

(No. 7075.)

"ANDALUSIA" (S.S.).

The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.

In the matter of a Formal Investigation held at the Magistrates' Room, Liverpool, on the 6th, 7th, and 8th days of June, 1907, before W. J. STEWART, Esq., assisted by Captain KNOX, R.N., Captain COWIE, and Captain MELVILLE, into the circumstances attending the foundering of the British steamship "ANDALUSIA," of Liverpool, in Lat. 41° 45' N., Long. 9° 50' W., on April 13, 1907, whereby loss of life occurred.

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 foundering and loss of the said vessel were probably due to her springing a serious leak as the result of being struck by a heavy sea. The loss of life was due to the suddenness of the casualty.

Dated this 8th day of June, 1907.

W. J. STEWART,
Judge.

We concur in the above Report.

HENRY C. KNOX,
Captain, R.N., }
W. COWIE, } Assessors.
WM. G. B. MELVILLE, }

Annex to the Report.

This was an inquiry into the circumstances attending the foundering of the British steamship "Andalusia," of Liverpool, and was held in the Magistrates' Room, Dale Street, Liverpool, on the 6th, 7th, and 8th days of June, 1907, when Mr. Paxton appeared for the Board of Trade, Mr. Pedder for the owners, and Mr. A. T. Miller for the master and chief officer.

The "Andalusia," official number 79204, was an iron screw steamship built in 1878 by the Tyne Iron Shipbuilding Company, Limited, at Wellington Quay on Tyne. She was schooner rigged and of the following dimensions:—Length 287 feet, breadth 34.5 feet, and depth in hold 24.65 feet and was of 1920.58 gross, and 1212.49 net registered tonnage. She was fitted with compound surface condensing engines of 200 horse power constructed by the North Eastern Marine Engineering Company, Limited, Sunderland, in 1878, and was owned by the Iberian Steamship Company, Limited, of 17, Water Street, Liverpool, in the County of Lancaster, Mr. Thomas Williamson Whimster, of 149, West George Street, Glasgow, being appointed manager on the 21st February, 1907. She was, on the voyage in question, in good condition and well found, and fitted with two lifeboats and two other boats; also with life-saving appliances in accordance with the Act.

The s.s. "Andalusia" left Swansea on the 9th April last bound for Barcelona, with a cargo of 2362½ tons of coal, including 151 tons of patent fuel, and there were 296¼ tons of bunker coal, making a total of 2659½ tons dead weight, her draught being 20 feet 9 inches forward and 22 feet 9 inches aft. She was under the command of Mr. Timothy McCarthy, who

holds a master's certificate of competency No. 030948, and had a crew of 22 hands all told. Shifting boards were fitted throughout the lower holds and 'tween decks, but not in any of the hatchways, and the cargo was stowed in seven compartments. All these were filled with the exception of the after part of No. 4 'tween decks, which could not be filled on account of the vessel being already 2 feet by the stern, which was 18 inches more than the desired trim. This space, according to the evidence, would have held about 40 tons.

Mr. David Smail, superintendent engineer, stated that the "Andalusia," after stranding on a voyage from Smyrna, was placed in dry dock at Glasgow, during September, 1906. A number of plates in the bottom and tank tops were renewed, the tank margin plates and brackets were caulked and re-riveted, a new ceiling was provided to the tank tops fore and aft, the frames faired and other repairs executed. In addition to the above-mentioned repairs to the hull, the engines and shafting were stripped and examined, new main and donkey pumps were fitted, the high-pressure cylinder bored out, the crank shafts lifted and relined up, new lead suction pipes and roses were fitted to the wells and tanks. The tanks and collision bulkhead were tested by water pressure, and all repairs to hull and machinery were executed under the supervision of Lloyd's surveyor, and the owner's superintendent engineer.

The "Andalusia" passed Cape Finisterre on the 12th April, at 4.30 p.m., about 12 miles off; the wind was a stiff breeze with heavy squalls between W.N.W. and W.S.W., with a choppy and confused sea. Up to this period the wells were sounded night and morning, but no water was found in any of them. At 1.30 a.m. of the 13th the vessel having run about 65 or 70 miles from her position off Cape Finisterre, she was struck by a heavy squall, and the master was called by the chief officer. As the master wished to pass inside of the Burlings he remained on the bridge. At 3.45 a.m. the chief officer, who had been in charge of the watch from midnight, left the bridge to go on the main deck, and during that time the vessel was struck on the starboard side by a heavy sea, causing her to lurch heavily to port, and washing away her boats on the port side. The loss of the boats was not observed by the master until his attention was called to it by the chief officer on returning to the bridge.

After the vessel was struck by the sea and had taken a list to port she righted a little, but very soon began to list heavily to port. All hands were then called on deck, and all appeared except the steward, who was berthed aft, and attempts were made to get the starboard boats out and bring the vessel's head to wind, but she only came up three or four points. The engines were stopped, and the master left the bridge to assist in getting the boats out. At that time the list was rapidly increasing, and the vessel falling over on her beam ends, the boat lashings were cut adrift and the boats were soon in the water. The master tried to reach the steward's room, but soon found himself in the water and the ship gone. The master swam to the lifeboat, picked up some lifebelts, and threw them to those of the crew who were near.

According to the evidence, only five minutes elapsed from the time the vessel was struck by a heavy sea on the starboard side (as already mentioned) until she foundered. Such a short interval prevented the crew from adopting the usual measures to save their lives. In the result only the master, chief officer, and one A.B. were saved. Although the survivors were carefully examined with regard to the vessel striking anything prior to the foundering and creating the serious leak which must have occurred and caused it, none of them was aware of anything other than the sea striking the vessel.

No questions were raised by the Board of Trade as to the stability of the "Andalusia," and the evidence satisfied the Court that on leaving Swansea she had the free board required by the regulations.

At the conclusion of the evidence, Mr. Paxton, for the Board of Trade, submitted the following questions for the opinion of the Court:—

(1) When the vessel left Swansea on or about the 9th April last:

- (a) Was she in good and seaworthy condition as regards hull and equipments?
- (b) Was her cargo properly stowed and secured from shifting?
- (c) Had she the free board required for a summer voyage? As laden, was she in proper trim and had she sufficient stability?

(2) What was the cause of the vessel taking a heavy list to port at or about 4 a.m. of the 13th April last?

(3) What was the cause of the loss of the vessel, and what were the circumstances in which so many lives were lost?

(4) Was the vessel navigated with proper and seamanlike care?

(5) Was the loss of the s.s. "Andalusia" and/or the loss of life caused by the wrongful act or default of the master and chief officer or of either of them?

(6) What was the cost of the vessel to her owners? What was her value at the time she last left the United Kingdom? What insurances were effected and how were they apportioned?

Mr. Miller having addressed the Court on behalf of the master and chief officer, the Court gave judgment as above and returned the following answers to the questions of the Board of Trade:—

(1) When the vessel left Swansea on or about the 9th April last:

- (a) She was in good and seaworthy condition as regards hull and equipments.
- (b) Her cargo was properly stowed and secured from shifting, with the exception of the afterpart of No. 4 'tween decks, in which there was a space left capable of holding about 40 tons, which could not be filled owing to the trim of the vessel. Shifting boards were fitted throughout the lower holds and 'tween decks, but not under the hatchways.

(c) She had the free board required for a summer voyage.

According to the master's evidence, he wished her trim not to exceed 6 inches by the stern, but as she left Swansea 2 feet by the stern the Court is not prepared to say as laden she was in proper trim. There

was no evidence to indicate that she had not sufficient stability.

(2) The cause of the vessel taking a heavy list to port at or about 4 a.m. of the 13th April last was, according to the evidence of the master and chief officer, that she was struck by a heavy sea on the star-board side.

(3) There is no direct evidence as to the exact cause of the loss of the vessel, but as she sank in five minutes after she was struck by a heavy sea, the Court can only surmise that a serious leak suddenly occurred, causing the vessel to founder. The suddenness of the casualty prevented those of the crew who were drowned from taking any effective measures to save their lives.

(4) The vessel was navigated with proper and seamanlike care.

(5) The loss of the s.s. "Andalusia" and the loss of life were not caused by the wrongful act or default of the master and chief officer or of either of them.

(6) The vessel was bought by her late owners in 1905 and cost £6,500.

Her value when she last left the United Kingdom was £6,500.

The insurances effected were on a time policy for £9,000 for total loss by accident (£1,500 being at owners' risk), £1,000 on freight, and £950 on disbursements. The total amount recovered from the underwriters owing to the loss of the vessel was £5,913 and £1,800, making a total of £7,713.

W. J. STEWART, Judge.

We concur in the above report.

HENRY C. KNOX, |
Captain R.N., } Assessors.
W. COWIE,
WM. G. B. MELVILLE, }

Liverpool, 10th June, 1907.

(Issued in London by the Board of Trade on the 2nd day of July, 1907.)

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