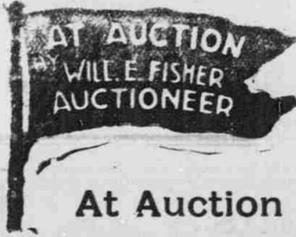


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OWNS NO SAMPANS

Edmunds Speculates on Government Property.

Fish Company Promoter Seeks to Control Industry.

How He Obtained Federal and Territorial Mooring Privileges.

W. H. S. Edmunds, the manager of the Live and Refrigerated Fish Company, whose arrest on a warrant charging him with obtaining money under false pretences was noted in yesterday's issue, appeared in the police court yesterday morning, but the case was continued until today.

The defendant stated to an Advertiser reporter that he was much misunderstood in the transactions between himself, or the company he represents, and the Japanese fishermen. In support of his right to charge the fishermen for the privilege of mooring their boats either in the Waikiki end or the Ewa end of the harbor, Mr. Edmunds produced a number of letters, permits and sundry correspondence which bear the signatures of Admiral Terry, U. S. N., Superintendent of Public Works Holloway and C. M. White, chief clerk of the Public Works Department.

In brief, Mr. Edmunds claims to have the right to charge for mooring privileges used by Japanese at the places mentioned. Those who refuse to pay may go elsewhere.

But there is practically no "elsewhere" about the harbor, and the situation in a nutshell is that Mr. Edmunds has secured a monopoly on mooring places and is in a position to control almost the entire fishing business. Mr. Edmunds gave evidence of the desire of his company to exercise such control, as markets are to be started all over the city, and all the fish coming into the hands of the company from the Japanese fishermen, whom they claim belong to their "association," are to be distributed at these markets.

The markets are to be placed as follows: 1, Punahou, opposite the tramways headquarters; 2, corner Makiki street and Wilder avenue; 3, South and Queen Sts. 4, Kinau and Emma Sts.; 5, Beretanla, near Maunakea; 6, Aala, opposite Oahu Railway station; 7, Palama, terminus of old tramways system; 8, Kalia, at terminus of Rapid Transit line; one each at the various plantations on Oahu. In addition, supply stations are to be established at Lahuku, Kahawa, Heela and Waimanalo, in conjunction with the general headquarters at Honolulu, and twelve fishing sampans are to be maintained at Mokolai, the catches to be brought to Honolulu in the small steamer Talula and possibly the gasoline schooner Brothers, under charter from Young Brothers. The company also has the right to several fishing ponds on Mokolai.

Mr. Edmunds states that there are about 150 fishing sampans in and about Honolulu, and of these 120 are said by him to belong to his "association," leaving only 30 to supply the general market. Mr. Edmunds claims that the "association" boats average catches of about 3,000 pounds of fish per day. A refrigerator tank has been installed by the company in the city market, foot of Alakea street, and there are other tanks at the headquarters of the company in Kakaako, between the makai end of the Channel wharf and Young Brothers' house.

Last December Edmunds obtained permission from Admiral Terry to utilize for the company the space between the Channel wharf and Young Brothers' house, and the sea wall, which is controlled by the Navy Department. In the permit signed by Admiral Terry, Edmunds was given the right to occupy the mooring grounds above mentioned, with the privilege of putting in permanent fishing stakes to be numbered from 1 to 100 or over and to erect a signboard with the name of the company thereon. The Admiral reserved the right to withdraw the privilege at any time the ground was required for government purposes.

About this time Mr. Edmunds claims that a delegation of Japanese fishermen voluntarily came to him and proposed that he form an "association" with them as members, he to put in mooring stakes, supply water pipes, electric lights, etc., and they would be willing to pay rental, in addition to pledging themselves to turn over their catches to the company which he had formed. They agreed, so Mr. Edmunds claims, to pay him ten per cent of the amount received from the "marketmen," or purchasers, for their fish.

Mr. Edmunds denied that he had made the initial overtures to the fishermen, but claims that it was a voluntary act on their part.

"I told the Admiral when I received permission to use the grounds," said he, "that I would not charge the fishermen for anchorage. It was thoroughly understood we were not to make any money for anchorage. We charge for

accommodations. By accommodations I mean mooring stakes to tie up their boats to. For this purpose we built long piers leading out to the mooring stakes so the Japs won't have to wet their feet; we put in water mains with faucets for their use; installed two 50-candle-power lights and have probably put in about 900 feet of water pipe. They also have the use of wire enclosed tanks for the keeping of live fish brought in by them. They get the benefit of our watchman's services who looks after their nets, boats and other property.

"For those who are not members of the 'association,' we left some space mauka (which is between the runways from land to the Channel wharf entrances), where they are at liberty to tie up their boats. In this space the native canoes are left, to themselves.

"On this showing we went ahead and put in our moorings. For these moorings we assessed a charge for the accommodations. We charge \$3 for the large boats, \$2 for smaller ones, and \$1 each for inside moorings. This brings in about \$175 per month."

At this section of the harbor about a hundred sampans are accommodated. This gave Edmunds and his company control of that portion of the harbor moorings and the daily catches of fish which have to pass through their hands. In the latter part of February Mr. Edmunds began reaching out for the "moorings" and the "Ewa end" of the harbor became his plan of conquest. The "Ewa end of the harbor" was setting of a blanket privilege, but to end he wrote to Superintendent Holloway, referring to "Rotten Row" as one of the places he desired, and also the space in Nuuanu stream near King street, agreeing to pay a monthly rental for the privilege. Superintendent Holloway replied:

"In reply to your letter of the 29th ult., in which you make application for certain lands at the 'Ewa end of the harbor' for the mooring of fishing boats, I am agreeable to your request on the payment of a monthly rental of \$25, as a tenant at will, with the understanding that you vacate the premises on thirty days' notice from this date."

"I will arrange to have your permit for occupation of the mooring land located near Rotten Row."

A receipt dated March 8, 1904, a week ago, signed by C. M. White, chief clerk of the Public Works Department, shows that \$25 for one month to April 1, 1904, had been paid by Edmunds. Rotten Row is understood to be where the hulks of several demolished vessels still lie in the mud, Ewa of the Naval Row.

Armed with this receipt, which, according to Superintendent Holloway's provision, permitted Mr. Edmunds to use "Rotten Row" for "moorings," the manager proceeded to the place generally used by fishermen for mooring, which is at the mouth of the Nuuanu stream. They were urged to join the "association." Some did and were then assessed rentals from \$3 down, although no mooring stakes have been installed. Mr. Edmunds stated that those who did not wish to join the "association" were told to vacate the "moorings" which up to this time they had peacefully enjoyed.

The fish company promoter said that in talking over the "moorings" question with Superintendent Holloway he had intimated that the government was receiving nothing for the use of the places mentioned and that it was worth something to the government. Mr. Holloway is reported to have rejoined that at least \$50 a month could be taken in this manner, but with the cost of collection, etc., he was willing to accede to Edmunds' proposition for a rental of \$25 per month. He did not believe that Mr. Edmunds would have possession for long, as the government might begin dredging out the places and using them. However, even for a very short period Mr. Edmunds said he was willing to take over the "mooring" grounds.

Owing to the fact that nearly all the boats in the Waikiki end of the harbor were under Edmunds' control, thereby giving him, in a measure, control of the market, it was desirable that he obtain control of the Ewa end and by forcing the ignorant Japs into his "association" he would be in a position to dictate terms.

"I do not own a single sampan," replied Mr. Edmunds in response to a question.

In the correspondence with officials Mr. Edmunds refers to "our" boats, as if the company was one which had been compelled to seek moorings for its own boats. The privileges which Mr. Edmunds has obtained both from the Federal and the Territorial governments are therefore in the nature of a speculation. The steamer Talula is owned by the company.

"I do not see any reason why the Japanese have taken this stand against me," said the promoter, "unless some one is jealous and is trying to break up our combination. These Japanese at the Ewa end had a conference with me and wanted to turn over only one-half of their catch to us, the other half to go to Chinese marketmen. I told them that we wanted all of it, and if not we would charge higher rates for moorings. If we got all we would reduce the charges. They asked what would be done in case they would not agree at all and I told them they would have to take their boats somewhere else."

There is no written agreement between any of the fishermen and Edmunds. It was an oral agreement he claims but thoroughly understood by both parties. In accordance with this the company is said to have spent about \$3,000.

It is Edmunds' claim that this "association" will bring the price of fish down.

Outside of the Japanese fishermen there are very few who make sea-catches. These are Hawaiians, an Italian and a few Portuguese.

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