

(No. 5697.)

“HINDUSTAN” (S.S.)

MINUTES of Preliminary Court of Inquiry, held at the Court House, Albany, on the 27th January, 1898, before JOHN ARTHUR WRIGHT, Esq., the Principal Officer of Customs at the Port of Albany, and JOHN MOIR, Esq., 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 grounding, on the 25th January, 1898, of the s.s. “HINDUSTAN,” of Sydney, 1,552 tons, while leaving the harbour on a voyage from Batavia to Melbourne, laden with sugar.

Captain Butcher, the Harbour Master, was in attendance. John Hazard, Master, certificate No. 21,675, put in a statement in writing hereto attached, also the official log of the “Hindustan.”

By CAPTAIN BUTCHER : As soon as I saw the beacon I put the helm “hard-a-port,” to go clear of it ; but owing to the strong southerly wind and current on the starboard bow, the vessel would not answer her helm We were going three-quarter speed. As soon as the vessel took the ground I reversed the engines and went “full speed astern.” Every precaution was taken to save the ship, and she has been making no water since.

(Signed) JOHN HAZARD, Master.

ANDREW HAIG, Chief Officer of the s.s. “Hindustan” : I was on duty on the fore-castle as we were going out of the harbour, and knew nothing about it till we took the ground inside the West Red Beacon.

By CAPTAIN BUTCHER : I saw the Red Beacon—it was on the starboard bow. Anchor and everything was ready in case of emergency.

(Signed) ANDREW HAIG, Chief Officer.

THOMAS HUDSON, Chief Engineer, s.s. “Hindustan” : I was in the engine-room, in charge of the engines. She was going about three-quarter speed. We felt nothing when she took the ground. I received orders almost simultaneously : “stop,” and “full speed astern.” I consider the ship perfectly seaworthy.

(Signed) T. HUDSON, Chief Engineer.

After hearing the evidence, the Court is of opinion :—

1. That, owing to the captain’s long and meritorious service without an accident, that the proceedings in this case shall cease and determine.

2. They advise him, however, in future, in going into and coming out of a port in which he has never been before, the more so when he has had to pay pilotage fees, to take a pilot whose local knowledge of winds and currents, more especially in a narrow entrance, must be of use.

(Signed) J. ARTHUR WRIGHT,
Sub-Collector of Customs.

(Signed) JOHN MOIR, J.P.

(Signed) G. T. BUTCHER, H.M.

Albany,
27th January, 1898.

(Issued in London by the Board of Trade on the 14th day of April, 1898.)