

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

CONTINUED FROM

PREVIOUS FILM

B. S. "SEBIL"

454

Port Florence,

22nd June 1906.

To,

The Loco Superintendent,

Uganda Railway,

N A I E O B I.

Sir,

In reply to your letter No. 207/120 of 20th June 1906, I have the honor to herewith give you the particulars required.

I had steered a direct course down to Kawironda Gulf Del W. Mag. until Chanhanga Island came in transit with the conical peak on west Eusinga (the clearing marks for the Gull shoal) and I altered course for them at 4/45 p.m. passing the Gull shoal buoy at 4/50 p.m. at a distance of $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile. At 4/51 I altered course to N 85° W. Mag. for $\frac{1}{2}$ west of Seminal and struck the rock at 4/57 p.m. Stop was immediately rung on the engine room telegraph but as she struck and was clear immediately I rang full speed and took the bearings of my position.

At the time of striking owing to its suddenness no soundings were taken as I did not consider it advisable to remain in the neighbourhood, endangering the ship, there being a heavy head sea at the time, so I pushed ahead for Eusinga anchorage where the water is clear to ascertain what damage was done to the propellers and sounding the bells incessantly to see if she made water, which she did not.

I myself was on watch at the time and I consider that I did everything that was necessary for the safety

safety of the ship and all I could to get the position
of the rock struck.

I have etc,
ad/- E. W. STRAIN.
Commander,
S. S. "CORONA".

The Good Government
National Railway
1 1 1 0 1 1

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter regarding the
safety of the ship, I have the honor to
acknowledge the receipt of your letter.

I had steered a direct course from
New York to the West Indies, and
in the night with the usual calm
clearing up for the Gulf Stream and
for the Gulf Stream. The Gulf Stream
was at a distance of 4 or 5 miles
to the west of the Gulf Stream and
the rock at 4 1/2 miles. The rock was
seen from the ship but in the dark
and I immediately I took the
position.

At the time of striking the
rock no soundings were taken as I
was unable to remain in the neighborhood
of the rock being a heavy fog at the
time. I wished to know the position
of the rock but in the dark and
and sounding the bell to see if the
water, which was the case.

I would be much obliged if you
would let me know the position of
the rock.

No. 3950

From

The LOCO AND CARRIAGE SUPERINTENDENT,

To

The Manager,

Uganda Railway.

Dated Kampala, July 11th, 1905.

Sir,

I beg to hand you the proceedings of the Board held at Port Florence on the 8th. of July on the grounding of the "BYALL" on her voyage from Entebbe to Mukoba on the 28th. of June 1905. I also attach a letter which Captain Farnell handed in when asked to suggest an explanation for the grounding. We did not judge it admissible preferring so far as possible to embody these views in the form of direct evidence.

Although the Board has not made comment on the Lake Survey its slowness is regretted.

We had the advantage of seeing the actual courses laid down (by Captain Hutchinson) on the Charts also of comparing the different maps and charts held by the three Captains who navigate the Lake and of actually inspecting the original markings and notes made on them by Commander Whitehouse in recent time. I will not enlarge in this place on this detail but will take occasion to do so elsewhere.

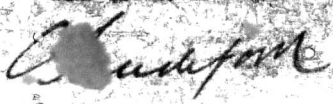
The enquiry took longer than I anticipated (8-30 to 7 p.m.) the technical character of the evidence and the inspection of Charts occupied a good deal of time.

I did not communicate the finding, judged it best
to place the papers in your hands for decision before
going so.

I also attach a note on damage to Steamer as far as
ascertained and the approximate cost of repairs.
I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your Obedt. Servant.



Locomotive Superintendent,

Uganda Railway.

Attached are copies of the

- (a). 3 Evidence taken at enquiry.
- (b). 1 Letter from passengers. (sent in)
- (c). Report by Captain Hutton (already sent in).
- (d). 1 Letter from Captain Farnall (not used on enquiry).
- (e). 1 Commander Whitehouse's sailing orders.

ENQUIRY INTO GROUNDING OF THE STEAMER
"SIVIL" on 25th. June.

The enquiry was held on board the "SIVIL" at Florence on the 25th. July and was conducted by Mr. [redacted] as President, Mr. Nagge, Captain Hutchinson and Mr. Penruddocke as Members.

It was opened by the President reading the Manager's letter No. 1743/161 of 4-7-1905 ordering the enquiry and was continued by putting in Captain Hutton's report of the grounding and comparing it with the Log (it is attached.)

The evidence attached was then taken, it embraces that of all the persons likely to throw light on the grounding.

We also attach a letter from the passengers on the Steamer at the time of the accident which explains the conduct of the Officers and crew.

No evidence in the whole proceeding is so vital and to the point as that of the Captain of the Ship who deliberately states, and supports it by a series of explanations, that he struck a shoal $\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 miles off the Coast.

This may be correct or not, but we are unable to verify the position; he also admits that he was at least three miles inside the point he intended to have made and when asked for explanation ascribes it to a set explanation towards which enquiry was afterwards directed.

It is impossible to get more from him as to the correctness of this assumption the other witness while admitting a set do not give it the same weight as Captain Hutton.

Investigation establishes the fact that the course was correctly set but we are unable to find any important circumstances which had any influence on it and fail to see why it deviated to the extent it did.

When we state that the course was correctly set we assume that that recorded was and the whole of the evidence goes to show that it was; still in the face of the admitted fact that it did not strike the point aimed at must have deviated and we lean to the belief that it could not have been correctly steered and attached more importance to this than to so great a deviation though set.

As to who is to blame we can only say that if any one is the responsibility rests or necessarily with the Captain of the Ship, more particularly as he was actually in charge at the time; while making this statement we quite admit that the navigation is fraught with difficulty in the present uncharted state of the Coast and we recommend that this fact shall be strongly borne in mind when weighing the responsibility which we have laid on him.

As to the conduct of the crew we find that it was all that could be desired.

(Signed). C. Sandiferd. President.
S. S. Page.
T. H. Hutchinson.
J. E. Penruddocke.



EVIDENCE TAKEN AT KINGMAN.

Having steered my usual course passing the Island of Pualuanu about 3/4 mile West I altered course to E 14 W mag. steering by knots. I passed the Island of Lujaewa about 7 miles to the west and considered myself on the correct course and I advance that the deviation from the true course which took place afterward must be due to some hitherto uncorrected current and I can suggest no other cause, nor can I see any other reason for subsequently being so far to the west as to have struck a shoal fully 3 miles west of the usual course, this supposition of a westerly set is in my opinion supported by the fact that on the return voyage north on 27th. (after the grounding) I found myself much further west (on verification by bearing approximately 6 miles) of my supposed position and I do not believe this deviation is sufficiently accounted for in any derangement of compass due to the bumping on shoal I was unable to record anything unusual in the speering, speasing, or any other circumstances connected with the Speasid on this voyage.

I can not account for my inability to see the German Coast at 4 to 5 miles while I was able to distinguish Lujaewa at twice that distance it must have been due to the clearness of the haze or atmosphere at the time.

I was the only officer on watch (and was on the bridge) nor except the men ^{at the wheel or the bridge} on watch the rest of the crew were carrying out their various duties nor do I know of any one on board (having made enquiry on this point) seeing the land prior to striking.

The only reason why I did not slow down or alter the course outward (knowing that I had run my distance) on seeing the land was that the land appeared a long way off probably 8 miles about the usual distance.

Captain Hutton does not think that he can add to nor does he wish to alter his official report or his conduct of the proceedings on and after grounding and in navigating the ship back to Port Florence it is as complete and full as appears necessary.

I followed Commander Whitehouse's sailing direction (copy attached) on this southern voyage, as you see stated in the log.

ANSWERS to Questions by Captain Hutchinson.

What is the point marked L.V.S. and Long 51 503 N Ships Chart? It is the approximate position of a point where breakers were reported some 3 months ago by Engineer Seidl of German Finnage. Where did you get this approximate position? From Commander Whitehouse who inserted it on the German map of Jan. 1896 used on U.S. "WIKING" (a tracing of which was supplied me) from information supplied to him by Seidl.

I left Eschsch at 5/5 a.m. 26th. June I was on the bridge. I am in charge the whole time except when I find it necessary to be relieved at any time when the Chief Officer does so.

The Chief Officer relieved me at 12/30 p.m. 26th. and remained in charge till 1/45 p.m. when I again took charge and remained in charge up to the grounding (corroborated by Mr. Grey).

I am certain the courses and were steered while I was in charge.

What means do you take for finding the deviation of compass by transit Bearings of known position and by the Sun (but as I have no Nautical Almanack I do not at present use that method). Have you a record book for this purpose, book produced.

62

What means do you adopt for finding the speed
point to point bearings? distances taken from chart and
number of Revs from Engineer.

Mr. Gray.
1st Officer. I took charge of bridge at 12/50 on the 29th. and
remained in charge to 1/45 p.m. steering the course.
Was on deck at the time of striking.

When I left the bridge the land was not visible.
Course given to me was S 40 W Compass that course
was steered by compass during the time I was in charge.
I could take no observation for deviation while in charge
being unable to do so. The only land I saw while on the
bridge was Lajamba.

On the previous voyage did I experience abnormal
deviation of compass on the East voyage. It was 22 W.

I have not experienced current on any part of this
lake. I have experienced sets due to wind and sea.

When I left the bridge it was heavy strong S.E. wind
and a good swell.

I approximate the speed at 9 knots while I was on
the bridge.

On previous voyage I was in command of "SIVIL" and
steered some course S 40 W but on passing Lajamba heeled
her out to S 30 W.

I did experience a set to the westward on that parti-
cular voyage.

Mr. Birch.
2nd Engineer. When I left the Engine-Room at noon the Engines
were running at 190 and I estimate that we were driving
24 knots. I was not in charge when she struck. I was
on deck when she struck. I saw the land on doing so.
prior to that I am not certain about setting it.

Mr. Gordon,
Chief Engineer.

I took over charge from Mr. Mirding, Chief Engineer, at noon and was in the Engine-Room at the time of grounding. The Engines were driving full average speed of 125 Revol while I was in charge up to the time of striking. Had no further information bearing on case to give.

John Fisher.

Steersman. Went on duty at 2 p.m. I steered S 50 W the time I was at the wheel, this order was given me by the Captain the before he gave S 40 W.

William B. A. Steersman.

Went on duty at 12 noon and left p.m. Steered S 40 W the whole time no alterations while I was on duty.

(Note). a third Steersman name not recorded said likewise.

Mr. Farnall.

I have experienced of the west Coast of this lake. I lay a course on southern voyage S 45 W compass from Lujawa deviation 80 W (on S 25 W) usually pass 10 to 11 miles west Lujawa (this is to make S 14 N mag.) this course is continued 45 miles. I then alter course to S 51 W mag. (I find this position by patent Log and by observation at noon) this takes me to a point about 5 miles E of Masuri having run about 12 miles. I estimate that I usually pass outside V-Jarposi 12 to 15 miles. I have not experienced the strong set to the westward which has been suggested but when I find a moderate to fresh S.E. wind I alter the course one point to South and East after I have sighted land in the vicinity of Vorgebirge - Pujabu. I have experienced no set when going northwards. Did I find my Ship on the shoal on which the "SHELL" grounded I have only account for it by going too close to the shore.

I have never seen breakers have been always too far out.

Elicited from Captain Farnall that on a recent voyage made on June 11th, he took his departure at 12/11

12/21 a.m. from Musuri which bore west one mile and set
 a course S by E mag. till 2/25 when his Log gave 22 miles.
 He by a point bearing found Vargabirge - Mujaba bearing
 west 14 miles altered course to N 15 E mag. At 7/20
 Lubaba ahead courses various till 8.25 a.m. when Lubaba
 bore W mag. $\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile. This course has been quoted with
 a view to fixing its distance from the land but is not
 intended for use in this enquiry.

Mr. Johnson,

In my experience of the western course I have found
 no currents but in moderate to fresh breeze I would allow
 $\frac{1}{2}$ of a point (2 deg.) for set if there was also a swell
 I would increase this 4 degrees. I have never experienced
 set running north. In passing down the Coast we have
 kept 11 to 12 or 13 miles off the shore so far as I can
 judge. I have never seen breaker about there.

In my experience of this Coast there is often a
 haze, at the distances I have passed it is only the high land
 that is visible at all, and there is no ambiguous land
 mark before Musuri at the distance we steer. I do know
 indeed was told so by Commander Whitehouse that there were
 in the neighbourhood of Vargabirge and we were ordered
 to keep well out 10 to 12 on that account.

Mr. Hutton recalled,

and asked if he was at liberty to leave the
 bridge for more than a few minutes without being relieved?
 He would not leave the bridge for more than five minutes
 without being relieved except in broad waters when he
 might go into the Chart Room (for a longer period) from
 where the navigation can be seen from.

Mr. Grey accepts this as the practice on these Steamers
 goes to the extent of believing that he can so far leave
 the bridge as to go on to the lower deck in the execution
 of ship duty, but always in open waters but he admits he
 still keeps a look out / Captain Hutton endorsed this.

Captain Hutton,

U.S. Army.

Lake Victoria Nyasa.

465

We the undersigned passengers by the "SWEET" on the
June 1905 desire to express the sense of our high
recognition of the excellent untiring and happily
successful efforts made by you to save the ship and all
aboard when she unfortunately struck rocks and secured
us in danger of foundering.

It was found necessary to put a quantity of cargo
aboard but this was not done until you had tried every
means that seemed to be possible to get the ship off.
Except that heaviest packages nearest at hand were
taken as likely to bring quickest relief we can say
on our own observation that there was no special
selection of cargo for throwing overboard. The ship was
rolling hard upon the rock and her release soon after the
release of cargo showed the wisdom of and necessity for
this step, while making no pretenses whatever to any
ledge of navigation or its rules we may say that you
mainly appeared to us throughout the whole trip to be
assiduous and attentive in the discharge of your
duties before during and after the accident and we desire
to say that you were most excellently and ably supported
throughout by your Chief Officer Mr. Gray. We feel we have
much to thank for our safety under difficult and dangerous
circumstances which we sincerely hope and believe will be
satisfactorily shown to have involved no neglect or im-
provement on your part especially in view of the fact
that you were navigating in completely charted waters in

Sincerely

thickly hazy weather a nasty sea and a strong breeze.

(sd). S. Rowland Timson.
Major Gen. (Herts) Sadr. Regt

(sd). Archd. Y. Comstock. U.S.A.

(sd). Florence Shaw.
European Hospital Entebbe.

(sd). G. S. Garveth.
Nairobi.

(sd). Major C.J. Ross. D.S.O.
Nyanza, G. E. A.

(sd). Julius Wiegand.
Nyanza.

(sd). G. Boffr.
Nyanza.



S.S. "STILL"

Port Florence, July 1st. 05.

To,

The Manager and Loco: Supt.

Uganda Railway - Nairobi.

Sirs,

Re: the grounding of s.s. "STILL" on a rocky shoal 2° East of Rujab Ruposi June 29th. 1905, I have the honor to give you the following particulars:-

From Dwavanu Id. I had steered my usual course S.14 W. Mag. to clear the sand shoal with 32° on it off the Rujabu Coast and passed Lujabwa at 9/15 p.m. at a distance of about 9 miles. The weather throughout the day was hazy and hardly any landmarks could be distinguished.

Having seen Lujabwa at a distance of 9 miles I reckoned I should pick up the German Coast at about 2 p.m. but at this time and the ship having run her distance as I could see no land to the Westward I reckoned the ship must have been to Eastward of her track line and at 2/30 p.m. as a strong S.E. breeze had sprung up together with a heavy S.E. swell I hauled up to S.10° to allow for leeway and to be on the safe side of dangers as breakers had been reported a short time ago some distance down the Coast.

About a minute before the ship struck the rocky shoal at 3/30 p.m. the haze cleared slightly over the land but looked a good distance off. I left the bridge to get a sextant to triangulate some points I could distinguish and get my position and before I had got the sextant from the Cass ship struck.

I Immediately

I immediately put the engines full astern but she would not move, Boats were immediately lowered, wells sounded fore and aft with no increase of water, and soundings were taken right round the Ship as follows:-

Starboard 5 feet Fd. to 6 feet amidship to 10 feet aft.
 Port 6 " " " " " " " " " " " "

Two kedge anchors were immediately sent away, one right astern the other from the port bow to the port quarter and I then heaved ^{away} on both and working the engines astern without ^{avail}. The after kedge hawser ^{was} carried away and the kedge was lost.

At 5/40 p.m. the Ship began to bump badly on the rock under the boilers and engine room, I then ordered all cargo in the fore hatch to be shifted aft filled the after peak with water and tried again to get her off without avail so I pumped out the after peak and ordered cargo to be jettisoned to lighten the Ship and while this was being carried out worked the engines ^{in reverse} thereon on kedge several times.

At 8/30 p.m. the Chief Engineer informed me that she was making water in the boiler and engine room and that cement was breaking under the engine and boilers, all available pumps were immediately put on and this managed to keep the water in check.

At 10/50 p.m. having lightened the Ship considerably by throwing cargo overboard and the heavy ground swell and breeze having abated somewhat I gave her a heavy list to Port (that being the side with the deepest water) with the fuel remaining in the fore-hatch and again tried her with the engines and hove on the kedges; this time she turned right round and came off the rock at 11/00 p.m.

Soundings were immediately taken right round the Ship and 17 fms: found everywhere, the Chief Officer then went ahead in the gig sounding and I followed with the Ship slowly and anchored at 0/00 a.m. on the 27th. some distance clear of the rocks.

I kept a sharp watch in the engine room until 1/30 with the Chief Engineer and found that the water was not gaining on the pumps, watches were then set to watch the wells and pumps until daylight.

At daylight after having had a good look round below to see where the water was coming from and the state of the hull I consulted with the Chief Officer and Chief Engineer and came to a conclusion that it would be best to proceed to Entebbe, report mishap, fuel, and get back to Port Florence as soon as possible.

Before getting under weigh at 7 a.m. I with the passengers and Ship's Officers had a good look in the direction of the shoal for breakers but although a very heavy sea was running at the time no breakers could be seen.

At about 8/30 p.m. on the 29th. a Canoe came off from the shore and I made use of it in intimating the Commandant at Fusha and asking him to send Dhows to take cargo and to send a buoy and anchor to mark the place and I enclosed a letter to the Assistant Superintendent of Marine, Entebbe, asking him to send Percy Anderson and Sir William Mackinnon to assist us and to wire you particulars.

During the time the vessel was on the shoal the passengers on board gave me every assistance in running lines, shifting and dumping cargo, and I should say that it was due to their effort ^{combined} with those of the crew that the Ship was saved.

No panic whatever was created on board.

Every possible manouever to get the Ship off was tried before proceeding to jettison the cargo and the cargo being jettisoned was the last resort to save the Ship and which proved successful.

The cargo was jettisoned indiscriminately and no Merchant was favored but when first discharging weight was given preference.

I trust that this mishap will be the means of expediting the completion of the Survey of the Lake, more especially in the S.S. quarter, it being a known thing that that is the most dangerous part, being well studded with rocks, reefs and shoals, a few of them only being noted approximately and even if the position of these few were known, the German map, which we navigate by, is so incorrect that it would be hard to locate them again.

I took careful triangulations of notable features on the land, when on the shoal, also a sketch to show the points taken, which I send herewith.

These triangulations put the shoal about 2° East of Yorgab Nupoi and the sketch worked on the bearings taken put it about 4° East and I should say 4° was more correct also it was the universal opinion of all on board.

I was keeping a very careful look out but failed to see any broken water to indicate dangerous ground and consider I was taking every precaution in the execution of my duties to sail my Ship in accordance with the sailing directions.

The damage done to the Ship has not been wholly ascertained yet, but I think I can safely say she has no holes in her, she is making water in the fore-hold at about 2" in 12 hours and in the Boiler and Engine rooms about 2" to 1 1/2" per hour. The pumps on board are sufficient to keep the water down and extra pumps are on the Pier in case of emergency.

I have etc. etc.

Ed. E.W. Hutton.

Commander U.S. Sybil.

No. 3951

166

472

From

THE LOCO AND CARRIAGE SUPERINTENDENT,

To

The Manager,

Uganda Railway.

Dated Kilindi, July 11th. 1905.

Sir,

Grounding of Sybil.

Although it is difficult to estimate the money value of the damage done to this Steamer until she is in Dock, a description of the injuries sustained so far as can be seen will give an idea of the approximate amount we must at present spend in even temporarily making her fit for service.

She took the rocks just ^{at} the fore peak bulk head on the port side and again about the centre of the fore-hold both on starboard and port side, she must have rested on rocks neither very hard or sharp as no holes have been punched through the plates but so severe was the pounding that the plates in some places are bulged up $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 inches and the frame bent, in some parts crumpled, rivets loosened and leaking badly, but mostly through rivet holes.

The after hold and after end appears to have sustained no injury, but the Engine and Boiler Rooms which fortunately are heavily strengthened by deep girders carrying Engine and Boiler also the stoke hole or fuel space have been severely bumped, in some parts of the fuel space the plates are bulged up quite 3" and in the Engine Room the deep girders bent sideways and crumpled out of shape.

Fortunately the Engines do not seem to have suffered at all nor to have been thrown out of adjustment. This is the part of the Ship which leaks most (principally through rivet holes) and all that we are able to do until she gets into dry Dock is to remove these rivets and after enlarging the holes replace them by Tap bolts also walk gaping angles and plates where possible.

The position is of course exceedingly cramped and awkward to get at but I hope to so far reduce the leakage as to make it an easy matter to keep water down by moderate pumping.

Much of the expenditure which is being incurred is on taking up the floors, cover plates, cement, etc. etc. and on its subsequent replacement. Loss due to the Ship being idle (wages (I will not include loss of interest or earnings) add to this the wages of men employed on working and material etc. I should say it approximates:-

Crew for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ month Rs. 2250/-

Extra Labour on work including Stowage:-

Rs. 750/-
Rs. 1000/-

As you will see it is not a large amount but remembering much more will be expended when we Dock her the present outlay is more or less lost and in no way contributes to the making good the actual damage yet although it will take a good while to make the damages good in Dock the expenditure will not be much more than that now incurred.

I refrain from speculating on the unascertained or possible damage; it is sufficient put down what we actually do know.

(sd) C Sandiford
Local Superintendent.

Final 5 (L)

474

COPY of CLAUSES 12 of CAPTAIN H. B. HUTTON'S AGREEMENT.

"In the event of the Secretary of State becoming desirous of determining the engagement of the person engaged at any time, he shall be at liberty to do so on giving him three months' notice in writing (through the Manager) determinable at any period of the year, or on the Secretary of State paying him three months' salary in lieu of such notice, and, in either case, providing him with a free passage, first class, to England or other place of engagement. It shall also be competent to the Secretary of State, through the Manager, to terminate the employment of the person engaged if at any time it shall be certified by the Principal Medical Officer, or other duly qualified Medical Officer employed by the Secretary of State, that he is incapable on physical grounds of rendering further efficient service in British East Africa, and in such case he shall be provided with a free passage, first class, to England or other place of engagement, but shall have no other claim upon the Secretary of State".

Captain Hutton's appointment dates from the 23rd of October 1902. He was engaged in India.

000