

S.S. "LA CRESCENTA".

STATUTORY DECLARATION

by

SAMUEL FREDERICK MARKS

Solicitor,

BOARD OF TRADE.



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W604-0276 '17

I SAMUEL FREDERICK MARKS of 168 North Labrea Los Angeles California do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows

1. I am an American citizen

2. In 1928 I was engaged in business on shore and I had not been to sea before then On the 5th May 1928 I joined the s.s. "LA CRESCENTA" in San Pedro as a sailor and I served in her until the 27th July 1928. Mr. Upstill was then the 2nd Officer and he was Captain of the "LA CRESCENTA" when she sank From 1928 after I left the "LA CRESCENTA" until 1934 I was engaged in other business ashore On September 18th 1934 I rejoined the "LA CRESCENTA" as a fireman and I served on board her on the voyage from San Pedro to Yokohama and Shimitzu and back to Port San Luis in California

3. During the first part of the passage from San Pedro to Yokohama the oil fuel system gave little trouble but after about 10 days out one of the two oil fuel pumps failed It was dismantled and efforts were made to put it in order but it was not used again during this passage The other oil fuel pump was used but stopped occasionally and I was ordered to strike it with a spanner to start it again and I did so On occasions as the pump stopped all the burners went out and had to be relit again after restarting the pump

4. About this time choking occurred in the oil fuel heater and the filters The heater was opened out and the retarders were taken out of the tubes to clear the passages The filters were scraped clean with a knife and washed with paraffin The regulation of the pump and heating of the oil was attended to by the engineers but I had to assist in cleaning the heater and filter

5. The oil fuel burners usually required cleaning about three per watch but the number to be cleaned increased considerably the trouble appearing to be carbon deposit at the nozzles which required the burner to be taken out for cleaning. Later the pipes across the boiler fronts supplying the oil to the

burners became choked and it was necessary on two occasions to take down this pipe work to clear the pipes. The ship was stopped during these two occasions but the weather was fine at the time. I think these troubles seemed to occur when taking the oil from the cross bunker tanks and conditions would improve when changed over to take oil from another tank but I did not have anything to do with the changing over or with the settling tanks.

6. At Yokohama the boilers were cleaned the retarders removed and the tubes well brushed through.

7. On leaving Yokohama two boilers only were required but two days later the other the port boiler was required for deck steam and considerable difficulty was experienced before the burners could be lighted. Different size nozzles were tried and blow backs occurred but after two hours the burners were got away. During this time the burners on the other boilers appeared to be working all right. Exactly the same trouble occurred just before we reached Yokohama on the outward voyage.

8. Later on the homeward passage the smoke tubes became choked with soot and flaming occurred in the back ends when the burners were shut off. It was necessary to shut off a boiler at a time withdraw the retarders and sweep the smoke tubes. The ship was not stopped during these periods but ran at reduced speed. The tubes were cleaned five times during the passage to San Luis.

9. On two occasions heavy escapes of steam occurred in the stokehold from joints failing on the steam pipes but in each case after a short interval steam was shut off and a repair was made without affecting the main steam to the engines.

10. The steam pipes in the stokehold vibrated in heavy weather and a considerable amount of lagging including large pieces fell on to the stokehold platform.

11. I am not a technical man and cannot give any practical information on the working of the oil fuel system and boilers.

other than what I actually saw or did myself

12. During the voyage from San Pedro to Yokohama with cargo we ran into very heavy weather and were hove to for some hours the engines being kept turning slowly No failure of the machines or oil burning installation occurred during that time and so far as I know there was no damage to the hull

13. During the heavy weather on the voyage from San Pedro to Yokohama water came down in sheets on me while I was in the stokehold It came through the fidley and I was wet through It came down like very heavy rain No important quantity came through the stokehold ventilators We were able to turn them away from the weather One could be turned readily and the other only with very considerable difficulty

14. In bad weather the seas would strike the bulkhead at the forward end of the after bridge with considerable force and each time about half a bucketful of water would come into the starboard alleyway of the after bridge through the door at the fore end This door could not be closed quite tight No important quantity of water however accumulated in the alleyway

15. There was a ventilator over the forward end of the starboard alleyway of the after bridge It was about 6 or 8 inches in diameter It was broken off before I joined the ship and it remained so when I left The jagged edges of the coaming where it had been broken projected upwards from the deck and it was not plugged

16. There was also a broken ventilator over an empty cabin but this was plugged

17. During the voyage a man was chipping the plating of the crew's companion on the starboard side of the steering gear house His chipping hammer went through the plating about 5 feet 6 inches above the deck and about 2 inches from the companion door leaving a hole about one and a quarter inches square The companion doors closed tightly and water did not enter the companion in bad weather

18. About 15 feet abaft the main bridge stretching for a matter of about 20 feet there were a series of waves in the deck plates about 1 inch high. These were more pronounced when the vessel was loaded then being about 4 inches high.

19. The ship had a list of between 5 and 10 degrees when returning from Yokohama to San Luis. I was informed that this was done purposely in order to obtain better lubrication of the guides and other parts of the main engine.

20. I saw the officers and crew entering the tanks during cleaning operations on this voyage and making grommets for the purpose of dealing with leaks. I did not see any of the leaks and did not know where they were.

21. When the ship arrived at San Luis she was given a greater list and repairs were done to the rivets in the ship's side. From a boat I saw a workman working near the waterline about 100 feet from the bow on the port side of the ship. This is only a rough estimate.

22. I once dropped a burner on to the tank top between the two forward boilers. I got down to get it and found it had not become dirty. The tank top was quite clean and was always kept so. This was when we were in Yokohama. I was at the end of the boilers and I remember that the engineers were working putting asbestos on the insulated portions of the boilers.

23. It was no uncommon thing for large bolts and nuts to drop on the stokehold floor plates near me while I was at work in the stokehold. These were mostly nuts for bolts about one inch in diameter with part of a cut off or broken bolt in the nuts. I never discovered where they came from nor did I see any part of the structure or ventilators overhead which had such bolts or nuts missing.

24. I know that Captain Upstill was very worried over the Owners' attitude regarding work he had had done during the short period he had been in command. This related particularly to tank cleaning at Batoum and the repairs by the Bethlehem Steel

Corporation He was afraid of the Owners' criticism if he incurred further expense and acted accordingly.

25. When I was in the ship in 1928 there were about 39 crew On my last voyage there were only 28 and all the crew were hollow cheeked and seriously overworked

26. Repairs were done to the dynamo on several occasions but I do not know that it ever gave out while running The wireless apparatus never failed so far as I know and the dynamo was always available for this purpose when required

27. I left the ship at Port San Luis on the 21st November 1934 My reason for leaving was that the ship was in my opinion in such bad condition that I feared that disaster would overtake her

28. The four photographs of the vessel marked respectively S.F.M.1 S.F.M.2 S.F.M.3 and S.F.M.4 attached hereto were taken by me when I was on board the vessel during the voyage from San Pedro to Yokohama in 1934

AND I MAKE this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true by virtue of the Statutory Declarations Act 1855

DECLARED at Truro in the County)
of Cornwall this 16th day of
August One thousand nine
hundred and thirty five

Samuel Frederick Marks

Before me

A. ALAN CARLYON.

A Commissioner for Oaths.

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