

Confidential

Copy No 3

Extract from Chief Engineer's Deposition

M.V. "FAMAGUSTA"

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4. That the ship had on board a cargo of eight lorries, of the weight of 26 tons shipped by Samuel Williams of Dagenham and consigned to S.A.S. de Chauffure, Ntata, Larnica of Famagusta, and that 3 tons of (one lorry) was carried on deck.

5. That the ship sailed from Dagenham, Essex, on her intended voyage to Famagusta in Cyprus on the day of March 1947, at .m.; that the draught of water of the said ship at the time of sailing was 3 feet 6 inches forward and 6 feet - inches aft.

6. That at the time of sailing as above the said ship was in some respects well found, but prior to sailing it was discovered that the vessel had a tendency to make water into the Port Double bottom tank under forward store. This could be pumped out by the pump situated in the fore part of the ship. The rate of entry was about 3 inches per hour. The pumping arrangements were such that the holds could not be cleared by either the forward or the main engine room pump. The vessel was put on the Hard at Gravesend and at low water no leak was discovered in the ship's side. The shell bottom could not be examined as it was flat on the hard. When water rose outside it again flowed into the tank indicating that the bottom was leaking. The forward pump was started up and this kept the water down and had to be run continuously whenever the vessel was afloat. Whilst the vessel was on the Hard, Lloyds surveyors attended and were informed of the leakage but so far as deponent is aware the bottom shell was not inspected.

7. That the said ship was proceeding on the intended voyage as above stated and after taking in 35 tons of oil fuel at Purfleet proceeded to Southend. On leaving Purfleet the total weight of fuel oil was 44 tons. The vessel left Southend about noon 15th March 1947. The forward pump was running continuously. By noon on 16th

March, the vessel had run about 220 miles and deponent noticed that the ship a list of about 2 degrees to Port. By the time Ushant was reached the weather was becoming bad but the list had not increased. About mid-day on 16th March deponent went forward to look round. The store was dry and the pump was still working. About 11 a.m. 17th March Mr. Lowe, the owner, reported to deponent that the list was increasing. Deponent went forward. The pump was working, but there was water on the storeroom floor, water was seen coming through the deck over. There was a transverse fracture about 3 feet long and about 1/32 inch wide. It appeared that the deck plating had come away from the transverse bulkhead at the after end of the store. This was a welded joint. Water was also seen leaking through the deck round the companion and hatch coamings where they had been welded to the deck. A welded joint half way up the companion side was also leaking. While deponent was in the store the pump stopped dead due to the action of the water washing about in the store. The list of the ship about this time was about 20 degrees.

Deponent then put the after pump on to the duct keel and pumped that dry in about ½ hour. As soundings of the tanks were impossible, he tried to draw water from the after double bottom and wing tanks in way No. 2 hold and found water in the after Port and Starboard double bottom tanks only. Pumping was continuous alternately port and starboard. In the early hours of 18th March 1947, water was leaking into the tiller flat through the rudder post glands. The glands were re-packed and it was then noticed that the shell connection of the starboard gland was loose. Whilst this was being repaired it was found that the shell connection of the port gland was also working loose and water was making its way in through them. About noon 18th March, the pump was put on to draw from the tiller flat, but the quantity of the water was too much for the pump to keep down. The list was still increasing. During the afternoon of 18th March deponent found that water was entering the engine by way of the port skylight. Attempts to make the skylight cover tight were unsuccessful. By the night of 18th March the list had increased to about 30-35 degrees. On 19th March at 12.33 p.m. the port engine stopped suddenly. The cause of this stoppage was not

definitely ascertained. About the same time the pump in the engine room stopped dead due to water in the engine room coming in contact with the pump motor.

The port generator which was running at the time was then used to pump water out of the engine room. The circulating pump drawing water from the engine room and discharging overboard.

When the port engine stopped, the deponent reported to the Master that nothing further could be done. The starboard engine was stopped owing to the propeller being out of the water.

All tanks and stores forward of the watertight bulkhead between Nos. 1 and 2 holds could only be pumped out by the pump, electrically driven, in the forward store. All tanks and compartments aft of the bulkhead were served by the pump in the engine room. The duct keel which was open from the fore end of the forward store to the forward bulkhead of the oil fuel bunker was served a suction at the after end. The oil fuel tanks could be emptied by means of a semi-rotary hand pump only.

On the morning of 19th March deponent saw that the oilmen's room and the cabin on the after side of it were flooded and it appeared to him that the water was washing between the deckhouse side and the deck, this was a welded connection.

10. That in consequence of the aforementioned casualty 6 lives were lost.

11. That the loss on the said ship is estimated by deponent at unknown pounds sterling, and on the said cargo at unknown pounds sterling and that the ship was insured in the sum of unknown pounds sterling, the cargo in unknown pounds sterling, and the freight in unknown pounds sterling.

12. That in deponent's opinion the cause of the casualty was the failure to attend to the leakage in the fore tank before sailing and the faulty welding carried out during conversion, and that it might

have been avoided.

13. That the above statements are correct and true to the best of deponent's knowledge and belief and they have been read over to the deponent before he signed.

Sgd. M. H. BEARMAN

Deponent.

Sworn at London this

1st day of April 1947. before me (Sgd) H. H. E. JEFFESIDE

Engineer & Ship Surveyor.

Sgd. -

Officer of Customs and Excise
Person appointed for the purpose
under S.465 of the M.S.A. 1894.



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Foundation

W992-0036 4/4