

(No. 4405.)

"GLENEDEN" (S.S.)

The Merchant Shipping Acts, 1854 to 1887.

In the matter of a formal Investigation held at the Athenæum, and by adjournment at the Municipal Buildings, West Hartlepool, on the 29th and 30th days of October 1891, before RICHARD CORKER WALKER and WILLIAM HUNTON FISHER, Esquires, two of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the county of Durham, assisted by Captains GEORGE RICHARDSON and J. T. BRAGG, into the circumstances attending the stranding of the British steamship "GLENEDEN," of West Hartlepool, on or near Ballastkier Reef, south coast of Norway, on or about the 28th September 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 cause of the casualty was the neglect to make due allowance for the current, of which caution is given in Sailing Directions and upon the chart by which this vessel was navigated.

The Court finds the master, Edward Fell, alone in default, and suspends his certificate for a period of six months, but recommends that he be granted a chief mate's certificate during the period of such suspension.

Dated this thirty-first day of October 1891.

(Signed) R. C. WALKER, } Justices of
W. H. FISHER, } the Peace.

We concur in the above report.

(Signed) GEO. RICHARDSON, } Assessors.
J. THRELFALL BRAGG, }

Annex to the Report.

This was an inquiry into the circumstances attending the stranding of the British steamship "Gleneden," of West Hartlepool, on or near Ballastkier Reef, south coast of Norway, on or about the 28th September 1891.

Mr. Burton, of Newcastle, represented the Board of Trade, and Mr. Tilly, of West Hartlepool, appeared for the master and owners. The chief mate was not represented by counsel, but appeared in person.

The "Gleneden," official number 97,393, was a steel screw steamer, built at Sunderland in the year 1890 by Messrs. John Priestman & Co., of Sunderland. She was schooner-rigged, and of the following dimensions:—Length, 231.5 ft.; breadth, 32.1 ft.; and depth 15.5 ft. Her gross tonnage was 1,133.10 tons, and deductions 420.47 tons, giving her a registered tonnage of 712.63 tons. She was owned by Mr. Robert Livingstone, of West Hartlepool, and others, Mr. Robert Livingstone being the managing owner. The "Gleneden" was fitted with three tri-compound engines of 120 nominal horse-power, the diameter of the cylinders being 17 in., 28 in., and 46 in. respectively, and length of stroke 33 in. She had three compasses, viz., a pole, by which the courses were set, a bridge, by which the vessel was steered, and one aft. They were made by Mr. Wilson, of Sunderland, and were last adjusted by the maker in June 1890. She appears to have been well found, and was commanded by Mr. Edward Fell, who holds a certificate of competency, numbered 0,060.

On the 24th September 1891 the "Gleneden" left Windau, in Russia, with a cargo of railway sleepers and other wood goods, bound for Dublin, her draught of water being 14 ft. 7 in. forward, and 16 ft. 9 in. aft. Her crew consisted of 18 hands all told, and she also had on board one stowaway. On her passage down the Baltic rough seas and boisterous weather were encountered, notwithstanding which she arrived at Copenhagen on the 26th of September, and having taken on board 25 tons of bunker coals she left that

port at 11 p.m. of the same day, proceeding at full speed on her voyage. About 6.20 p.m. of the 27th September the Skaw Light-vessel was passed, bearing N.N.E. and distant $\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile, when a course W. by N. $\frac{1}{2}$ N. was set and steered for a distance of 9 miles. During this time the weather was bad, as a heavy gale was blowing from the westward, with a high sea running, and the vessel was pitching bows under occasionally. At 8 p.m. the course was altered to W. $\frac{1}{2}$ S. southerly, making her correct course west magnetic, no allowance being made for tide or current. At about 5.20 a.m. of the 28th September Hirtshalls Light was abeam, and according to the master's statement bearing south, distant 8 miles. The westerly gale was still blowing, with a high sea, and no observations were obtained at noon of the 28th September. The ship's course, however, was continued west until 4 p.m., when the master ordered it to be altered to N.W. by W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. magnetic. From this time the weather commenced to moderate, and the master stated that on this course $\frac{1}{2}$ of a point was allowed for current. This alteration of the course brought the wind and sea on the port bow, and the forestaysail was hoisted and kept set for a short time, when it was taken in again. This was between 7 and 8 p.m. About 10 or 10.20 p.m. the master went below, leaving the first mate in charge of the deck, with orders to call him should the necessity arise, also to keep a good look-out, and if he saw the Naze Light to report it to him. The night was dark but clear, and some vessel's lights were seen, but nothing eventful occurred until about 11.45 p.m., when the mate stated he suddenly saw a black mass right ahead, and ordered the helm to be put hard-a-starboard and the engines to be stopped, but immediately afterwards the vessel struck the ground heavily and remained fast. The shock of the grounding brought the master on to the bridge, and efforts were made to get the vessel over the obstacle by turning the engines easy ahead, but this measure not having the desired effect, the engines were stopped and soundings were taken round the vessel, when on both sides aft 5 fathoms of water were obtained, 3 fathoms on the port side abreast of the foremast, and 2 fathoms on the starboard side. The ballast tanks were also sounded, when Nos. 1 and 2 were found to be full of water, but the after tanks remained tight. In a short time, however, the water commenced to enter the engine-room through the forward bulkhead. About 1 a.m. on the 29th the vessel listed heavily over to port, and the engineers and firemen were obliged to leave the engine-room. The boats were now cleared away and lowered, and the crew, with the exception of the master, mate, and first engineer, got into them and remained alongside. Signals of distress were shown, but no response was made, and at daylight it was found that the vessel lay stranded on the Ballastkier Reef, a short distance off the south coast of Norway. About 6 a.m. the mate was sent to the mainland with one of the boats, and about noon Lloyd's agent came to the ship from Mandal. Shortly afterwards bad weather set in again, and at about 5 p.m. of the 29th September all hands were obliged to leave the vessel. On the following day some of the crew returned to her, but owing to the heavy sea breaking over, they were unable to get on board of the ship. The after part of the vessel had now become submerged, and on the 8th October the vessel broke in two parts, the after end sinking in deep water. Up to this time the master had remained in the vicinity, and with the aid of a salvage tug some portion of the cargo and part of the vessel's outfit had been saved. No lives were lost by this casualty, but the vessel is a complete and total wreck.

At the conclusion of the evidence Mr. Burton submitted the following questions to the Court:—

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 corrections to the courses applied?
4. Whether proper measures were taken to ascertain and verify the position of the vessel at or about 6.20 p.m. of the 27th September?

5. Whether a safe and proper course was then set and thereafter steered, and whether due and proper allowance was made for tide and currents?

6. Whether a safe and proper alteration was made in the course at or about 8 p.m. of the 27th September, and whether due and proper allowance was made for tide and currents?

7. Whether proper measures were taken at or about 5.20 a.m. of the 28th September, and from time to time thereafter, to ascertain and verify the position of the vessel?

8. Whether a safe and proper alteration was made in the course at or about 4 p.m. of the 28th September, and whether due and proper allowance was made for beam wind and sea?

9. Whether the master was on deck at a time when the safety of the vessel required his personal supervision?

10. Whether a good and proper look-out was kept?

11. What was the cause of the casualty?

12. Whether the vessel was navigated with proper and seamanlike care?

13. Whether the master and mate are, or either of them is, in default?

In the opinion of the Board of Trade, the certificates of Edward Fell, the master, and George Mann, the chief mate, should be dealt with.

The Court was then addressed by Mr. Tilly on behalf of the master and owners of the vessel, the chief officer not desiring to address the Court.

Mr. Burton having replied on behalf of the Board of Trade, the Court replied to the questions as follows:—

1. The vessel was provided with three compasses, viz., a pole, by which the courses were set, a bridge, by which the vessel was steered, and one aft. They appear to have been in good order, and sufficient for the safe navigation of the vessel.

2. The compasses were made by Mr. Wilson, of Sunderland, in June 1890, and were last adjusted by the maker in the same month and year.

3. The master stated he did ascertain the deviation of his compasses by observation from time to time. The errors appear to have been correctly ascertained, and the proper corrections applied to the courses.

4. At 6.20 p.m. of the 27th September a bearing of the Skaw Light was taken, and the distance estimated at $\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile.

5. A safe and proper course was then set and thereafter steered. No allowance was made for tide and currents.

6. A safe and proper alteration was made in the course at or about 8 p.m. of the 27th September. No allowance was made for tide and currents.

7. Proper measures were taken at or about 5.20 a.m. of the 28th September to ascertain and verify the position of the vessel. No other means were afterwards available.

8. Having regard to the circumstances of this case, the Court does not consider the alteration made in the course at 4 p.m. of the 28th September was safe or proper. Due and proper allowance was not made for either tide or current, or for the wind and sea, which were on the port bow.

9. The master having been on deck almost continuously for some time previous, when the vessel was in narrow waters, and not anticipating in any way that the ship would again approach the land so close, and leaving a certificated officer in charge with explicit instructions, he was justified in being off the deck at the time indicated.

10. There were three persons on the bridge, viz., the first mate, the helmsman, and a look-out man, but the Court is not prepared to say that a good and proper look-out was kept.

11. The cause of the casualty was the neglect to make due allowance for the current, of which caution is given in Sailing Directions and upon the chart by which this vessel was navigated.

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

13. The Court finds the master, Edward Fell, alone in default, and suspends his certificate for a period of six months, but recommends that he be granted a chief mate's certificate during the period of such suspension.

The Court does not deal with the certificate of the chief officer, George Mann.

(Signed) R. C. WALKER, } Justices of
W. H. FISHER, } the Peace.

We concur.

(Signed) GEO. RICHARDSON, } Assessors.
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