

(No. 7668.)

“SOUTHERN CROSS” (S.S.).

Finding of a Marine Court of Inquiry held at St. John's, Newfoundland, on the 25th and 28th August, 1st, 21st, and 28th September, 7th October, 13th, 18th, and 28th November, 1914, into the loss of the British steamship “SOUTHERN CROSS,” on or about the 31st March, 1914.

The S.S. “Southern Cross,” a wooden screw ship of 537 registered gross tonnage and 325 tons net, was built at Arendal, Norway, in 1886, and having been purchased by Messrs, Murray & Crawford, Limited, of Glasgow, she was registered at that port in 1901 in the name of that firm. Since the year 1901 she was engaged each spring at the seal fishery of Newfoundland.

She left St. John's on the fourth day of March last in good seaworthy condition of hull and equipments, and carried a crew of 173 men all told, the Master being George Clarke, of Brigus, in Newfoundland, bound to Channel to prosecute the Seal Fishery in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, from which latter port she sailed on the 10th of March.

She bore up for home port (St. John's or Harbour Grace) on or about the 26th day of March, having secured about 18,000 seals, which, according to the average weight of seals taken in the Gulf last spring, would be a load for her.

She was last seen off Cape Pine, somewhat south of it, and in the vicinity of Cape Freels Rock, on the morning of the 31st of March last, by the S.S. “Portia,” a mail steamer on the coast, and nothing has since been heard of her. At the time she was sighted by the S.S. “Portia,” she was in a dangerous position, the wind increasing to a gale with heavy sea making, and thick snow falling.

There is no direct evidence as to the cause of her loss, but I am of opinion she foundered and went down with all hands in the heavy gale and snow storm on the 31st of March, in the vicinity of Freels Rock, which lies two miles off-shore W. $\frac{1}{2}$ S. from Cape Pine.

Given under my hand at St. John's, Newfoundland, this First day of December, A.D. 1914.

A. W. KNIGHT,

Marine Court of Inquiry.

Issued in London by the Board of Trade on the 2nd day of February, 1915.