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(No. 6265.)

"ELIZA FIRTH."

Shipping and Seamen's Act, 1877.

Wrecks and Casualties.

Colony of } REPORT on a Shipping Casualty to the  
New Zealand, } "ELIZA FIRTH."  
to wit.

To the Honourable the Minister having charge of the  
Marine Department of New Zealand.

We, the undersigned, two of His Majesty's Justices of  
the Peace in and for the Colony of New Zealand, having  
been on the 23rd day of March, 1901, applied to by  
J. Christy Smith, Esquire, Officer in charge of Customs  
at the port of Kaipara, 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 "Eliza Firth," of the Port of Lyttelton, on the  
22nd day of February last, at 3 miles North of North  
Spit, Kaipara Heads, did duly proceed with the said  
investigation, to wit, on the 23rd day of March instant,  
and had before us, and examined on oath, divers persons  
and witnesses—to wit, Gilbert Brown, Alfred Cash,  
Charles Peterson, Thorwald Nilsen, the original deposi-  
tions of whose evidence are hereunto annexed, signed by  
us, being assisted therein by Ferdinand Holm, holding a  
certificate of competency, as master mariner, No. 102  
S.A., from the South Australian Government, and Thomas  
Richards, holding a certificate of competency, as master  
mariner, No. 129, from the Marine Department of New  
Zealand, who were duly appointed by the Minister of  
Marine to act as Assessors; and, upon such investigation  
and examination of witnesses as aforesaid, we find and  
report as follows, that is to say:—

1. That the official number of said ship called the  
"Eliza Firth" is 59,540, of which Gilbert Brown is  
master, who holds a certificate of service as master, home  
trade No. 2286, issued by the Marine Department of New  
Zealand, and which ship belonged to John Buckland  
Way, of Lyttelton.

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2. That the loss or damage herein more particularly  
mentioned happened on the 22nd day of February, 1901,  
at about 2.30 o'clock in the morning at Kaipara Heads.

3. That the loss or damage appears by the evidence to  
have been caused by stranding.

4. That the nature of the loss or damage done was  
slight. That the vessel was not insured. That the  
"Eliza Firth" is brigantine rigged. Her port of registry  
Lyttelton. Her registered tonnage 143. That no lives  
were lost through the casualty.

And we, the said Justices of the Peace, further state  
our opinion on the matter aforesaid to be as follows:—

That Captain Gilbert Brown committed an error of  
judgment in over-estimating his distance from the light-  
house at 10.30 p.m. on the night of February 21st; and  
further that in heading in for the land, the lead should  
have been used.

At the same time we are of opinion that the errors are  
not sufficiently serious to warrant the suspension of his  
certificate; which certificate we have therefore returned.

There were no costs in this case.

Given under our hands, this twenty-third day of  
March, one thousand nine hundred and one, at Aratapu,  
New Zealand.

(Signed) MAURICE HARDING, J.P.

(Signed) THOMAS WEBB, J.P.

I concur in the above Report.

(Signed) F. HOLM, Assessor.

I concur in the above Report.

(Signed) THOMAS RICHARDS, Assessor.

A true copy.

W. T. GLASGOW,  
Secretary, Marine Department, N.Z.

(Issued in London by the Board of Trade on the  
8th day of November, 1901.)