

LOSS OF THE COASTER "RUMORE"

Board of Trade Inquiry Opened

From Our Own Correspondent

GLASGOW, Wednesday. The circumstances attending the disappearance of the Glasgow-registered steamer *Rumore*, while on a passage from Waterford to Barry, towards the end of January, 1938, was the subject of a Board of Trade Inquiry held in County Buildings, Glasgow, to-day. Sheriff Wilton presided, and the assessors were Captain F. J. Thomson, R.N.R., Captain C. A. Wilson, and Mr. R. B. Reith.

Mr. T. W. Donald, Glasgow, appeared for the Board of Trade, and Colonel Hugh Spens represented the owners, the Point Steamship Company, Ltd., Glasgow.

Mr. DONALD said that there was very little controversy in the case.

Sheriff WILTON: No suggestion was made against the master or mate?

Mr. DONALD: No, absolutely none.

Mr. Donald explained that the ship had had four names in the course of her career, being finally named *Rumore* by her recent owners. She left Waterford on Jan. 27 but lay at Passage East until the following day. She was bound for Barry, in Wales, and since that time nothing had been heard of her or her crew of seven men, master, mate, two engineers, a fireman and two able seamen. She was a comparatively small vessel, 130 ft. in length, 22 ft. in breadth, and had a depth of 9 ft., while her gross tonnage was 325 tons and her net tonnage 123 tons. Her engines developed 400 h.p. and she had a speed of nine knots.

Mr. JOHN URQUHART, 45, Renfield Street, Glasgow, said that he was the registered manager of the *Rumore*, which he purchased for the Point Steamship Company at a cost of £3200 from a Liverpool firm. The ship did not carry wireless, although she had a receiving set. The master, Captain Heggan, had been with her for ten

months, and knew the vessel well. Witness could give no evidence regarding stability, but there had never been anything said against the ship.

Sheriff WILTON: You paid a fair price for her and she should have been all right?—That is correct.

She was, said WITNESS, mostly engaged in the coasting trade between Ayrshire ports, Mersey, Bristol Channel, and Southern and Eastern Ireland. As a rule her cargo consisted of 270 tons of coal. Repairs had been carried out in the ship at a cost of

£1585, but all over the firm had spent £2120 on keeping the vessel in good condition. There was a hull and machinery insurance policy for £4000, increased value policy for £1200, and a policy for freight of £300. Witness estimated that at the time of the loss the vessel's market value was £5500. The company had recovered the full amount of the insurance.

Mr. Urquhart spoke of the weather conditions which prevailed on the night that the ship went missing. He had heard from other masters that the seas were tremendous.

Sheriff WILTON: Have you any theory regarding her loss?—The only one I have is that the ship could not stand up to the terrible battering which she received.

In other words she was overwhelmed?

—Yes.

WITNESS said that the vessel carried two lifeboats each capable of accommodating 12 persons. She had life jackets for the crew and also a number of round lifebelts. She had signalling apparatus and was fully equipped according to Board of Trade regulations.

Captain ANGUS CARMICHAEL said that he had been master of the *Rumore* for about 20 days in February, 1937, and had made four voyages in her. He found her satisfactory. When running in ballast, with the sea on her quarter, she was bit cranky or tender. He had, however, never been really alarmed about her.

Captain RICHARD CROSS, who had been master of the *Rumore* for 5½ years when she was known as the *Dhoon Glen*, said that he had no complaints to make of her behaviour during the time he was with her.

Mr. DONALD: Supposing you had been in command at Waterford and had been asked to go to Barry in ballast and you had received messages that the weather was likely to be extremely rough, would that have prevented you from going to Barry?—I would have remained in port.

A number of masters in the vicinity at the time said that there was a gale on Jan. 28 and 29, 1938, and that it had been at its worst from noon to noon.

Captain HARRISON, who has been a surveyor at the Board of Trade for 24 years, expressed the opinion that when

the *Rumore* left the shelter of the land she became unmanageable. As a prudent man, her master probably decided to run for shelter, keeping the ship before the wind, but as the storm rose she was driven helplessly on to the rocks and became a complete loss.

Sheriff WILTON: Any wreckage which might be washed up would be of fragmentary character?—Yes, I think so.

The inquiry was adjourned until to-morrow.



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