

(No. 3778.)

“ O R E T I ” (S.S.)

Shipping and Seamen's Act, 1877.
Wrecks and Casualties.

REPORT on a Shipping Casualty to the S.S. “ O R E T I . ”

I, the undersigned resident magistrate, having been, on the 28th day of January 1889, applied to by James Tyeth Hart, Esquire, collector of customs at the Port of Wellington, for a formal investigation pursuant to Section 240 of the Shipping and Seamen's Act, 1877, and other provisions of the said Act, respecting a shipping casualty to a certain British ship called the “ Oreti,” of the Port of Dunedin, on the 17th day of January last, at the Steeples Rock, on the west coast of the Middle Island of New Zealand, did duly proceed with the said investigation, to wit, on the 28th day of January instant, and had before me and examined on oath divers persons and witnesses, to wit, John George Gilbertson, master; Lionel Campbell Heugh Worrall, chief officer; Alexander Conbrough, second officer; Victor Lamberg, A.B.; Henrich Rachlew, the original depositions of whose evidence are hereunto annexed, signed by me, being assisted therein by John Norie, master mariner, holding a certificate of competency No. —, from the Board of Trade, London, and James William Grant Fraser, master mariner, holding a certificate of competency No. 8,692, from the Board of Trade, London, who were duly appointed by me to act as assessors, and upon such investigation and examination of witnesses as aforesaid, I find and report as follows, that is to say:—

1. That the official number of said ship, called the “ Oreti,” is 75,219, of which John George Gilbertson is master, who holds a certificate of competency No. 5,240, issued by the New Zealand Marine Department, and which ship belonged to the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, Limited.

2. That the loss or damage herein more particularly mentioned, happened on the 17th day of January 1889, at about 9.15 o'clock in the afternoon, at the Steeples, Cape Foulwind.

3. That the loss or damage appears by the evidence to have been caused by touching on a rock.

4. That the nature of the loss or damage done was 22 rivets started in stem, two plates on starboard side dented, and part of rolling chock carried away. That

the “ Oreti ” is fore and aft, three masts, rigged. Her port of registry Dunedin, her registered tonnage 138. That no lives were lost through the casualty.

And I, the said resident magistrate, further state my opinion on the matter aforesaid, to be as follows:—

That the vessel was on her way from Whanganui to Greymouth. That on January 17th, when passing Rocks Point, she was from four to five miles off the land at 2.15 p.m. That she was then put on a course S. and by W. westerly by the standard compass, and kept the same course until 4.30 p.m., when the course was altered to S. and by W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. That the weather at this time was clear, but beginning to cloud over from the westward, and from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. the weather became thick. That at 9.15 p.m. the Steeples were sighted on the starboard bow, and the ship, which was then going full speed ahead, was at once put full speed astern. That she almost immediately after struck lightly forward once, and sustained the injuries described. That the log had been hauled in at 7.45 p.m., when it appeared that 51 miles had been run since leaving Rocks Point, and that allowing 12 miles to be run from 7.45 to 9.15 p.m., the total distance run from Rocks Point to the Steeples would be 63 miles, whereas the measured distance on the chart is only 52 miles. That the light at Cape Foulwind was not seen. That it appears that an iron roller had recently been fixed near the standard compass which, with the addition of some cattle troughs with iron about them, may have caused a deviation beyond that shown on the card. That it is probable that the mischief arose from a deviation of the standard compass throwing the ship out of her course. That a good look-out was kept, and prompt measures taken to save the vessel. That it would have been more prudent for the master, in thick weather, when he could not see the light at Cape Foulwind, and with the knowledge of the iron roller having been newly placed near the standard compass, to have slowed his engines and had soundings taken. That the master pay the expenses of this enquiry, amounting to four pounds four shillings.

Given under my hand this 28th day of January 1889, at Wellington, in the Colony of New Zealand.

(Signed) H. W. ROBINSON, R.M.

I concur in the above report.

(Signed) JOHN NORIE, Assessor.

I concur in the above report.

(Signed) J. W. G. FRASER, Assessor.