

C.S.

MISCELLANEOUS

(Dependencies)

(Strikes)

1921.

No.

686/21.

Magistrate, S. Georgia

SUBJECT.

1921

28th May,

Previous Paper.

691/20

Reports strike of the employés of the
Southern Whaling and Sealing Co., Ltd.,

MINUTES.

Letter from Magistrate S. Georgia dated 28th May, 1921

Letter from Mr. E. B. Binnie, dated 30th July, 1921.

H.E. the Governor,

Submitted.

2. I was not aware that Encl:(1) had been received, until today. The Magistrate's report of 28/5/21 (Encl:1) I understand, had not been previously jacketed to be submitted to Your Excellency before today, owing to pressure of clerical work in the C.S.O.

A. C. S.
A. C. S. 4/8/21.

H.E.S.

Will you please let Mr. Binnie see
Report of Mr. Pardo & request him to
make any further observations which
he may have to offer.

Subsequent Paper.

A. C. S.
12 Aug 1921

Mr. Binnie

For your observation please

H. Thompson
A.C.S. 13/8/21

Hon. Col. Secy.

I have looked over the report made by Mr. Larlas and the cause of the strike is just what I expected it to be. I am inclined to think that the men were in a way justified in discontinuing work at the end of the 'Catching time' as stated in their contracts, or at latest when all the whales had been dealt with, the question of loading the vessel after that time is hardly covered by the contract. I think if the management had ~~accepted~~^{shared} their opinion that the contracts ceased at the end of the 'catching time' and offered to make fresh agreements with them for the loading of the vessel, this strike would not have taken place.

I think the Company is at fault in not seeing to it beforehand that the contracts covered the necessary period for shipping the oil.

E. W. B. Binnie

Ag. Postmaster
14th. August 1921.

H.E. The Governor

Submitted

H. Thompson
A.C.S. 15/8/21

~~Handwritten scribble~~

H.E.S.

It does not appear to have been a ^{accidental} strike in ordinary sense but a dispute between employer & employed as to interpretation of a contract

Dr

16 August 1921

(1)

G. 53/21



The Magistrate's Office,

South Georgia.

28th May, 1921.

Sir ,

I have the honour to inform you that a Strike took place at the Station of the Southern Whaling and Sealing Co., Ltd., at Prince Claf's Harbour, at the beginning of this month.

At the Manager's request I went to Prince Claf's Harbour and saw several deputations from the strikers, and endeavoured to bring about a settlement between them and the Management, but without success. The reasons for the strike put forward by the men were that their contracts had expired when the Company stopped whaling on the 1st May, and that they should have been sent home by the s.s. "Southern Isles" on the 4th May. I saw the contracts which are printed in English and Norwegian. The contract in English states that its termination will be at the end of the Whaling Season while in Norwegian it is said to expire at the close of catching time. I explained to the men that the end of the Whaling Season or Catching time was, officially, the 31st May, and that even then the season could not be said to be finished until the oil boiled out had been shipped, provided there was a means of shipping it within a

reasonable

The Honourable
The Colonial Secretary,
Stanley.

reasonable time.

I pointed out to them that the Company's vessel the s.s. "Widdville" was ready to be discharged and loaded and when that was done they would all be at liberty to leave by her, and that she would leave as soon as any ship at present loading in the Island if the work of loading was carried out by the men in a proper manner. For several days no work was done but eventually they agreed to discharge the General Cargo on board the vessel but refused to touch the coal cargo or load the ship. On these latter points they were adamant and no offer of wages would induce them to do any more work.

As nothing could be done with them, the general cargo was discharged as agreed and the coal discharged by a few men who are to remain over the Winter Season and the crew of the "Widdville". The "Widdville" then left for Montevideo in ballast taking the strikers with her.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. Barlas

(W. Barlas)
Magistrate.



Honourable,

The Colonial Secretary.

In reply to your minute of 28th. July 1921; I beg to submit the following for the information of His Excellency the Governor, regarding the strike reported by Mr Barlas the Deputy Collector as having taken place at the whaling station of the Southern Whaling and Sealing Coy. at South Georgia.

From the Deputy Collector's Report, it appears that the strike took place in the month of May last after I had left South Georgia and in consequence regret not being in a position to place the actual facts before His Excellency.

This particular strike among the workmen appears to me, to be a repetition of what has often taken place at South Georgia. The trouble seems to be, that, the men are under the impression that by their contracts they should not be required to work when a Company ceases from catching whales, as they imagine the season is at an end and generally strike for increased wages for doing ~~other~~ work, other than the actual boiling down of whale matter.

Another cause for discontent among a certain class of men is; When a man has done a Summer and Winter Season he gets heartily ~~sick~~ discontented before the end of the second Summer season, and refuses to work with a view of being sent home by the first boat and if a convenient opportunity offers the man is repatriated. Should the men at any time hear that one or two are being sent away for refusing to work, others may join up and if not judiciously handled a general strike may ensue,

Since the example that was made in January 1919, when H.M.S. "DARTMOUTH" arrived so opportunely, there has been no serious labour troubles.

E. W. B. Quinn

Ag. Postmaster.
30th. July 1921.