

OFFICIAL COPY.

(No. 3621.)

"CASTLE GREEN"

AND

"MEMLING" (S.S.)

The Merchant Shipping Acts, 1854 to 1876.

In the matter of a formal Investigation held at Glasgow on the eighth and tenth days of September 1888, before WILLIAM GUTHRIE, Esquire, Advocate, Sheriff-substitute of Lanarkshire, Judge, assisted by Captains RICHARD C. DYER, R.N., JOHN BAIN, and ANDREW CUNINGHAME, Assessors, into the circumstances attending the loss of the British sailing ship "CASTLE GREEN," of Ardrossan, through collision with the British steamship "MEMLING," of Liverpool, in the Firth of Clyde, on or about the 1st September current, whereby loss of life ensued.

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 master of the s.s. "Memling," Mr. George White Greig, is in default, and that the mate, Mr. David Richards, is also deserving of severe censure for not having kept a better look-out, and he is hereby censured accordingly. The certificate, No. 99,302, of the master is suspended for three calendar months from 10th September current.

Dated this 11th day of September 1888.

(Signed) W. GUTHRIE, Judge.

We concur in the above report.

(Signed) RICHD. C. DYER,
JOHN BAIN, } Assessors.
ANDW. CUNINGHAME,

Annex to the Report.

This inquiry was held at Glasgow on the 8th and 10th days of September, before Mr. Sheriff Guthrie. Mr. C. D. Donald appeared for the Board of Trade, Mr. G. B. Young for the owners of the "Memling," Mr. John A. Spens for the master of the "Memling," and Mr. James Mackenzie for the representatives of Mr. Neil Sinclair, late master of the "Castle Green," and also for her owners. The "Castle Green" was a sailing schooner, built of wood, at Dumbarton, in the year 1848; her length was 61 ft., breadth 16.4 ft., and her depth 7 ft.; registered tonnage 46.95. On the morning of the 31st day of August last she left Irvine with a full cargo, which consisted of eighty tons of coals, under the command of Mr. Neil Sinclair, bound for Bowmore, in the island of Islay. She had a crew of three hands all told, and carried one boat, which was lashed on the main hatch, and otherwise she appears to have been properly equipped for the voyage on which she was proceeding. The wind being light from S.W.

and the sea smooth, she worked to windward until about midnight, having Pladda Light about N.W., she was standing in towards the land on the port tack. At this time she was seen by the crews of two Girvan fishing boats, who testified that her lights were burning brightly, they having had the opportunity of seeing her on both tacks. Shortly after midnight, the mate being at the helm and the master and the other hand on deck, she tacked, and was standing out to the S.E., and when about two or three miles from Pladda the masthead and port lights of a steamer were seen approaching a little before the starboard beam. The "Castle Green" continued sailing by the wind, while the steamer, which ultimately proved to be the "Memling," of Liverpool, rapidly approached, and notwithstanding the efforts of those on board the "Castle Green" to attract attention, the "Memling" came on and crashed into the schooner on the starboard bow, cutting into her nearly as far as the foremast. The deck hand of the "Castle Green" scrambled over the bow of the "Memling"—the schooner sinking immediately, taking the master and the mate down with her. The mate, however, was picked up by the steamer's boat, but the master was unfortunately drowned.

The "Memling" was an iron screw steamer built at Dundee in 1872, her length being 220 ft., breadth 30.2 ft., depth 21.8 ft., and her registered tonnage 632.7. She had two compound surface-condensing engines of 120 horse-power combined. At the time of the casualty she was owned by Mr. William H. Raeburn, of 109, Hope Street, Glasgow, and others, Mr. Raeburn being manager, and registered at the Port of Liverpool. She was under the command of Mr. George White Greig, who held a certificate of competency, No. 99,302, and had a crew of eighteen hands all told. She had four boats slung in tackles and resting on the skids, and appears to have been otherwise well equipped. The "Memling" left Huelva with a cargo of copper ore bound for Glasgow, and at midnight on the 31st of August was abreast of Ailsa Craig, proceeding full speed up channel on a N.E. by N. course. It was the mate's watch from midnight, but the captain was on deck and in charge. There was a man on the look-out who reported several bright lights. A few minutes before 1 a.m. a vessel was seen about 2½ or 3 points on the port bow, and at the same moment her green light was seen, as the master thought, about 150 yards distant. He immediately ordered the helm hard-a-starboard, and telegraphed full speed astern, but before the steamer had paid off more than two points she struck the "Castle Green" with her stem on the starboard bow, sinking her almost instantaneously. A boat was at once lowered, and the mate of the "Castle Green" was picked up. The steamer remained on the spot for three quarters of an hour, but failed to find the master.

Mr. C. D. Donald on behalf of the Board of Trade submitted the following questions for the opinion of the Court:—

1. Whether both vessels complied with the Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea?
2. Whether a good and proper look-out was kept on board both vessels?
3. Whether every possible effort was made by those on board the steamer to save life?
4. Whether both vessels were navigated with proper and seamanlike care?
5. Particularly, whether the "Castle Green" carried lights of such a character as to be visible on a dark

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night, with a clear atmosphere at a distance of at least two miles?

6. Whether the "Memling" complied with Article 17 of the Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea?

7. Whether the "Memling" complied with Article 18 of the said regulations?

8. Whether the "Castle Green" complied with Article 22 of the Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea?

9. What was the cause of the loss of the "Castle Green?"

In the opinion of the Board of Trade the certificates of the master and mate of the "Memling" should be dealt with.

To these the Court returns the following answers:—

1. Both vessels did not comply with the Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea.

2. A good and proper look-out appears to have been kept on board the "Castle Green" but not on board the "Memling."

3. Every possible effort to save life was made by those on board the steamer.

4. The "Castle Green" appears to have been navigated with proper and seamanlike care; but the Court is of opinion that the master of the "Memling" did not navigate his vessel with the caution which should be observed under the circumstances in which he was then placed.

5. From the evidence led, the Court has no doubt but that the lights carried by the "Castle Green" were of such a character as to be visible on a dark night with a clear atmosphere at a distance of at least two miles.

6. The "Memling" did not comply with Article 17 of the Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea.

7. The "Memling" did not comply with Article 18 of the said regulations.

8. The "Castle Green" appears to have complied with Article 22 of the Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea. The starboarding of her helm was done only at the last moment, with the view of lessening the blow when the collision seemed to her master to be inevitable.

9. The loss of the "Castle Green" was caused by collision with the "Memling," off Pladda, on board of which last-mentioned vessel a good and proper look-out was not kept, and also owing to her having failed to slacken her speed when approaching, so as to involve risk of collision.

In hearing this case the Court had the advantage of the evidence of the crews of the two Girvan fishing boats who were riding to their nets in the neighbourhood of the casualty; for besides the valuable evidence they gave as to the "Castle Green's" lights, they made it clear to the Court that previous to the "Memling" colliding with the "Castle Green" she was proceeding apparently in a somewhat reckless manner, for she had passed so close to one of the boats as to carry away the length of net next the boat, and seriously alarm the crew.

(Signed) W. GUTHRIE, Judge.

We concur.

(Signed) RICHD. C. DYER,
JOHN BAIN,
ANDW. CUNINGHAME, } Assessors.

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