

# STEEL STEAMER OR MOTORSHIP.

Received at London Office

State if Report has been sent on the Freeboard of the Vessel yes

## REPORT OF TOTAL LOSS, CASUALTY, &c.

No. 96457 in R.B. Wreck Book, p. 32/49 SECTION 542 13343  
 Date of writing this report 18th May 1949  
 Vessel's Name Twin Is. S.S. "Magdalena" (R.M.C.) of London Tons Gross 17547 Net 9886  
 Supp. Belfast When 1949 2 Casualty notice sent to Owner 11.5.49 Owner's reply 14.5.49  
 Owner's Name Royal Mail Lines, Ltd.  
 Address Royal Mail House, Leadenhall Street, E.C.3.

Used previously before Passing Committee.	Date	Particulars of Classification.	
		Last Minute	+100A1 with fbd 1.49

Date of Casualty 25th April, 1949  
 Details of particulars of Casualty

This vessel grounded on the Tijuca Rocks between Cagarras and Palmas Islands, a few miles south of Rio de Janeiro, on the 25th April, 1949.

No. 3 hold was flooded, No. 2 leaking, nine double bottom tanks were pierced and the engine room tank tops were straining.

She was refloated the following day and taken in tow for Rio de Janeiro, but when off Fort Sao Joao she broke in two.

The forepart grounded and subsequently sank with only part of the mast showing.

The afterpart was beached, and no decision has yet been reached whether to dismantle or remove it.

The Owners concur.

### SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 25.—Steamer Magdalena (La Plata for London) is aground Tijuca Rocks, reported making water forward and "No. 1" hold. Brazilian Navy salvage tugs in attendance. Surveyor appointed.  
 London, Apr. 25.—The owners of the steamer Magdalena have received the following message from Rio Janeiro, timed 7.56 a.m. to-day: Master of Magdalena wirelessed at 6.30 a.m. to-day: Send tender for 350 passengers and tugs to stand by. Vessel hard aground half a mile south of Ilhas Tijucas. Making water in "No. 3" hold and forward. Weather conditions fine at present.  
 Naval craft, including tugs, under orders to proceed immediately and Wilson's tug Saturno, endeavouring also to send tender.  
 Rio Janeiro, Apr. 25.—Steamer Magdalena, which was returning from her maiden voyage to Argentina, ran aground on a rock between Cagarras and Palmas Islands, a few miles south of Rio Janeiro harbour. "No. 3" hold was flooded.—British United Press.

London, Apr. 25.—owners of the steamer Magdalena received the following message from Rio Janeiro, dispatched at 10.10 a.m. to-day: Master of Magdalena wirelessed at 8 a.m. to-day: First tug now close a hand, other small vessels in sight steamer Goiazloide standing by. Will soon commence transferring passengers by tug to her.  
 Lloyd's surveyor and owners' marine superintendent at Rio Janeiro have already left for ship. Arrangements being made for shore accommodation for passengers.

London, Apr. 25.—The owners of the steamer Magdalena have received the following message from Rio Janeiro, dispatched at 11.24 a.m. to-day: Master of steamer Magdalena has wirelessed: Transfer of passengers proceeding with some difficulty, owing to increasing swell. Sufficient naval craft here to take all passengers.

Rio Janeiro, Apr. 25.—Steamer Magdalena: The cargo of oranges and meat from Argentina is being shifted into barges to lighten her. Passengers have been transferred to naval launches and were expected to reach the city by early afternoon. The Brazilian steamer Goiazloide, which had begun preparations to take off the passengers, was recalled to Rio Janeiro.—Reuter.

### "Magdalena" Aground off Rio Janeiro

The 17,547-ton Royal Mail Line steamer Magdalena, returning to London from La Plata on her maiden voyage, has grounded on the Tijuca Rocks, near Rio Janeiro. She is making water forward and in No. 3 hold. Her 350 passengers have been taken off and her cargo is being lightened.

LL 26.4.49

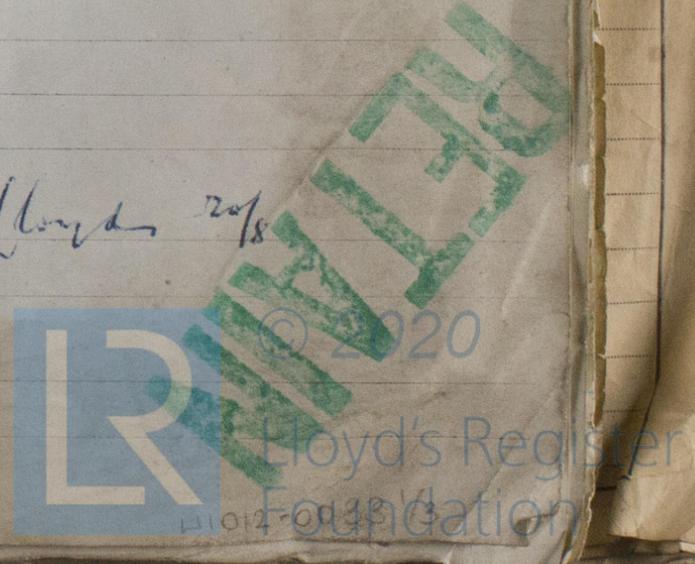
P.T.O

Record Committee FRI, 20 MAY 1949

Wrecked 4.49 by Lloyd's 20/8

Committee's Minutes Wrecked 4.49

REF



State of Report has been sent on the Freeboard of the Vessel yes

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**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 25.—  
Steamer Magdalena: Position un-  
changed. Brazilian Navy salvage tugs  
and personnel, and Wilson's tug Saturno,  
in attendance. Lighters and men to  
lighten vessel proceeded. Passengers all  
disembarked by Navy without incident.  
Lloyd's Register shipping surveyor and  
cargo surveyor appointed by us on  
board.

LL 27.4.49

(Later) Surveyor now reports: Vessel  
fast between rocks half mile south of  
Ilha Fonseca. No. 3 hold flooded and  
No. 2 making water but under control.  
Following double bottom tanks pierced:  
Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10. Vessel  
pounding at high water. Engine-room  
tank top straining. Situation very ser-  
ious; essential for more heavy tugs to  
attempt refloating when weather abates.

(Later) Weather deteriorating and  
lighters and labour unable to board  
vessel. Estimate wind from south,  
approximate force five to six (fresh to  
strong breeze), seas heavy. Navy tugs  
standing by but weather preventing  
further boarding.—Lloyd's Agents per  
Salvage Association. (See issue of  
Apr. 26.)

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 25.  
—About 100 tons of meat is believed to  
have been lost in the Magdalena follow-  
ing the flooding of the holds. Her cargo  
consisted of meat and 20,000 crates  
of oranges which were being shipped to  
Britain. At 4 p.m. (local time) to-day  
tugs were still round the vessel trying to  
get her off the rocks. —British United  
Press.

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 25.  
—Steamer Magdalena: Only Navy tug  
Triunfo and tug Saturno attending.  
Arranging for Lloyd Brasileiro salvage  
tug Comandante Dorat to proceed at  
4 a.m. (Apr. 26); nothing else available.  
—Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association.

—London, Apr. 26.—  
The owners of the steamer Magdalena  
have received the following messages  
from Rio Janeiro, dated Apr. 26:  
Timed 8 25 a.m.: Eye witness report  
just received states Magdalena in tow  
of Lloyd Brasileiro salvage tug with two  
other tugs accompanying. Vessel floated  
during the night.

Timed 8 33 a.m.: Following received  
from Magdalena: Now in tow of salvage  
tug Comandante Dorat, making for Rio  
Janeiro if possible, otherwise anchoring  
in shallow water route.

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 26.—  
Steamer Magdalena refloated on tide at  
approximately 4 a.m. and now in tow of  
salvage tug Comandante Dorat heading  
for port. Weather considerably im-  
proved.—Lloyd's Agents per Salvage  
Association.

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 26.  
—Steamer Magdalena: At 6 a.m.,  
G.M.T., advised all refrigeration main-  
tained excepting No. 3 hold, No. 2 orlop  
and trunk, No. 3 lower deck and trunk  
all flooded.—Lloyd's Agents per Salvage  
Association.

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 26.  
—An estimated 2000 tons of oil was dis-  
charged from the steamer Magdalena.—  
British United Press.

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 26.  
—Steamer Magdalena has broken in two  
outside the harbour in front of Fort Sao  
Joao. Tugs are standing by and making  
all efforts to take off the crew.

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 26.—  
Steamer Magdalena broke in two and  
started to sink at 1 15 p.m., local time.  
Two destroyers are proceeding to the  
scene and scores of small boats in the  
harbour went to the rescue. The two  
parts of the ship are partly submerged.  
—British United Press.

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 26.—  
The bows of the steamer Magdalena  
broke off and floated about 200 yards  
away from the remainder of the hull.—  
Reuter.

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 26.—  
Wireless reports from a tug near the  
steamer Magdalena said that her bow  
was half sunk and aground and the  
stern section, drifting towards the beach,  
was expected to sink shortly. The crew  
are reported to be safe and the master  
and four other persons are reported to  
be still on board.—Reuter.

**"Magdalena" Breaks in Two  
After Refloating**

The Royal Mail Lines' steamer  
*Magdalena*, which was aground on the  
Tijucas Rocks, near Rio Janeiro, was  
refloated early yesterday morning and  
taken in tow for that port by the sal-  
vage tug *Comandante Dorat*, but when  
off Fort Sao Joao she broke in two.  
The forepart was aground and partly  
submerged, and the afterpart was not  
expected to remain afloat. The crew  
is safe and all passengers had been  
landed earlier. Earlier reports  
from Rio Janeiro stated that the  
*Magdalena's* No. 3 hold was flooded  
and that No. 2 hold was making water  
but under control.

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 26.—  
Steamer Magdalena has broken in two  
just outside entrance and close to Fort  
Sao Joao, stern part apparently beached,  
bow in tow of tugs.

LL 28/4

(Later) Surveyor now returned to port  
and reports: Left Ilha Pontuda at  
6 45 a.m., engines out of commission.  
First in tow salvage tug Comandante  
Dorat, with tug Saturno standing by.  
Later Navy tug Triunfo took forward  
tow with tugs Saturno and Trijao (?  
Tritao) astern. Everything proceeded  
satisfactorily until crossing the bar  
when vessel fell into a trough and  
pounded heavily on bottom, fracturing  
and buckling sides at after end of No. 3  
hold. Vessel broke in two within 20  
minutes. Forward portion still afloat  
and anchored in fairway, after part  
ashore close to Ponta da Fora.—Lloyd's  
Agents per Salvage Association. (See  
issue of Apr. 27.)

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 26.—  
Steamer Magdalena broke in two just  
aft the bridge at No. 3 hold.—Reuter.

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 26.—  
The Royal Mail Lines announced in Rio  
Janeiro to-day that all the crew of the  
steamer Magdalena, including Captain  
Lee, have abandoned ship and are safe.  
Tugs abandoned the bow portion of the  
vessel at 4 20 p.m., local time, and it  
was slowly sinking at the entrance to  
the bay. The nose was projecting  
at an angle of 45 deg. with the  
bridge partly submerged. As nightfall  
approached, the bows of the steamer  
had almost disappeared. It is presumed  
that all the 4000 tons of meat which  
the vessel was bringing to England has  
been lost as well as all the passengers'  
heavy luggage.—British United Press.

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 27.—  
Three thousand tons of meat on board  
steamer Magdalena is known to be a  
total loss, it is announced to-day. The  
stern section of the vessel is to-day  
firmly grounded in the shallows, sur-  
rounded by cases of oranges, of which  
she was carrying 20,000. Work is going  
on removing the bow section, which was  
yesterday menacing shipping. Pessimism  
is expressed here about the possibility  
of successfully salvaging the stern section.  
—Reuter.

**Position of "Magdalena"**

Messages received yesterday showed  
that, contrary to earlier reports, it  
was the afterpart of the liner  
*Magdalena* which was beached outside  
Rio Janeiro, while the forepart re-  
mained afloat, anchored in the fair-  
way. The vessel broke at the after end  
of No. 3 hold, that is, forward of the  
passenger accommodation and main  
superstructure.

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 27.—

"29/4

Steamer Magdalena: Preliminary in-  
spection on after part at 5 p.m. to-day  
by Lloyd's Register surveyor, owners'  
superintendent, chief engineer, chief  
officer and ourselves reveals lying  
on sandy bottom in Imbui Bay. Sound-  
ings at half tide dead, aft 18 ft., frame  
100, 18 ft. port and starboard, frame 70,  
19 ft. port, 25 ft. starboard, frame 40,  
25 ft. port, 28 ft. starboard, frame 20,  
35 ft. port, 32 ft. starboard, and 'mid-  
ship, 30 ft. port, 45 ft. starboard.  
Weather presently calm, with slight  
swell, vessel lying easily with some  
working. Forward end of engine-room  
6 ft. of water, after end 2 ft. From  
engine-room forward bulkhead aft  
apparently sound above tank tops.  
Cargo position: No. 4 middle 'tween  
deck 450 tons of oranges, No. 5 'tween  
deck 220 tons of oranges, No. 4 lower  
'tween deck and orlop full of meat, No. 5  
orlop full of meat, No. 5 lower 'tween  
deck Brazilian and European mails and  
first and third-class baggage. Tempera-  
tures of meat at present from 20 to  
25 deg. fahrenheit, oranges satisfactory  
and engineers working through night  
endeavouring to restore refrigeration,  
pumps and power. Lloyd's Register  
surveyor, owners' superintendent and  
chief officer remaining on board making  
full detailed survey of hull and  
machinery. Expect discharge of mail  
and baggage to-morrow. Fore part still  
as last advised, but bow cut of water  
and after end on bottom.—Lloyd's  
Agents per Salvage Association. (See  
issue of Apr. 28.)

The latest reports received from Rio  
Janeiro indicate that there is 6 ft. of  
water in the forward end of the engine-  
room of the liner *Magdalena* and 2 ft.  
in the after end. From the engine-  
room forward bulkhead aft the vessel  
is apparently sound above tank tops.  
The temperatures of the meat cargo  
in Nos. 4 and 5 holds were between  
20 and 25 deg. Fahrenheit. Engineers  
were working through Wednesday  
night in an endeavour to restore the  
refrigeration, pumps and power.

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 28.—  
Steamer Magdalena: After section, fur-  
ther report: All decks from position  
approximately in line with No. 3 hold  
aft bulkhead in as new condition. No  
damage found on decks, casings or side  
shell plating except within 10 ft. of  
separation point. Tunnels, aft peak tank,  
transom and peak spaces all in good  
condition. No. 6 double bottom tanks  
badly damaged, feared no structural  
strength left under tank top plating.  
Cofferdam around lubricating oil double  
bottom tank leaking. Lubricating oil  
tank tight, Nos. 8 and 9 double bottom  
tanks tight, Nos. 10 and 11 double bot-  
tom tanks soundings at sea level. Tunnel  
well and aft peak tight and sound.

LL 30/4

Weather still moderate. Position of ves-  
sel unchanged, aft part riding easily,  
forward part still above water in fairway.  
Endeavouring to run out moorings fore  
and aft to-day to hold vessel fast in  
present favourable position.—Lloyd's  
Agents per Salvage Association. (See  
issue of Apr. 29.)

The latest report from Rio Janeiro  
regarding the beached after part of  
the liner *Magdalena* states that the  
condition of all decks from a position  
approximately in line with No. 3 hold  
aft bulkhead is as new. All damage  
to decks, casings or side plating is  
within 10 ft. of the separation point.

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 30.—

"2/5

Admiral Antonio Guimaraes, Brazilian  
Director of Naval Navigation and  
Hydrography, said here to-day that he  
believed it would be possible to tow into  
port the sections of the steamer *Mag-  
dalena*; the engines suffered no serious  
damage, he said. Representatives of  
Lloyd's were to-day inspecting the stern  
part of the *Magdalena*, now manned by  
members of her own crew.—Reuter.  
(See issue of Apr. 30.)

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 29.—

"3/5

Steamer Magdalena: Examination  
to-day reveals forward section is sub-  
merged, with waterline through stem  
to main deck at No. 1 hatchway and  
after end of chartroom. Owing to swell  
and position, consider salvage of for-  
ward section impracticable. After  
section is ashore with water in engine-  
room about 2 ft. above lower platform  
under control. No leaks in after hold or  
tunnel. Emergency generator working  
and controlling meat spaces but unable  
to control fruit. Average temperatures  
to-day, meat 24 deg., fruit over 60 deg.  
Of opinion after section could be re-  
floated and Merritt-Chapman and Scott's  
salvage officer is reporting to his office,  
but Merritt's equipment would take 15  
days to reach Rio Janeiro. No insulated  
barges here and owners are endeavour-  
ing to obtain portable generator to  
augment vessel's power, as main diesel  
generators damaged. Meantime explor-  
ing local possibilities of salvage.—  
Lloyd's Agents and Salvage Association's  
Special Surveyor. (See issue of May 2.)

—Rio Janeiro, Apr. 30.—  
Steamer Magdalena: Examination of  
engine-room indicates tank top set up  
and machinery disturbed. Port main  
discharge pipe fractured.—Lloyd's  
Agents and Salvage Association's  
Special Surveyor.

—Rio Janeiro, May 1.—  
The bows of the steamer *Magdalena*  
sank yesterday, and to-day only part of  
the foremast is visible. Because of the  
prevailing southerly winds, each day the  
other part of the liner becomes more  
firmly aground. It is understood that  
salvage equipment of a kind not avail-  
able here would be needed to refloat  
this part of the wreck. Practically all  
the passengers' baggage has been  
recovered but the work of salvaging mail  
continues.—"The Times" Correspondent.

It is now known that the forward  
section of the liner *Magdalena* sank on  
Saturday and only part of the fore-  
mast is now visible. The latest report  
from Rio Janeiro states that the water  
in the engine-room in the after section  
is about 2 ft. above the lower plat-  
form and is under control. An emer-  
gency generator is now working and  
controlling the temperature in the  
meat spaces but it has been found im-  
possible to control the fruit tempera-  
tures. The engine-room tank top is  
set up and the machinery disturbed.  
The port main discharge pipe is  
fractured.

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# STEEL STEAMER OR MOTORSHIP.

Received at London Office

8 MAY 1919

State if Report has been sent on the Foreboard of the Vessel 7/19

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, May 2.—Sides of beef from the cargo of the steamer Magdalena were to-day reported washed ashore near Copacabana Beach. Beaches near the Sugar Loaf, at the entrance to Rio Janeiro Bay, where the Magdalena finally broke in two, are strewn with orange boxes, stores, chairs, tables and flotsam. Soldiers are patrolling the shore to prevent pilfering. The stern of the vessel now lies half afloat. The bows, half submerged on the edge of the channel into the bay, sank lower to-day.—Reuter. (See issue of May 3.)

LL 4.5.49

**LOSS OF THE "MAGDALENA"**  
**Insurance Claim Paid within Three Days**

Nine days ago, it was definitely decided by the marine insurance market that the Royal Mail liner *Magdalena*, which went aground on a reef off Rio Janeiro and later broke in two, was a total loss. On Wednesday of this week, the Royal Mail Lines, owners of the vessel, presented their claim for insurance to the market, and by to-day the whole of the money will have been paid by the underwriters (Lloyd's and the Companies), including the Liverpool underwriters, who have co-operated with their London colleagues in this special settlement being made to the owners within three weeks of the vessel first going aground.

The total insurance on the vessel, excluding cargo, approaches £2,500,000, but the owners, not wishing to take advantage of any over-insurance that might have been done, have elected to receive (in addition to the £2,000,000 insured on the hull of the vessel) 60 per cent, for the time being on account of the amount in excess of that figure—the eventual total may be between £2,400,000 and £2,500,000. If the owners find that their disbursements are above the amount of the figure paid, there will be a balance for the excess underwriters to pay—but only the actual balance.

The amount paid on the *Magdalena* is the biggest loss, in terms of money, that the marine market has ever suffered, and is approached only by that paid on *J'Atlantique*. That it has been paid within 72 hours of the presentation of the claim is proof of the stability and integrity of the British insurance market.

LL 14/5

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, May 4.—Steamer Magdalena: Now discharging fruit from No. 5 hold; in apparent general good condition. Provided present weather conditions continue, prospects of discharging all cargo, &c., good. Vessel now moored and additional generator on board and working.—Lloyd's Agents and Salvage Association's Special Officer. (See issue of May 4.)

Rio Janeiro, May 4.—Workmen began to-day to unload the cargo of oranges still in the stern part of the steamer Magdalena. The stern holds 460 tons of oranges and 540 tons of meat, but it is not yet known how much can be salvaged. It is hoped that the unloading of the meat will begin before the week-end. Hope of salvaging any cargo from the bows is understood to have been abandoned.—Reuter.

" 6/5

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, May 5.—Steamer Magdalena: Discharge proceeding, hire and labour. Discharged to docks fruit warehouse to date 2125 boxes of oranges; discharge to lighters continues. Hope to tranship direct to motor vessel Highland Brigade approximately 4000 cases. Meat temperatures now lower. Checking quantities and condition of all goods. Probably starting discharge of meat to-morrow.—Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of May 6.)

" 7/5

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, May 6.—When the unloading of frozen meat in the stern section of steamer Magdalena began to-day it was believed that at least 450 tons would be saved for the British market and possibly a further 300 tons. Of 12,000 cases of oranges which have been recovered, more than 2000 cases left for London to-day in the motor vessel Highland Brigade. The refrigerated cargo is being kept in cold storage here awaiting shipment. The wreck is now firmly moored where it grounded. An expert said to-day that no decision had been reached about dismantling or removing the hull.—"The Times" Correspondent. (See issue of May 7.)

" 9/5

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, May 13.—The stern section of the steamer Magdalena is now partly afloat, and a Royal Mail Lines spokesman said to-day that its towage to a safe part of Guanabara Bay was under consideration. Bad weather has delayed the salvaging of the frozen meat cargo, of which 200 tons still have to be discharged.—"The Times" Correspondent. (See issue of May 9.)

" 16/5

**MAGDALENA.**—Rio Janeiro, May 16.—Steamer Magdalena: Position unchanged, operations at a standstill owing to weather.—Lloyd's Agents and Salvage Association's Special Officer. (See issue of May 16.)

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