

Enclosure in No. 129.

Mr. GRAY to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Board of Trade, Whitehall Gardens, 8th March, 1875.

I am directed by the Board of Trade to transmit to you the accompanying copy of the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry, held into the loss of the emigrant ship "Cospatrick."

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

THOS. GRAY.

"Cospatrick."

REPORT* of the COURT of INQUIRY, held under order of the Board of Trade, into the circumstances attending the loss by fire of the sailing ship "Cospatrick," about 12.30 a.m. of the 18th November last, in the Southern Ocean, in latitude 37° 15' south and longitude 12° 25' east, by James Henry Patteson, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, assisted by Captains Pryce and Castle, and W. H. Turner, Esq., acting as Assessors.

Greenwich Police Court, 11th February, 1875.

THE "Cospatrick" was a sailing ship belonging to the port of London. She was built of wood, at Moulmain, in the year 1856. She had two decks, three masts, was ship rigged, of 1,199 $\frac{1}{2}$ tons register, and the property of Mr. Walter Savill and James W. Temple, of 34, Leadenhall Street, in the city of London, shipowners, to the extent of twelve shares each; Mr. John Parker, of Goldsmith Street, in the city of London, shipowner, to the extent of sixteen shares; James Wilkie Adamson and Thomas Ronaldson, of 34, Leadenhall Street, London, in the city of London, shipowners, to the extent of twelve shares each.

It appears that in the month of July last the vessel underwent a thorough overhaul and repair in dry dock in London. She was then surveyed by Messrs. Bolt and Cornish, Board of Trade Surveyors, who pronounced her sound and well fitted to carry emigrants.

On the 17th August, 1874, a charter-party was made between Her Majesty the Queen, for and on behalf of the Colony of New Zealand, the Agent-General of that colony, and Messrs. Shaw, Savill, and Co., of Leadenhall Street, for the conveyance of emigrants from London to the port of Auckland, in New Zealand, by that vessel.

The number of emigrants embarked was—

80 married couples	
101 single (males)	} adults
45 " (females)	
58 males	} children between 1 and 12 years of age
53 females	
8 males	} children under 1 year old.
8 females	

Also Mrs. Elmslie, the captain's wife, and child, making a total of 435 passengers.

Her cargo consisted of about 340 tons dead weight, iron rails and cement, and about 700 tons of measurement goods. The latter included 1,732 gallons of linseed oil, 100 gallons of colza oil, 1 ton 8 cwt. of palm oil, 95 gallons of turpentine, 178 gallons of varnish, and some small quantities of pitch, tar, paints, and candles; also a quantity of rum, brandy, and other spirits, amounting to 5,732 gallons wine, 1,488 gallons, and beer 184 barrels. The remainder of the cargo consisted of light goods. These were exclusive of emigrant's stores.

This cargo was described by the several witnesses as being an ordinary colonial cargo, and such as carried in emigrant and other vessels.

This stowage of the cargo and stores is minutely described in the evidence. Part of the coals for the ship's use were in the fore peak, which was separated from the fore hold by a wooden partition. The remainder of the coals, some 20 tons, were abaft this partition, and close to it. Some of these coals were trimmed under the water tanks and by the sides of the hold, upon which stood some 40 cans of oil. The pitch and tar and salt provisions were stored in the wings of the fore hold. Abaft the water tanks the oil was stowed, then some bales of light goods, which formed a temporary bulkhead forward of the bottled beer, which was in casks. In the fore part of the main hatch were four butts of wine and 25 casks of rum, and further aft, extending to the stern-post, the wine and remainder of the spirits.

The vessel carried six boats, their cubical contents together being 2,747 feet. They consisted of two life-boats, carried on davits, one on each quarter before the mizen-mast. A long-boat and the captain's gig were on skids between the fore part of the poop, and the main-mast, and the two other boats on skids forward. She was commanded by Mr. Alexander Elmslie, a skilful and brave officer, who held a master's certificate of competency, and manned by a crew of forty-four hands all told, making a total of 479 souls on board. On the 10th of September she was inspected at Gravesend by the Emigration Officers, who considered her to have fulfilled the requirements of the Passengers Act, and accordingly certified her for clearance.

On the 11th of September she left Gravesend on her intended voyage, during which eight children died, and two were born. All went well till the night of the 17th of November. On the day before the two life-boats had been cleaned preparatory to painting, and all the gear had been taken out and placed on the poop; the oars, masts, and life belts were, however, put back into them. At midnight of the 17th, the second mate's watch, Mr. Henry McDonald, expired. On being relieved, he walked round the deck, and finding everything apparently in good order, went below and turned in, and fell off to sleep. In about half an hour afterwards he was awoke by the alarm of fire. He at once came on deck and met the captain, who gave him orders to go forward and see what was the matter; he did so, and found a great quantity of smoke issuing from the fore scuttle and fore hatch. The watch on deck were in the act of getting the force pumps ready, and the passengers were rushing about

* For the evidence as reported by the *Times*, *vide* p. 71.