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Wood Drifter "RENNYHILL" ex "DYKER LASSIE" ex "FOGBANK".

The Leith Surveyor recently reported that during last season indications of dry rot had been found to exist in this vessel, and as the Owners were taking up the matter with the Admiralty and as it was stated Underwriters had refused to accept the vessel even as a harbour risk, Mr.T.Richardson, who has had good experience in wooden vessels, was requested to join the Leith Surveyor in the survey of the vessel.

A Condition Report has now been received from the Surveyors. It is stated that from the stem to after end of the fish room the timbers, planking, inside bilge stringers, centre and side keelsons, and ceiling were found to be generally attacked by dry rot. Portions of the timbers, centre and side keelsons had already been removed and there were no arrangements for ventilation of the space behind the ceiling.

Indications of dry rot were also found in the Counter, and on parts of the main rail on the bulwarks on both sides, in the bunkers where the woodwork had been coated with tar no signs of dry rot were found, and also no dry rot was visible in the machinery space.

It is recommended that owing to the condition of the vessel as now found and reported, she is not, in the Surveyor's opinion, seaworthy and is therefore ineligible to remain classed with this Society.

The vessel was built for the Admiralty at Hull and launched in May 1919, the timbering and beams being of oak, the outside planking being of oak and elm with the topsides of oak. She was employed in line and herring fishing during 1921, afterwards laid up in Anstruther and purchased by the present Owner in May 1922, being engaged in herring fishing from August to November 1922.

A Representative of the Owner states the vessel was

bought on the strength of her having been built to this Society's classification, and that action is at present being taken with a view to the Admiralty meeting the Owners in their losses; should this action not be succesful they are advised that although there is no claim for error of description and no guarantee is given by the Society, this experience would be probably aired in the Courts and that such a course would certainly not redound to the credit of this Society.

The Surveyor under whose survey the vessel was built states that "during construction most careful observation was kept to see that the materials of every description were sound and free from sap. It must be borne in mind, however, that at the time this vessel was constructed seasoned timber was difficult to obtain and she was not built under cover, but exposed during the whole course of construction to the weather. In these circumstances it would be very necessary, when such a vessel was laid up that thorough ventilation should be maintained through every part of the structure. That rot has set in at such an early stage seems to point to the fact that this precaution cannot have been taken in the case of this vessel".

In connexion with this case it might be remarked that during the war, when so many vessels of this type were built in different parts of the country, the wood could not (owing to the celerity of their construction) have been properly seasoned (i.e. they were built of green timber) but they have not given any trouble due to dry rot.

It is considered the home-grown wood used in the construction of this vessel must have lost its vitality prior to the tree being felled, and therefore the initial growth of the fungus causing dry rot was existent in the wood prior to it being cut or sawn to shape, and in these conditions it is only natural to expect that unless special attention was given to the vessel when she was laid up, the growth

of the fungus causing dry rot would proceed with extreme rapidity.

It is submitted, as recommended by the Surveyor, that the vessel's class should be expunged with a black line, indicating that from reported defects she is not entitled to retain her classification.

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