

(No. 2659.)

“BAINES HAWKINS” (S.S.)

The Merchant Shipping Acts, 1854 to 1876.

IN the matter of a formal Investigation held at the Town Hall, North Shields, on the 25th and 26th days of August 1885, before R. M. TATE and J. F. SPENCE, Esquires, assisted by Captains PARISH and BEASLEY, into the circumstances attending the stranding of the S.S. “BAINES HAWKINS,” on the 18th of July 1885, on Terschelling Bank.

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 stranding of the S.S. “Baines Hawkins” was caused by negligent navigation, and the non-use of the lead; and the Court finds the master, Edward James Hemmings, in default, and suspends his certificate for three calendar months from the date hereof.

Dated this 27th day of August 1885.

(Signed) ROBERT M. TATE, } Justices.
JOHN FOSTER SPENCE, }

We concur in the above report.

(Signed) ALFRED PARISH, } Assessors.
THS. BEASLEY, }

Annex to Report.

This is an investigation into the circumstances attending the stranding of the S.S. “Baines Hawkins,” of Newcastle-on-Tyne, on Terschelling Bank, on the 18th of July 1885, held at the Town Hall, North Shields, before R. M. Tate and J. F. Spence, Esquires, two of Her Majesty’s justices of the peace, assisted by Captains Parish and Beasley (nautical assessors). Mr. De Hamel appeared on behalf of the Board of Trade, and Mr. W. O. Forster represented the master. The “Baines Hawkins,” official number 83,918, is an iron screw steamer, built at Blyth in 1881 by Messrs. Hodgson and Soulsby, of the following dimensions:—Length 189·6, breadth 30·15, and depth of hold 13·65, of 746·12 gross and 480·00 registered tonnage. She is fitted with two high pressure compound surface condensing engines of 95 horse power (combined), and is owned by Mr. George Renwick, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and several others, Mr. Renwick being appointed managing owner on the 5th of November 1881. She had three compasses, one placed aft, which was never used, one on the lower bridge for the helmsman to steer by, and the standard compass on the upper bridge, by which the courses were set, and on which it was stated there was no deviation on the southerly courses. The “Baines Hawkins” left Skellapier or Kellapier, Sweden, on the 12th of July 1885, with a cargo of 600 tons of deals, having a crew of 15 hands all told, under the command of Edward James Hemmings, who holds a certificate of competency as master, number 98,056, bound to Ghent, the vessel drawing 12 feet 6 inches forward and 14 feet aft. Nothing occurred until the morning of the 18th of July 1885, at 11.30, when a lighthouse was sighted, supposed to be on Ameland Island, bearing S.E., estimated distance about 6 miles, the vessel’s course then being S.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ S. magnetic, and the course was then altered by hauling out gradually by $\frac{1}{2}$ points to S.W. by W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. magnetic at noon, vessel going full speed ahead 8 knots, fresh head wind, with a moderate sea and hazy weather. Shortly after 1 p.m. a buoy was sighted ahead, which was stated by the master to be of a conical shape, painted with black and white stripes, although the man at the wheel, Reynold Erickson, stated it was painted with red and white stripes, with staff and glove at the top. The vessel was then hauled out to W.N.W., and between one and half-past one a lighthouse was seen, of which the master took no bearings, as he stated that he was in

doubt what lighthouse it was, but which was afterwards proved to be Terschelling. The lead was not used. At 1.50 they passed a quarter of a mile to the northward of the buoy. The course W.N.W. was continued for five minutes after passing the buoy, and the vessel was then hauled in to the W.S.W. Another buoy was then sighted to the eastward, bearing about E.S.E., but at too great a distance to make out the distinguishing marks. About 2 p.m. the master went below to consult the chart, and after doing so was coming up the companion to the deck when the vessel, at 2.8 p.m., struck on Terschelling Bank and remained fast. Shortly after stranding a red and white buoy was seen, bearing W.N.W.; the first buoy seen bore about N.E., and a rough bearing of Terschelling Lighthouse was taken S.E., but the master stated he could take no correct bearings, as the compasses were swinging about so much. Shortly after a salvage steamer came from Terschelling, and with her assistance the vessel was got off, and continued her voyage and arrived at Ghent, where she discharged her cargo, and eventually returned to this country, where she was docked, and it was found she had received the following damage—stern post broken, several frames broken, and several plates bent, and rivets started and gone; the repairs lasting several days.

At the conclusion of the evidence the following questions were submitted to the Court on behalf of the Board of Trade:—

- 1. What was the cause of the stranding of the “Baines Hawkins” on Terschelling on the 18th of July?
- 2. Whether the master took proper measures to ascertain and verify the position of the vessel at 11.30 a.m. and noon respectively of the 18th July?
- 3. Whether proper courses were thereafter set, and the vessel carefully and prudently navigated therefrom?
- 4. What was the buoy seen at 1.15 p.m., and whether the master then and thereafter took all proper measures to ascertain and verify the position of the vessel?
- 5. Whether, having regard to the fact that the master was in doubt as to his position, he was thereafter justified in putting the vessel back on the W.S.W. course, and in continuing her at full speed?
- 6. Whether the neglect of the lead was justifiable?

In the opinion of the Board of Trade, the certificate of the master should be dealt with.

Dated this 25th day of August 1885.

(Signed) LANCEL DE HAMEL, }
For the Board of Trade.

Judgment.

- 1. The stranding of the S.S. “Baines Hawkins” was caused by negligent navigation and the non use of the lead.
- 2. The master took no measures to ascertain and verify his position at 11.30 a.m. and noon of the 18th July.
- 3. Proper courses were not thereafter set, and the vessel was not carefully and prudently navigated.
- 4. The buoy seen at 1.15 p.m. must have been the N.E. Gat Buoy, but the master took no measures to verify his position.
- 5. The master was not justified in putting his vessel back to the W.S.W. course and continuing at full speed after passing the buoy, being in ignorance of his position.
- 6. The neglect of the use of the lead was unjustifiable.

The Court finds the master, Edward James Hemmings, in default, and suspends his certificate of competency, No. 98,056, for a period of three calendar months from the date hereof.

(Signed) ROBERT M. TATE, } Justices.
JOHN FOSTER SPENCE, }

We concur in the above judgment.

(Signed) ALFRED PARISH, } Assessors.
THS. BEASLEY, }