

S.T. "EMPIRE HARRY".
BOMBAY 21st March 1944.

16 AUG 1944

The Surveyor,
Lloyd's Register of Shipping,
Bombay.

Dear Sir,

I beg to report that at 11-40 on 1st March whilst manoeuvring close to A.F.D. 23 in order to put my harbour tow on board I backed into the dock, causing damage to the stern of the tug. The dock officials had assured us that there was 21 ft. of water at the place where the dock was moored.

On taking soundings I found that there was only 18 ft. The tug was handling very sluggishly and I am of an opinion that the heel of the vessel must have touched the mud.

At 17-20 on 1st March, after slipping my harbour tow, I had to close A.F.D. 23 in order to connect up my sea tow. There was a fresh breeze blowing and I had close on the weather side. The centre tug was towing slow. The dock yawed heavily and collided with tug causing slight damage on port side.

At 13-10 on 13th March, whilst proceeding across Trincomalee Harbour vessel grounded lightly on York Shoal. State of tide half ebb. As efforts to refloat under our own power were unsuccessful, signals for assistance were made. Pilot boarded at 13-55 with tug in attendance. After peak tank was pumped out. As further efforts to refloat were still unsuccessful it was decided to wait for rising water. At 22-00 Pilot again boarded & tug made fast. At 22-50 ~~Rixx~~ operations were resumed and vessel refloated at 23-10. Tanks and wells were sounded and no increase in soundings shown. There is a shortage of Pilots at Trincomalee and Masters of small craft are expected to shift around the harbour without assistance. The grounding was caused through the necessity of steaming around the baffles which abound in that harbour and the alteration of certain navigational aids. York Shoal Buoy, as shown on chart 816 having been removed and a red conical buoy, not shown on that chart, having been placed in the vicinity of Keroceta Rocks a short distance away, causing it to be mistaken for that of York Shoal.

Yours faithfully,
sd/- E. M. Swan
Master.

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