[Poll. / 8.]
1,000—24-8-97.

Political (1899) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 132 - 33

DATED 10 - 2 - 99.

INDEXED.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Forwarding to the Consul for Norway and Sweden in Madras, copies of the Residency Post-office's letter and its enclosure relative to the stranding and abandonment of the Swedish Barque "Linnet"

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Financial

Political

Marine (1899) Department.

CURRENT No. 86

CURRENT NO. 134

CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS 22 JAN 1899

No: 47 E. dy 21 Jany 99.

Endt:

~~Order~~

Transferred to the Political Department for the necessary action, as suggested by the Presidency Port Officer.

From

The Presidency Port Officer
Madras.

No. 1261/20 G.

Secretary to Government

Dated 18th January 1899

Received 19-1-99

Enclosures 1

Spare copies —

Read
Rept 23-1-99.
Encls: marine Cov 86 & enclosure.

To

The Political Department.

C.S.

Political Dept.

SUBJECT.

Order
Mis No 132 dy 20-2-99

~~Copies of the P. Pt's letter & No~~
~~The Communications referred~~
~~enclosures~~
~~On the letter and above~~
forwards for information
will be ~~placed at the disposal~~
of the Consul for Norway & Sweden

Forwarding for information Copies of Communications relative to the Stranding and abandonment of the Swedish Barque "Minnet"

Dated 16th Jany 99 from the Port Officer Madras

Sir -

I am directed to forward ~~to~~ for such action, as you may deem necessary, ~~the enclosed~~ ~~copies of the communications from~~ ~~the Port Officer~~ ~~Negapatam~~ ~~relative~~ ~~to the stranding & abandonment~~ of the Swedish Barque "Minnet" in December last ~~as no further proceedings in the matter by this Govt. are possible~~. —

I have &c. —

H. G. V.

Nos 3/1/99 Cmdr. 1/99

Enclosures -
No 22/47 d/ 11 Jany 1899
" 22/70 d/ 13 " 1899
" 22/73 d/ 13 " 1899

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
		the Port Officer @ Negapatam	
		a copy of the Pors. of this Govt of this date No .....,	

No. 22/47

Port Office

Negapatam 11th January 1899.

From

J. P. James Esqre
Port Officer
Negapatam.

To

The Presidency Port Officer,
Madras.

Sir,

In forwarding the Statement taken by me from the Master of the Swedish Barque "Minnet", I have the honor to observe that in my opinion the reason of the grounding of the vessel is due to her having only old and obsolete charts, and Sailing directions which were practically useless. No allowance seems to have been made by the Master for the strong current that sets down the coast during the north east monsoon, and of which he appears to have been totally unaware. If he had anchored his vessel when he found himself in 5½ fathoms water, and waited until the weather cleared the accident would probably have been avoided.

The ship was ~~made~~ ~~in~~ ~~ballast~~ at the time

off the land, she could only either warp or be towed off. The day after the vessel grounded her crew refused duty, and have been more or less off duty ever since, demanding their discharge. This I refused them and advised them to go to work. I also warned them that if they went ashore without permission of the Master I should arrest them as deserters. The Master has been greatly harassed and impeded in his attempts to get the vessel afloat, by the continued disobedience of the crew, which fact I have reported to the Swedish Consul, Madras.

I have &c.

/Signed/ J. P. James

Port Officer

Minutes of Proceedings of a Preliminary Court of Enquiry held on board the Swedish Barque "Minnet" at Topasurai by the Port Officer in connection with the Stranding of the Ship "Minnet".

John Hallstroem, Master of the Barque "Minnet", called and examined, states as follows:-

I am Master of the "Minnet" [illegible]

Sleepers. The compasses have not been adjusted since I joined the ship, more than a year and a half ago. We had fair weather and a good voyage until December 27th. On that date at 6.30 P.M. We sighted Negapatam light bearing S.W.½W. I tacked and steered S.E.b.E.½E true and at 8 P.M. the light bore W.S.W ½W, distant about twelve miles. I continued on that course until midnight having run by log ten miles. From midnight to 4 A.M. of the 28th I altered the course to S.E.½E true, and made ten miles; from 4 A.M. to 6 A.M. I ran S.E. five miles. At 6 A.M. I could not see any land, and tacked, steering W.N.W for two hours, distance by log fourteen miles. At 8 A.M. I altered the course to N.W.b.W½W twenty three miles. I hove the lead every half hour, at first cast at about ten O'Clock I got twenty three fathoms, then fifteen, then twelve, at noon got nine fathoms and saw land, but could not distinguish any building only cocoanut trees, but saw two big towers, which I now find must have been the pagodas at Vedaraniem. I then tacked again steering S.b.W to try and find Negapatam, sounded again and got five [illegible] we hove the lead

shoal between it and the land. Finding the water shoaling rapidly, I wore ship and steered N by E. hoping to get back into deep water, and stood on that tack for one hours, when I saw discoloured water ahead. I then tried to tack but the ship missed stays, and I wore her. Through leaving to wear we drifted further into shallow water, when the vessel was found steering S. S E 1/2 E. for one hour doing four miles. We found no deeper water and at 3.45 P. M. we felt the ship grounding, and she bumped heavily after that, the vessel was still moving. There was a heavy Squall with thick rain at about 4 P. M, during which the ship was moving at the rate of five knots an hour, and when it passed the ship was still touching the ground, although moving along slightly, and at 4.30 she grounded altogether and remained fast in soft mud. I then furled all sail except the topsails, with the head of the sea the ship continued to go further up. As the weather was squally and thick with a high sea we considered it best to let her drive, as it gave a better chance of saving the lives of the I am master of the [illegible] well [illegible]

the Negapatam light. At this time I pumped the ship out, and furled all the sails. We hoisted three red lights all night for a distress signal, and in the day N.C. Catamaran and came off in the morning, and at 9.45 A.M. I went ashore to see if I could get help. I landed at Topeturai, and started for Negapatam as soon as I could get a boat, arriving there the day after, the early morning of December 30 th. I had only a chart of the world which is a very old one published by J. Imray & Sons dated 1867. It gives no allowance for any current on this Coast. I allowed one point of lee way, but nothing for current, which I now estimate at least, three knots an hour. I had another Chart of the Indian Ocean dated 1876 which is on the same scale as the first one mentioned, and gives no instructions for this Coast. The book of directions is the Sailing Directory of the Indian Ocean, 2 d Edition by A. G. Findley published in 1870. Before I left Hamelyn Harbour I endeavoured to procure other charts, and telegraphed to Perth and Fremantle but could get none.

The above is the evidence of [illegible]

[illegible] on the 13th January 1880

I agree with the above Statement which I conscientiously believe to be true.

/Sd:/ P. Sodescanny

1st Mate

Barque "Minnet"

True Copy

/Sd:/ J. P. James

Port Officer

Negapatam
11th January 1899

No. 22/70

Port Office

Negapatam, 13th January 1899.

From

J. P. James Esqre
Port Officer,
Negapatam.

To

The Presidency Port Officer,
Madras.

Sir,

In continuation of my telegram of yesterday, I have the honor to report that the Swedish barque "Minnet" has become a total loss and has been abandoned by her master and crew.

I am Master of the night and next morning it was found that the lady had lost her rudder and had fourteen feet of water in her hold, so it was decided to abandon her. When I was down helping to float her, over seven thousand sheepers were landed and she then drew fourteen feet. As her ballast draft was thirteen feet I did not think it wise to lighten her any more, as she would be very tender being very heavily sparred.

The crew had been in a state of mutiny ever since the vessel grounded on the 28th Ultimo. They were brought up yesterday afternoon by the S.S. "Vita", and I had them sent off by train at once to their Consul in Madras. The Master and two Mates have remained here to give their Statements, but Section V of Act V of 1883 precludes any formal investigation or Court of Enquiry.

I have &c.

/Signed/ J. P. James
Port Officer.

No. 22/73

Port Office,

To

The Presidency Port Officer,

Madras.

Sir,

In forwarding statements of the Master and Mate of the Barque "Meninet" foundered near Point Calimere, I am of opinion that no Court of Enquiry can be held under act V of 1883. It is pretty clear that the vessel was not properly supplied with charts and that no one on board knew anything about this part of the world, as appears in the statement made by the Master and confirmed by the first Mate at the first preliminary enquiry. The total loss of the vessel is due in my opinion to the very uneven and shifty bottom near where she was stranded, alternate mud and sand banks. She was an old vessel 24 years of age, built of pine and not capable therefore of standing the bumping in a heavy sea on a hard bottom when the attempt was made to tow her off.

I have &c

of Enquiry held in the Port Office, Negapatam, by the Port Officer in connection with the loss of the Barque "Meninet."

John Fallstrocan Master of the Barque "Meninet" called and examined states as follows.

The barque "Meninet" under my command was stranded on the Coast near Point Calimere on the 28th day of December last. About half of the cargo of sleepers was taken out of her and landed on the beach; and steps were taken to warp the vessel out, it being impossible to work her out under sail on account of the breakers on Point Calimere on one side, and the shoal water on the other side. Repeated attempts at warping were made. On the 11th of January the S.S. "Vita" arrived near with a view to tow the ship up to Negapatam. In the evening at high water at about 5.30, the Steamer took the barque in tow. Whilst endeavouring to tow her out the ship moved ahead and in doing so repeatedly bumped on the hard sand, causing the hawsers to part. It then being 6.30 P.M. and dark the attempt was discontinued for the night. The S.S. "Vita" stood by the whole night. The

water in the hold, and the seas were breaking over her lee side on the main deck. It then being considered that the vessel was totally unseaworthy it was thought best to abandon her for the time on account of the high sea. The Crew and their effects were immediately transferred to the S.S. "Vita" which brought them to Negapatam. I wish to add that after the hawsers parted the Carpenter or the mate reported that much water was coming into the ship from near the Stern, I went to the small hatch aft and could hear it rushing in.

(Sd:) John Fallstrom
Commander Barque "Minnie."

The above is the evidence of Mr. John Fallstrom taken by me on the 13th day of January 1899.

(Sd:) L. P. James
Port Officer

P. Sedelkamm first mate of the Barque "Minnie," called and examined, states as follows.

feet of liquid mud, the ship was afloat. After taking us in tow the vessel forged ahead for about half a mile, there was a good deal of sea with a moderate North east wind; after being in tow for some time we came out of the mud on to hard ground, and the ship bumped heavily, the ship moving ahead all the while. When the vessel had been bumping for about twenty minutes the wire hawser parted, we then let go the port anchor with 15 fathoms of chain which held her. We hailed the Steamer and told them what had happened. The Steamer went into deep water and anchored. The barque was bumping all the time. I and the Carpenter went below in the after part of the lower hold, and found that the ship had opened out both sides of the stern post, and water was coming in freely. I reported to the Captain, and he considered it best to leave the ship in case the masts and gear should fall and kill some body; it was also feared that when the vessel filled she might capsize. We then left that was in

he was full of water, the rudder was gone, and the whole stern frame started. Seeing that the vessel was a total wreck the Captain decided to abandon her. The crew were told to fetch their effects, and we proceeded on board the Steamer which brought us to Negapatam.

/Sd:/ P. Sidulhaum

1st Mate

The above is the evidence of Mr. P. Sidulhaum taken by me on the 13th day of January 1899.

/Sd:/ J. P. James

Port Officer

(True Copy)

/Sd:/ J. P. James

13.1.99. Port Officer

(True copies)

W. F. Fernandez

Manager

Presidency Port Office

No. 1261 G

20

Heading

Presidency Port Office,

Madras, 18 January 1899.

From

Commander H. A. Street, R. I. M.,

Presidency Port Officer,

Madras,

To

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,

MARINE DEPARTMENT,

CHEPAK.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward for the information of Government, copies of the communications noted in the margin from the Port Officer at Negapatam relative to the Stranding and abandonment of the Swedish Barque "Minnet," and to State that no action is possible under Act V of

No. 22/47	dated 11 January 1899.
" 22/70	dated 13 January 1899.
" 22/73	dated 13 January 1899.

placed at the disposal of the
Consul for Sweden and Norway
at Chadras for such action
as he may consider necessary.

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

Attested
Commander, R. I. Mn,
Presidency Port Officer

When given for copying 11/2
When copied 11/2
When examined 13/2 1899
When signed

Fwds
LEAD AGAIN G.O., No. , DATED
189 .

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURES TO C. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT. .. .. .. A A A A A A A

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH IN ORIGINAL.