

REPORT of SURVEY for REPAIRS, &c.

WRECK BOX

No. 126

REPORT OF TOTAL LOSS, CASUALTY, &c. 9265

No. 8856 ^{Supp} in R. B. Wreck Book, p. 4/37

Date of writing this report 15th February 1937

Vessel's Name *Steel Twin S. M/S. "Johanna Thorden"* of *Brando* Tons Net 1612 Gross 3223

Built at *Landskrona* When 1936 - 11 Casualty notice sent to Owner 2/2/37 Owner's reply 9/2/37

Owner's Name *Rederi A/B. Fincka Nordamerika Linien (Gust. B. Thorden, Mgr.)*

Address *Brando Villastad, Helsingfors.*

Case previously before Classing Committee.

Date Last Minute

Particulars of Classification
+100 A1 +LMC 11.34
15 fbd.
11.36

Date of Casualty 12 January 1937

Brief description of particulars of Casualty

This vessel was reported to have been wrecked in the Pentland Firth on the 12th January, & was located on the Island of Swona. It was later stated that she had slipped off the ledge of rock & had sunk. Huge quantities of wreckage were being washed ashore on various of the Orkney Islands. Lloyd's Agent per Salvage Association reported that there was no likelihood of any salvage being effected. The Owners concur.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

JOHANNA THORDEN.—Kirkwall, Jan. 12.—Finnish steamer Johanna Thorden (? Finnish motor vessel Johanna Thorden) struck Pentland Skerries this morning. Ship's lifeboat landed South Ronaldsay with seven crew alive, two dead, reports others drowned and lifeboat with 25 persons missing. Longhope lifeboat searching coast for them.

Wick Wireless Station, Jan. 12.—Following received from British trawler Berkshire, GYSN, at 3 40 p.m., G.M.T.: British trawler Alsey was 65 miles S. of Duncansby at 1 p.m., now going through Pentland Firth, should be in position in about five hours.

Following received from Icelandic trawler Max Pemberton:— At 4 4 p.m., G.M.T.: Ships scrutinise Pentland Firth, both south and north sides, met a lot of small wreck pieces but saw no boat.

At 4 21 p.m., G.M.T.; Steamer Bruarfoss received your broadcast and keeping lookout. Position of Bruarfoss off Duncansby Head.

Following received from Pentland Skerries lighthouse at 4 15 p.m., G.M.T.: Have looked all round and can see absolutely no trace of anything here. Only wreckage here is a ship's hatch about 10 ft. long washed ashore at high tide. Visibility five miles and keeping sharp look out for ship's boats but I hope not because there is a very heavy sea running on Skerries Reef.

Following received from Coastguard, Wick, at 5 25 p.m., G.M.T.: Following received from Coastguard, Kirkwall: Motor vessel Johanna Thorden, of Brando, Helsinki, Finland: Time of casualty between 4 and 5 a.m. Number of crew was 32 men, two women and two children. Thirteen got away in one boat but five drowned, the other eight picked up at east side of South Ronaldsay. Twenty-two men, two women and two children left ship in another boat and have not been seen or heard of since. Longhope lifeboat still searching. Search parties from Brough Ness and Durness are still searching vicinity.

Following received from Icelandic trawler Max Pemberton at 5 34 p.m., G.M.T.: Now at south end of Pentland Firth, have been both east and west sides and seen no boats. Now leaving bound Grimsby; bad weather.

Longhope, Orkney, Jan. 12.—Longhope lifeboat located wreck on Tarf of Swona of Finnish motor vessel Johanna Thorden. Passed a large quantity of wreckage, found none of crew. One boat believed missing. Wreck submerged.

London, Jan. 12.— More than 20 persons are missing following the grounding to-day of the Finnish motor vessel Johanna Thorden, 3223 tons gross, which went ashore on the Little Skerry in the Pentland Firth between the North of Scotland and the Orkneys. Four bodies have been washed up on the shore at Ronaldsay. News of the disaster was received during the afternoon by coastguards at Wick. The vessel struck the Lowther Reef near the Pentland Skerries at 4 30 a.m. A southerly gale was blowing and the seas were high, and when the ship struck she broke in two and sank. The master sent off 22 men, two women and two children in one of the lifeboats and later he, along with the remaining 13 members of the crew, abandoned the ship as the after part of the vessel was sinking. It was shortly after eleven o'clock to-day that the lifeboat which the master was in was washed up on the shore on the east side of South Ronaldsay. The master had been drowned. Eight members of the crew of his lifeboat swam ashore. Longhope lifeboat searched for the other boat all day, but it was thought impossible for her to survive such heavy seas. In the master's boat were the second, third and fourth engineers, the wireless operator, and a number of seamen. The vessel's wireless was wrecked by the storm and she could not send out an S O S. The Johanna Thorden was returning from New York and had a crew of 38. Longhope lifeboat returned to its base, but was putting out again to continue the search for the missing boat.

(Cont'd over)

Suggested Record *Wrecked 1.37*

Date of Committee *TUE 16 FEB 1937*

Committee's Minute *Wrecked 1.37*

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Lloyd's Register

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Lloyd's 18/2/37

JOHANNA THORDEN.—Wick Wireless Station, Jan. 12.—Following received from Pentland Skerries Lighthouse at 6 36 p.m., G.M.T.: No further information here, now darkening, visibility six miles, sea heavy, can see nothing on east side of Ronaldsay. Searchers returned having only found several pieces wood apparently wrenched from cases, no markings on wood.

14/1/37

Following received from Icelandic trawler Reykjaborg at 7 33 p.m., G.M.T.: Good look-out kept and course altered to Pentland Skerry but didn't see anything. Abandoned search at 6 p.m. Have left Pentland Firth. Experiencing heavy weather.

Following received from British trawler Alsey at 7 46 p.m., G.M.T.: Position 25 (miles) south of Pentland Skerries, have no information but we are keeping look-out. Skipper thinks direction of drift of boat would be southerly.

Following received from Pentland Skerries Lighthouse at 8 36 p.m., G.M.T.: Nothing further to report, weather same, visibility 4 1/2 miles, hazy.

Wick Wireless Station, Jan. 13.—Following received from British trawler Alsey at 12 38 a.m., G.M.T.: Passed position and seen nothing.

Kirkwall, Jan. 13.—Motor vessel Johanna Thorden: Actual position seems to be Island of Swona, Pentland Firth, and vessel appears from distance to be broken in two. Weather too rough yet for communication with island. Small boat containing three dead bodies washed ashore at Deerness this morning.—Lloyd's Agent per Salvage Association.

Kirkwall, Jan. 13.—Finnish motor vessel Johanna Thorden: Boat washed ashore at Deerness this morning with three bodies is definitely established as boat originally containing 25 of crew. No hope can be entertained for remainder.

London, Jan. 13.—George Mollis, wireless operator, one of the eight known survivors of the Finnish motor vessel Johanna Thorden, stated that the vessel was returning from her maiden voyage and left New York on New Year's Day for Gothenburg and four other Swedish ports with a general cargo and motor-cars. He said: "For six days we had fine weather, but since then it has been terrible first with north-west gales and then with southerly gales. This morning, about 5 45, we struck what I thought was the Pentland Skerries in

the Pentland Firth, but what local people have told me must have been either the island of Swona or the neighbouring island of Stroma. The first boat put off half an hour afterwards with 25 people, and the master's boat, in which I was, got away an hour after the first one. Ten minutes after we pushed off I saw the ship break in two and sink. It was blowing a hurricane. After many hours of drifting before the storm—we were unable to do anything—we reached the shore of this island, South Ronaldsay."—The Times' Correspondent.

London, Jan. 13.—It has now been definitely established that 30 lives have been lost. Six bodies have been recovered. One of the two women lost is the wife of the chief engineer and one of the children who have perished is her son. The survivors will leave St. Margaret's Hope to-morrow for Leith en route for Finland.

JOHANNA THORDEN.—London, Jan. 14.—The forepart of the Johanna Thorden has been carried four miles by the gale and tide and driven ashore at Tarf Tail, on the south end of the island of Swona in the Pentland Firth.—The Times.

15/1

Kirkwall, Jan. 14.—Finnish motor vessel Johanna Thorden: Only small portion of bows showing and no likelihood of any salvage either vessel or cargo.—Lloyd's Agent per Salvage Association.

JOHANNA THORDEN.—Kirkwall, Jan. 15.—Motor vessel Johanna Thorden: A quantity of ship's fittings also some tobacco and cigarettes have been washed ashore and taken in charge by Receiver of Wreck. So far 11 bodies have been recovered.

16/1

Stronsay, Jan. 16.—Four new hatches, a quantity of paraffin wax and several pieces of wood washed ashore House Bay, Stronsay, to-day, presumably from motor vessel JOHANNA THORDEN, wrecked Pentland Firth.—Lloyd's Agent.

18/1

JOHANNA THORDEN.—Kirkwall, Jan. 15.—Motor vessel Johanna Thorden: There is no likelihood of any salvage being effected either on ship or cargo. The sea has been too rough to allow approach to the Island of Swona by boat, but flying low in an aeroplane over the wreck nothing can be seen except a part of the bows and the foremast, and the seas are even breaking over this. The vessel is not wrecked on the island itself, but on a reef lying close to the island. From the depositions made by the survivors, the vessel is broken in two and the parts separated. There are some small lots of cargo being washed ashore on the various islands and being taken in custody by Receiver of Wreck.—Lloyd's Agent per Salvage Association.

19/1

JOHANNA THORDEN.—Glasgow, Jan. 19.—Finnish motor vessel Johanna Thorden, which was wrecked last Tuesday (Jan. 12), in the Pentland Firth, and subsequently located on the Island of Swona, yesterday slipped off the ledge of rock on which she was perched and slid into deep water. A temporary change of wind from south-east to westerly during another fierce gale caused the vessel to vanish. Huge quantities of wreckage are coming ashore on various of the Orkney Islands, including hides, fruit, raw tobacco, paraffin wax, drums of crude oil and chemicals, motor tyres and boxes of motor parts, and machinery of various kinds, including electric typewriters.—The Glasgow Herald.

21/1

JOHANNA THORDEN.—London, Jan. 21.—Orkney police and coast watchers to-day recovered two more bodies of victims of the wreck of the Finnish motor vessel Johanna Thorden. One man's body was found at South Ronaldsay and another at Scapa Flow. Bodies of 16 of the 30 lost have now been recovered.

22/1

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No Certificate required if so, to be sent to



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