AGENTS:

PORT ST. JOHNS:
Whitaker's Stores.

EAST LONDON:
Deary & Co.

PORT ELIZABETH:
Edward Searle & Co.

KNYSNA:
Geo. Parkes & Sons, Ltd.

CAPETOWN:
Dent & Goodwin.

Telephone 4443
Central

Telegraphic Address
~~"GARMID"~~
WARDROP
KOKSTAD

St. Johns Coasters [Pty.] Limited

PORT ST. JOHNS FORTNIGHTLY SERVICE

Head Office:
~~No. 1 SCOTSWOOD BUILDINGS~~
~~52 FIELD STREET~~
~~DURBAN~~

S.S. "GARDENGA"

Whinstone
P.O.Kokstad
East Griqualand
South Africa

April 14th 1932

The Secretary
Lloyds Register of Shipping
London

Dear Sir.

T.S.S.Gardenga

I beg to draw your attention to the above steamer. I ~~wa~~ was sent over to Europe in April 1931 by the St Johns Coasters Prop Ltd Durban. to buy a small steamer suitable for the South African coastal trade and particularly for the run between Durban and Port St Johns.

The only vessel I could hear of that would be suitable for that trade,owing to the very shallow draft required,was the Gardenga,an old river icebreaker lying at Cuxhaven.

Before I bought the vessel I submitted her plans to your Society to ascertain whether you would be able to class her 100A1 for the coastal trade between Lorenzo Marques and Port Elizabeth,which your Society agreed to do provided certain alterations were carried out.

I then bought the vessel and contracted with the Arminius Bodenwerder Germany,who were the only firm whose contract price was within my figure,to carry out the work and to deliver the vessel to me in Bremen classed by your Society and ready for sea.

This was done and the vessel sailed from Bremen on Aug 1st 1931 on her voyage to South Africa. Numerous mechanical troubles occured and the vessel put into Portland and Falmouth where repairs and alterations were carried out to try and correct one vital defect,namely,that the boilers were unable to produce the steam required by the engines.

The vessels designed full speed is at 184 revelutions and at sea,it was impossible to maintain steam for even 130 revs

revs)
for 24 hours.

Eventually I had to abandon the vessel at Gibraltar. AS in spite of the alterations carried out at Portland and Falmouth, her steaming qualities were the same, which meant that she had a sea speed in calm weather of barely five knots and even in a moderate sea she became unmanageable.

I have tried to claim some compensation from hte Underwriters at Lloyds, who insured the vessel for the voyage out to South Africa but they contend the vessel is unseaworthy and it is impossible to insure against unseaworthiness.

The vessel is now lying at Gibraltar in the hands of the Union Coal Company for sale and the Company are faced with practically a total loss.

In conclusion, as I trusted in your Society for ensuring that the vessel would be seaworthy for our purpose,,I appeal to you to accept some of the responsibility and award us some compensation for our serious loss.

Yours faithfully

R M Wardrop

P.S. Under seperate cover I am forwarding you the Engineers Log and the Deck Log for your information.

R. G. W.

Referred to the Chief Ship Surveyor,
and the Chief Engineer Surveyor.

9 MAY 1932

also for Mr. Bradshaw to Note
Also for Mr. Carey to note.