



Lloyd's Register of Shipping,

18¹/₂, Regent Quay,

Aberdeen, 3rd November, 1927.



Reference

Dear Sir,

The Board of Trade Inquiry into the loss of the S.S. "ENNISKILLEN" ended on Monday the 31st ultimo, with the completion of the examination of witnesses, and the summing up by Mr. Duncan, the Solicitor conducting the case for the Board of Trade. The finding of the Court will be announced on Friday the 4th instant.

I have had an opportunity of discussing the case with the builders, Messrs J. Lewis & Sons, and think it well to submit the following observations. I should explain that neither Mr. Richardson nor myself were able to attend the whole of the Inquiry.

The Builders gathered the impression in conversation with one of the technical witnesses for the Board of Trade, that the object of this inquiry was to strengthen the hands of the Board of Trade in obtaining powers to control the design of this class of vessel, and the evidence as led, and especially as summed up, certainly appears to bear out that impression.

The idea of fitting a double bottom in a vessel was stated in evidence to be a matter of strength; its use for ballast purposes for unloaded vessels was not directly mentioned, and was ignored in the summing up.

One Board of Trade technical witness gave the density of/

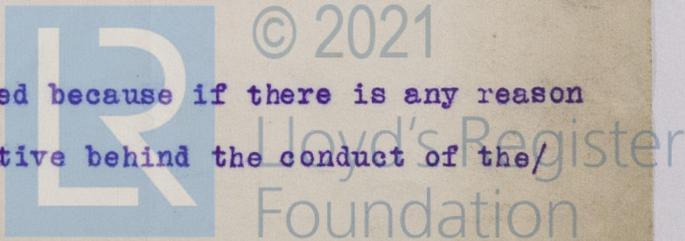
of the coal cargo as 49.2 cubic feet to the ton, from which he calculated that the hold must have been full, and that there was no possibility of the cargo having shifted. A second technical witness, I am informed, modified this figure to between 47 and 48 cubic feet to the ton, but as this figure was in a long technical report, which was read to the court, it did not obtain the publicity of the previous statement.

On this evidence it was considered that the question of the shifting of the cargo could not arise, and in the summing up was ignored, although it is generally assumed that 45 cubic feet to the ton is a good average, and indeed the Builders, who have had an opportunity of checking the Board of Trade witnesses' calculations, inform me that their figure was about 46 cubic feet.

This difference would certainly give a margin for shifting cargo.

Shifting of the cargo having been ruled out, there only remained the inherent instability of the ship, and in his summing up, Mr. Duncan stressed his impression that fitting a double bottom in a vessel of 180 feet in length was unsound, a new idea, and had not been sufficiently considered by the builders, a statement which had no bearing on any evidence which was offered, and which was, in fact, objected to by the Sheriff, and by the Owners and Builders' Solicitors on that account. However, the statement was made, and has received wide publicity.

These observations are submitted because if there is any reason for the builders' idea as to the motive behind the conduct of the



the inquiry, I think you should be made aware of it.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

P. Fitzgerald.

The Secretary,

LONDON.



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Foundation

W577-0240 73

For the Chief Ship
Surveyor
as
4/11/27

For Mr. Mayne
London
Spel
at



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Reference



TELEPHONE

LONDON

ALPHABETICALLY

I AM NOT SURE

I THINK YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL OF IT

Handwritten signature or name