

LISMORE WRECK INQUIRY.

WAS LOADING HURRIED?

ARRIVAL AND SAILING TIMES MATERIAL.

THE LIST: SHIPMASTERS TO GIVE EVIDENCE.

To-day's sitting of the Dublin Castle Court which is inquiring into the loss of the City of Cork steamer *Lismore*, was almost entirely devoted to the hearing of witnesses as to the amount and description of cargo carried, together with an approximate idea as to the weight of various packages.

Mr. Perry, superintendent stevedore for the company, produced a tabulated statement as to what condition the vessel was in when she left Penrose Quay.

It was intimated by the President that the question of the times the vessel arrived at and left Ford's Wharf had become very material. There was a considerable discrepancy on this point, and it was apparent that if the time for loading was short hurry would be suggested.

Evidence was also forthcoming from Ford's factory as to the amount of heavy cases of motor parts which were not loaded at Ford's, but were taken down to the quay and loaded there.

For the shipping company it was intimated that there was a possibility of securing the evidence of two masters who saw the *Lismore* on her voyage, and might be able to testify as to any list if it existed.

The hearing was adjourned until Monday.

SUPERINTENDENT FURTHER EXAMINED.

(From Our Own Reporter.)

DUBLIN, Thursday.

THE official inquiry into the circumstances of the foundering on July 10, off the Wexford coast, of the City of Cork Steam Packet Co.'s steamer *Lismore*, was resumed to-day in Dublin Castle,

before Mr. G. Cussen, assisted by four nautical assessors.

Mr. Edgar Perry, superintendent stevedore for the City of Cork Steam Packet Co., was the first witness. Recalled to-day, he was further examined by Mr. Swayne for the Ministry of Commerce as to the details of the cargo in the different holds. He declared that there was no direct documentary evidence to show what was put into hold No. 1, and he was not in a position to know the weight of any particular case among the cargo.

He was next questioned as to the axles from Ford's, which were put on the poop deck in tiers of four.

Mr. Swayne asked whether witness had ever before heard of such machinery being put unprotected on a poop deck exposed to the weather and sea, and witness's reply was that they were black enamelled axles, which would not be damaged by the weather. The master suggested to him that they might be put in that position.

DISCREPANCY IN COAL CARGO.

Witness said he did not remember anybody discussing with him the question of a list to port as the *Lismore* left, and he did not remember the remark being made that it was only a degree.

In answer to a query as to the amount of coal carried witness said he had nothing to do with the bunkers at all.

Mr. Swayne.—According to your earlier statement there were 65 tons of cargo carried, but, according to your evidence, there were 35 tons 13 cwt in No. 1 hold, and 14 tons 7 cwt on the main and upper deck, and 4 tons on the poop; that makes roughly 53 or 55 tons. How can you explain that discrepancy of 10 tons?

Witness.—I cannot explain.

The President.—You know now from the papers what you did not know at the time the ship was loaded?—That is so.

He further explained, in answer to the President, that there was not a checker for each hold but one checker for the entire ship.

Answering questions by Mr. Overend for the shipowners, Mr. Perry produced a statement which he had had prepared from the consignment notes, and as a result of inquiries which showed as accurately as possible the weights of the different packages of cargo. He had the consignment notes relating to the entire cargo that went on the ship apart from cattle.

Mr. Swayne.—But I take it there is nothing to indicate in which part of the ship the various goods went?

The Witness.—That is so.

Mr. Overend proceeded to go through the items in the statement seriatim with the witness with a view to indicating as nearly as possible that the *Lismore* carried by way of cargo on her fatal voyage.

In further reply to Mr. Overend, Mr. Perry said he could not now, and he could not at the time the vessel left Cork, have told the exact distribution of weight throughout the various parts of the ship. He had estimated the weights. He could tell, however, and

could have done at the time of departure in what parts of the vessel the various kinds of cargo were stowed.

To Mr. Swayne, witness replied that it was not exactly the case that so far as the loading of the boat was concerned they only troubled themselves about bulk as distinguished from weight. As far as possible they took precautions to see that heavy cargo was placed as far down as possible. If the vessel took a list when the cargo was being put in, they arranged for the transfer from one side to the other of the heavy cargo already put in.

LOADING OF FORD CARS.

Joseph Murphy, traffic manager for Messrs. Ford, described the work of unloading and subsequently of loading. There were about 13½ tons to be unloaded, and as 2½ hours were occupied in loading it, he thought the time was excessive, and he declined the suggestion of Mr. Perry that his (witness's) men should work overtime to carry out the loading. He considered Fords were being run in for extra expense through the inability of Mr. Perry's men to do the very simple job of unloading, less than 14 tons of cargo, in practically the whole afternoon.

When the *Lismore* left Ford's Wharf 41 tons 5 cwt. of their cargo were left behind, and this the company sent their motors and lorries to convey to the ship's side at Penrose Quay. It consisted of cases of motor car parts, and included some heavy cases. Twenty of the cases would weigh a ton or over.

Among the goods left behind at Ford's Wharf were a number of rear axles, which he subsequently learned had been stowed on the poop of the *Lismore*.

Mr. Costello (for the Ministry).—Did you know that any of these motor axles had been stowed on the poop?—Not until after she sailed.

Would your company have been pleased had they known that their axles were being packed in a position exposed to the sea and weather?—No, they don't like that being done at all. He added that it would have been detrimental to them if they got the salt water on them.

In reply to Mr. Overend, witness agreed that in their factory the packing was going along pretty well all the time, and while the stuff was waiting to be loaded on the ship it would be added to every few minutes; therefore, it would not be possible for the ship to wait until she had loaded them all.

Mr. Overend.—Your company are anxious that the ship should go on to Penrose Quay when ready, and still be taking stuff from their factory per cart until the vessel is ready to leave for England?—Yes, that is right. That is the usual practice.

Mr. Hubert Morris, the superintendent engineer for the City of Cork Steam Packet Company, recalled, stated the amount of coal which the *Lismore* carried was about 68 tons, although the chief engineer's return gave it 50. When witness looked at the bunkers he thought there was more than returned, and he asked the chief to run the tape over it again.

This being done the chief agreed that it was nearer 68 than 55 tons.

Mr. Overend said a message had been sent to two shipmasters who were now on their way to Dublin, and who might be able to give evidence regarding any list or absence of list.

The President said as he was engaged elsewhere to-morrow the hearing would be adjourned until Monday morning.



© 2021

Lloyd's Register
Foundation

W709-0104