

Extract from letter written by
Sir Westcott S. Abell to Mr. Eugene
T. Chamberlain, Commissioner of
Navigation, Department of Commerce,
Washington, dated 2nd May 1921.

I shall very much appreciate your help in a matter which has rather puzzled us here - it is the loss of the S.S. "HEWITT" belonging to the Union Sulphur Company (Mr. J.R. Gordon Manager). This vessel, carrying about 8,000 tons of sulphur left Sabine on 20th January last for Boston and Portland. Wireless messages were received from her every day giving her position until her disappearance on the morning of 26th January when she was 222 miles north of Jupiter (Florida). The vessel recently had a considerable overhaul in November 1920, and according to all our information, she was in a thoroughly efficient condition. There was apparently nothing in the weather conditions to account for the disaster, and the only other fact which may have a bearing on the case is that a large 5-masted schooner "Carroll A. Deering" came ashore on the Florida coast not far from where the "Hewitt" was last heard of, with all sails set and no crew on board. It is considered possible that the two vessels were in collision and the crew of the sailing ship had jumped on board the steamer, thinking that a safer place, and that the "Hewitt" subsequently foundered with both crews.

Our information states that it could not be ascertained whether the schooner had been in collision as she broke up and was nearly buried in the sand before the coastguard could make any inspection.

It may happen that in your records you have some notes of these cases, and if that is so, I shall be very glad of any information which you can give me.



© 2021

Lloyd's Register
Foundation

W926-0056