

LOSS OF THE "RADYR"

Further Evidence on Coal Loading Operations

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 yesterday before Mr. Hugh Jones, K.C. (Deputy Stipendiary), sitting with three Assessors: Captain William B. Blacklin, Captain F. J. Thompson and Mr. T. H. Blaker.

The previous proceedings were reported in LLOYD'S LIST of July 24, 25, 26 and 28.

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.

At the outset of the proceedings yesterday the DEPUTY STIPENDIARY, addressing Mr. Pratt, said: Do you know if any instructions are issued by the Board of Trade with regard to trimming?

Mr. Pratt said that he was informed there were no particular instructions issued, but the trimming had to be done to the satisfaction of the master and officers of the ship.

The DEPUTY STIPENDIARY: Where is that stated?

Mr. Pratt: In the Trimming Tariff, para. 106. It is an arrangement made by the Trimmers' Union.

There is nothing from any Government Department like the Board of Trade?—No, Sir.

Mr. Pratt added that, as there was some conflict of evidence on Saturday with regard to loading self-trimmers, he would call evidence from the men's side.

Mr. JOSHUA THOMAS CLATHWORTHY then entered the box, and said he had been connected with the Trimmers' Union since its inception 43 years ago, and had been its President for 18 years.

DUTY OF TRIMMERS

Mr. Pratt said they had evidence that when the *Radyr* was loaded on her last voyage the No. 4 hold was incompletely filled and the coal was left in the shape of a cone. They got a situation in which the coal was loaded and formed a cone, but

the height of the cone was just sufficient to allow the hatch covers to be placed on the hatches. There would be no obligation upon the trimmers to level the coal.

WITNESS: That is so.

So that the meaning of the paragraph in the Tariff is that the hatches are only to be levelled if the ship's officers are unable to get the hatch covers on?—Yes.

In reply to further questions, WITNESS did not agree that there was an established custom, as suggested by Mr. Street, the chief supervisor to the Employers' Clearing House, by which it was the duty of the trimmers to knock off the top of any cone that might be formed. The trimmers might at the request of the officer in charge knock off a cone without any extra charge. If, however, it was a considerable amount, the men would expect to be paid, and the matter of payment would be arranged. In loading a self-trimmer it was the duty of the leading trimmer to direct the shute to give as far as possible an even distribution of the coal. Witness would regard it as bad workmanship if a cone was formed in a hold. Where there was unusual capacity he did not think any man would keep the shute in one position.

Mr. Pratt: To whose satisfaction is the trimming to be done?

WITNESS: The captain or officer in charge. If the trimming was not done satisfactorily the officer would have the right to complain.

Whatever he required, it would have to be done?—Yes.

Answering the Bench WITNESS agreed that knocking off the cone would to some extent make a ship more seaworthy. He agreed that if a ship went to sea with a cone in the hold, and getting round Land's End met with bad weather and rolled to an angle of 35 degrees, it would be possible for the cargo to shift. He did not think there would be any argument on the part of the men about going down and levelling the coal, if it was considered dangerous.

Mr. Pratt: If instead of a single cone formed in the hold there was a ridge fore and aft, would that be consistent with good loading?

WITNESS: It would be inconsistent with good loading.

SUPERVISOR'S DEPOSITION

Mr. DAVID MOSTYN DAVIES, assistant supervisor to the Employers' Clearing House, deposed to being one of those supervising the loading of the *Radyr*. There did not appear to be a cone in No. 4 hold. Had there been one, and he considered it dangerous, he would have immediately told the leading trimmer to knock the top off and make it secure.

In reply to Captain Thompson, WITNESS admitted he was not actually on board at the time, but only saw the position of the coal from the top of the tip. He had a number of vessels to supervise.

Another assistant supervisor said that during his supervision the vessel had a list.

He never had any complaint from the officers regarding loading.

Expert evidence regarding the class of timber of which the hatches produced in Court were composed was given by Mr. John RAMSBOTTOM, keeper of botany at the British Museum (Natural History Section), London, and Mr. REGINALD GEORGE BATESON, chartered civil engineer and chartered mechanical engineer, engaged at the National Physical Laboratory, Teddington, as principal assistant in the engineering section, spoke as to tests he had made to ascertain the breaking strain of the hatch submitted to him. He found the shearing strain 74 tons when the timber was supported in the middle and at the ends of the 9 ft. hatch. The tests were made from selected pieces of timber free from all knots. He considered the timber to be of about the usual commercial standard.

Mr. PETER CHOFF, dock pilot, said that when he went on board at midnight on Dec. 5-6, Nos. 2, 3 and 4 hatches had been battened down and also the after part of No. 1. The other portion had been left open to complete loading. The master was ashore watching the marks and gave orders for loading to stop. No. 1 hold was then battened down. They all had wire lashings with screws. The vessel's draught of water was about 18 ft. 6 in. forward and 20 ft. aft. The ventilators were all unshipped and plugged. She had a slight list. No measures were taken with regard to the list except that the master suggested to the engineer that he should pump out any water that might be in the tank. That was done and the vessel was upright before she left the dock side. They remained in the outer lock until 6 o'clock in the morning. He later handed her over to the Channel pilot and she was then quite in order. "In fact," added witness, "I was very nearly going over to Bordeaux in her on a holiday. I had been invited several times."

Mr. Pratt: I congratulate you on not having gone, but you would not have had any hesitation in going out in the ship yourself?

WITNESS: Oh, no, sir. He added that after leaving the vessel in the Roath Dock he watched her down to Lavernock. She appeared to be behaving all right.

Mr. WILLIAM HARRIS, an outdoor officer under the Board of Trade, said the draught of the *Radyr* when she left the East Dock was 18 ft. 8 in. forward and 20 ft. aft. That was in fresh water. The fresh water allowance was 4½ in. The vessel was loaded to her correct load line in salt water, and though there was a slight list of about 1½ deg. to port she was in all respects in order.

Mr. WILLIAM BARCLAY DUGGAN, the Channel pilot who took the *Radyr* out, said her engines were in perfect order, and she answered the helm well. He left the vessel about half a mile above the Ranie Buoy, off Lavernock Point, after 8 a.m. The weather was then getting worse, and the wind increasing, the force being about six. The sea was very bad then, but when he last saw the vessel rounding the Ranie Buoy she was behaving well.

At this stage of the proceedings the inquiry was adjourned until to-day.