

Sp "Bonaccord"

1

Abstract of letters from the Owners of the
"Bonaccord" Messrs J & A. Davidson to
The Secretary. Lloyd's Register of Shipping
also from Mr Hindmarsh. Surveyor.

20th May 1890. — Advising copy of "Evening Gazette" giving
judgment of Board of Trade inquiry.
Requests that judgment of Court be placed
before Committee for some reply re points
affecting Lloyd's

Owners say they contracted for a first-class vessel
and in making all the plans & pumping
arrangements subject to Lloyd's approval, they
were under the impression that skill,
judgment and prudence would regulate the
construction of the ship.

21st May 1890. — Forwarding newspaper reports.

State they are somewhat annoyed at
reflections made by Court on the class and
construction of the vessel, and think this
is to some extent brought about by the
evidence of Mr Hindmarsh

Requests that matter be placed before Committee
as they feel they would scarcely be
justified in purchasing a steamer of
similar construction.

23rd May 1890. — Advising specifications of "Bonaccord"
and requesting in view of evidence of
Mr Hindmarsh an independent investigation
to be made



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24th May 1890. - Asking in what manner the pumping plans for the Bonaccord were laid before Committee, also date and in what manner the Committee indicated approval of these plans

26th May 1890 Letter from Mr Hindmarsh Surveyor.

to The Secretary

States he took great care to have workmanship perfectly satisfactory.

Captain Davidson, Pipers brother, also superintended vessel while building.

Says question of workmanship cannot for one moment be admitted

States his opinion that vessel was lost through mismanagement in the engine room.

Attended official trial of machinery, all satisfactory

His parting words to the Chief Engineer were "Mind you keep a sharp eye on your bilges as you must remember you have no limbers only side pockets."

Says from evidence given in Court although the vessel was shipping large quantities of water, it was not until the water was reported on the stokehold plate that any precaution was taken to clear the strums which would be 4 ft below surface of water.

Tank door then taken off and water passes into Cell D.B. Vessel rolling heavily would give an opportunity to examine ^{where} leak existed but Second Engineer stated

stated "no leak could be seen, no not so much as a leaky rivet."

Centrifugal pump started at 2.30 A.M. with tank door still off and before 8 A.M. the pumps are stopped and 9 ft of water in Engine Room.

Says from this it is clear that after opening sea valve to prime centrifugal pump, ~~the~~ it was forgotten to close it.

Centrifugal pump could discharge 160 tons per hour and with the other pumps they could discharge 200 tons per hour, yet the water gained. After pumps ceased working, the vessel remained afloat at least 12 hours.

Says that although pumping arrangement was satisfactory, yet, if his advice had been followed, a better arrangement could have been devised, but this had nothing to do with foundering which resulted from flooding of Engine room and storeroom.

12th June 1890 Mr Hindmarsh to The Secretary.

Replying to enquiry whether he has any grounds for believing sea valve ^{closed} was when pumps ceased working, also to explain how it was possible to close this with 9 ft of water in the Engine Room. —

Says such would have been impossible, but even if sea valve had been closed, the water could still find its way into the vessel, for the discharge valve being

then below water & the centrifugal pump stopped, the water could pass through the centrifugal pump into the tank and out through the manhole into the Engine Room.

Regarding efficiency of Centrifugal pump has no doubt whatever, although Chief Engineer stated in his evidence "that this pump did not work steady" (though previously it had worked splendidly) assigning as the cause that it only caught the water as the water rolled towards the pump.

Says this could not be, as the suction pipes would be completely immersed and longitudinal girders in Cell D.B. would prevent undue wash, even if tank not quite full.

Says reason this pump might not work steadily would be the suction pipes were evidently surrounded by the coals which had been carried into the tank ~~although~~ through the rush of water when manhole cover was removed.

20th June 1890 Messrs J & A Davidson to the Secretary. Asks for further investigation, as in their opinion there have been results disclosed in the loss of this steamer which justify them in stating that the Bonaccorda was certainly faulty in construction.

Note. This does not appear on the newspaper reports of evidence in his evidence Carpenter stated in his evidence he went into the hold to see if there was any water in it.

States from their enquiries that they find as a fact that the vessel was leaking all round the topsides in No 2 hold, all round the topsides

in the fore part of bridge, in the way of the forecastle, that round the coamings of No 2 hold the steamer had opened and was leaking.

See evidence of Chief Engineer they had to cut the pipe of the main bridge pump because it was threatening to choke

Denies statement that pumps were choked. Also denies statement that vessel remained afloat 12 hours after pumps ceased working and says, that, the steamer remained afloat a considerable time, is due to the fact that both sea and wind had gone down.

Says practical men in Aberdeen, sailors and engineers, consider construction of ship was faulty in so far as the web frames are principally concerned.

1st July 1890 -

Enclosing reply from Chief Engineer of Bonaccord.

Refers to Board of Trade enquiry re ss "Cape Clear" and says finding of the B of T official is as nonsensical and absurd as in the case of the "Bonaccord."

Says in a postscript -

"These two steamers Bonaccord and "Cape Clear seem to have been lost from "the same cause "an error in construction" "this seems evident to us"

8th July 1890

Enclosing letter from Chief Engineer in reply to question whether on leaving the Bonaccord he had closed the discharge valves.

Says they are satisfied no blame attaches to either Captain or Engineer.

9th July 1880 Mr Hindmarsh to the Secretary
Reporting on the letters from Owners

Describes construction of vessel, testing of double bottom compartments, and says workmanship throughout vessel was subjected to the most rigid examination.

Re Owners' statement that the steamer was leaking all round the topsides in No 2 hold, calls attention to Carpenter's evidence that this hold was sounded at 8 P.M. the night before the vessel was abandoned "there was then very heavy weather" but he found no water". At midnight sounded this hold again and found 18 inches of water, but Surveyor attributes this to the sluices on bulkheads communicating with stokehold being open, as stated by Captain and Engineer that these sluices were not closed until after the manhole cover had been taken off Engine room tank.

Carpenter also stated that he opened No 2 hold about 2 A.M. on the day of the abandonment and saw no sign of water.

From his evidence as reported in daily papers the soundings of No 2 hold were

March 15 th	8 P.M.	no water
"	Midnight	18 inches
" 16 th	4 A.M.	30 inches
"	9 A.M.	42 inches

If 9 ft. measured
to top of tank
about 400 tons of water
If to bottom of tank
about 300 tons
approximate

and at the same hour 9 A.M. 9 feet in the Engine room.

Says this must locate the leak if any to the Engine room.

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10th August 1890 Messrs J & A Davidson to The Secretary.
 Acknowledging letter of the 11th August 1890.
 Cannot agree as to cause of loss of vessel.
 States their opinion that Bonaccord was
 weak in structure and opened up by
 way of the top of the tank
 Thinks independent investigation should
 have been made by Committee.

Repeats statement that the steamer
 leaked all round the topsides and
 the hatchways, in fact the structure
 seemed to have collapsed inwards,
 the principal breach being near the
 engine room and at the connection
 between the tank and the frames.

Gives an unqualified denial to the
 statement that the water entered by
 the stockhold gratings.

Says no water entered the vessel in
 any other way except by inherent
 weakness.

Says will have no more steamers
 built with a similar structure.



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