

(No. 5416.)

“L'ISLE ADAM” (S.S.)

REPORT of a Court of Inquiry held at Malta to investigate the circumstances attending the nature and cause of the fire which broke out on board the S.S. “L'ISLE ADAM” at Tunis on the 13th August 1896: Dr. G. B. MIFSUD, Magistrate sitting; Captain GUISEPPE MUSCAT, Assessor.

29th August 1896.

The s.s. “L'Isle Adam,” belonging to the port of Malta, on the 5th August 1896, left Trieste for Malta laden with casks of spirits and timber, which were stowed in No. 3 hold. In the same hold at Malta gunnie bags were laden, and on the 11th of the same month the steamer left for Tunis, reaching there on the 13th at 7 a.m. When the donkeyman had entered the tunnel to stop the water-cocks and tightening the gland-shaft, the tunnel was found filled with smoke. The alarm was raised, and on the arrival on board of the Tunis fire brigade it was found necessary to let the water in to extinguish the fire. On discharging the vessel and refloating her, it was found that three of the casks of spirits had been stove in, that part of the timber had been charred, and that some of the gunnie bags had caught fire. It was ascertained that proper care had been taken in stowing the casks and cargo, so that as no evidence could be collected of any neglect on the part of the master and crew of the said ship, this Court acquitted of all blame Master Guiseppe Inguanez.

(Signed) GIO. B. MIFSUD, Magistrate.

*Opinion of the Assessor.*

I, the undersigned, appointed nautical assessor for the purpose of assisting the magistrate, Dr. Giovanni Mifsud, in the investigation of the cause of the British s.s. “L'Isle Adam,” Guiseppe Inguanez, master, having discovered the fire on arrival at Tunis on the 13th instant.

I hold that it is impossible with the evidence before the Court to establish the real cause of the fire that was discovered in No. 3 hold of the s.s. “L'Isle Adam” on the 13th August 1896; no evidence was forthcoming that the master of the ship or anyone of his crew were guilty of any neglect in the stranding of the cargo.

Malta, 29th August 1896.

(Signed) GUISEPPE MUSCAT.

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