

(No. 4337.)

"CID" (S.S.)

The Merchant Shipping Acts, 1854 to 1887.

IN the matter of a formal Investigation held at the Guildhall and Moot Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on the 10th, 11th, and 13th days of July 1891, before J. J. HUNTER and W. M. ANGUS, Esquires, two of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace, acting in and for the City and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, assisted by Vice-Admiral H. D. GRANT, C.B., and Captains C. H. J. BAKER and E. BROOKS, into the circumstances attending the loss of the steamship "CID," of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, upon the Porumier Banks, Casquets, on the 23rd day of June 1891.

Report of Court.

The Court having carefully inquired into the circumstances attending the above-mentioned shipping casualty, finds, for the reasons stated in the annex hereto, that the loss of the vessel, whereby loss of life occurred, was occasioned by the stranding on the Porumier Banks, Casquets, the casualty being caused by unskilful navigation and the bad look-out kept. The Court finds the master and mate in default, and hereby suspends the master's certificate, No. 19,197, for the period of 12 months, and the mate's certificate, No. 012,339, for the period of three months from the date hereof.

Dated this 13th day of July 1891.

(Signed) JOHN J. HUNTER, }
WM. M. ANGUS, } Judges.

We concur in the above report.

(Signed) HENRY D. GRANT, }
C. H. J. BAKER, } Assessors.
EDWARD BROOKS, }

Annex to the Report.

This was an inquiry into the circumstances attending the loss of the British steamship "Cid," whereby loss of life occurred, and was held at the Guildhall, Newcastle-on-Tyne, on the 10th July 1891, and, by adjournment, at the Moot Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne, on the 11th and 13th days of July 1891, before J. J. Hunter and W. M. Angus, Esquires, assisted by Vice-Admiral H. D. Grant, C.B., Captain C. H. J. Baker and Captain E. Brooks, nautical assessors. Mr. W. F. Dendy appeared on behalf of the Board of Trade, Mr. Ingledeu represented the master, and Mr. Temperley the chief officer.

The "Cid," official No. 80,550, was an iron steamship, built at Stockton-on-Tees by M. Pearce & Co. in the year 1879, of 1,512·81 tons gross, and 975·91 tons nett register.

She was schooner-rigged and fitted with two compound direct-acting surface-condensing engines of 130 h.p. combined, which were made by Blair & Co., Limited, of Stockton-on-Tees. She was registered at Newcastle-on-Tyne and owned by the Durham Steamship Company, Limited. Her length was 245 ft., main breadth 33·1 ft., and depth of hold 23 ft.

When she left the Tyne on her last voyage she was in good and seaworthy condition. She was supplied with three compasses, namely, a pole compass (by which the courses were set), a bridge compass, and a compass aft (placed immediately before the after steering-wheel); and from the time of her leaving the Tyne she was steered by the after-gear.

The compasses were last adjusted by Mr. Ainsley, of South Shields, in September 1888, and a card of deviations supplied. These errors were applied to the courses steered on this voyage, and the master stated that he made his courses good down the east coast; but the fact that the vessel had been lying moored in the Tyne with her head to the eastward for upwards of two months undoubtedly affected the compasses on westerly courses. It is also, in the opinion of the Court,

most reprehensible on the part of all concerned that the compasses had not been examined for nearly three years previous to this voyage.

The vessel had four boats, two of which were lifeboats, and they appear to have been well equipped and ready for use.

The "Cid" left the Tyne about 2 p.m. on the 20th June 1891, under the command of Mr. Titus Evans, who held a certificate of competency as master, No. 19,197, with a crew of 20 hands all told. She was bound for Naples, and had a cargo consisting of about 1,757 tons of coals, coke, and bricks. Her draft of water at the time was 20 ft. 7 in. forward and 21 ft. 4 in. aft. All went well, and at 6.30 p.m. on the 22nd June St. Catherine's Point was abeam, bearing N. by W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. (mag.), distant between 7 and 8 miles by estimation. A course was then set by the master W.S.W. by pole compass, which, according to the deviation card, had an error of $\frac{1}{4}$ of a point easterly, and this error was applied to the course.

It was stated in evidence that the after-compass had, on the course set, the same deviation as the pole. At 10.45 p.m. the master left the deck, leaving the second mate in charge, to whom he gave no other order than that he was to be called if wanted. At midnight the weather was stated by the second mate to be dull and overcast. He was then relieved by the chief mate, to whom he gave the course W.S.W. by pole, repeating the master's order to be called if wanted. At 2 a.m. of the 23rd a vessel was sighted shewing no light, but very shortly she displayed a red light, and turned out to be a brig. The "Cid" ported her helm to clear her, and was afterwards brought back to her original course, namely, W.S.W.

It appears from the first mate's evidence that he was under the impression that the course set from St. Catherine's Point was a fine course for Ushant. As, according to his own statement, he was well acquainted with the channel, he did not take the precaution of looking at the chart (which was in the chart-room for inspection) to verify his opinion. Had he done so he would have at once seen that the course set and steered was bringing him in close proximity to the Casquets.

The weather at this time was said to have been hazy, with a light drizzle, but as the witnesses stated that a masthead light could be seen 4 to 5 miles off, it must have been comparatively clear. At 2.30 a.m. a light was seen bearing half a point on starboard bow, and was immediately recognised by the first mate as the Casquets Light. He stated that he at once ordered the helm hard-a-port, and the ship's head came up to W.N.W., when she stopped, swinging to the northward. He then ordered the engines to be stopped and reversed, but the vessel struck the rocks before these orders were carried out, and listed heavily over to port. The look-out man, John Sjöberg, A.B., stated that he reported the light to the bridge, and heard the first mate give orders immediately after to "hard-a-port." The man at the wheel, John Jordan, A.B., however, stated positively that he himself saw the light about $\frac{1}{4}$ point on the starboard bow 3 or 4 minutes before he got the order to hard-a-port.

This order he obeyed, being assisted by the man who had been sent by the first mate to render such assistance, and to call the master.

The master stated he was aroused by the shock and came on deck immediately, when he found the crew getting the lifeboats out. Soundings were taken round the ship showing 5 fathoms on the starboard side and 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ on the port. Both lifeboats were launched, and the crew got into them. Very shortly afterwards the second engineer found that the third engineer, Mr. William Godsiff, and R. Conrad, fireman, were missing, and the chief officer then went on board and called down the engine-room skylight, but received no reply. He then went down the stokehole ladder to the top platform, where he saw a large quantity of water, but no trace of the missing men. He then returned to the deck and looked into the engine-room, where the water was nearly level with the main deck. The men in the boats shouted out "hurry up," and he then left the ship, which had righted and listed over to starboard, soon after settling down and becoming a total wreck. The crew remained in the boats alongside for about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours, when they were picked up by the French steamer "Ville de Montevideo," and landed at Havre about noon of the 24th.

At the conclusion of the evidence the following questions were submitted on behalf of the Board of Trade. Mr. Ingledew and Mr. Temperley addressed the Court on behalf of their respective clients, and Mr. Dendy replied:—

1. What number of compasses had the vessel on board, where were they placed, and were they in good order and sufficient for the safe navigation of the vessel?
2. When and by whom were they made, and when and by whom were they last adjusted?
3. Did the master ascertain the deviation of his compasses by observation from time to time? Were the errors of the compasses correctly ascertained, and the proper correction to the courses applied?
4. Whether proper measures were taken to ascertain and verify the position of the vessel at or about 6.30 p.m. of the 22nd June last?
5. Whether a safe and proper course was set at 6.30 p.m. of the 22nd June, and thereafter steered, and whether due and proper allowance was made for tide and currents?
- 5a. Whether, when the master went below, he left proper instructions with his officers?
6. Whether, having regard to the state of the weather, the mate was justified in not calling the master?
7. Whether, when the Casquets Light was seen, the mate took prompt and proper measures to keep the vessel out of danger?
8. Whether the weather was hazy, and if so, whether the vessel was navigated at too great a rate of speed?
9. Whether a good and proper look-out was kept?
10. Whether the lead was used, and if not, whether such neglect was justifiable?
11. What was the cause of the casualty and loss of life?
12. Whether the vessel was navigated with proper and seamanlike care?
13. Whether the master or mate are, or either of them is, in default?

In the opinion of the Board of Trade, the certificates of Titus Evans, the master, and George Wm. Marshall, the chief officer, should be dealt with.

To which the Court replied as follows:—

1. There were three compasses on board, viz., a pole compass above the upper bridge, a standard compass in a binnacle on the upper bridge, and a third compass aft. Having regard to the fact that the compasses had not been examined for nearly three years, and that the vessel had been lying moored in one direction in the Tyne for upwards of two months immediately preceding the voyage in question, the Court cannot say that they were in good order and sufficient for the safe navigation of the vessel.
2. There was no evidence to show when or by whom they were made. They were last adjusted on the 20th September 1888, off the Tyne, by Aynsley and Co., of South Shields.
3. The master took no steps to ascertain the deviation of his compasses. He applied to his courses the deviation, as shown by the cards supplied when the compasses were last adjusted in September 1888.
4. There is a discrepancy in the evidence as to the measures taken to ascertain and verify the position of the vessel at or about 6.30 p.m. of the 22nd June, but

the Court is not prepared to say that the vessel's position was not then correctly ascertained.

5. A safe and proper course was not set at 6.30 p.m. of the 22nd June, and thereafter steered, and no allowance appears to have been made for tide and currents.

5a. The master, when he went below, did not leave proper instructions with his officers.

6. There was nothing in the state of the weather to necessitate the master being called.

7. The mate acted with promptitude, but owing to the short time that elapsed between the sighting of the Casquets Light and the striking of the vessel, the measures taken were ineffectual.

8. There was a slight haze, but the vessel was not navigated at too great a rate of speed.

9. Having regard to the comparatively clear state of the weather, and to the fact that the vessel was well within the range of the two first class lights on the Casquets and La Hague respectively, the Court is of opinion that a good and proper look-out was not kept.

10. The lead was not used, but this circumstance did not contribute to the casualty.

11. The casualty was caused by unskilful navigation and the bad look-out kept. The 3rd engineer, Mr. William Godsiff, and one of the firemen, R. Conrad, were in the engine-room when the vessel struck, and were in all probability drowned there immediately.

12. The vessel was not navigated with proper and seamanlike care.

13. The master and mate are both in default, and the Court hereby suspends the master's certificate, No. 19,197, for the period of 12 months, and the mate's certificate, No. 012,339, for the period of three months from the date hereof.

The first officer, who was in charge of the deck, attributed the fact of his not having seen the Casquets Light earlier to its being obscured by a local fog. The Court cannot adopt this suggestion, inasmuch as the weather must have been comparatively clear to enable a masthead light to be seen at a distance of upwards of four miles as was stated was possible. For some time previous to the casualty the ship must have been well within the range of both Cape La Hague Light and the Casquets Light. This, coupled with the fact that the man at the wheel appears to have seen the Casquets Light some time before the man on the look-out, compels the Court to come to the conclusion that a bad look-out was kept. The course set by the master was a most improper one, and no allowance was made for tides. In addition, he never tested his compasses as opportunity afforded, and on going below left no orders with his officers, although he stated to the Court he was making for the Casquets in order to take a fresh departure for Ushant. Under these circumstances, the Court had no alternative but to suspend the master and mate's certificates, but on the application of their solicitors, the Court consented to recommend that they should be granted mates' certificates in the meantime.

(Signed) JOHN J. HUNTER, } Justices.
WM. M. ANGUS, }

We concur.

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4. Whether proper measures were taken to ascertain and verify the position of the vessel at or about 6.30 p.m. of the 22nd June last?
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