

LOSS OF THE "RADYR"

Evidence Regarding Loading of Vessel

The Board of Trade inquiry into the loss of the Cardiff steamer *Radyr*, which foundered with all hands off Hartland Point on Dec. 7 last, was continued at Cardiff on Saturday. The vessel, it will be recalled, was lost while on a voyage from Cardiff to Bordeaux, with coal. There is no suggestion that she was overladen, but the vital question the Court is being called upon to consider relates to the hatchways. Hatch covers washed ashore after the wreck of the *Radyr* are lined up around the walls of the Court and are to be examined by experts. One possible result of the inquiry will be an investigation as to whether special provisions should be laid down regarding the hatch covers of coal-carrying vessels. The Court is being presided over by Mr. Hugh Jones, K.C., Deputy-Stipendiary of Cardiff, assisted by the following assessors: Capt. William Blackin, Capt. F. J. Thompson and Mr. T. H. Blaker.

The previous proceedings were reported in *Lloyd's List* of July 24, 25 and 26.

Mr. Allen Pratt, of Messrs. Vachell & Co., of Cardiff, represented the Board of Trade, while Mr. A. M. Ingledew, of Messrs. Ingledew & Sons, of Cardiff, held a watching brief for the owners of the *Radyr*, the Rupert Phillips Steamship Company, Ltd., Cardiff. Lieut. Commander H. L. Wheeler is also attending on behalf of the Royal National Life-Boat Institution.

Mr. H. T. Cooper, chief officer of the steamer *Headcliffe*, recalled, gave evidence as to the position of the *Radyr* off Hartland Point on the evening of Dec. 6. At 8 p.m. the *Headcliffe* was in a position with Hartland Light five miles distant, and at that time the *Radyr* was on her starboard quarter. At 1 a.m. on the seventh the *Headcliffe* was making no headway and turned round and ran before the wind. There was blinding rain and visibility was then poor.

Mr. Henry Leslie, second officer of the *Headcliffe*, said his vessel found difficulty in making headway. He was on watch at 8 p.m. and saw the *Radyr* at intervals up to 9 p.m. He thought the *Radyr* was steering more towards Hartland Point. After 9 o'clock the vessel was obscured by heavy rain. Between 4 a.m. and 8 a.m., he saw nothing of the *Radyr*. The weather had then much improved. When he last observed the *Radyr* her position was north by east, $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant from Hartland Point.

Mr. Arthur Thomas, able seaman in the *Headcliffe*, said he saw the *Radyr* leaving Cardiff on Dec. 6. She then had a slight list to port. He next saw her off Penarth Head, and she then appeared to be all right apart from the list. He never saw her again.

Another member of the *Headcliffe's* crew, Mr. Thomas James Israel, also deposed to seeing the *Radyr* on her voyage down channel. When leaving dock she appeared to be all right and on an even keel. When between Bull Point and Hartland Point the *Radyr* appeared to be heading for the latter point. She was rolling heavily, but owing to the weather conditions he did not think this alarming. The wind at the time was very strong.

LOADING OF THE VESSEL

Mr. William Wilkins, coal foreman for the owners of the *Radyr*, deposed to superintending the loading of the vessel prior to her ill-fated voyage. There were no complaints or suggestions made to him by the officers of the vessel in regard to the loading. He saw the holds had been properly levelled down and the hatches battened down. In his opinion everything was properly done.

Mr. Howard Stanley Williams, a coal trimmer, who said he had had nine years' experience, gave evidence of the process of loading. He said their duties as trimmers in self-trimming vessels would only commence after the bulk of the cargo had been tipped.

The Deputy Stipendiary here interposed and said he thought they should have someone called to say who authorised the hatch covers to be put on after the loading.

Mr. Pratt replied that he understood such duties were carried out by the chief officer of a vessel after satisfying himself that the loading had been properly done. He would, however, make inquiries and obtain all possible evidence on the point to place before the Court.

The Deputy Stipendiary having asked for evidence with regard to repairs to the *Radyr*, Mr. J. P. Carrell, marine superintendent to the company, entered the witness box and explained that after the ship was taken over, certain repairs were effected from time to time, accounts in connection with which were produced. The vessel was in Bristol Channel ports every two or three weeks, and most of the communications to him regarding repairs were verbal.

Mr. Torry, naval architect of Harland & Wolff, Ltd., Belfast, said the *Radyr* was built for a speed of 11½ knots. Replying to Captain Thompson, witness said no distinction was made between the hatches supplied with self-trimming vessels and those of other vessels. He did not think the hatches should be stronger, provided there was sufficient support. There was no added danger to a ship by having wide hatches.

Mr. J. H. Blaker, another assessor: Suppose two hatches were stove in and a big rush of water into these two occurred, would that be sufficient to sink that ship? Witness replied that he could not answer without much detailed information.

Mr. Timothy Harrington, leading trimmer, gave further evidence regarding the loading of the vessel. He said that after loading No. 2 hold the vessel had a five degree list to port. When he commenced on No. 3 the chief officer told him to try and get the ship upright. The chief officer was responsible for the loading of the vessel and gave the orders for the quantity of coal required to be tipped. After 1006 tons had been put into No. 3 hold the second officer asked him why a space was left in the forward section of the hatch, and witness told him that he had his complement in the hatch and witness had been ordered to pick the shuts up. The officer was satisfied with the explanation. Witness could not explain why the hold was not

full after the quantity stated had been put in, except that the coal, which was wet, was heavier than ordinary coal.

Other evidence was given that when the vessel was finished she was perfectly upright.

Mr. Street, chief supervisor to the Employers' Clearing House, was asked by Captain Thompson as to the use of hatches in the loading of steamers. Witness replied that there was a regulation against it and he had written two or three times to the Trimmers' Union calling their attention to this fact. His reason for doing so was because he had been told that some were being used at this stage.

The inquiry was adjourned until this morning.