

30th September 1938.

FORMAL ENQUIRY INTO THE LOSS
OF THE S.S. "QUARRINGTON COURT".

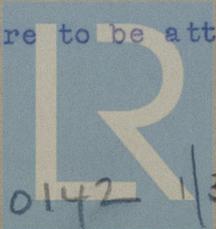
As instructed I attended the above Enquiry which was held in the County Court, Newcastle on Tyne, on the 27th, 28th and 29th instant.

The Court was presided over by Mr. R. F. Hayward, K.C.

The vessel was lost in the Red Sea on the 7th December 1937, while on a voyage from Calcutta to Baltimore with a cargo consisting mainly of Manganese Ore.

The main injection pipe which was of copper fractured on the line of the brazing and in a very short time the fracture was about 4 feet long and had opened out about 12 inches. Attempts were made to close the main injection valve which had been full open but the valve jammed when only $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 turns were taken out of about 14 turns which are required to close the valve. Water rose in the engine room and put out the fires, the engine room filled and water flowed over the second deck and the vessel subsequently foundered on the same day. The obvious course for dealing with the inflow of water was to lower a tarpaulin or similar body over the ship's side so as to cover the inlet, but instead of doing this an attempt was commenced to lower ropes with a tarpaulin attached over the bow of the vessel and drag it aft to cover the hole. This attempt was abandoned, however, when a French steamer, the "PRESIDENT DOUMER", came along and efforts were concentrated in getting a towing wire along the deck. The Captain of the French steamer wanted the wire to be attached to two lengths

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of the main cable so as to form a spring, but the Captain of the "QUARRINGTON COURT" would not do this and when towing commenced the bitts on the "PRESIDENT DOUMER" carried away. A further attempt by an Italian steamer was unsuccessful and the vessel foundered. No lives were lost.

I was the first witness to be called and I produced the reports of the Society's Surveyors and answered a number of questions relating to the reports and the Society's practice. I was not called upon to give any explanation of the Clause which was deleted from Mr. McGlashan's report (Yka. Rpt. 6233 dated October 1937) as this had been explained by Council for the Board of Trade in opening the Enquiry.

Mr. Matthews, a Ship and Engineer Surveyor at present stationed in the Society's Office at Newcastle, was present in the Court on the 27th and 28th instant to give evidence regarding repairs to the main inlet valve which were carried out at Newcastle in January 1936 (Nwc. Rpt. 93484), but he was not called upon to give any evidence.

Attached hereto is a copy of the questions put to the Court by the Board of Trade.

The decision of the Court was given on the afternoon of the 29th instant.

The Court found that the loss of the vessel was caused by the fracture of the pipe and the jamming of the valve. No blame attached to the Owners, but the Captain was held to have failed in his duty to take prompt and effective measures to stop the inflow of water by lowering a weighted tarpaulin over the side of the vessel so as to cover the opening and thus prevent, or at least diminish the inflow of water and thus to enable effective measures to be taken to release the valve and repair the pipe from the inside of the vessel. He was also at fault in not

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taking effective means to provide for an efficient tow. He was censured by the Court and his Master's Certificate was suspended for 3 months. He was granted a Chief Mate's Certificate for this period.

At the conclusion of my evidence on the 27th instant Mr. Hayward, the Wreck Commissioner, referred to my retirement and on behalf of those engaged in these Enquiries thanked me for the services which I had rendered at so many similar enquiries. Mr. Bateson, on behalf of the Board of Trade, associated himself with Mr. Hayward's remarks.

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