

Reports have been received from America of repairs effected to three vessels, the "CHARLES PRATT", "F.Q.BARSTOW" and "H.H.ROGERS".

In the case of the "CHARLES PRATT" fractures of the bottom shell plating were observed, and in the case of the "F.Q.BARSTOW" one plate had fractured. The condition of these vessels was such that, as appears from the reports, it was necessary to renew approximately 130 shell plates in the "CHARLES PRATT", a similar number in the "F.Q.BARSTOW", and it has been decided also in the case of the "H.H.ROGERS" to effect repairs of a like nature.

It was noted that the "CHARLES PRATT" and "H.H.ROGERS" were built in 1916, and the "F.Q.BARSTOW" in 1917, but as the reports gave no definite information as to the ^ucase of the fractures the Surveyors were asked to provide additional information grouped under four questions which were communicated to them in the Secretary's letter of the 2nd August last.

The Surveyors' replies have now been received, and they have also sent a report made by a Mr. H.F.Norton, Naval Architect, of his investigation of the physical characteristics of the plates which have been removed from the first of these vessels, together with numerous microphotographs which he had taken. His conclusion is that the plate fractures were not due to any physical defect of the material itself, but due to corrosion which in some cases wasted the plates to a thickness insufficient to withstand the stresses ~~setup~~ in actual service".

The Surveyor in his reply states that he can give no definite answer to the questions addressed to him except to state that the general report has it that these vessels have been considerably overloaded during their lifetime, that he has not much doubt but that the pitting of the bottom shell plating and the widespread corrosion of the bottom shell plating were responsible to a certain degree for the fractures, and that there is evidence in the case of the "CHARLES PRATT" that the vessel

had grounded.

Samples have been received from the Surveyor of the material contiguous to the fracture, but these samples show no sensible deterioration of the material, either in respect of quality or thickness, resulting from corrosion.

It is submitted it would be well to send these samples and the correspondence to Mr. Ripley, who should be requested to report upon the case for the information of the Committee.

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Dr. Mr. Ripley 3/10/33

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