

1.

The Guildhall, Cardigan.
Tuesday, 20th April 1920 at 11. a.m.

S. S. "Sutton"

Formal Investigation
Order by the Board of Trade in pursuance
of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894,
before:-

H. Cloughton Scott Esq. Wreck Commissioners
and Assessors.

Captain. H. P. Learmont. R.N.R.

Commander. C. A. Smith. C.B.S. R.N.R.

Vice Admiral. F. R. Booty. C.B. M.V.O. R.N.

Alexander Esq. Naval Architect

The above are the Assessors

A. Y. Bucknill Esq. O.B.E. M.A., instructed
by J. J. Barnes Esq. O.B.E. Solicitor for the
Board of Trade appears for the Board of
Trade

W. K. S. Carpmael instructed by Messrs
Bateasons & Co., Solicitors, 114 Castle Street,
Liverpool for the Overton, S. S. Co. Ltd.,
Liverpool, owners of the S. S. Sutton.

Messrs Miller, Taylor, and Holmes,
Solicitors, Liverpool, for relatives of
deceased Master of the S. S. Sutton.



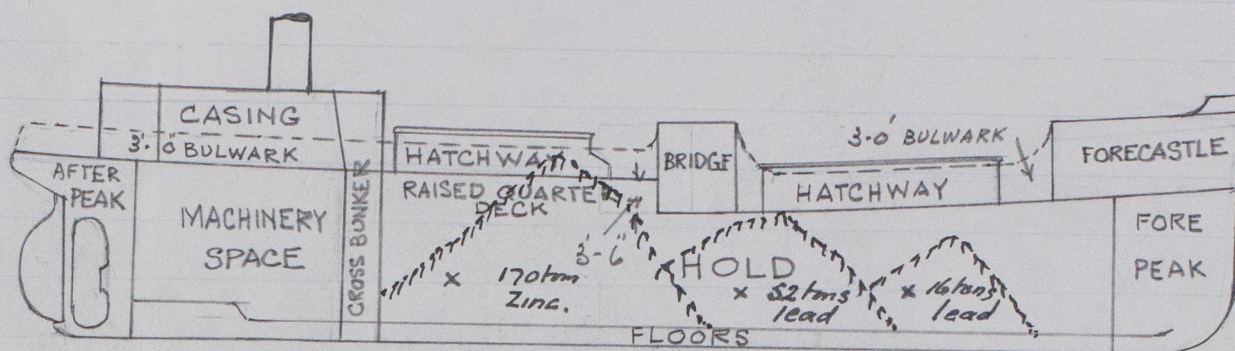
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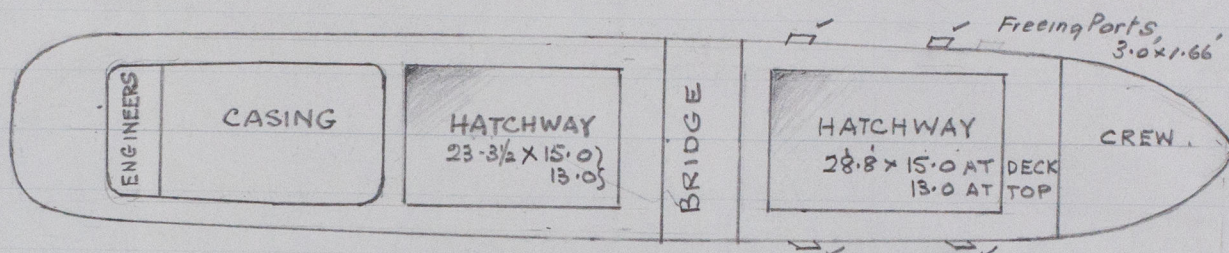
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WELL-DECK STEAMER "SUTTON"

Moulded Dimensions :- 152.0' x 25.0' x 12.0'



* Storage of cargo of metal concentrates



OFFICIAL NO: 143676

Built by Messrs Cochrane & Sons Ltd. Selby. 1920

Owners:- The Overton S.S. Co Ltd. Liverpool.

Port of Registry:- Liverpool.

Freeboard Centre of Disc:- 3' 11"
 F.W. 3" above
 Winter. 2" below.

Statutory Deck Line. 1" above the steel raised quarter deck.

Erections:- Forecastle. 25' 0" Long. 7' 0" high
 Bridge. 9' 0" " 7' 0" "
 Raised Quarter Deck 86' 0" " 3' 6" "

Dead weight:- 520 tons

Class +100 A.1.



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Mr. A. T. Bucknill opened the enquiry on behalf of the Board of Trade by stating the reasons for the enquiry. We were informed that the questions relating to the ship and her cargo would be dealt with at first and then the whole question of coast watching would be dealt with thoroughly at a later stage.

The S. S. Sutton was chartered by the British Metal Corporation to convey a quantity of zinc and lead concentrates to Antwerp from Aberystwyth. She was loaded and left the latter port on the night of Nov. 22nd 1925 with a crew of 9 in charge of Captain Ferrata. The Captain's wife and daughter were also on board. When day broke the ship had disappeared. Two bodies were found at Aberfoyle - the master's wife and one of the crew - together with a lifeboat.

Particulars of the ship are given on page 2.

The ship was built in 1920 ^{at a cost of} for £29,436 and before leaving Aberystwyth on her last voyage was insured for £15,000.

Mr. Bucknill stated that the vessel was built to Lloyd's highest class, and six months before her loss went through her S. Survey No. 1. ~~survivor~~ before ~~her~~.

The port of survey was not stated.

Direct evidence of the loss of the ship was extremely scanty but important information relating to the loading of the ship would be given during the enquiry.

The ~~262~~ tons of cargo was stowed as follows, and is shown on the sketch on page 2. -

16 tons of lead concentrates in the fore part of No 1 Hatch.

52 tons of lead concentrates in the after part of No. 1 Hatch.

170 tons of Zinc concentrates in the fore part of No. 2. Hatch.

Making a total of 238 tons of cargo. with 50 tons of Bunkers.

The Charter was for 260 tons of cargo. 22 tons were left behind.

The full deadweight as before stated was 520 tons.

The draught on loading was: -

8' - 4" Forward.

11' - 6" aft.

9' - 11" mean.

with an excess of freeboard of 1'-8"

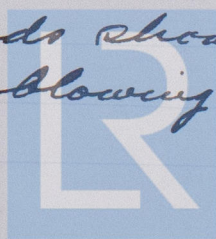
The cargo was loaded in barrows and tipped into hold and formed a pyramid. in shape when stowed.

The cargo was not trimmed.

Hatches were placed in position and double tarpaulins put on before proceeding to sea.

In turning round from the quay side the vessel touched the bank on the other side but after investigation no damage appears to have been done to the ship.

The weather records show that a strong northerly wind was blowing at time of departure.



The pilot left the ship at 7.0 p.m. and was the last person to see her.

It was stated by Mr Bucknill that the Board of Trade did not question the ship's stability.

Reference was then made to an important case which had a very direct bearing on the questions under discussion at this enquiry, viz. that of the S. S. "Marali", which was loaded with the same type of cargo, chartered by the Metal Corporation Ltd. and left Aberystwyth on the 17/2/26 for Antwerp.

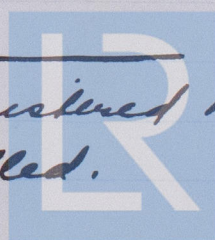
This vessel's registered dimensions are 141.5' x 23.6' x 9.8'. ^{ton} 3441 Gross Tonnage. a slightly smaller ship to the "Sutton".

Soon after leaving port the cargo shifted, but having made Milford Haven in safety the Board of Trade Surveyors advised that a portion of the bulk cargo should be bagged and act as shifting boards to the remainder which was trimmed. The vessel proceeded to Antwerp and arrived safely.

Only three vessels loaded with these types of concentrates have been known to perish, viz. "S. S. "Sutton".

S. S. "Fleur" (I am not at present aware of the particulars of this vessel) and the S. S. "Grevesse".

Mr Clark, the registered manager of the owners was called.



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He stated that the ship was built to Lloyd's class under supervision by surveyors to that Society and to designs by Messrs. Roscoe & Little of Liverpool.

The "Sutton" was one of four sisters, the other three vessels being the "Weston", "Beeston" and the "Edon".

They (The Owners) were perfectly satisfied with the vessel.

The "Weston" had been chartered by the ^{and sold} General Co. for the past three years between Liverpool and Havre.

The "Sutton" carried lead and zinc concentrates for the first time and the Captain had ~~not~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ no previous experience in stowing or carrying this type of cargo.

Stowage was in the hands of the Captain and the Charterer's representative.

It was also stated that the navigating lights were oil-fed (no electric lamps carried), wireless telegraphy was not fitted.

Mr Gray the Chief Draughtsman to the Builders was then called.

He gave a brief description of the Hatchways, with particular reference to a trimming hatch on the fore side of No. 1 Hatch, & the height of the coamings to all entrances below deck.

(The Solicitor to the Board of Trade by his questions to Mr Gray was trying to find out where water would first

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cubew inside the vessel when she listed badly.)

In addition to tarpaulins the ship was supplied with 3 sets of lashing rings and locking bars to each hatchway.

Mr Gray then stated that the Builders had conducted an inclining experiment on the "Weston" which was completed one month before the "Sutton".

The particulars of this experiment will be of value to the Committee and I have been promised a copy which will be sent direct to me at the London Office, so that it is not attached to this report.

From my own personal observation of these particulars there does not seem to be any doubt as to the stability of the vessel when loaded with a homogenous cargo.

Mr Gray stated she was stable under all conditions of loading.

Mr Clark, the Marine Superintendent to the Owners, handed in Lloyd's Certificate of Classification and Survey, & who also gave evidence as to equipment of life saving appliances. He stated that the "Sutton" often carried coal, but shifting boards were never used.

Mr Watts, Manager of the British Metal Corporation Ltd. was called to give evidence of the quantities of ore shipped.

A great deal of time was taken up with the object of ascertaining the

amount of moisture present in the cargo as proving the cause of the cargo shipping. If the Chairman or Committee would like detailed information of the analysis and other particulars I have complete notes of the evidence taken in my book. The question of moisture is one of importance with this type of cargo.

The analysis taken after ~~the~~ the "Marali" arrived at Antwerp showed the presence of chlorine which indicated that ^{sea} water found its way through the hatches into the holds.

At the rising of the enquiry at 4.45 pm. Mr Perry the representative at Aboukyuth of the The Metal Co during loading operations was giving evidence.

Note:- I have been promised a copy of the plan of loading of the "Marali" which will be sent direct to me at London for attachment to this report at a later date



J. W. Blackledge
20/4/26
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