

(No. 5515.)

"LA SERENA" (S.S.)

FINDING of a preliminary Court of Inquiry, held at the Court House, Albany, on Thursday, the 4th day of March 1897, before ROWLEY CROZIER LOFTIE, Principal Officer of Customs (Port of Albany), and PETER NICOLSON, Master Mariner, also a Justice of the Peace, under the provisions of the Local Ordinances, 28 Vict., No. 2, and 51 Vict., No. 6, to inquire into the circumstances attending the striking, on the 25th day of February 1897, of the British steamer "LA SERENA," of Adelaide, South Australia, of 1447 tons burden, on a reef in the vicinity of Cape Lewin, West Australia, while on a voyage from Fremantle to Albany, having on board a cargo of coal, and commanded by Captain Edward Jones, the number of whose certificate of competency is 15,445 of Board of Trade, London.

Finding.

After careful consideration, we are of opinion that no blame can be attached to the certificated master and mate of the steamer "La Serena" on the 25th ult., and by virtue of the power vested in us by sec. 2, of 51 Vict., No. 6, sub-sec. C., we direct that all proceedings shall cease and determine; but we desire to express our opinion that, considering the state of the weather and the time of night, it would have been more prudent to have kept more off shore by three miles, and so to have been less liable to be affected by currents which we think the cause of the mishap. We also desire to express our opinion that the use of a patent log was most advisable, and that it should have been used on the occasion.

(Signed) ROWLEY CROZIER LOFTIE,
Principal Officer of Customs,
Port of Albany.

PETER HAY NICOLSON, J.P.,
Master Mariner.

(Issued in London by the Board of Trade on the
29th day of April 1897.)