

1923

LEGAL

No. 525/23

C.S.

Registrar

SUBJECT.

192 3

12th July

Previous Paper.

ALFRED HENRY ANDERSEN

Report of Inquest held at South Georgia.

MINUTES.

*Copy of minutes from Registrar of 12th July 1923 — Encl (1)
Letter from Coroner, S. Georgia of 23rd March 1923 — " (1a)*

*V.S. Submitted for information
by R. H. [unclear]
On file
19 July 1923*

[Signature] 20 July 1923

Subsequent Paper.

919

1

No.

MINUTE.

(It is requested that, in any reference to this minute, the above Number and the date may be quoted).

July 12th 19 23

From Registrar S.C.

To

Stanley.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

Letters from Coroner S. Georgia dated 29th Novbr 1922 and 23rd March 1923 forwarding copies of Coroners Inquisitions held at South Georgia.

Hon. Col. Secty,

Submitted accordingly for the information of

H.E. the Ag. Governor.

M. Waiji Harueta
Registrar.
July 12th 1923

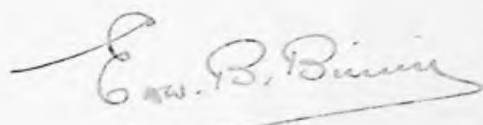
19

The Magistrate's Office,
South Georgia,
23rd. March 1923.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith ,the original copy of the result of an Inquest held by me at South Georgia on the 20th. March ,for the information of His Excellency the Governor.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,


Coroner.

The Registrar Of the Supreme Court,
Stanley.

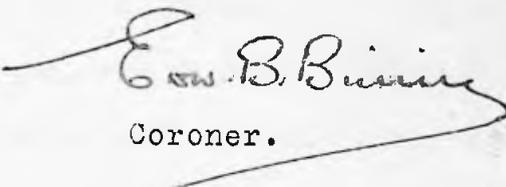
CORONERS INQUEST

South Georgia to wit

An Inquest taken for Our Sovereign Lord the King
At Stromness Harbour, in the Dependency of South
Georgia, on the 20th. day of March 1923, before me,
one of the Coroners of our Lord the King for the
said Dependency of South Georgia, on view of the
body of ALFRED HENRY ANDERSEN as to what means he
came to his death, and hereby state,

"That Alfred Henry Andersen was found dead
on the deck of the "Norrøna II" at sea
on the 19th. March 1923, and that the cause
of his death, was the effects on his skull
and brain caused by an explosion of Gun-
powder, and I do further say that Alfred
Henry Andersen accidentally came to his
death and not otherwise."

In Witness whereof I hereunto subscribe my hand and
seal at the Police Court South Georgia, on the day
and year hereinbefore first written.


Coroner.

CORONERS INQUEST

taken this 20th.day of Marck 1923, touching the death of Alfred Henry Andersen. Stromness Harbour So.Georgia.

Johan Kopstad, Master s.s. Norrona 11."

I am the Master of the Norrona 11, and I left New Fortune bay yesterday morning at about 4 am, and began chasing whales at about 9, we made fast to a whale at 10.30 and the forerunner broke, at 20 minutes to 11 there was an explosion on deck in the Chart room, I immediately went to the fore part of the vessel and the crew remained on the bridge, in case there should be other explosions to follow as there was about 60 kilos of Powder in the room. After a short lapse of time I called the crew to pump ~~was~~ water on the fire which the explosion had started in the chart room. The Gunner came down off the bridge and said that deceased was lying on the port side, so I called some men to assist him up, but he was quite dead.

What was deceased doing in the Chart room?

It is impossible to say for what purpose, only two alternatives present themselves. He either went in to light his pipe before going to the wheel, or, to replenish the granat powder in the hold, as we always keep a tin there to load the shells with.

Q Who was in charge of the magazine?

A Deceased always looked after the powder and brought it from the magazine, he was 24 years of age and was quite well aware of the danger of smoking while working with it

Q Had he been warned of this practice?

A Yes many times.

Q Was there any reason for using a light in the magazine?

A No the room is lighted with electric light.

Deceased was dressed in oilskins to relieve the Gunner at the wheel and was on his way there when the explosion

explosion took place.

- Q. Did any of the crew see him going in to the Magazine?
- A. No. But it is almost certain that he was inside with the door closed. There are two doors one on either side one is always locked and never used, the door on the port side is the only door made use of, both doors were blown open and the locks burst off, which seems to prove that they were both closed, the whole of the 60 kilos of powder had exploded. Deceased was found lying on deck on the port side near the door quite dead, his clothes were on fire and we poured water on them. He appeared badly burnt on the face.

Johan Henslad
Master

Taken and sworn before me this 20th. day of March in the year of our Lord 1923.

Edw. R. Buring
Coroner.

CORONERS INQUEST

taken this 20th. day of March 1923, touching the death
of Alfred Henry Andersen, Stromness Harbour, So. Georgia.

Rolf Christian Aarberg Doctor.

I am the Doctor for the whaling stations at Stromness bay, and yesterday at about 5pm. I was called to make an examination on a man named Alfred Henry Andersen, a sailor from s.s. Norrona 11. ~~Because~~ The man was quite dead. On examination I found the skin of the head was burnt black, the lower and upper jaw and skull were fractured to pieces. The skin had burst across the forehead, A fragment of the frontal bone was quite loose, only adhering to a flap of the skin, making an opening so large that, a hand could be put into the skull cavity (cavitas cranii). The brain was out, only small pieces of brain tissue were left.

From my examination I conclude that death was due to an explosion and its effects on the Skull and Brain, and must have been instantaneous.

R. Chr. Aarberg

Doctor.

Taken and sworn before me this 20th. day of March in the
year of our Lord 1923.

W. B. B. B. B.

Coroner.

CORONERS INQUEST

taken this 29th, day of March 1923, touching the death of Alfred Henry Andersen, who came to a sudden death on board the s.s. Norrona 11 " while at sea.

Coroner.

On the 19th. March at about 5pm. it was reported to me that a man had been killed by an explosion on board the s.s. Norrona 11, while at sea. I immediately proceeded on board and made an examination of the scene. The man was quite dead, part of his brain was lying on deck. The room in which the gunpowder had been stowed was a strong iron house under the Main bridge, lined with wood, and having two iron doors. The Locks of both doors were torn apart and only hanging by a screw. The inside of the room was burnt black and the sides were bulging outwards, considerable damage was also done to the ceiling which had affected the compass on the bridge. From enquiries which I made among the crew I gleaned the following: There was about 60 kilos of pebble Gunpowder in the room, packed in 10 kilo tins. Everyone on board had been warned not to smoke or carry matches into this room. Deceased was one who treated this order with contempt and had been warned repeatedly not only by the Master but also by his associates, which he did not heed only laughing at their fears. During his watch it usually fell to him to assist in loading the gun and carrying the powder from the Magazine. It appears on this occasion, from the evidence, that he was about to take his turn at the wheel. The weather was particularly boisterous and a strong wind blowing. No one saw him after leaving the Fo'castle in his oilskin clothes until he was found dead on deck after the explosion. He was never known to be without his pipe in his mouth, and it is therefore reasonable to expect, from his contemptible manner in the face of danger, that he had gone into the room to light his pipe before going on the bridge. There was a tin of powder open for immediate use

use, and the consequences are already known.

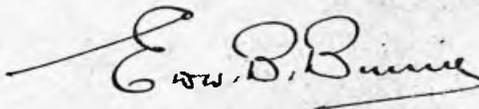
I found from my enquiries on the spot that ,immediately before the explosion, no one was seen on deck, therefore deceased must have entered the room and closed the door as both locks were burst off.

Deceaseds clothing was examined but no pipe was found, he had a box of matches in his pocket.

It is a well known fact that the limited space on a whale catcher where explosives can be stored away from wet increases the danger. I am therefore of opinion and order, that, all places set apart on catchers for the purpose of storing explosives, must be fire proof and a notice painted in large letters on the door "Explosives" . The door must be provided with a lock and key, which latter must be in the charge of the Master or other responsible officer, who will supervise the handling of all explosives. In this case I do not attach any blame either to the Officers on board or to the company, as I think the warnings given were sufficient. It is however the opinion of the court that any member of the crew treating an order -so serious- ^{with contempt} should be taken severely to account as it endangers the lives of the other members of the crew.

~~I append xxxxxxxxxx~~

I append a verdict of "Accidental death"



Coroner.