

Sm. 1000  
Dutch Bay  
25/10/19  
Now Vineland

Your ref.  
D.20285/19/11996.

7th August, 1919.

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 21st ultimo, respecting the repairs which have recently been effected at Devonport to the S.S. "SAPINERO", owned by the United States Shipping Board, I beg to acquaint you that in view of your remarks further enquiry has been made into the case with the following result.

In regard to the statement that "some of the items were so drafted (by Lloyd's presumably) as to provide no definite limit, the requirements being generally that the defects discovered should be made good", Mr. Nicholas, the Principal Surveyor of the London district, who was specially detailed to carry out the inspection, reports that on the completion of the Survey, there being no Dockyard Officer present, the various Surveyors adjourned to the vessel's saloon, and drew up a statement embracing general recommendations as is the usual practice in cases of this kind, which statement was dictated to Mr. Lewis, Foreman of the Yard, on the following day by Mr. Nicholas in the presence of the other Surveyors.

Mr. Nicholas was associated in the Survey with Mr. French, the Society's Chief Surveyor for the United States of America and Canada, and these two Surveyors asked the Master of the vessel who had authorised the additional work, and the Master was unable to inform them. They then called on Mr. Grinshaw, the Constructor in charge of repairs, and before they had properly asked him, he stated that he would take no interference from Lloyd's Surveyors and further, that he did not recognise them. As they saw no other responsible Dockyard Officers, the statement that in the absence of the other representatives concerned, the Society's Surveyors subsequently endeavoured to reduce the amount of work to be done,



a proceeding which the responsible Dockyard Officers declined to adopt under the terms of the original requisition, does not appear to be in accordance with the facts. Mr. Nicholas also states that no request of any kind was made to them by the Dockyard Officers to define the limits of the work required.

With regard to your remarks relative to the procedure followed by the Surveyor in this instance, it may be pointed out that the vessel was not under Government control and that the survey was commenced when she was lying in the Great Western Docks, Millbay. In these circumstances, you will no doubt appreciate the fact that it was with no disrespect that the Surveyors deemed it unnecessary to call on the Admiral Superintendent or on the Manager of the Constructive Department with regard to the case. Further, they considered the action of Mr. Grimshaw of such moment as to justify their calling the attention of the Committee thereto.

It is the invariable practice of the Surveyors to this Society to call on the Managing Constructor or other responsible Officer in the first instance whenever they visit a Dockyard in connection with repairs which are being effected to any vessel in the Yard before proceeding on board. This was not done on the occasion of the Surveyors' visit to the "SAPINERO", as Mr. Nicholas had previously attended the "MOTAGUA", for extensive damage repairs and was at the time of the Survey on the "SAPINERO" attending the "HIMALAYA" in the Dockyard, which vessel had been under Survey for a considerable time for reinstatement of class. Moreover, the survey on the "SAPINERO" was commenced by Mr. French and Mr. Larg, the Society's Surveyor for the Plymouth district, and the repairs were put in hand by the Dockyard Authorities in the Millbay Docks.

From the foregoing statement it will be seen that the version of the circumstances which have arisen in connexion with this case as submitted to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, does not coincide with the statement of the Society's Surveyor and while the Committee agree that it is desirable that unnecessary friction



should at all times be avoided in cases of vessels bearing the Society's classification, which may be undergoing repair in His Majesty's Dockyards they consider that the Surveyors in this instance acted with all due discretion, and that no blame can be attached to them for the unfortunate incident, which can only be attributed to the uncalled for action of Mr.Grimshaw.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.

The Secretary,  
ADMIRALTY,  
S.W.1.



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