

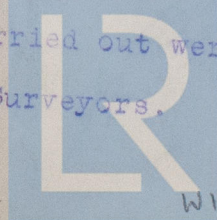
S.S. "HOUTHANDEL", built 1917-10mo.

The S.S.No.2 due 10,25 has been partly held by the examination of the vessel in dry dock, bridge space bunkers and all double bottom tanks. An undertaking of the Owners to advance the survey as much as possible on her recent arrival at Antwerp and complete it at Kobe was approved on the 30th ultimo, subject to the Antwerp Surveyors being satisfied that the vessel was in fit condition for the proposed voyage.

Mr. Herbert, the Principal Surveyor at Antwerp, recently reported that he visited the vessel on the 9th instant when the following parts were examined, viz:- steering gear leads; watertight door to tunnel; boats; anchors and wires; ventilators; hatches (not in position); hatch supports, battens and cleats; casings; masts & rigging. Repairs were recommended to the foregoing and agreed to be carried out, an arrangement being made with the Owners' Superintendent for these to be examined on the 11th instant. On the morning of the 11th, however, the Owners' Superintendent telephoned to Mr. Herbert that the vessel had sailed on the evening of the 10th instant, no arrangement or opportunity being given for Mr. Herbert to see what repairs had been effected.

At the same time the Owners wrote direct to this Office setting forth the repairs effected, which do not however cover all those recommended by Mr. Herbert, in addition to which certain machinery repairs are stated to have been done, yet not submitted for survey although the ship is considerably overdue for LMC.

In a covering letter to his report Mr. Herbert stated he did not consider the vessel to be now in a seaworthy condition, and on the case receiving consideration on the 14th instant action was deferred and the Owners asked to state why the repairs said to have been carried out were not submitted for inspection by the Society's Surveyors.



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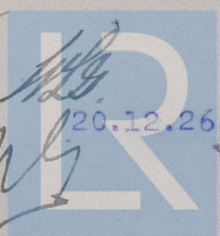
In a long explanatory letter the Owners now state that the list of work handed to them by Mr. Herbert practically covered the whole of the outstanding survey, whereas they understood from the letter the Society was kind enough to give them under the special circumstances that the repairs required to be carried out now were those necessary to make the steamer fully fit for the voyage to Japan.

They add that Mr. Herbert was not able to come down to the ship on Friday the 10th instant, but could not attend until Saturday the 11th instant; this was a great disappointment to them especially as they were 500 tons short of cargo, detained by fog, and in view of the great interests at stake they considered themselves justified in not having the steamer lying idle for another day, particularly as there is usually thick fog over the River Scheldt at this time of year whereas on that night very clear weather prevailed; and after ascertaining that practically nothing further could have been done to make the steamer more seaworthy and that the engines were in perfect condition for the voyage, they ordered the steamer to leave, *the following morning* duly advising Mr. Herbert of what had happened.

This letter shews that the Owners were fully cognisant of the conditions attached to the postponement of the survey, and in view of the arrangement made by their Superintendent that an opportunity would be afforded to Mr. Herbert on the 11th instant to examine the repairs, their explanation regarding the despatch of the ship on the previous evening is considered unsatisfactory, as, the vessel being in the same port as the Surveyors, any modification of sailing arrangements could have been immediately notified.

The case is submitted for the consideration of the Committee.

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