

Confidential

No. <sup>C.4</sup> ~~Confidential~~ 143

The Governor

(SUBJECT).

1915

15<sup>th</sup> July

SS. "Columbus" (Messrs. Salvesen)

Previous Papers.

See CS: 252/13

(MINUTES.)

Colonial Engineering

Please see H.S.'s Confidential minute.

C. J. Cordell

C.S.  
15.7.15

Hon: Col: Secretary.

Memo in reply to H. E.'s Confidential minute, dated 15/7/15, herewith attached.

- 2. I shall be glad to know if I may have a copy taken of the correspondence, dated 15/7/15.

R.R.B.  
C.E.

2/9/15.

H.S. Submitted

C. J. Cordell  
C.S.

Subsequent Papers.

Thanks - The Col. Eng's file can be returned to him.

2.9.15

Done C.A.S.  
13.9.15

3.9.15  
57  
9N

Hon. Colonial Secretary.

Confidential

Messrs C. Salvesen have represented to the Secretary of State that they have received no reply to their letter of 11th October, 1913, addressed to the Colonial Secretary of Stanley respecting the s.s. "Columbus". They state that:-

"the "Columbus" boilers were inspected here by the Surveyor of the Classification Society, who reinstated the original boiler pressure of 110 lbs. which had been reduced by the Colonial Engineer in Stanley to 88 lbs. The whole boiler survey was passed at a mere nominal expense of something like 50/-, executed by one man and an apprentice in about a day and a half. Subsequently we sold the "Columbus" at a heavy loss, and the buyer before closing the bargain had no less than 3 experts to examine her in every detail, and who all reported most satisfactorily on the steamer's condition in every detail. The steamer was placed into drydock for survey of bottom etc. as also for inspection of the propeller and tail end shaft, which was drawn in, and everything was found in perfect order. The vessel has since been trading in Iceland waters and we have received no complaints as to her condition, in fact, the new owner's engineer reported to us personally that the boilers were in such a high state of efficiency that he was under the impression that they had been renewed since the steamer was built.

Our own 2 Marine Superintendents, who have been in our service for many years, the Senior of whom having constantly been in our employment since 1882, both took a very keen interest in the vessel and reported to us most favourably on her condition. She is an exceptionally strongly built vessel with plating far in excess

of Lloyd's requirements, and we absolutely convinced of a  
grievous injustice having been done to us, and which has  
entailed us a very great loss."

*Please refer to the Colonial Engineer for report.*

*Douglas Young,*

Governor.

15.7.15

*Confidential*

*Colonial Engineer*

*Referred to you*

*for report as instructed.*

*C. A. Condell*

*C.S.*  
*15.7.15*

Memo.

C.E.'s Office.  
2/9/15.

The Hon: the Colonial Secretary.

I beg to submit the following in reply to His Excellency's minute of the 15th July, 1915.

2. With regard to Messrs. C. Salvesen's letter of the 11th October, 1913, a copy was sent to me to which I sent a reply, dated 22/11/13: this should be in M.P. 252/13. A copy of further correspondence addressed to Governor Allardyce, dated 23rd June, 1914, was also received, to which I replied on 19th August, 1914. In both these letters, I answered all questions concerning the boilers, and also gave my reasons for requiring them to be in good condition when working on this coast. At the time I surveyed the boilers of the S.S. "Columbus" (that is during July of 1913), they were not in a fit condition to carry mails and passengers round these islands. My Survey Report, dated, 1st August, 1913, was a true statement as to the condition of the boilers at that time.
3. I would draw your attention to Messrs. C. Salvesen's letter of the 11th October, 1913, in which they say they are sending out stays, etc. in the S.S. "Horatio". Am I to understand that these were not fitted when the "Columbus" was lying at New Island, and that the Classification Society Surveyor passed and reinstated the original boiler pressure (110 lbs.) with stays and nuts in the same condition as I surveyed them? If such is the case, I am greatly surprised, as it is due to the presence of the nuts that a reduction is allowed in the thickness of the plates: in this case many of the nuts were slack, and on being examined, were found to be stripped. I have one such nut in my possession.
4. Had the repairs been done, as suggested in my minute of 22/11/13, and the conditions fulfilled as shown/

shown in para 3 of that letter, I have little doubt that the original pressure would have been allowed. The whole question has been the condition of the combustion chamber back plates, stays, and stay nuts.

5. By referring to page 5 of Survey Report, dated 1st August, 1913, under 'Summary', it will be clearly seen why the boiler pressure was reduced. Under the circumstances, I fail to see what other course was open for me to adopt, knowing that nuts on stays and also stays were faulty. The pressure was reduced to enable the vessel to proceed to a port where the necessary repairs could be effected, this pressure being sufficient to enable the vessel to proceed with greater safety.
6. Why no reply was sent to Messrs. C. Salvesen's letter of 11th October, 1913, I cannot say. My reply was sent to the Colonial Secretary on the 22nd of November, 1913 in M.P. 252/13. Had a reply been sent in the terms of my minute, dated 22/11/13, M.P. 252/13, perhaps Messrs. C. Salvesen would have notified this Government that they were going to do certain repairs at New Island, and that they would require the services of a surveyor on the spot. On the completion of the repairs, a new Survey Report would have been furnished which might have enabled the vessel again to trade in these waters, carrying passengers and mails.
7. In order that all the details of this question may be fully understood, it is necessary that all previous correspondence be read, and I think it will then be found that any 'grievous injustice' which Messrs. Salvesen may or may not have suffered, has not been caused by any action taken by me when surveying the boilers during July, 1913. I surveyed the boilers and reported as to their conditions. As to what was done/

done to them prior to their being surveyed again in England, I cannot say as Messrs. Salvesen do not state, further than they suggested doing the work required. No notification, as far as I know, has been received that the work was done and that further survey was required.

R.B. Barclay, A.M. I. Mech. E.,  
Col: Engineer. M. I. Mar. E.  
2/9/15.