

14 DEC 1926

s.s. "HOUTHANDEL"

The s.s.No.2 due 10,25 was partly held at Antwerp in August 1925, by the examination of the vessel in dry dock, bridge space bunkers and all double bottom tanks.

A proposal to complete the survey at Antwerp in about three months' time was agreed to in August this year, and a further proposal to complete the survey at Antwerp as far as time would allow and carry out the remainder at Kobe, to which port the vessel was to proceed, received the consideration of the Committee on the 30th ultimo when action was deferred provided that in the opinion of the Antwerp Surveyors the vessel was in a fit condition for the proposed voyage.

The Antwerp Surveyors now report that the special survey has been further advanced by the examination of the steering gear, tunnel, watertight door, boats, wires and anchors, ventilators, hatches (not in position), hatch supports, hatch battens and cleats, casings, masts and rigging.

Repairs were recommended to steering gear blocks, at the break of poop, watertight door to be made workable, port and starboard lifeboats (galvanised iron) to be renewed, the stream wire and towline to be renewed (both missing), spare bower anchor (missing) to be renewed, ventilator coamings to be scaled in way of steam pipes and further examined, several hatches to be renewed, hatches to be examined in position, hatch web slides to be repaired, fidley casing to be temporarily repaired by means of a bolted plate, broken glasses in engine boom skylight to be renewed, main stay to be renewed, main topmast to be rewedged in way of lower masthead.

An appointment was made with the Owners' representative to see these repairs completed on the 11th instant, but he telephoned stating the vessel had sailed the previous evening.

Nothing has been done now in connection with the machinery survey.

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An interim certificate has been issued recommending the vessel to be continued as classed subject to the lifeboats being renewed, the hatch webs and hatch covers being repaired, and repairs effected to the fidley top and engine room skylight before leaving Antwerp.

A letter has been received from Mr. Herbert stating that he does not consider the vessel is now in a seaworthy condition, and he has been informed that the vessel has been sold to a Japanese firm who are to take her over on arrival. There is no undertaking on behalf of the present Owners to complete the survey, and Mr. Herbert states that their letter of the 22nd ultimo is misleading, and to his mind the whole business is most unsatisfactory.

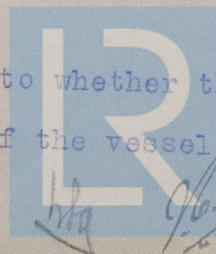
It is also to be observed that whereas certain parts of the machinery were opened out for examination, yet no part of the machinery was submitted for survey, although the vessel is overdue for L.M.C.

Mr. Herbert only gave his certificate subject to certain repairs being made, and the ship was sent away without giving him any opportunity of seeing whether these repairs were effected or not.

To cover themselves the Owners wrote a letter direct to the London Office giving a list of the work done by them, which does not appear to include certain of Mr. Herbert's requirements.

It is submitted for the consideration of the Committee that after the Owners agreeing with Mr. Herbert to carry out certain repairs, on account of which agreement they were handed a certificate, their action in sending the vessel to sea without notice to him, or without giving him an opportunity to see the repairs is extremely unsatisfactory and requires explanation.

It is also submitted as to whether this is not a case for dealing with the class of the vessel.



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