

Encl. to Lloyd's Register of Shipping

INGLEDEW & CO.

Milburn House,

Dean Street,

NEWCASTLE ON TYNE 1.

31st March 1936

Messrs. Parker Garrett & Co.
St. Michael's Rectory,
Cornhill,
London, E.C. 3.

Dear Sirs,

"VARDULIA"

We attended at the Court to-day when the Questions were answered by the Wreck Commissioner and his Assessors. He also read out a long Annexe which contains some very interesting remarks.

We refer to the Answers, the most important of which are as follows :-

5. The vessel's value was £25,000 - She was insured for £30,000 in respect of Hull and Machinery. - £2,500 for Freight, and £555 for reducing premiums.
6. A General Cargo amounting to 286.8 tons altogether was loaded in the 'tween decks at Manchester; she was properly and securely stowed and the trimming hatches were left clear.
8. (a) The plan of loading was decided by the master and approved by the Owners.
(b) The master had no specific instructions apart from the general instructions given by the Donaldson Line.

9. The Court gives figures both for the 'tween decks and lower holds, as follows :-

(a) Tween decks:

No. 1	241 tons
" 2	60 "
" 3	333 "
" 4	456 "
" 5	277 "

(b) Holds:

No. 1	1365 tons
" 2	1541 "
" 3	662 "
D.T.	751 "
No. 4	980 "
" 5	903 "

10.

(a) Tween decks:

Empty space.

No. 1	-	2000 cub. ft.
2 & 3	-	18820 " "
4 & 5	-	13230 " "

- (b) Each lower hold was trimmed in accordance with the usual practice of the port. There was no abnormally empty spaces.

11.

(a) and (b)

The normal practice of the port was followed.

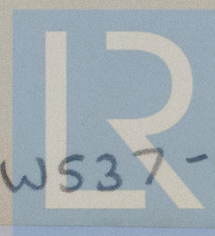
12.

Small coal was liable to shift.

13.

No one Authority was responsible, other than the master, who could only give general supervision.

14. The Foreman Trimmers appear to be more concerned with the allocation of gangs than with the supervision of the trimming itself on this vessel. The only real supervision was by the Charge men in charge of each gang on the port and starboard sides of the holds.
- The Court consider that the supervision was not proper and that the Foreman Trimmer should be present to exercise personal supervision of the trimming.
15. The damage to the bulwark had no effect in causing the loss of the ship.
16. (a) (b) (c) (d) and (e)
- Yes.
17. The vessel had a $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. list to starboard but this had no effect on the casualty.
18. 25 ft. forward - 25 ft 3" aft.
19. Yes.
20. Yes, under existing regulations.
21. Yes.
22. Yes.



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24. The Court accepted the evidence contained in the Log Books of the "BLAIR ANGUS" which was the nearest ship which indicated that there was a whole gale at the material time.
25. The Wireless messages are set out.
26. The last Wireless message was at 6-56 a.m. on the 19th October when it was stated that the crew were "now abandoning ship".
27. Gives the position set out in the "VARDULIA'S" Wireless messages but considers that these can only be approximate as it is the same position as on the previous day.
28. The Court thinks that the vessel was probably lost somewhere S. and E. of the position given in the previous Answer.
29. The cause of the loss must be a matter for conjecture - See the Annexe.

The Annexe states that there is no doubt that the weather was very severe but the only direct evidence is the two last messages from the ship on the 19th October. It must therefore be a matter of conjecture as to exactly what happened.

No possible blame could attach to the owners, as every precaution was taken for the well-being and safety of the ship.

The Court considers it possible that the gap between

the message on the afternoon of October 18th and that on the morning of the 19th may possibly be due to a breakdown of the Wireless Aerial.

The Court then dealt with the stowage and trimming and more particularly referred to the Questions 9 & 12.

After careful consideration they come to the conclusion that the theory put forward by the B.O.T. as to the empty spaces in the lower holds is not proved as it is based on a stowage rate of approximately 44 cub. ft. to the ton. - This stowage rate is taken from the small coal in trucks and is by no means the same, as this coal would stow in the vessel's holds.

The figures given by Mr. Jackson the Coal Shippers' Representative (48 cub. ft) are based on actual experience.

The Court were of opinion that in particular in No. 1 hold and tween decks there was incomplete trimming. Further, that perfect trimming is impracticable but that the empty spaces were not so great as Mr. Nutton, the B.O.T. Representative suggested and in fact the Court rejects Mr. Nutton's figures.

The Court however does consider there were very extensive spaces in the 'tween decks and that the stowage was not satisfactory.

The Court consider that where the cargo space cannot be filled the coal in such space should be levelled off.

The question of providing shifting boards for

such a cargo as this is a matter for consideration by others but the Court are by no means certain that they are necessary. Even assuming that Mr. Nutton's figures were correct as regards empty spaces the Court are still not satisfied that the cargo would shift to the extent mentioned by him and cause the list that he had specified (over 30 degrees).

The Court are therefore not satisfied that the shifting of the cargo by itself caused the loss.

An examination was then made as to the possibility of the vessel being lost owing to water getting into her. - for example, by No. 1 or 2 hatches being stove in. The Court refers to the fact that this vessel had made 16 voyages across the Atlantic since September 1929 on 14 of which the two forward holds were protected by a cuttle deck. On the two latter voyages the master gave certain indications of uneasiness as regards these holds but the Owners' Agents considered the matter, investigated it and took additional steps to remedy matters.

The question however arises as to whether the existing regulations are sufficient in regard to the hatches, their height from the water, and their protection.

Yours faithfully,

INGLEDEW & CO.

P.S. We hope to send you the Answers and Annexes to-morrow.