

Messrs. The Burntisland Shipbuilding Co.Ltd. are to build a vessel for Messrs. Capper Alexander & Co.Ltd., Yard No. 238.

The Leith Surveyors state that this vessel will trade from Cardiff to the River Plate, and from the River Plate to London, carrying cargoes both ways, but that on the voyage from London to Cardiff the vessel will be in ballast, and, due to the absence of deep tanks or bunkers, it will be necessary to carry a limited amount of water ballast in No. 3 hold, which would not exceed in height the height of the tunnel.

Proposals of a similar nature have been considered by the Committee on previous occasions. Their general attitude is to consider the practice of flooding holds in order to ballast vessels when in the light condition undesirable, and, subject to certain requirements being complied with, to accept such a proposal on the distinct understanding that the flooding will only be resorted to in cases of definite emergency.

There have, however, been exceptions to this procedure. Vessels engaged in trading on the Great Lakes have been dealt with on the basis of the holds being flooded in the ballast condition, suitable valves being fitted; further, in 1934 in the case of the "BLAIRANGUS" a proposal to flood No. 3 hold to secure better ballast conditions was permitted, subject to precautionary arrangements being adopted governing the flooding by means of proper flooding valves.

The case under consideration differs from the above in that the construction has not yet commenced, and suitable arrangements may be made in the construction of the vessel if necessary.

On the general question in a case like the present it is considered that the Committee cannot take exception to a proposal such as this made by the Owners, provided suitable structural arrangements are adopted, and the arrangements for flooding are to the Committee's satisfaction. If that view is approved, it is submitted the Surveyors be informed that no exception will be taken to the flooding of this hold as described in their letter, provided the stiffeners of the watertight bulkheads and of the shaft tunnel be made intermediate in strength between those required by Section 17 and Section 19 of the Society's Rules respectively.

The Surveyors should also be requested to state what arrangements are proposed to be made to prevent damage to the wood ceiling and wood sparring, if any, which are fitted in this hold.

So far as can be seen from an approximate stability estimate which has been made in this Office the vessel appears to possess sufficient initial stability in the condition contemplated, but as the Board of Trade require to be satisfied in respect of stability the Surveyors should advise the Builders to approach the Board in regard to their proposal.

22. 6. 39.

It should be added that, subject to the above conditions being complied with, the proposed pipe connections for flooding the hold, as shown on the plan, are in order.

Ltr. 26.6.
P.C. Gls.

22.6.39.