

# REPORT OF TOTAL LOSS, CASUALTY, &c. 9013

No. 29919 in R. B. Wreck Book, p. 19/35

Date of writing this report 19th August 1935

Vessel's Name *Steel S.S. "Methilhill"*

of *Methil* Tons Net 1203 Gross 1948

Built at *Gaugemoyth* When 1914 - 9 Casualty notice sent to Owner

Owner's Name *M. Taylor*

Owner's reply

Address *East High Street, Methil, Fifeshire*

RETAIN

### SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

**METHILHILL.** — Gibraltar, Aug. 4. — S.O.S. message received from Spanish motor vessel *Campeador* states: British steamer *Methilhill* abandoned, gutted, still burning, position lat. 36 50 N., long. 7 55 W., unlighted, dangerous to navigation. Crew taken off by the Spanish motor vessel *Campeador*, proceeding Gibraltar. — Master British steamer *Methilhill*.

Gibraltar, Aug. 5. — The crew of 22 of the steamer *Methilhill*, which had to be abandoned at sea after catching fire, were landed here to-day by the Spanish motor vessel *Campeador*, which had picked them up at sea. Captain D. A. Johnson, of the *Methilhill*, said: "The *Methilhill* was on a voyage from Oran to Granton with a cargo of esparto grass when fire broke out on Saturday night (Aug. 3). We were in lat. 36 50 N., long. 7 55 W., or roughly west-south-west of Faro, Portugal. It was about a quarter past eleven at night when the fire broke out at the foot of the foremast and the flames quickly spread to starboard. The crew worked their hardest to combat the flames, but a very strong head-wind helped the flames to spread to the foredeck, which was very soon ablaze. Part of the cargo was jettisoned and I decided to beach the vessel, but the terrible heat all over the vessel and especially in the engine-room compelled us to abandon her. The Spanish motor vessel *Campeador* appeared on the scene at 1 50 a.m. on Sunday, and I asked her by wireless to stand by. I then ordered the boats from the *Methilhill* to be lowered. By 9 30 a.m. the whole crew had taken to the boats. I and three of the crew were the last to quit. When we abandoned her the *Methilhill* was ablaze fore and aft and the bridge had already collapsed. During the fire I tried to get Gibraltar by wireless but failed. The crew and I all saved very little of our personal belongings." — Reuter.

Gibraltar, Aug. 5. — Spanish motor vessel *Campeador* has put in to land crew of 22 all told of British steamer *Methilhill*, no casualties are reported. *Methilhill* reported on fire near Faro, understand is being towed to Lisbon by British steamer *Shetland*. — Lloyd's Agents.

Gibraltar, Aug. 4. — The battleship *Valiant* is standing by steamer *Methilhill*. Should she become a danger to other shipping the warship is prepared to sink her. Blazing from stern the *Methilhill* is now being towed to Lisbon by the British steamer *Shetland*. — "The Daily Mail" Correspondent.

**METHILHILL.** — London, Aug. 6. — Steamer *Methilhill*: The following messages have been received: —

Dated Lisbon, Aug. 5, 11 27 a.m.: Steamer *Shetland* wires towing burning steamer *Methilhill*.

Dated Lisbon, Aug. 5, 5 6 p.m.: *Shetland* master informs towing steamer *Methilhill*, expect arrive to-morrow noon Cascaes.

Dated Lisbon, Aug. 6, by telephone: Radio from master of *Shetland*: Expect arrive river bar 2 p.m. Propose anchoring derelict below Belem clear of traffic. Fire confined to holds.

Dated Lisbon, Aug. 6, 2 49 p.m.: *Shetland* entered Cascaes.

Lisbon, Aug. 6. — British steamer *Methilhill*, reported on fire, picked up abandoned and towed here by British steamer *Shetland*.

Gibraltar, Aug. 5. — The battleship *Valiant* which stood by the blazing steamer *Methilhill* for some time yesterday, when she was abandoned by her crew, arrived here this morning. — Reuter.

6/8/35

7/8/35

Previously before Committee.	Date	Particulars of Classification.
	Last Minute	+100 AI 55 R.L.N. 3-330 9.34 55 L.N. 1-34 +LMC MS 9.34 133 2.35

Date of Casualty 3rd August 1935

Particulars of Casualty

Fire was reported to have broken out in this vessel when in lat. 36.50N, long. 7.55W, on the 3rd August, while proceeding from Oran to Granton with a cargo of esparto grass. The master + crew were obliged to abandon her as she was quickly ablaze from stem to stern.

The vessel was, however, later taken in tow & arrived at Lisbon on the 6th August still burning where she was anchored at Cova Piedade on the instruction of the harbour authorities.

The Lisbon Surveyor in his report, dated 9th August, stated that after flooding the fire in the holds was extinguished. Upon examination he found the fore & after well decks collapsed into the hold & the remainder of the vessel completely burnt out; all plating buckled, &c., & coal still burning in the bunkers.

In his opinion & that of the Salvage Association's Special Officer the vessel is a constructive total loss.

Suggested Record *Burnt 8.35*

Date of Committee TUE. 20 AUG 1935

Committee's Minute

*Burnt 8.35* *RM*

350,434

*In. Dws. 23/8/35*

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W489-0002 1/2

Character Assigned

*See Wreck Rpt.*

Is Certificate required? If so, to be sent to

**METHILHILL.**—Lisbon, Aug. 6.—British steamer Shetland arrived in the Tagus to-day with the burned-out hulk of the steamer Methilhill in tow. The fire had burned everything on board and had terribly twisted the hull which the master of the Shetland claims as salvage. The Shetland found the blazing vessel drifting and abandoned off the Portuguese coast.—Reuter.

8/8/35

London, Aug. 7.—The following message has been received from Lisbon, dated Aug. 6, 10 50 p.m.: Steamer Shetland arrived to-day. Methilhill is still burning, anchored Cova Piedade, as ordered by harbour authorities.

Lisbon, Aug. 6.—Steamer Methilhill is still burning fore and aft, impossible to board at present. Beaching to-night south side of river with a view to flooding.—Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association.

Gibraltar, Aug. 7.—The second mate and ten members of the crew of the steamer Methilhill left here to-day on board the steamer Hako-zaki Maru. The crew, numbering 22, were landed here on Monday (Aug. 5) by the Spanish motor vessel Campeador, which had picked them up at sea. The master and the rest of the crew are leaving for the United Kingdom shortly.—Reuter.

**METHILHILL.**—Lisbon, Aug. 8.—Steamer Methilhill: Attempt to cut holes in ship's side last night unsuccessful owing to excessive heat, making further attempt to-day. Meanwhile cargo burning furiously and impossible to board.—Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association.

9/8

**METHILHILL.**—Lisbon, Aug. 9.—British steamer Methilhill flooded last night, fire extinguished except cross bunker above water level. Boarded this morning with Lloyd's surveyor. Well decks collapsed into holds, ship burnt out, definitely constructive total loss.—Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association.

10/8

**METHILHILL.**—Lisbon, Aug. 9.—Steamer Methilhill surveyed. Decks completely collapsed, ship's sides badly distorted, hold accommodation completely burnt out, all entirely beyond repair. All cargo apparently destroyed.—Salvage Association's Surveyor.

12/8

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