioning the word Pragueta as Pragueta means Whale company in A. B. C. 5th Edition. They wired to me for an explanation which I sent & have had no further calls. I received a letter by Post asking for a full explanation as they were interested.

I am

Sir
Your Obedient Servant,
Mitchell Steel,

FAKLAND ISLANDS.

No. 92.

5

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

STANLEY,

26th July, 1923.

My Lord Inigo,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Grace's despatch No. 51 of the 4th of June relative to an offer, said to have been made by Mr. Mitchell Steel of Stanley, to sell the "Bragueta" Company and a licence for whaling at the South Shetlands to the Southern Whaling and Sealing Company.

2. Similar enquiries have been received by me through the British Minister at Monte Video, with respect to an offer made by Mr. Steel to sell the "Bragueta" Company to Messrs Chadwick, Weir and Company.

3. Mr. Steel has shown me the original correspondence and telegrams which passed in the matter. He had obtained an option for the purchase of the Morge Company and he endeavoured, before the expiry, to sell. He was unwilling to disclose the name of the company and used the word "Bragueta" meaning, according to him, "whale" in the A.B.C. code, which was used in the correspondence. A reference to the code appears to show that the word

means/

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,

P.C., K.G., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

means "whale oil" but there is no reason to suppose that there was any intentional deceit on his part in this respect.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord Duke,

Your Grace's most obedient,

humble servant,

H. Henniker-Heaton,

6.

NOTE OF STATEMENTS MADE BY MR. STEEL AT INTERVIEW

ON THE 21ST INSTANT.

MR. MITCHELL STEEL secured a provisional promise on the 26th of April of the sale to him of the Norge Company for four million kroner - a bank guarantee was required. The offer was kept open until 31st May. In the meantime Mr. Steel had communicated with Messrs Chadwick, Weir and Co., stating that he could sell a Whaling Company to them. He used the term "Bragueta" Company - the word Bragueta meaning in the A.B.C. Code Whale (or Whale Oil). He had no intention of giving the actual name of the Company as this would have given possible purchasers the advantages he had obtained by being first in the field. Receiving no satisfactory reply from Messrs Chadwick, Weir, Mr. Steel made a similar offer to Messrs Lovers saying that he had bought a factory, &c., and asking whether they would buy from him for £225,000. In each case Mr. Steel made it clear that if the purchase was effected he would require £5,000 worth of shares and to have a seat on the board of directors: he also asked that £5,000 worth of shares over and above his allotment should be reserved for the Falklands. The name "Bragueta" Company is not mentioned in telegram to Lovers Brothers. The first telegram received by him from Mr. Watt stated that the offer was previously received through Chadwick, Weir & Co.

Mr. Steel informed me that one million kroner equalled £55,000. That is at par rate of exchange. The actual value April - May was approximately £37,500.

21st July, 1923.

FALKLAND ISLANDS.

No. 498/23.

7
GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

STANLEY,

8th August, 1923.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th of June, relative to an offer made by Mr. Mitchell Steel of Stanley to sell the "Bragueta" Company and a licence for whaling at the South Shetlands to Messrs Chadwick, Weir and Company, Limited, of Buenos Aires.

2. Mr. Steel had obtained an option for the purchase of a whaling company and he endeavoured, before the expiry, to sell. He was unwilling to disclose the name of the company and used the word "Bragueta" meaning, according to him, "whale" in the A.B.C. code. A reference to the code appears to show that the word means "Whale Oil", but there is no reason to suppose that there was any intentional deceit on his part in this respect.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. Henniker-Heaton.

H. O. Chalkley, Esq.,

His Britannic Majesty's
Commercial Secretary,

British Legation,

BUENOS AIRES.