

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS
"DAVIDSON ABERDEEN."

Grovest. Blackie's Quay

Aberdeen 20th June 1890

LLOYD'S REGISTER
and also Newcastle-on-Tyne
LONDON.

REC'D JUN. 90

ANSR

Let abn 20/6/90

Mr. Weymouth Esq
London

Dear Sir

We duly received your favour of 14th inst in reply we thank you for the kind consideration you have given to our letter but we conceive it to be our duty to ask you to look further into the matter of the loss of the *St. Bonaccord*. In our opinion there have been results disclosed in the loss of this steamer which justify us in stating that the *Bonaccord* was certainly faulty in construction.

We have no desire in any way to cast reflections on any one concerned our duty in this matter being to other owners & to the valuable lives of many men. So far as your surveyor, Mr. Hindmarsh is concerned we have ever found him to be active, intelligent & energetic our surveyor could have been more anxious or more devoted to his duty during the whole construction of the *Bonaccord*, clearly understand that we have no personal feeling either towards Mr. Hindmarsh or towards the Builders - rather the very reverse.

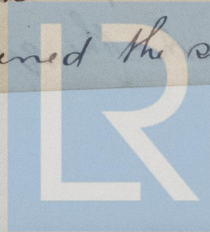
Permit us to refer to your letter of 14th inst & to say in reply that you surely cannot seriously maintain that Mr. Hindmarsh's suggestion furnishes a reasonable conjecture as to the cause of the loss of the *Bonaccord* it may or it may not shew a little

ABN 20-0162

effect as to the length of time the *Bonaccord* would have remained afloat but it does not touch the first cause of the extraordinary leakage in this steamer.

With regard to the construction in the course of our inquiry & investigation of this matter we find as a fact that the steamer was leaking all round the sides in No 2 hold, all round the sides in the fore part of the bridge in the way of the fore-castle, that round the combings of No 2 hold the steamer had opened & was leaking showing to any practical man that the steamer was weak where she ought to have been strong.

Again referring to your letter of 14th you must have been misinformed with regard to the pumps there was no evidence given that the pumps became choked this was the very reverse both the Chief Engineer, the Second Engineer & the firemen all gave it in evidence that the pumps worked in a most satisfactory manner, there is not one word of truth in the statement which you make that the pumps were choked further with regard to the vessel remaining afloat 12 hours after the pumps had ceased working this is not so either, that the vessel did remain afloat a considerable time after the pumps had ceased working is mainly attributable to the fact that both sea & wind had greatly gone down during the whole day of the 16th & as the sea went down the ship pulled less & consequently made less water. The centrifugal pump wrought splendidly & wrought as long as they were able to keep steam on the boilers. Had the manhole door in the engine room not been opened the steamer would have



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foundered long before she did.

With regard to the latter part of your letter we think Mr. Hindmarsh must assume not purely assume that the valves were left open by the Engineer when the pumps had stopped working. We think it is a pity that Mr. Hindmarsh should make statements purely on any such assumption without ascertaining the fact.

We enclose you a report which we first had from the Engineer with regard to the loss & we are today sending your letter to the Chief Engineer & shall ask him to state clearly whether or not the discharge valves were left open.

Kindly say if you would care to have the evidence transcribed in full, we can get you a copy for £9 & as in our opinion this is a most important matter we think they justify us in asking you to investigate all the facts with reference to the loss. We have no hesitation in stating that practical men in Aberdeen (we mean sailors & engineers) consider that the construction of the ship was faulty in so far as the web frames are principally concerned.

We consider Mr. Hindmarsh's criticism somewhat of the nature of putting the cart before the horse & further it is an easy matter for Mr. Hindmarsh or any other surveyor comfortably sitting in his Office chair to criticise the actions of men under an extreme emergency they having the benefit at a distant date of these actions with their results. We have no doubt our Engineer, Mr. Chalmer ~~will~~ ^{will} effectually dispose of Mr. Hindmarsh's criticism, it is in no way a reasonable or sensible answer to the question how does it come that this

fine new ship sprung a leak & foundered in a moderate gale of wind on her first voyage

Yours faithfully

J & A Davidson

P.S. The inquiry of Board of Trade was in great measure a mere farce - The men sent down here were in our opinion of no use quite unfit for any such inquiry

J & A Davidson

To the Chief Surveyor and
Mr. Atkinson

21. 6. 90



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