E.

29/8

ORDINARY, PRINTED.

xxvii/36

Mar Department.

G.O., dated 14-8-95

No. 250-1.

INDEXED.

First copy sent to Press. 16/8

Returned for signature. 26/8/95

Despatched in print. 27/8/95

[Despatch Abstract.]

Stranding of the Austrian-Lloyd's S. S. Thisbe.

Commun. to the Secy of State and the Austro-Hungarian Consul General, Bombay, the Proceedings of the Special Court appointed to enquire into the circumstances attending the —— on the beach to the South of the Sacramento Shoal on the 23rd June last.

10 Copies

Read again Order of Government, dated 18 , No.

Last Paper No.

26

Further Paper No.

Enclosures.

Currency No.

Print is marked on the papers [illegible]

16/2

Statement with papers.

Order, &c., of Government—A.

Papers kept out of File for despatch in original (not pages).

with 2 copies each [illegible] to the [illegible] Consul-General, Bombay

Number of copies required:
- Order complete. 45
- Letter only.
- Order complete with Letter. 10

A = Print in full.
B = Not to be printed.
[illegible]

Govt. of {1895} Madras.

MARINE.

Issued

Recd.

Encl.

G.O., 14th Aug. 1895, No. 250.

AUGUST.

Stranding of the Austrian Lloyd's S. S. "Thisbe."

Communicating to the Secretary of State and the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General, Bombay, the Proceedings of the Special Court appointed to enquire into the circumstances attending the — on the beach to the south of the Sacramento Shoal on the 23rd June last.

14TH AUGUST 1895, No. 250, MARINE.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following papers :—

From V. A. BRODIE, Esq., Collector, Gódávari District, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Cocanada, 25th June 1895, No. 3645-Acc.

I have the honour to report, for the information of Government, that I have this day received information of the wreck of the S.S. *Thisbe* on the Sacramento Shoal. The Port Officer has proceeded to the wreck and I will report further on hearing from him. At present, all that has been reported to me is the bare fact that such a wreck has occurred.

From J. P. JAMES, Esq., Acting Port Officer and Deputy Conservator of the Port, Cocanada, to the Collector and District Magistrate, Gódávari, dated Cocanada, 26th June 1895, No. 384.

I have the honour to report for your information that on Monday, the 24th, at about 2 P.M., the 1st Officer and four of the crew of the Austro-Hungarian S.S. *Thisbe* arrived at my office and reported that their ship was stranded at 7-45 the evening before at a spot which I gathered must be in the neighbourhood of the Sacramento Shoal, and asking for help to rescue the remainder of the crew. As the sea was too rough for me to proceed outside, I arranged for the launch *Empress* to go to Coringa as soon as the tide suited for the Coringa bar, and I with Mr. Lake, of the Austro-Hungarian Consul's office, proceeded by road to join her. Unfortunately the launch grounded at Ramannapalliyam near Coringa and did not get off until day-light. At 6 A.M. we started and reached the wreck at 10–15. The ship is not on the Sacramento Shoal, but considerably to the south of it. She is lying upright with her head north, the village of Kottapalaiyam bearing N. by W. and the wreck of the *Lanark* bearing E. by N. ½ N. distant about three miles; the bow is in seven feet, probably four of that being sand, and the stern in eight feet. The rudder is gone and the stern-post slightly started; the vessel is making some water, as I was informed that the water in the after ballast tank was brackish, but the Captain did not think it worth while to have the well sounded when I asked him. There was apparently no chart of that part of the coast on board, as the Captain only showed me the pieces of an old chart dated 1848 which did not take in his position, probably Coromandel Coast, No. 1, Coringa Bay to Santapilly, on which was "Sacramento Shoal reported to be discovered in 1881." The officers all reported that the weather was very thick at the time the vessel stranded. I directed the Assistant Conservator at Coringa to supply all aid requisite, and asked him to arrange for constables to prevent looting, as the 2nd Officer reported that the villagers had stolen a sail the night before. The crew are all saved, and the cargo and stores can all be saved. If the ship is leaking badly, there is no chance of getting her off. If not, however, I consider it would be worth while to get two powerful tugs from Calcutta to make the attempt. There is no danger of her breaking up, but she will probably be silted up in the sand. I returned to Cocanada last night at midnight.

Cur. No. 468-Magl. of 1895.

Submitted to the Chief Secretary to Government in continuation of my letter, Current No. 3645-Acc. of 1895, dated 25th June 1895.

(Signed) V. A. BRODIE,
Ag. District Magistrate.

27*th June* 1895.

From the Presidency Port Officer, dated 1st July 1895, No. 1261—164-G.

From Commander W. POWELL, R.I.M., Presidency Port Officer, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Madras, 2nd July 1895, No. 1261—166-G.

With reference to the particulars already reported by me in connection with the stranding of the Austro-Hungarian Steamer *Thisbe* and ending with my No. 1261—164-G., dated 1st instant, I beg to enclose copy of a letter from the Austro-Hungarian Consular Agent at Cocanada, now received through the local Port Officer, from which it would appear that the Consular Agent is now desirous of a Court of Enquiry being held. Under the circumstances and with reference to G.O., Marine, No. 32, of 3rd February 1888, I would suggest that the District Magistrate be communicated with in view to an enquiry being held.

2. The Consular Agent apparently thinks that the accident may be due to causes other than faulty navigation. The Port Officer reports the vessel to be stranded on the beach and not on any shoal: *vide* copy of his letter attached. I therefore think an enquiry is desirable in the interests of all concerned.

ENCLOSURES.

From the Austro-Hungarian Acting Consular Agent, Cocanada, to the Port Officer, Cocanada, dated 28th June 1895.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter, No. 385, of 26th instant, duly received and in reply beg to inform you that I have not yet received a reply from the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General, Bombay, to my message of same date asking instructions regarding a Court of Enquiry into the circumstances which led to the wreck of the S.S. *Thisbe*. I further beg to inform you that I have recommended to the Consul-General that a Court of Enquiry be held, as, on consideration of the circumstances and in view of the number of vessels which have previously been wrecked in the vicinity, it is quite possible the accident may not be ascribed entirely to carelessness on the part of the ship's officers as would appear at first sight.

From J. P. JAMES, Esq., Acting Port Officer, Cocanada, to the Presidency Port Officer, dated Cocanada, 28th June 1895, No. 396.

In continuation of my telegram, dated 26th instant, I have the honour to inform you that the Austro-Hungarian Consul has altered his opinion regarding a Court of Enquiry on the stranding of the S.S. *Thisbe* for the reasons set forth in his letter which I enclose. I still retain my opinion, because the steamer was several miles out of her course. She is grounded a long way from the Sacramento, on the beach and not on any shoal; she must have been in five fathoms at least an hour before she went ashore, and it must have been possible at least two hours before she struck to see from the discolouration of the water that the vessel was very close to land, even if it could not be seen.

Telegram from the Chief Secretary to Government, Ootacamund, to the Presidency Port Officer, Madras, dated 5th July 1895.

382. Your 1261-166, second instant. Ascertain and telegraph sharp Consul-General's decision on Consular Agent's reference.

Telegram from the Presidency Port Officer, Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Ootacamund, dated 7th July 1895.

Consular Agent wires Consul-General ignores his proposal Court of Enquiry *Thisbe*, also that Captain withdraws his demand for same.

From the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Bombay, 9th July 1895, No. 780 :—

With reference to the request addressed to you a few days ago by the I. and R. Austro-Hungarian Consular Agent in Cocanada for the appointment of a Court of Enquiry to investigate into the circumstances connected with the wrecking of the Austrian Lloyd's S.S. *Thisbe*, I have the honour to request that instructions may be issued to the members to proceed with the enquiry immediately, to finish it without delay, and that the original or a certified copy of the findings of the Court of Enquiry, together with all the documents and papers relating to this case, should be forwarded to me for my Government.

Telegram from the Chief Secretary to Government, Ootacamund, to the District Magistrate, Gódávari, dated 16th July 1895.

No. 404. Government directs Court of Enquiry at Cocanada into stranding steamer *Thisbe*. Wire for approval names of President and Members. You should preside if possible.

Telegram from the Chief Secretary to Government, Ootacamund, to the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General, Bombay, dated 18th July 1895.

Your 780 ninth. Court Enquiry stranding *Thisbe* will be held.

Telegram from the District Magistrate, Godávari, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Ootacamund, dated 17th July 1895.

Thisbe enquiry. Court—Self, James and J. F. Maxwell.

Telegram from the Chief Secretary to Government, Ootacamund, to the District Magistrate, Godávari, dated 19th July 1895.

No. 413. Your telegram seventeenth. Members Court Enquiry *Thisbe* approved. Proceed without delay.

From V. A. BRODIE, Esq., Acting District Magistrate, Gódávari, and President of the Special Court of Enquiry, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Cocanada—— No. ——.

With reference to orders conveyed by telegrams of the 16th and 19th instant, I have the honour to submit the entire record connected with the enquiry into the stranding of the Austro-Hungarian S.S. *Thisbe* near the Sacramento Shoal on the 23rd June 1895 as per list enclosed.

Enclosure.

Court of Inquiry regarding the loss of the Austro-Hungarian Lloyd's S.S. "Thisbe."

Vernor A. Brodie, Esq., C.S.—*President.*
J. P. James, Esq.
J. F. Maxwell, Esq. } *Members.*
Lieutenant F. Icely, R.N.R.
N. Way, Esq., Master of Barque *Golden Fleece.* } *Nautical Assessors.*

Victoria Fransin, age 30, Native of Monja, Austria, states--

I was 2nd Officer of the *Thisbe.* We left Madras at 8-30 P.M. on Saturday, the 22nd June. The ship struck at 7-45 on the following day. The average speed was 10½ knots. The last position of the ship by the sun was taken at 20 minutes to 4. I took two observations. Her position then is entered in the log. We were steering N. by E (compass course) then, and after that the course was altered to N. ¼ W. and we continued that course till 6, when we changed again to N. by W. At 6 P.M. we sent a look-out man up the foremast I and the Chief Officer were on the bridge till 6-25 when the Captain joined us. We were all three on the bridge from that time till the ship struck. About 7-30 we on the bridge and the look-out man simultaneously saw a light on the port bow some 4 or 5 points. We had just stopped the engines and called on the lead. Whilst we were trying to make out the light a general cry of breakers ahead arose and immediately we struck. We put the helm hard aport and engines full speed astern when the alarm was given, but it was too late. It was then dark and raining. There was a squall with rain at 4 P.M., and at about 6 a light rain set in. We never heaved the lead. We did not do so for by our calculations we were a long way from the shore. The observations at 4 o'clock were good observations. The book shown me is the ship's log. The signature attached to the last entries is the Captain's and the entries are made by the different officers. After the accident on our arrival at Cocanada a sworn declaration was made by the officers and crew as to the circumstances of this accident. I hold a Captain's certificate. It was issued to me about 1890. I received Mate's certificate in 1884. I have been Chief Officer but not in the Austrian Lloyd. I have not been on this coast before, nor had any of the officers ever been at Cocanada. We were going to cast the lead from the forecastle as we thought we were in deep water. After we struck we hove the lead but I don't recollect the soundings. There was a heavy sea at the time. We heard no sound of the breakers before we struck. I had heard of the wreck of the *Lanark* near Cocanada. The chart before the Court (published by James Imry in 1884, Bengal sheet No. 2) is the chart we were using. This chart does not show the Sacramento Shoal and I had not heard of that shoal myself. The paper shown me is the sworn declaration we made on arrival at Cocanada. It contains my signature and that of all the men except about three who were unwell, two being in hospital and one laid up in his hotel. We had a plan which did show the Sacramento Shoal and on which some previous Captain had marked the position of the *Lanark.*

(Signed) V. FRANSIN.
(„) V. A. BRODIE,
Ag. District Magistrate.

24th July 1895.

Recalled.—The signature shown me is that of the Captain, Rieteo Sussonich (Wreck Return filed).

24th July 1895.

(Signed) V. A. BRODIE,
Ag. District Magistrate.

Opinion of Assessors.

We accept the evidence of the 2nd Officer as correct, and from his evidence, the log book and the sworn statement of the officers and crew we are of opinion that the course steered was a correct one assuming the observations to have been correct. The Captain seems to have allowed for a current setting to the East, which according to their observations existed up to 4 P.M. but did not exist afterwards, and consequently came ashore. A good look-out appears to have been kept, but the shore there is difficult to see, particularly at night and on a dark and rainy night. The Captain of the ship and both his Mates being on the bridge at the same time is evidence that they were anxiously on the look-out. The chart used was not an Admiralty one and does not show the Sacramento Shoal, but we do not attribute the accident at all to this, as from the evidence it appears that they were aware of the existence of the shoal and moreover they went ashore, not on the shoal, but some four miles to the south of it. Heaving the lead would have

prevented the accident, but the fact that by their calculation they were far from land was a sufficient excuse for not resorting to it. A light in the vicinity of the shoal would have prevented the accident and is in our opinion urgently necessary.

(Signed) N. WAY,
(„) F. ICELY, } *Assessors.*
(„) V. A. BRODIE—*President.*

25th July 1895.

Judgment.

The evidence before the Court is very meagre owing to the Captain, officers and crew with the exception of the 2nd Officer having left the country. We have therefore only the oral evidence of the 2nd Officer, whose statements we have almost no means of checking. At the same time it must be admitted that he has given his evidence in a straightforward manner and the Court sees no reason to doubt his veracity. The other evidence consists of the ship's log, the signature of the Captain in which is proved by the 2nd Officer; a sworn statement made on the 28th ultimo by the Captain, officers, engineers, and all the crew with the exception of three who were sick; the chart (one published in 1884 by James Imry) by which the ship is said to have been navigated; and the Captain's wreck declaration. All other papers have, it is said, been taken away with him by the Captain.

2. From the above it appears that the Austro-Hungarian S.S. *Thisbe* left Madras at 8–30 P.M. on Saturday, the 22nd ultimo, and steered a N. by E. course for Cocanada, maintaining an average speed of 10½ knots with 56 revolutions throughout. At 3–30 P.M. according to the log and general declaration of the officers and crew, and at 3–40 P.M. according to the 2nd Officer, the position of the ship by observations taken by the latter was 15° 56′ N. and 82° 33′ E. In consequence the course was altered to N. ¼ W. by the compass (the magnetic or true course being N. ½ E.)—a course which should have taken the ship some 13 miles off the Sacramento Shoal. At 4 P.M. there was a heavy squall with rain. From this hour till 6 P.M., the Chief Officer was on watch and he remained on the bridge, when the 2nd Officer relieved him at the latter hour. About 6 P.M. a drizzling rain set in which continued till the ship struck—the weather being thick with a fresh breeze from the W.S.W. and the sea rough. As no land was visible, the ship's course was altered at 6 P.M. to N. by W (N. ¼ W. magnetic), which should still have kept them clear of the Sacramento Shoal, and a look-out man was sent up to the foretop. At 6-25 P.M., according to the 2nd Officer, the Captain joined his two Mates on the bridge and all three remained there until the accident occurred At 7-30 P.M., having failed to make out the Hope Island light as he had anticipated, the Captain stopped the engines with a view to take soundings, but before they did so a bright light was suddenly seen on the port bow by the look-out man and those on the bridge simultaneously. It remained visible for a few minutes and then disappeared. Whilst they were still looking out for it again and trying to make out what light it was, a cry of "land and breakers ahead" was raised by the foretop man and taken up by those on deck, whereupon the Captain ordered the engines to go full speed astern and put the helm hard aport, but before the engines could stop her the ship took the ground badly at about 7-45 P.M., when the tide was about three-quarters flood, and though they kept the engines going steadily full speed astern until the sand choked up the pumps and stopped them, they failed to move her and the sea was too rough for them even to attempt to carry out an anchor in a boat and try warping her off. When she grounded soundings showed 8 feet forward and 12 feet aft. As she seems to have been drawing about 15 feet, it is obvious that she must have ploughed her way through the sand for some distance before she stopped, so that she must have had considerable way on when she struck.

3. As she was almost empty at the time, the rising tide and boisterous wind and sea soon made her position hopeless, and a member of the Court who has visited her states that it is now possible to walk out to her dry-shod at low tide The light that was seen at 7-30 by those on board must have been a light in the village of Kottapalaiyam in the Amalápuram taluk, where she is stranded. The spot is to the south of the Sacramento Shoal, the wreck of the *Lanark* on the shoal bearing E. by N. ½ N. from the spot and about three miles away.

4. The most serious discrepancy between the evidence of the 2nd Officer and the documentary evidence is as to whether any sounding was taken before she struck. He states positively that they were ready to take a deep-sea sounding (casting the lead from the forecastle) when the light was observed some 10 minutes before she struck, but no sounding was ever taken; whereas in the general declaration of the officers and crew it is stated that a sounding giving 16 feet was taken immediately after the cry of "breakers ahead" was raised. It is, we think, however, quite possible that such a sounding was taken by the Captain without the 2nd Officer, in the confusion that prevailed, being aware of it. It is otherwise difficult to understand how the Captain got the 16 feet sounding of the declaration and why he did not let go an anchor.

5. The nautical assessors have on the evidence recorded the following as their opinion :—

"We accept the evidence of the 2nd Officer as correct, and from his evidence, the log book and the sworn statement of the officers and crew, we are of opinion that the course steered was a correct one, assuming the observations to have been correct. The Captain seems to have allowed for a current setting to the East which, according to their observations, existed up to 4 P.M. but did not exist afterwards, and consequently came ashore. A good look-out appears to have been kept, but the shore there is difficult to see, particularly at night and on a dark and rainy night. The Captain of the ship and both his Mates being on the bridge at the same time is evidence that they were anxiously on the look-out. The chart used was not an Admiralty one and does not show the Sacramento Shoal, but we do not attribute the accident at all to this, as from the evidence it appears that they were aware of the existence of the shoal and moreover they went ashore, not on the shoal, but some four miles to the south of it. Using the lead would have prevented the accident, but the fact that by their calculations they were far from land was a sufficient excuse for not resorting to it. A light in the vicinity of the shoal would have prevented the accident and is in our opinion urgently necessary."

Note.—The observation of 3-40 P.M. is stated by the 2nd Officer, who made it, to have been a good one, and though it is notorious that at this season observations in the Bay of Bengal are liable to be misleading owing to refraction, it does not appear to have been much out, as the scene of the wreck is just about forty-two miles from the point then fixed, and the *Thisbe* was running 10½ knots.

Note.—The distance does not appear to be quite so great, as the Deputy Conservator of the Port in his report to the President as District Magistrate of the 26th June, No. 384, states that the wreck of the *Lanark* on the shoal is about three miles E. by N. ½ N. from the *Thisbe*.

6. The Court fully concurs with the nautical assessors in all their opinions and particularly with reference to the necessity for a good light in the vicinity of the Sacramento Shoal. The Hope Island light is not visible, even on the clearest night, until the shoal is reached, and on a dark and rainy night, of course, it is not visible so soon, and this shoal is the great danger to navigation connected with this port. In this case such a light would have shown those on board the *Thisbe*, who were anxiously on the look-out for the Hope Island light, that they were out of their course, and saved her. At the same time it must be admitted that the vessel was a good deal out of her course, so that, although such a light would have saved her, it can hardly be said that the want of one was the cause of the wreck. Heaving the lead would also have saved her, and the direct cause of the accident would appear to have been over-confidence in their observations and the assumption that the current experienced up to 4 P.M. would continue in a locality where the currents are most changeable.

We pass no remarks on the conduct of the officers and crew at the time of the accident and have not enquired closely into it nor as to the conduct of the Captain and crew in deserting their ship afterwards, as, being Austrian subjects, they are not, we believe, subject to our jurisdiction, and indeed we have no means of doing so as only one of their number is before us.

(Signed) V. A. BRODIE—*President*.
(„) J. P. JAMES, *Port Officer*, } *Members*.
(„) J. F. MAXWELL, }

COCANADA,
25th July 1895.

ORDER—dated 14th August 1895, No. 250, Marine.

The Proceedings of the Special Court appointed to enquire into the circumstances attending the stranding, at 7·45 P.M. on the 23rd June last, of the Austrian-Lloyd's S.S. *Thisbe* on the beach to the South of the Sacramento Shoal, about three miles from the wreck of the S.S. *Lanark*, will be communicated to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India and to the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General at Bombay.

2. Payment of the usual fee to Mr. Maxwell and the Marine members of the Court is sanctioned.

3. Steps have already been taken for the exhibition of a temporary light opposite the Sacramento Shoal. The question of the provision of a thoroughly efficient light to guard the shoal is under consideration.

(True Extract.)

J. F. PRICE,
Chief Secretary.

To the Collector of Gódávari.
„ the Presidency Port Officer.
„ the Accountant-General.
„ J. F. Maxwell, Esq.

14TH AUGUST 1895, No. 251, MARINE.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

To

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN CONSUL-GENERAL,
BOMBAY.

SIR,

In compliance with the request conveyed in your letter, No. 780, of the 9th July last, I am directed to forward three copies of the Proceedings * of this Government, embodying the report of the Special Court of Enquiry held on the stranding of the Austrian-Lloyd's S.S. *Thisbe*.

* No. 250, Marine, dated 14th August 1895.

The marginally-noted papers, which are the only ones not printed, are attached.

(1) Translation of extract from the Log.
(2) The Captain's report of the stranding.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

J. F. PRICE,
Chief Secretary.

OOTACAMUND,
14th August 1895.

Govt. of {1895} Madras.

MARINE.

Issued

Recd. *Encl.*

Letter, 14th August 1895, No. 251.

AUGUST.

Stranding of the Austrian-Lloyd's S.S. "Thisbe."

Forwarding three copies of the Proceedings of this Government embodying the report of the Special Court of Enquiry held on the stranding of the Austrian-Lloyd's S.S. *Thisbe* on the beach to the south of the Sacramento Shoal.

GOVT. OF FORT ST. GEORGE.

MARINE* (1895) *DEPARTMENT.

LETTER to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India.

Dated 21st August,

No. 6 of 1895.

Forwarding three copies of the Proceedings of this Government embodying the report of the Special Court of Enquiry held on the stranding of the Austrian-Lloyd's S.S. "Thisbe" on the beach to the south of the Sacramento Shoal.

Press

Please strike off 30 copies & send tomorrow.
[illegible]
23/8

21st August 1895, No. 6 Marine.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

Letter—to

The Right Honourable the SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA.

My Lord,

We have the honour to forward three copies of our Proceedings * embodying the report of a Special Court appointed by us, at the request of the Austro-Hungarian Consulate, to enquire into the circumstances attending the stranding of the Austrian-Lloyd's S.S. *Thisbe* on the beach to the south of the Sacramento Shoal on the 23rd June last.

We have the honour to be,
My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient, humble servants,

(Signed) Wenlock
(") H. W. Bliss
(") J. Grose.

Ootacamund,
21st August 1895.

* G.O., No. 250, Marine, dated 14th Aug. 1895.

Exd, A, Raitt.

Issue

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GOVT. OF FORT ST. GEORG

MARINE (1895) *DEPARTMENT*

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India.

Dated 21st August,

No. 6 of 1895.

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We have the honour to be,
My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient, humble servants,

(Signed) WENLOCK.
(„) H. W. BLISS.
(„) J. GROSE.

Ootacamund,
21*st August* 1895.

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* G.O., No. 250, Marine, dated 14th Aug. 1895.

Exd. A. Raitt.

CURRENT No. 496

16

No. $\frac{3645}{acc}$ of 95

GODAVARI DISTRICT COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,
Coconada 25 June 1895.

FROM
V. A. Brodie Esquire
COLLECTOR,
Godavari District,

TO
THE Chief Secretary to
the Government of
Madras (Marine
Department)

Mar 250 8 14/8/95 Print

SIR,

I have the honor to report for the information of Government that I have this day received information of the wreck of the S. S. Thisbe on the Sacramento Shoal. The Port officer has proceeded to the wreck and I will report further on hearing from him. At present all that has been reported to me is the bare fact that such a wreck has occured.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant
(Sd) V. A. Brodie
Ag Collector.

Dy for Collector

496

Mar

CURRENT No. 496

Marine Deptt.

REVENUE (1895) DEPARTMENT.

FROM

The COLLECTOR,
Godavari District.

No. 3645 Rev

Dated 25
Despatched 26 } June 1895.
Received 1/7.
Rep 3. vii. '95

SUBJECT.

Reporting, for the information of Govt, that he has just heard of the wreck of "S.S. Thisbe" near the Sacremanto shoal.

CURRENT No. 499A

Marine Deptt.

Magisterial (1895) Department

From the District Magistrate
Godavari

CHIEF SECRETARY
-2 JUL 1895
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

To

The Chief Secretary to
Government

Cur No $\frac{468}{\text{Magl}}$ of 1895

Dated 27 } June 1895
Despatched 27 }
Recd. 2/7
Repd 3/7

Subject

Submitting a report regarding the stranding of the Astro Hungarian Steamer Thisbe near Sacramento Shoal.

H.E. The Govr.

Submitted for perusal.

The Sacramento Shoal appears to have been in this instance not guilty. The ship seems to have been disgracefully provided as regards charts. The absence or presence of a light would apparently have made no difference.

The question of employing tugs is one for the owners or agents of the ships.

2/7/95

This report or its substance should be communicated to the press. Govt. has been blamed over this business — and it would be as well that the blame should be laid on the right shoulders.

W
3 July

RENT No. 496

3/2

CURRENT No. 499A

No 384

Port office, Cocanada
dated 26th June 1895

2B

From

J. P. James Esquire
Ag Port Officer and Dy Conservator
of the Port, Cocanada

Print

To

The Collector and District Magistrate
Godavari

Sir,

I have the honor to report for your information that on Monday the 24th at about 2 P. M. the first officer and four of the Crew of the Austro-Hungarian S. S. "Thisbe" arrived at my office and reported that their Ship was stranded at 7.45 the evening before, at a spot which I gathered ~~which~~ must be in the neighbourhood of the Sacramento Shoal, and asking for help to rescue the remainder of the Crew. As the sea was too rough for me to proceed outside, I arranged for the launch 'Empress' to go to to Coringa as soon as the tide suited for the Coringa bar, and I with Mr Lake, of the Astro Hungarian Consul's office, proceeded by road to join her. Unfortunately the launch grounded at Ramannapalliam near Coringa and did not get off until day-light. At 6 A.M. we started and reached the wreck at 10.15. The ship is not on the Sacramento Shoal but considerably to the South of it. She is lying upright with her head north, the village of Kottapalliam bearing N by W, and the wreck of the "Lanark" bearing E by N ½ N distant about three miles; the bow is in seven feet, probably four of that being sand, and the stern in eight feet. The rudder is gone and the stern post slightly started; the vessel is making some water, as I was informed that the water in the after ballast tank was brackish, but the Captain did not think it worth while to have the well sounded when

---

Dated 20 June 189

No. 5

From

8

when I asked him. There was apparently no Chart of that part of the Coast on board, as the Captain only showed me the pieces of an old chart dated 1848 which did not take in his position, probably "Coramandal Coast No. 1. Coringa Bay to Santapilly, on which was "Sacramento Shoal" reported to be discovered in 1881". The officers all reported that the weather was very thick at the time the vessel stranded. I directed the Assistant Conservator at Coringa to supply all aid requisite, and asked him to arrange for Constables to prevent looting, as the 2nd officer reported that the villagers had stolen a sail the night before. The Crew are all saved, and the Cargo and Stores can all be saved. If the ship is leaking badly there is no chance of getting her off. If not, however, I consider it would be worth while to get two powerful tugs from Calcutta to make the attempt. There

there is no danger of her breaking up, but she will probably be silted up in the sand. I returned to Cocanada last night at midnight

I have the honor to be
Sir,
your most obedient Servant

(sd) J P James.
Ag Port officer and
Dy Conservator.

(True Copy)

CURRENT No. 499A

Submitted to the Chief Secretary to Government in Continuation Cr No 496 of my letter Cur No $\frac{3645}{age}$ of 1895 d/ 25th June 1895

(sd) V. A. Brodie
Ag District Magistrate

For District Magistrate

J.S.
2/7

CURRENT No. 504

Marine (1895) DEPARTMENT.

From
THE PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICER,
Madras,

To
THE CHIEF SECY. TO GOVERNMENT,
MARINE DEPARTMENT,
Fort St. George.

CHIEF SECRETARY
3 JUL. 1895
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS
No. $\frac{1261}{164}$ G

Dated 1st }
Received 3rd } July 1895.
Regd 4th

No.

Subject.

Forwarding copy of letter received from Port officer, Cocanada, regarding grounding of the steamer "Ihiohe"

42

CURRENT No. 504

Port Office,

No 389. Cocanada, 26th June 1895.

4 headings

~~From~~

J. P. James Esqr.,
Ag. Port Officer & Dy. Conservator
of the Port, Cocanada.

Quote

To

The Presidency Port Officer,
Madras.

Sir,

I have the honor to report for your information that on Monday the 24th at about 2 P.M. the First Officer and four of the Crew of the Austro-Hungarian S.S. "Thisbe" arrived at my Office and reported that their ship was stranded at 7-45 the evening before at a spot which I gathered must be in the neighbourhood of the Sacramento Shoal, and asking for help to rescue the remainder of the crew. As the sea was too rough for me to proceed outside, I arranged for the Launch "Empress" to go to Coringa as soon as the tide suited for the Coringa Bar, and I, with Mr. Lake of the Austro-Hungarian Consul's Office proceeded by road to join her. Unfortunately the Launch grounded at Ramannapolliam near Coringa and did not get off until daylight. At 6. Am we started and reached the wreck at 10.15. The ship is not on the Sacramento Shoal but considerably to the South of it. She is lying upright with her head North, the village of Kottapolliam bearing N by W and the wreck of the "Lanark" bearing E by N½N distant about three miles; the bow is in seven feet, probably four of that being sand, and the Stern in eight feet. The rudder is gone and the Stern post slightly started; the vessel is making some water, as I was informed that the water in the

after

after ballast tank was brackish but the Captain did not think it worth while to have the well sounded when I asked him. There was apparently no Chart of that part of the Coast on board, as the Captain only showed me the pieces of an old Chart dated 1848 which did not take in his position, probably Coromandel Coast No 1 Coringa Bay to Santapilly, on which was Sacramento Shoal reported to be discovered in 1851. The Officers all reported that the weather was very thick at the time the Vessel stranded. I directed the Assistant Conservator at Coringa to supply all aid requisite and asked him to arrange for Constables to prevent looting, as the 2d Officer reported that the Villagers had stolen a sail the night before. The Crew are all saved and the cargo and stores can all be saved. If the

ship can

ship is leaking badly there is no chance of getting her off. If not, however, I consider it would be worth while to get two powerful tugs from Calcutta to make the attempt. There is no danger of her breaking up, but she will probably be silted up in the sand. I returned to Cocanada last night at midnight.

I have &c.
Sd/. L. T. James
Ag. Port Officer and
Deputy Conservator.

No 1261/164 G.

Copy forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Marine Department, for the information of Government.

Walter Bowle
Commander R.I.M.
Presidency Port Officer

Madras
1st July 1895

CURRENT No. 502
Urgent

Marine (1895) Department.

From
THE PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICER,
Madras,

To
THE CHIEF SECY. TO GOVERNMENT,
MARINE DEPARTMENT,
Fort St. George.

CHIEF SECRETARY
3 JUL 1895
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

No 1261/166 G

Dated 2d }
Received 3rd } July 1895.
Regd 4th }

No.

Subject.

Recommending a Court of Enquiry touching the grounding of the Austro-Hungarian Steamer "Thisbe".

Mar GO No 285 d 18-7-94 &c
" " 32 d 3-2-88
Act V of 1883 amended by VI of 91
Mar Cr. No. 501a of 95
" G.O. 191 d 2-7-95
" Cr No. 496 & 499A

Order

The following telegram will be dispatched to the Dt Magte Godavari:-

"Govt directs Court of Enquiry at Cocanada into stranding Steamer "Thisbe". Wire for approval names of President and members. You should preside if possible."

H.E. the Governor

For orders whether the telegram may issue. The Cocanada Consular agent merely says that he has reported to his superior at Bombay that an investigation shd. be held but no such request has been recd. from the Consul General. This Govt need not press for the Enquiry, which will take up the time of its officers & cost some money, as it is quite apparent that the vessel was a long way out of her course and the lighting of the coast is not to blame. Proposed to ask the P.P.O. what the Consul Genl says.

72

Dated 28 No. 57
June 189

From

Cocanada 28th June 1895.

68

To

The Port Officer,
Cocanada.

Print

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge your No. 385 of 26th inst. duly received and in reply beg to inform you that I have not yet received a reply from the Austro Hungarian Consul General Bombay to my message of same date asking instructions regarding a Court of Enquiry into the circumstances which led to the wreck of the S. S. "Thisbe". I further beg to inform you that I have recommended to the Consul General that a Court of Enqui be held as on considerati of the circumstances & in v of the number of vessels which have previously been wrecked in the vicinity it is quite possible the accident may not be ascribed entirely to carelessness on the part of the Ship's Officers as would appear at first sight.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most obedt. Servt.

/Signed/ Henry L. Perth

H.R. Austro Hungarian Acting
Consular Agent
Cocanada.

/True Copy/

H D Baulley
~~Commander~~ R.I.M.
/ M. Presidency Port Officer

Madras
July 1895

Dated 28 June 189

No. 5

78

From
J. P. James Esqr.
Ag. Port Officer,
Cocanada.

Print

To
The Presidency Port Offi[cer]
Madras.

Sir,

In continuation of my telegram dated 26th Instant, I have the honor to inform you that the Austro-Hungarian Consul has altered his opinion regarding a Court of Enquiry on the Stranding of the S.S. "Thisbe" for the reasons set forth in his letter which I enclose. I still retain my opinion, because the Steamer was several miles out of her course. She is grounded a long way from the

Sacram ould
med on a
thinks Coast
taken.
The

on any shoal; she m

ve been in five fathoms

t least an hour before she

ent ashore, and it must –

ve been possible at least,

wo hours before she struck,

see from the discolouration

of the water that the vessel

was very close to land, even

if it could not be seen.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedt. Servt.

(Signed) J. P. James

Ag. Port Officer

(True Copy)

~~Commander R. I. M.~~

for Presidency Port Officer

adras

10? July 1895

uly 1895

Heading.

Casio"

Urgen

PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICE,

Madras, 2d July 1895.

58

From

Commander W. Powell, R. I. M.,

PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICER,

Madras,

Powell

To

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,

MARINE DEPARTMENT,

Fort Saint George.

SIR,

With reference to the particulars already reported by me in connection with the stranding of the Austro-Hungarian Steamer "Thisbe", and ending with my No. 1261/164 G, dated 1st instant, I beg to enclose copy of a letter from the Austro-Hungarian Consular Agent at Coconada, now received through the local Port Officer, from which it would appear that the Consular Agent is now desirous of a Court of Enquiry being held. Under the circumstances and with reference to G. O., Marine, No. 32 of 3d February 1888, I would suggest that the District Magistrate be communicated with in view to an enquiry being held.

2. The Consular Agent apparently

thinks

thinks the [illegible] may be due
other than faulty navigation. The Port Officer reports the vessel to be stranded on the beach and not on any shoal, vide copy of his letter attached. I, therefore, think an Enquiry is desirable in the interests of all concerned.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your Most Obedient Servant,

H D Baddeley
Commander R. I. M.
for Presidency Port Officer.

D. O. No 282

Ootacamund
July 3rd 1895

neither quote nor print

My dear Beauchamp,

I enclose a copy of the official report regarding the wreck of the *Thistle*. Govt has been blamed for not having a light to guard the Sacramento Shoal and so having been inferentially the cause of the loss of this ship. You will see from the Port Officer's letter that *Thistle* went ashore considerably to the South of the Shoal (between 4 and 5 miles as the "*Lanark*" to the best of my recollection was lost 1½ or 2 miles South of the Shoal) and that the wreck was evidently owing to the want of proper charts and to ignorance of the Ship's position, and not to the absence of any warning light on the shoal; which even if had existed would probably not have been visible.

Apparently neither was the lead used nor were any of the other precautions which one would expect to have been observed on an unknown part of the Coast and in thick weather taken. The

The vessel seems judging from her position and the depth which she appears to have got into the sand at the time that the Port Officer saw her to have run on to the beach full speed and hove on. It is quite likely that not even a proper look out was kept.

As regards the matter of the Sacramento Shoal I may tell you it some time back engaged the earnest attention of the Govt, that an officer with special knowledge of the subject of light houses was sent to the spot to select a site &c., and has just submitted his report and that the earliest possible steps will be taken to protect vessels from this dangerous Shoal by a thoroughly efficient and well placed light.

Things of this sort however cannot, as you know be done in a day.

Yours ~~faith~~ sincerely

(Sd) J. L. Price.

D O No. 282
3.7.95

A. Beauchamp Esq } Despd
with proceedings } 3/7

---

282 Word Form.

Despd 5/7

0

Print

Telegram

To
The Presidency Port Officer,
Madras.

382 × Your 1261 166 second instant ascertain and telegraph sharp Consul General's decision on Consular Agent's reference.

[G/9]
2,000—2-4-95.

Current No. 516

Mar: DEPARTMENT.

Telegram

From

The P. P. C.

No. –

Dated 7. VII. 95

Received 7. VII. 95
Regd 8. VII. 95.

Enclosures ——

SUBJECT.

Stating that the Consular ~~General~~ Agent wires that the Consular Genl. ignores his proposals for a Court of Enquiry re the "Thisbe", and that the Captain also withdraws his demand for the same.

H.E. the Governor

C. 496-499A-504
502 & 516.

F.D.B.
8/7/95.

There is nothing else to be done. The parties do not want an Enquiry and no interests of British Subjects appear to be involved (vide G.O. No 280 dated 27th May 1878 marked with red tapes)

W
11 July

G.O. ~~Dy 13th July 1895 No 210.~~

Recorded. Copies of any further reports recd. on the subject of the wreck should be subd. to Govt.

J.D.
10/7/95

To The Pt. P. Offr. &c.
" Collr. of Godaveri

Copies 15/7

Sld. have copy of 516

H.E.
Read up [illegible] for [illegible]

12

C 17/7

WIT ORDER

9/2 [illegible]

Telegram

The P.P.C.

H.E. the Governor

7. vii. 95.

7. vii. 95.

Regd. 7. vii. 95.

Stating that the Consular Agent [illegible] that the Consul-Gen. ignores his proposal for a Court of Enquiry [illegible] the "Thisbe" and that the Captain also withdraws his demand for [illegible]

---

may

Code Class. } DS. CURRENT No. 516

INDIAN TELEGRAPHS

Monthly Number. } 8

To (Office) Ootacamund

From (Office) Madras

Words. 27 Day. 7 Hour. 10 Minute. 17 Official Instructions. { Spd

96

To (Person) Madras

From (Person) Resident Port Offr.

CHIEF SECRETARY
7 JUL 1895

Print

Consular agent wires consul general ignores his proposal court of enquiry thisbe also that captain withdraws his demand for same

32 Word Form.

F. C1.

Recd. from / I.N. / At Hrs. Mts. by

Sent to / I.N. / At Hrs. Mts. by

M. L. Lawler
Telegraph Master.

C. G. P.—No. 29 T—25-5-94—40.0,0000

OOTACAMUND 7 7 95

pd 18/7 ©

Subject

Requesting that instructions may be issued to the Members of the Court of Enquiry to proceed with the enquiry regarding the wreck of "Thisbe".

Copy to the P. S. Officer.

WD

Telegram to
The Austro-Hungarian
Consul General
Bombay.

Print
Despd 18/7/95

Your 780 ~~ditto~~. Court Enquiry stranding Thisbe will be held.

JDB
16/7/5

JB
18/7/95

Telegram to D. M. Godavari with CA

K. U. K. OESTERR-UNGAR.
GENERAL-CONSULAT BOMBAY.

CURRENT No. 539

Here is a [illegible] officially [illegible] the [illegible] consul [illegible] take it for granted [illegible] This was refused [illegible] [illegible]

108

No. 780. Bombay 9th July 1895.

CHIEF SECRETARY GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS
13. JUL 1895

To
The Secretary
to the Government of Madras
Political Department
Madras.

Print

Sir,

With reference to the request addressed to you a few days ago by the I. R. Austro Hung. Consular Agent in Cocanada for the appointment of a Court of enquiry to investigate into the circumstances connected with the wrecking of the Austrian Lloyd's

Telegram to S of S Godavari wreck

V Sec

s.s. "Thisbe" I have the honour to request that instructions may be issued to the members to proceed with the enquiry immediately to finish it without delay and that the Original or a certified Copy of the findings of the Court of enquiry together with all the Documents and papers relating to this case should be forwarded to me for my Government.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your most obedient servant

Schmücker

I. R. Austro Hung. Consul General

[G/9]
2,000—2-4-95.

Current No. 556 Mar Department.

From The Dist. Magte. Godavari

No.

Dated 17 } July 95
Received & Regd 18 }
Enclosures

SUBJECT.

Intimating that Messrs James and T. F. Maxwell with himself constitute the Court for enquiry into the wreck of "Thisbe".

Telegram to D. M. Godavari with CA

VSm

12½

Code Class. } DS **INDIAN TELEGRAPHS.** Monthly Number. } 602

To (Office) Ootacamund			From (Office) Rajahmundry		
Words. 16	Day. 17	Hour. 19	Minute. 30	Official Instructions.	DO

12

To (Person) Madras

From (Person) District Magistrate Godavari

CHIEF SECRETARY 18 JUL. 1895 GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Thisbe enquiry x Court Self, James, James J. J. Maxwell

32 Word Form.

Print

Recd. from LN. Sent to LN.

At Hrs. Mts. by At Hrs. Mts. by

Telegraph Master.

OOTACAMUND 17-7-95

C. G. P.—No. 99 T—25-5-94—40,00,000

18/7/95

Copy to the P. P. Q. (556-A + ~~[illegible]~~ telegram) Despd 20/7

Thisbe

E

H. E. the Governor

~~CURRENT~~ No. 619

Marine Dept

Magisterial (1895) Dept.

From

The District Magistrate
Godavari and
President of the Spl.
Court of Enquiry.

To

6 AUG 95

The Chief Secretary
to Government.

No. $\frac{481}{\text{magl}}$ of 1895

Dated 28th } July 1895
Despatched 31st } July 1895
Received } 6th August
Regd }

Encls. 8

Subject.

Submitting the record connected with the Enquiry into the Stranding of the Austro Hungarian S.S Thisbe near the Sacramento Shoal on the 23rd June 1895.

23/2

~~R~~ 25-7-95 [illegible]

Don't print

Wr. 1(g).

ISSUED BY THE
BOARD OF TRADE,
September 1870.

R

SHIP.	
a. Name. b. Port of Registry, if British. c. Official number. d. Age. e. Where and how classed.	a. Rig b. Iron wood? c. Steam sailing
1.	2.
a. Thisbe b. c. 6098 d. August 83 e. Triest at Lloyd's regist	a. Scoo b. Iron c. Stea

Ad

Special particulars and remarks; opinions a

18.

The observations would t
vessel on a course 13 mile
& Sacramento Shoal, but a c
set them into the land a
owing to rain & thick weathe
[illegible] have half an hour t
might not have stran

Govt. Central Press.—No. 25 M. F. F.—23-8-81.—7

Pa of [illegible] 50. 130 tons about

Rank of officer in charge at time of stranding. 51. Captain

What and at what hour were the last landmarks, beacons, or buoys seen? 52. 10 minuts before standin a light mai sea

Were they recognized? 53. no

0. Calm.
1. Light Air..................Just sufficient to give steerage way.
2. Light Breeze .... } With which a ship with all sail set and clean full would go in smooth water. { 1 to 2 knots.
3. Gentle Breeze........ 3 to 4 „
4. Moderate Breeze...... 5 to 6 „
5. Fresh Breeze .... } In which she could just carry in chase, full and dry. { Royals, &c.
6. Strong Breeze........ Single Reefs and T. G. Sails.
7. Moderate Gale ...... Double Reefs and Jib, &c.
8. Fresh Gale .... Triple Reefs, &c.
9. Strong Gale .... Close Reefs and Courses.
10. Whole Gale.............In which she could just bear close-reefed Main Topsail and reefed Foresail.
11. Storm ....Under Storm Staysail.
12. Hurricane ....Bare Poles.

Captain

×(1) Translation of Extract from the Log
(2) The Captain's report of the stranding

2. Copies of The marginally noted× papers, which are the only ones not printed, are attached.
[illegible] 13/8/95

FDB
9/8/95

C.W.
8.8.95

Stranding of the S.S. Thisbe

E

H.E. the Governor

Victoria Franclin

Age 30

Native of Monja
Austria

I was 2nd officer of the Thisbe. We left
Madras at 8.30 P.M. On Saturday the 22nd
June. The Ship struck at 7.45 On the
following day. The average Speed was 10½ knots.
The last position of the ship by the Sun was
taken at 20 minutes to 4. I took two observa-
tions. Her position then is entered in the log.
We were Steering North by East (Compass
Course) then and after that the Course was
altered to N. ¼ W. And we Continued that Course
till 6 when we changed again to N. by W.
at 6 P.M. We sent a look out man up the
fore mast. I and the Chief officer were on
the bridge till 6.25 when the Captain joined
us. We were all 3 on the bridge from that
time till the Ship struck. About 7.30 ~~I~~ we were
on the bridge and the look out man Simultaneously
saw a light on the ~~point~~ Port bow - Some 4 or 5
points. We had just stopped the engines
and Called on the lead. Whilst we were
trying to make out the light a general Cry
of breakers ahead arose and immediately

Why not lead before?

we struck. We put the helm hard aport and the Engines full speed astern when the alarm was given but it was too late. It was then dark and raining. There was a squall with rain at 4. P. M. and at about 6 a light rain set in. We never heaved the lead. We did not do so for by our calculations we were a long way from the shore. The observations at 4 6' clock were good observations. The book shown me is the Ship's log. The Signature attached to the last entries is the Captain's and the entries are made by ~~my~~ the different officers. After the accident on our arrival at Cocanada a sworn declaration was made by the officers and crew as to the circumstances of this accident. I hold a Captain's Certificate. It was issued to me about 1890. I received Mate's Certificate in 1884. I have been Chief officer but not in the Austrian Lloyd. I have not been on this Coast before nor had any of the officers ever been at Cocanada. We were going to cast the lead from the forecastle as we thought we were in deep water. After we struck we hove the lead but I don't recollect the soundings. There was a heavy sea at the time. We heard no sound of the breakers before we struck. I had heard of the wreck of the Lanark near Cocanada. The Chart before the Court (published by James Imry in 1886. Bengal Sheet No 2) is the Chart we were using. This Chart does not show the Sacramento Shoal and I had not heard of that Shoal myself. The paper shown me is the sworn declaration we made on arrival at Cocanada. It contains my signature and that of all the men except about 3 who were unwell - two being in hospital and one laid up in his hotel. We had a plan which did show the Sacramento Shoal and on which some previous Captain had marked the position of the Lanark.

(sd) V. Franulic

24/7/95

(sd) V. A. Brodie
Ag District Magistrate

[illegible]

Recalled

The Signature shown me is that of the Captain Pietro Sussonich (Wreck Return filed)

(sd) V. A. Brodie
Ag. Dt. Magistrate

24/7/95

True Copy
for Dt. Magistrate

Is 317

Opinion of Assessors

We accept the Evidence of the 2nd officer as
Correct and from his evidence, the log
book and the sworn statement of the officers
and Crew we are of opinion that the
Course steered was a Correct one assuming
the observations to have been Correct. The
Captain seems to have allowed for a
Current setting to the East which according
to their observations existed up to 4 P.M.
but did not exist afterwards and
Consequently Came ashore. A good look out
appears to have been kept but the shore
there is difficult to see particularly at
night and on a dark and rainy night.
The Captain of the Ship and both his
Mates being on the bridge at the same
time is evidence that they were anxiously
on the look out. The Chart used was
not an admiralty one and does not show
the Sacramento Shoal but we do not
attribute the accident at all to this as
from the evidence it appears that they
were aware of the existence of the Shoal
and moreover they went ashore not

On the Shoal but Some 4 miles to the South of it. Heaving the lead would have prevented the accident but the fact that by their Calculation they were far from land was a Sufficient excuse for not resorting to it. A light in the vicinity of the Shoal would have prevented the accident and is in our opinion urgently necessary.

(Sd) A. Way
Assessor

(Sd) F. Seely
Assessor

(Sd) Vernon A. Brodie
President

True Copy

25-7-95

For Dt. Magistrate.

15
31.7

1895
Mar. Dept.
2
No. 619

Judgment.

The Evidence before the Court is very meagre owing to the Captain, Officers and Crew with the Exception of the 2nd Officer having left the Country. We have therefore only the oral Evidence of the 2nd Officer whose Statements we have almost no means of checking. At the Same time it must be admitted that he has given his Evidence in a Strait forward manner and the Court Sees no reason to doubt his veracity. The Other Evidence Consists of the Ship's log the Signature of the Captain in which is proved by the 2nd Officer, a Sworn Statement made on the 28th ultimo by the Captain, Officers, Engineers, and all the Crew with the Exception of three who were Sick, the Chart (one published in 1884 by James Imray) by which the Ship is Said to have been navigated, and the Captain's wreck declaration. All other papers have, it is said, been taken away with him by the Captain.

2. From the above it appears that the Austro Hungarian S.S "Thisbe" left Madras at 8.30 p.m. on Saturday the 22nd ultimo and steered a N by E Course for Cocanada – maintaining an average speed of 10½ knots with 56 revolutions throughout. At 3.30 p.m. according to the log and general declaration of the officers and crew and at 3.40 p.m. according to the 2nd officer the position of the ship by observations taken by the latter was 15°.56′ N and 82° 33′ E. In consequence the Course was altered to N¼W by the Compass (the magnetic or true Course being N½E) – a Course which should have taken the Ship some 13 miles off the Sacramento Shoal. At 4 pm there was a heavy Squall with rain. From this hour till 6 p.m. the Chief officer was on watch and he remained on the bridge when the 2nd officer relieved him at the latter hour. About 6 p.m. a drizzling rain set in which continued till the Ship struck – the weather being thick with a fresh breeze from the WSW and the sea rough. As no land was visible the Ship's Course was altered at 6 p.m. to N by W (N¼W magnetic) which should still have kept them clear of the Sacramento shoal and a look out man was sent up to the foretop. At 6.25 p.m. according to the 2nd officer, the Captain ~~found~~ joined his two mates on the bridge and all three remained there until the accident occurred. At 7.30 p.m. having failed to make out the Hope Island light as he had anticipated the Captain stopped the Engines with a view to take Soundings but before they did so a bright

light was suddenly seen on the port bow by the look out man and those on the bridge simultaneously. It remained visible for a few minutes and then disappeared. Whilst they were still looking out for it again and trying to make out what light it was, a cry of "Land and breakers ahead" was raised by the foretopman and taken up by those on deck whereupon the Captain ordered the Engines to go full speed astern and put the helm hard a port but before the Engines could stop her the Ship took the ground badly at about 7.45 pm when the tide was about three quarters flood and though they kept the Engines going steadily full speed astern until the sand choked up the pumps and stopped them they failed to move her and the Sea was too rough for them even to attempt to carry out an anchor in a boat and by warping her off. When she grounded

2

Soundings showed 8 feet forward and 12 feet aft. As she seems to have been drawing about 15 feet it is obvious that she must have ploughed her way through the sand for some distance before she stopped so that she must have had considerable way on when she struck.

Quest 20 [illegible] with the stop the engines had been stopped [illegible]

3. As she was almost empty at the time the rising tide and boisterous wind and sea soon made her position hopeless and a member of the Court who has visited her states that it is now possible to walk out to her dry shod at low tide. The light that was seen at 7.30 by those on board must have been a light in the village of Kottapolliam in the Amalapur Taluk where she is stranded. The spot 20 to the South of the "Sacramento" Shoal the wreck of the "Lanark" on the Shoal bearing E by N½N from the spot and about 3 miles away.

4. The most serious discrepancy between the Evidence of the 2nd officer and the documentary Evidence is as to whether any Sounding was taken before she struck. He states positively that they were ready to take a deep sea Sounding (Casting the lead from the fore castle) when the light was observed some 10 minutes before she struck; but no Sounding was ever taken; whereas in the general declaration of the Officers and crew it is stated that a Sounding giving 16 feet was taken immediately after the Cry of "breakers ahead" was raised. ~~This~~ It is we think however quite possible that such a Sounding was taken by the Captain without the 2nd officer, in the Confusion that prevailed, being aware of it. It is otherwise difficult to understand how the Captain got the 16 feet Sounding of the declaration and why he did not let go an anchor.

5. The nautical Assessors have on the Evidence recorded the following as their opinion.

We accept the Evidence of the 2nd officer as Correct and from his Evidence, the log book and the Sworn Statement of the officers and crew we are of opinion that the Course steered was a Correct one assuming the observations to have been Correct. The Captain seems to have allowed for a Current setting to the East which according to their observations Existed up to 4 p.m. but did not Exist afterwards and Consequently came ashore. A good look out appears to have been kept, but the Shore there is difficult to see particularly at night and on a dark and rainy night. The Captain of the Ship and both his mates being on the bridge at the scene

Note The observation of 3.40 p.m is stated by the 2nd officer who made it to have been a good one and though it is notorious that at this season observations in the Bay of Bengal are liable to be misleading owing to refraction, it does not appear to have been much out as the scene of the wreck is just about 42 miles from the point there fixed and the "Thisbe" was running 10½ knots.

time is Evidence that they were anxiously on the look out. The Chart used was not an admiralty one and does not show the Sacramento Shoal but we do not attribute the Accident at all to this as from the Evidence it appears that they were aware of the Existence of the shoal and moreover they went ashore not on the Shoal but some 4 miles to the South of it. Using the lead would have prevented the Accident but the fact that by their Calculations they were far from land was a Sufficient Excuse for not resorting to it. A light in the vicinity of the Shoal would have prevented the accident and is in our opinion urgently necessary."

Note. The distance does not appear to be quite so great as the Dy Conservator of the Port in his report to the President as District Magistrate of the 26th June No 384 states that the wreck of the "Lanark" on the Shoal is about 3 miles E by N½N from the "Thisbe."

6. The Court fully Concurs with the nautical Assessors in all their Opinions and particularly with reference to the necessity for a good light in the vicinity of the Sacramento Shoal. The Hope Island light is not visible even on the Clearest night until the Shoal is reached and on a dark and rainy night of Course it is not visible so soon and this Shoal is the great danger to navigation Connected with this port. In this Case such a light would have shown those on board the "Thisbe" who were anxiously on the look out for the Hope Island light that they were out of their Course and saved her. At the same time it must be admitted that the vessel was a good deal out of her Course so that although such a light would have saved her it can hardly be said that the want of ~~a~~ one was the Cause of the wreck. Heaving the lead would also have saved her and the direct Cause of the Accident would appear to have been overconfidence in their observations and the Assumption that the Current experienced ~~at~~ up to 4 p.m would continue in a locality where

the Currents are most Changeable.

7. We pass no remarks on the Conduct of the officers and crew at the time of the Accident and have not inquired Closely into it nor as to the Conduct of the Captain and crew in deserting their Ship afterwards as being Austrian Subjects they are not we believe Subject to our Jurisdiction and indeed we have no means of doing so as only one of their number is before us.

Cocanada
25th July 1895

(Sd) Vernor. A. Brodie
President.

(Sd) J. P. James
Port officer
Member.

(Sd) J. F. Maxwell.
Member.

1895
Enclosure No 1
O. No. 017

/True Copy/

For President and District Magte.

JS
31.7

List of record Connected with the Enquiry into the Stranding of the Austro Hungarian S.S. Thisbe near the Sacramento Shoal.

(1) Exhibit A. Translation of the log book.

(2) Exhibit B. Chart. This was returned to the 2nd Officer.

(3) Exhibit C Translation of the Sworn Statements of the officers and crew.

(4) Exhibit D. Wreck return.

(5) Copy of the deposition of the 2nd Officer

(6) Copy of Assessor's opinion.

(7) Copy of the finding of the Court.

Total 6 papers
omitting No 2.

District Magistrate
and President of the
Special Court of Enquiry

JS
31.7

5
Mar
7

619

Print the
remainder
complete except extract from log
15 8h

Court of Inquiry re the loss of the
Austro Hungarian Lloyd's S.S. "Thisbe"

President Vernor A Brodie Esq C.S.

Members. J. P. James Esq:
I. F. Maxwell Esq.

Nautical Assessors. Lieut F. Icely R.N.R.
N. Way Esq: Master of the Barque "Golden Fleece"

CURRENT

No — Godavari District
Dt. magistrate's office.
Cocanada. 14

From.

V. A. Brodie Esq:
Ag District Magistrate
Godavari
and President of the Special Court of Enquiry

To

The Chief Secretary to
Government Marine Deptt.

Sir,

With reference to orders conveyed by telegrams of the 16th and 19th instant, I have the honor to submit the Entire record connected with the Enquiry into the Stranding of the Austro-Hungarian S.S. Thisbe near the Sacramento Shoal on the 23rd June 1895 as per list enclosed.

I have the honor to bee,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant

Dt. magistrate & Presdt.

Despd 9/8 O

Fair Dft. by C.S.

Telegram

To

The Presidency Port Officer,
Madras.

467x Send sharp chart showing position Thisbe and Village Kottapalem mark distances,

CURRENT No. 629

Marine (1895) DEPARTMENT.

From

THE PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICER,
Madras,

To

THE CHIEF SECY. TO GOVERNMENT,
MARINE DEPARTMENT,
Fort St. George.

No. $\frac{1768}{214}$ G.

Dated 10 } August 95 189 .
Received 12 }
& Reg'd
Encls. 1

12 AUG 95

No. —

Subject.

Forwarding chart marked with the position of Kottapolian Village and wreck of "Thisbe".

CURRENT No. 629

No. 1768/214 G

PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICE,
Madras, 10 August 1895.

Heading.

Light.

From Commander W. J. Powell, R.I.M.,
~~The~~ PRESIDENCY PORT OFFICER,
MADRAS,

To

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
MARINE DEPARTMENT,
FORT ST GEORGE.

+ Returned to P.P.O.
Vide Marine C 82 204/96.
D.P.
28-2-96.

SIR,

With reference to your Telegram No. 467 dated 9 instant, I forward herewith the + Chart marked as required. The Village of Kottapoliam is N by W of the wreck of the "Thisbe", distant 1½ miles.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant
Walter Powell

Commander R.I.M.,
Presidency Port Officer.

[G./25.]
300—7-5-95.

DEPARTMENT.

C. No.

FOR ORDERS.

A letter from the Austrian Consul General asking that the Court of Enquiry which it was at first proposed should sit with regard to the wreck of the Thisbée may assemble.

The papers have gone to Madras but have been telegraphed for.

I however remember that the P.P.O telegraphed that the Vice Consul had stated that the Consul General had ignored the proposal for a ~~[illegible]~~ Enquiry and that the Commander of the Thisbée did not now want one.

The original proposal was therefore abandoned.

The letter of the Consul General however alters matters and a telegram to the Dt. Magte is accordingly submitted for approval.

The use of the word "ignored" was misleading. What the Vice Consul meant apparently to say (if perhaps it was the P.P.O who made the mistake) was that no reply had been received to his proposals. It is to be regretted that whoever is responsible for the use of this word was not more explicit

15/7/95

Stranding of "Thebe"

FOR ORDERS.

V. E.

H. E. The Governor

M. G. 6 14/8/95
No. 250-1
Marine

C1/97

[G/25]
600—23-7-95.

DEPARTMENT.

C. No.

FOR ORDERS.

I do not think it is necessary to say anything more.

W
14 Aug

As to whether anything more than ~~is stated~~ appears in the accompanying Draft should be said. I delayed the papers in order to get up a chart showing the position of the wreck & that of the "Lanark". This will be found in C No. 629. The smaller round dots in pencil marks about the point at which if the lead was hove, about 16 ft of water would be found; this is 1/2 a mile from the shore. Mr. Ashpitel has been good enough to mark ~~here~~ on the approximate site of the temporary light which is to be put up and its range. The range of the new one will be more than double this distance. On the accompanying mounted sheet of the chart of the East Coast I have marked as well as I can without the necessary instruments the supposed position of the ship at 3.30 P.M. on the day of the wreck the spot where she should have been laying that she steamed

10.5 knots she steered the course stated and was set in by currents and the point where she went ashore. She must have been about 12 or 15 miles south of her supposed position and possibly three or four miles west of it. What the bright light seen just before the wreck occurred was I cannot imagine. The village was then distant from the ship two miles. It seems strange that the ship if her way engines had been stopped quarter of an hour before she struck and were put astern full speed when she was about 1/2 a mile from the beach should have buried her bows so far into the sand. in the dark Apparently the officers were unaware of the position of the Sacramento Shoal or of the need of being careful when approaching Cocanada from Madras. and neglected to use the lead. The ship was evidently badly found in charts The evidence is very meagre and the sworn deposition of officers & crew all lumped together cannot be worth very much as it has not been subjected to cross examination. The temporary light would no doubt have covered the spot where the ship went ashore and a good way beyond but the ship was so very much out of her true position that it can hardly be said that the absence of a light was the sole cause of her loss. 13/8/95

Stranding of Thisbe

FOR ORDERS.

H.E. the Governor

21/8

W/
14 Aug

Marine Department 6

Order 14th August 1895. No. 25

A/ The Proceedings o
the Special Court appo
to Enquire into the circ
-stances attending the stran
at 7.45 p.m. on the 23d Ju
last, of the ~~Austro-Hunga~~ Austrian-Lloyd
S.S. Thisbe on the beach
the south of the Sacra
Shoal, about three mi
from the wreck of
S.S. Lanark, will be c
-municated to the R
Hon'ble the Secy of St
for India, and to
Austro-Hungarian C
-sul General at Bombay.

2. Payment of
usual fee to Mr.
well and the Mar
members of the C
is sanctioned.

3. Steps have
ready been taken
the Exhibition of
temporary light

Stranding of Thisbe

10 posite the Sacramento
oal - The question of
provision of a
oroughly Efficient
ght to guard the
oal is under con-
ideration.

Sd
13/8/95

Austro-Hungarian Consul-
General at Bombay with
th translation of Extract
om the Log and the Captain's
eport of the stranding)
Collector of Godavari 8
S. S. Officer 6
Accountant-General 6
F. Maxwell Esqr. 1

C.L.
by letter

desp
29/8/95

28-8-95
250

tter - to

The Rt. Honble the Secy of State
for India

My Lord,

We have the honour
forward three copies of
proceedings embodying
report of a Special Court
ointed by us, at the request
Austro-Hungarian Con-
, to enquire into the
mstances attending the
ding of the Austrian-Lloyd's S.S. Thisbe on the beach ~~three~~
to the south of the
amento Shoal on the
June last.

Sd
13/8/95

* G.O. No. 250 Mar: 8/14th Augt 95

W

Stranding of the S.S. Thisbe

E

[illegible]
1st August 1895

Copy [illegible]