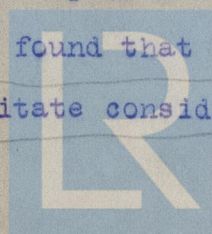


Oil Tanker "ALABAMA", built in 1903 and classed #100A1
"Carrying Petroleum in Bulk". 7,025 tons gross.

This vessel is owned by the Petroleum Soc. Anon. di Nav., Genoa, and the Manager of the Company, Mr. Chiarella, recently came to London and discussed with the Chief Ship Surveyor the circumstances attendant on the repairs which had been effected on voyages to New York, Philadelphia, the U.K., and Genoa. Mr. Chiarella was requested to communicate officially with the Society, and in a letter received from him dated 4th December he states the circumstances of the case.

It appears that the vessel, loaded with a full cargo of oil from Texas to the U.K., put in at Philadelphia in March last on account of bad weather, and damage to the steering gear. The cargo was discharged into shore tanks, and certain repairs which the Society's Surveyors had recommended were carried out at Philadelphia and New York. On completion of the repairs the vessel re-loaded her cargo and proceeded to the U.K., but Mr. Chiarella states that prior to leaving New York the Captain called the attention of the Surveyors to the fact that some waving had appeared on the bridge deck plating, and that he was assured this would be taken into consideration; but no mention is made of this waving in the Surveyors' report.

Mr. Chiarella met the ship at Manchester and called the immediate attention of the Underwriters to the condition of the deck, and an Underwriters' Surveyor was called in to examine this damage. The ship proceeded in ballast to Genoa, and at Genoa it was found that the condition of the deck was such as to necessitate considerable repairs, which were duly effected.



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? report

It now appears that some difficulty has arisen as between the Owner and the Underwriter as to the responsibility for the cost of these latter repairs, and the writer encloses photographic copies of two certificates which have been sent to him by the Hull Underwriters' Representative, one from New York and one from Philadelphia.

The certificate from Philadelphia has been issued by Mr.J.M.Buchanan, the Society's Surveyor at that Port, and states that with reference to the survey held by him, the deck plates were slightly waved, but that there was no indication nor did he believe this to be of recent origin, that he did not attribute same to the heavy weather, and for that reason no recommendations were made to deal with them. The certificate from New York is signed by a Mr.White, the Hull Underwriters' Surveyor, by Mr.Richardson, one of the Society's Surveyors at New York, and by a Mr.Silleman as Surveyor for Owners, and makes a similar statement, using the same words.

Mr.Chiarella, the Manager of the Company, has stated that Mr.Silleman was not acting on his behalf.

The Owners ask the Committee to provide answers to certain questions, namely:-

New York Certificate. Upon whose request was this certificate issued, and why this is not stated in the certificate as usual?

Has Lloyd's Surveyor authority to express his opinion about a ship classed with Lloyd's and especially to sign a document in conjunction with other private Surveyors, stating such opinion?

To whom was this certificate delivered, and why Owners were not at least notified that such document was being issued?

Are we to consider this certificate as an official certificate issued by Lloyd's?

Philadelphia Certificate.

Upon whose request was this certificate issued, and why this is not stated in the certificate as usual (please note that the printed words "At the request of" are crossed out)?

Why the wording of this certificate is exactly the same as that used for the New York Certificate.

Both certificates.

Signs of the recent origin of the waving of the deck have been discovered at Genoa.

Why do the certificates conclude that because the damage could not be attributed to the bad weather on the 4th March no recommendations were made?

Telegraphic communication took place with Mr. French regarding this case, and he was asked to state:-

(1) At whose request the certificates were issued, and to whom they were delivered.

(2) Why the New York Surveyors signed a certificate in conjunction with other Surveyors, and to whom that certificate was delivered, and why the Owners were not notified that such a document was being issued.

(3) Why copies of these certificates were not sent to London; and

(4) Why no reference to the slight waving of the deck plating was made in the official reports of the Surveyors sent to the Committee in March last.

To these enquiries Mr. French replies that it would appear that when the vessel arrived at her home port the Italian Underwriters communicated with Mr. White and asked him to obtain from the Surveyors a statement regarding the wave in the shelter deck in the vicinity of the steering house. The certificates were delivered to Mr. White. No copies of these documents were received at his Office. He adds that the Society's Surveyors were "under the impression" that these documents were requested and obtained with the concurrence of the Owners inasmuch as Mr. Silleman, who signed the New York statement, was understood to be representing the vessel.



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The following observations are submitted on the circumstances as reported by Mr.French:-

(1) It appears to be doubtful if the Surveyors were in order in signing the certificates in question in this case. In March and April last the ordinary damage survey was held at the request of the Owners' Representative. An interim certificate was issued to the Owner from Philadelphia in March, and a damage report was issued to the Owner from New York in April. The documents now in question are in the nature of comments upon these reports. They were requested by, and delivered to, an Underwriters' Surveyor, and Mr.French states that the Surveyors were "under the impression" that the Owners had concurred in this request.

It appears safe to say, in any case, that no action should have been taken without previous consultation with Mr.French.

(2) The certificates being issued, copies should have been available in the New York Office, and copies also should have been transmitted to the London Office.

(3) The waviness of the deck, having been observed at the surveys held in March and April last at Philadelphia and New York, should have received proper mention in the Surveyors' Reports to the Committee on those dates.

Jus
21.12.31

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