

Fiji Islands

COMMERCE, CONSULAR RIGHTS, SHIPPING

*Regulations signed June 10, 1840*¹

*Obsolete*²

4 Miller 275

FEEJEE REGULATIONS

Commercial Regulations made by the Kings and Principal Chiefs of the Feejee group of Islands, after full consideration in Council on the Tenth day of June, 1840.

ARTICLE 1

All foreign Consuls duly appointed and received in the Feejee group of Islands shall be protected and respected both in their persons and property; and all foreigners obtaining the consent of the Government, and conforming to the laws, shall receive the protection of the King and Chiefs.

ARTICLE 2

All foreign vessels shall be received into the ports and harbours of the Feejees for the purpose of obtaining supplies and for commerce, and with their officers and crews, so long as they shall comply with these regulations, and behave themselves peaceably, shall receive the protection of the King and Chiefs.

¹ These regulations, though perhaps not technically constituting an international agreement, are included because of their historical interest and because "they treat of matters which are frequently the subject of conventions, . . . they undoubtedly were regarded by the native chiefs who signed them as being of a promissory nature; and, indeed, they contain clauses reading somewhat like mutual promises" (4 Miller 279). See 4 Miller 275 for an explanation of various places and dates of signature and for other notes on this document.

² Fiji came under British rule in 1874.

ARTICLE 3

The fullest protection shall be given to all foreign ships and vessels which may be wrecked, and any property saved shall be taken possession of by the Master of the Vessel, who will allow a salvage or portion of the property so saved to those who may aid in saving and protecting the same, and no embezzlement will be permitted under any circumstances whatever. The effects of all persons deceased shall be given up to the Consul of the Nation to which they may have belonged.

ARTICLE 4

Any person guilty of the crime of Murder upon any foreigner shall be given up without delay to the Commander of any Public Vessel of the Nation to which the deceased may belong, upon his demanding the same, or be punished on shore.

ARTICLE 5

Every vessel shall pay a port charge of Three Dollars for Anchorage to the King, before she will be allowed to receive refreshments on board, and shall pay for pilotage in and out the sum of Seven Dollars, before she leaves the harbor; and Pilots shall be appointed subject to the approval of the Consuls.

ARTICLE 6

All trading in spirituous liquors, or landing the same is strictly forbidden. Any person offending shall pay a fine of Twenty-five Dollars, and the Vessel to which he belongs shall receive no more refreshments. Any spirituous liquors found on shore shall be seized and destroyed.

ARTICLE 7

All deserters from Vessels will be apprehended, and a reward paid of Eight Dollars, viz;—Five Dollars to the person who apprehended him, and Three Dollars to the Chief of the district in which he may be apprehended, on his delivery to the proper officer of the Vessel. No Master shall refuse to receive such deserter under a penalty of Twenty-five Dollars. Deserters taken after the Vessel has sailed shall be delivered up to the Consul to be dealt with as he may think fit. Any person who entices another to desert, secretes a deserter, or in any way assists him shall be subject to a penalty of Five Dollars.

ARTICLE 8

Any seaman remaining on shore after Nine o'clock at night, shall be made a prisoner of until the next morning, when he shall be sent on board and shall pay a fine of Five Dollars.

ARTICLE 9

Should the Master of any Vessel refuse to comply with any of these regulations, a statement of the case shall be furnished to the Consul of the Nation to which he belongs and redress sought from thence.

ARTICLE 10

All Magistrates or Chiefs of Districts, when vessels or boats may visit, shall enforce the regulations and rules relative to the apprehension of Deserters, or pay such a fine as the Principal Chief shall impose.

ARTICLE 11

These regulations shall be printed, promulgated, and a Copy furnished to the Master of each vessel visiting these Islands.

Done in council by the Principal Kings and Chiefs of the Feejee Group this 10th day of June, A.D., 1840.³

The foregoing rules and regulations having been signed by the King and Chiefs in my presence, and submitted to me, I consider them just and proper, and shall forward to the American government a Copy of the same for the information of all Masters of Vessels visiting the Feejee group of Islands.

UNITED STATES SHIP VINCENNES,
HARBOUR OF BAU,
June 10, 1840.

CHARLES WILKES,
Commanding U. States
Exploring Expedition

In presence of

WILLIAM L. HUDSON
Commanding U.S. Ship Peacock

CADR. RINGGOLD
Commanding U.S. Brig Porpoise

R. R. WALDRON
U. States' Navy

B. VANDERFORD, Pilot

³ The Fijian text was signed by all the principal chiefs (4 Miller 279).