

(No. 7102.)

“MONTROSE” (S.S.).

IN the matter of the formal investigation into the causes which led to the stranding of the C. P. R. s.s. “MONTROSE,” on Red Island Reef, in the St. Lawrence River, on the 2nd of July, 1907, when on a voyage from Antwerp to Montreal, whereby the vessel sustained considerable damage, held pursuant to the provisions of the Shipping Casualties Act, 1901, and amendments thereto, at the Wreck Commissioner's Court in the City of Montreal, on the 5th and 6th days of July, 1907, before Commander O. G. V. SPAIN, Wreck Commissioner, and Captain ARCHIBALD REID, Master Mariner and Port Warden of Montreal, and CHARLES A. RAYMOND, Branch Pilot for and below Quebec, Assessors.

The Court, on the termination of hearing all the evidence which it was possible to obtain, and after affording both the pilot and the master and officers of the ship full opportunity for defence and explanation, finds as follows:—

The s.s. “Montrose” is a vessel of 6,278 tons gross, and owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, registered at the port of Liverpool, Great Britain, and commanded by Captain J. H. Moore, who holds a Board of Trade master's certificate.

The s.s. “Montrose” was fully found in all the requisites to safe navigation, and properly manned, in accordance with the Act. From all the evidence adduced, all went well on the voyage until after the vessel passed Father Point, at which place, at 7.56 a.m. apparent time, on the 2nd inst., Branch Pilot Joseph H. Talbot, who holds a pilotage certificate for and below the harbour of Quebec, was taken on board, and took charge of the navigation of the vessel. At this time the weather was fairly clear, and the east end of Barnaby Island was visible, but the weather conditions were such as conduce to caution. At 9 a.m. Bicquette was passed at an approximately assumed distance of three miles, but nothing was observed; weather thick and lifting at intervals.

At 11.30 a.m. the vessel was enveloped in thick fog, but the sound signal on Red Island lightship was heard right ahead; ship was continued at full speed, which was in the neighbourhood of ten one-half to eleven knots. For some reason, not satisfactorily

explained to the Court, they passed north of the Red Island lightship, starboarding the helm, and passing between the ship and the island.

The testimony at this point is somewhat conflicting, it being impossible to find out exactly how long the ship was headed to the S.E., but the evidence of the master and officers of the vessel shows that the lightship was passed at 11.56 a.m., and the “Montrose” was steadied on her course of S.W. by W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  W. at 12h. 2m. p.m. (or six minutes), and she took the ground at 12.18 p.m., clearly proving that she could not have run on the S.E. course for as long a time, or for as great a distance, as the officers in charge assumed she had.

The Court considers that the pilot, Joseph H. Talbot, was guilty of a grave error of judgment, insomuch as he continued at full speed and on too fine a course without first ascertaining, by the lead or otherwise, that the vessel was in a safe position to clear a thoroughly well-known danger.

At the same time the Court cannot exonerate the master, J. H. Moore, from blame, as this officer accepted the actions of the pilot as correct, and allowed him to alter the course and continue at full speed without first assuring himself of the actual position of the vessel, which might have been so easily and conveniently found out by taking the departure from the lightship and running a course that would determine a safe offing from the Red Island reef. The Court, taking into consideration the excellent record as a pilot held by Joseph H. Talbot, fines him the sum of one hundred dollars, which is to be paid in four quarterly instalments of twenty-five dollars each; Captain J. H. Moore, master of the s.s. “Montrose,” is admonished and warned to be more careful in future. The Court exonerates the other officers of the s.s. “Montrose.”

(Signed) O. G. V. SPAIN,  
Wreck Commissioner.

We concur.

ARCHIBALD REID,  
Master Mariner and Port Warden  
of Montreal.

CHARLES A. RAYMOND,  
Branch Pilot for and below Quebec.

Montreal, August 12th, 1907.

(Issued in London by the Board of Trade on the  
10th day of September, 1907.)