

R E P O R T
OF
CAPTAIN WALKER,
OF THE NAVAL DEPARTMENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE,
ON AN
INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE, CIRCUMSTANCES, AND CAUSES
ATTENDING THE
WRECK OF THE “QUEEN VICTORIA;”
TOGETHER WITH THE
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Her Majesty's Command.



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AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WHITEHALL,

THE 18TH FEBRUARY 1853.

By the Right Honourable the Lords of the Committee of Council appointed for the consideration of all matters relating to Trade and Foreign Plantations.

PRESENT :

The Right Honourable Edward Cardwell.

My Lords are pleased to direct that Captain W. H. Walker, H.C.S., a Member of the Naval Department of this Board, shall hold an inquiry as to the nature, circumstances, and causes attending the late wreck of the steamship "Queen Victoria" of Dublin, by striking on the rocks off Howth Head in the County of Dublin, on the morning of the 15th instant, on her passage from Liverpool to Dublin.

EDW. CARDWELL.

REPORT OF CAPTAIN WALKER.

To the Right Honourable the LORDS OF THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVY COUNCIL FOR TRADE.

MY LORDS,

PURSUANT to your Lordships' warrant of the 16th of February, directing me to hold an inquiry into the causes and circumstances attending the wreck of the steamer, "Queen Victoria," belonging to the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, I proceeded to Dublin, where I arrived on the 20th instant. On the following morning (Monday) I called on the collector of customs, Samuel Price Edwards, Esquire, who kindly gave me a room in the Custom House to conduct the investigation.

I found that the managing director of the Company, Mr. Watson, had arrived from London, and I apprised him of the purport of my visit to Dublin, and mentioned the persons belonging to the vessel I should wish to examine, and requested some documents which would be necessary. He cheerfully offered every assistance and information he could give me. In consequence of the mate and part of the crew being summoned to Kingstown, as witnesses before the coroner's jury, I was obliged to defer my investigation until the termination of the inquest. Considering that I should be carrying out the wishes of your Lordships by being present at the examination, and collecting evidence which might elicit every particular as to the loss of this unfortunate vessel, I accordingly proceeded to Kingstown, and have to express my obligation to Mr. Davis, the coroner, for giving me a seat on the bench, with permission to put any questions to the witnesses which I might think necessary, and which I occasionally did, through him. For three successive days I attended this inquiry, until its termination on the evening of the 23d.

At 10 o'clock on the following morning I commenced my duties at the Custom House, and took the depositions on oath of the following witnesses, whose evidence is annexed hereto :—

Thomas Davis, the mate, who had charge of the watch when the vessel struck.

Lieutenant Sarsfield R.N., marine superintendent of the Steam Packet Company.

Phineas Howell, secretary to the Company.

Henry Vereker, ballast-master, and for many years secretary to the Corporation of the Ballast Board of Dublin.

Charles Ralph, *Patrick Darcey*, and *Matthew Maguire*, passengers ; and *Andrew Robertson* and *John Jackson*, seamen belonging to the vessel.

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After the investigation was concluded, the Dublin Steam Packet Company kindly furnished me with a steamer to visit the scene of the accident, when I found the wreck of the unfortunate vessel lying in 12 or 13 fathoms water, with a portion of the broken mainmast a few feet above the water, about 150 yards from the point whereon the Bailey Lighthouse is situated.

Having elicited the particulars attending the loss of the vessel, and carefully considered the evidence, I have now the honour to report, for your Lordships' information, that the steam-ship "Queen Victoria," belonging to the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, of 337 tons register, and propelled by engines of 250 horse-power, left Liverpool for Dublin on the afternoon of the 14th of February at about three o'clock, and passed the N.W. Light Ship at twenty-three minutes past four, with the wind moderate from the N.E., and the weather fine but cloudy. The crew consisted of 24 persons, including the master and three mates, and there appear to have been 12 cabin and 75 deck passengers, besides the stewardess, making a total of 112 persons. The ship was properly equipped, and, in addition to what is required by the Steam Navigation Act, she had an extra life-boat and ninety cork jackets placed in boxes on the quarter-deck under the seats. The officers had the character of being careful and experienced men. The master had been twenty-five years in the service of the company; Mr. Davis, the mate, twenty-eight years in the same employ, thirteen of which he had filled the situation as first mate. It appears by the evidence of Davis that the two quarter-boats would each contain twenty persons, and the two life-boats would hold double that number; but unfortunately these boats, instead of being suspended over the side, were placed upon chocks on board, and it was necessary to raise them about three feet, and reverse the davits, before they could be lowered into the water,—an operation easily performed by a practised and well-disciplined crew, but a work of time in a vessel with a large number of passengers in a state of confusion. The instructions issued by the company to their officers direct the commanders not to go at full speed in thick or foggy weather. I regret these orders were not attended to. After leaving the N.W. Light Ship the "Victoria" shaped a proper course, and at 8.30 sighted the Skerries Light, the weather still continuing moderate. At fifty minutes past midnight the Bailey Light was seen right ahead, or a very little on the starboard bow; and about two o'clock A.M. the lights on the Kish were also observed. About this time a snow shower came on, which obscured everything, and in less than half an hour the vessel ran with the speed of eight or nine knots upon the rocks. The engines were reversed, and in a few minutes she sunk in deep water.

In accordance with my instructions, it now becomes my duty to refer to the evidence, and to submit to your Lordships' attention the conduct of those in charge of the vessel.

As regards Captain Church, the master of the Queen Victoria, whose character up to the time of the loss of the vessel appears to have been praiseworthy, and whose experience from having been so many years in the service of the Steam Packet Company must have been considerable, I regret that it is my painful duty to condemn his conduct most strongly. Having been called at 50 minutes past midnight, and told that the Bailey Light was in sight, and having been again told at ten minutes before two o'clock that the weather was so thick from a snow shower as to obscure the lights, and to prevent objects being seen the length of the vessel, instead of giving orders to slow the engines, or going immediately upon deck, he said to the mate, "There is no fear of the land; the danger is from meeting vessels." About two o'clock he appears to have gone on deck; but the evidence upon this point is conflicting. Whether he did so or not, it is proved that the ship was then going at a speed of eight or nine knots an hour; that the Kish Lights had been seen a few minutes before, bearing a point or two abaft the beam, which, with the Bailey Light W.N.W., would place the vessel within three miles of the shore, and the course steered was directly for it. Captain Church was not heard to give any orders. He had lead and log lines on board, but he neither sounded nor ascertained how fast she was going, nor did he slacken speed, or adopt any precaution to prevent the fearful accident which took place. After the vessel struck, his presence of mind appears entirely to have deserted him. He ordered her to be backed from the rocks; but it was soon found she was sinking. The snow shower had passed over; the morning was fine, and the water smooth; the boats might easily have

been prepared, and the lives of the people saved ; but no directions were given. One quarter boat succeeded in getting away with seventeen passengers, and reached the shore in safety, not a sailor belonging to the steamer being in her. The other quarter boat was improperly lowered, and the people in her precipitated into the sea, and drowned. The two life-boats, which ought to have saved the lives of so many, appear to have gone down with the vessel. The result is, that thus the lives of fifty-nine persons, including the unfortunate master, have been sacrificed for the want of proper care and attention. If when the thick weather came on the direction of the steamer's head had been altered, and the engines slowed, the disaster would in my opinion not have taken place.

The conduct of Thomas Davis, the mate, was greatly to blame. He acted in obedience to his orders in calling the master when the Bailey Light was first seen ; also when the change took place in the weather. He states that he ordered four bells to be struck (two o'clock), and told the men to "keep a good look out," for that the captain was not upon deck ; but he had seen the Kish Light a point or two abaft the beam, and ought to have known he was close to the land, and he should then have stopped the engines, and have informed the master, and I consider him very culpable in not having done so. In his evidence he states that, after she struck, he appointed persons by name to prepare the boats ; but none of the witnesses heard these orders given to any individual in particular, and they do not appear to have been acted upon. Mr. Davis considers he would have been guilty of a breach of discipline in stopping the vessel without the orders of the captain, and he appears to have been vigilant in watching the men on the look-out from the time of his coming on deck, and after the accident he made signals of distress, by which the position of the wreck was denoted to the steamer "Roscommon," on her way from Dublin to Liverpool, and the lives of several persons saved in consequence.

I now beg to refer your Lordships to the evidence of Mr. Vereker, ballast-master, and for many years secretary to the Ballast Board of Dublin, from which it appears that in consequence of a steamer called the "Prince," belonging to the same Company, having struck her bowsprit against the rocks under the Hill of Howth in 1846, a correspondence took place between Mr. Howell the secretary and the Corporation, the former suggesting and the latter admitting the necessity of having a fog-bell on the Bailey Lighthouse, and that a resolution to have one there was passed at a Board meeting, and was entered in the minute book ; that a bell was procured from London, and forwarded to Dublin, but that it had not been put up, in consequence, as he stated, of matters of more importance inducing the inspector to postpone its erection ; but he added, it is now the intention of the Corporation to have it put up with as little delay as possible. Your Lordships will, however, perceive that upwards of six years have elapsed since the Ballast Board admitted the necessity of having a bell on the Bailey, and up to the present time it has not been put up ; and Lieutenant Sarsfield, R.N., Mr. Howell, the secretary of the Steam Packet Company, and Mr. Davis, the mate, are all of opinion (with which opinion I concur) that had there been a bell there to have given an alarm the vessel would not have been lost, and it is to be hoped that no time will be lost in placing one in that situation. Having attended the coroner's inquest, I cannot refrain from remarking on a portion of the evidence, by which it appears that four hours before the "Victoria" struck there was no person on watch in the Lighthouse,—the person in charge awoke by hearing the cries of the shipwrecked parties on the rocks,—and that one of the keepers, from infirmity of age, being between seventy and eighty, could scarcely be expected efficiently to perform the duties of his station.

It now becomes my pleasing duty to bring to the notice of your Lordships the conduct of Patrick Darcy, the young seaman who by his presence of mind in putting his finger in the plug-hole of the boat, and by unremitting exertions, prevented her from sinking, and in company with the two other passengers (Ralph and Kegg) succeeded in landing fourteen persons, and on going a second time to the wreck in saving four others who had taken refuge in the rigging of the vessel when she went down.

To conclude, the result of my investigation is as follows :—

- 1st. The "Victoria" was lost through the negligence of the master in not sounding, stopping the engines, or taking proper precautions when the snow-shower came on.

- 2d. The conduct of the mate was to blame. He supposed the master was below, and ought to have known that the danger was imminent, and should have stopped the speed of the vessel.
- 3d. The steamer was well found in all respects, with the exception that the boats were not so placed as to be ready for immediate use.
- 4th. Had there been a fog-bell on the Bailey Light it is probable the accident might have been prevented.
- 5th. That the Lighthouse was not properly attended to.

The question of the fog-bell and the condition of the Lighthouse and its establishment are for your Lordships' consideration. With regard to the boats, I deem it my duty to state my opinion, founded on the present and former cases of accident, and to suggest, that it would be very desirable if in all cases the boats of steamers were so placed as to be immediately ready for use, and if the officers in charge were instructed to station portions of the crew to the boats and to hold them responsible for their use and efficiency when required.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WALKER.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Inquiry into the loss of the steam ship "Queen Victoria," of Dublin, belonging to the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, instituted by Captain W. H. WALKER of the Naval Department of the Board of Trade, by the direction of the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council for Trade, by their Warrant dated the 18th day of February 1853.

The evidence of CHARLES RALPH of Wicklow in the county of Wicklow, but formerly serving on board one of the post office packets out of the port of Falmouth, having a retired allowance from the revenue, taken upon oath.

On Monday evening the 14th instant (February 1853), I left Liverpool as a passenger on board the "Queen Victoria." She left Liverpool at between twenty minutes past and half past three o'clock. The weather was fine, and the wind about north-north-east. In our passage we sighted the lights from Liverpool to the Skerries. The weather continued fine till about one o'clock on Tuesday morning, when the wind drew round to the north-west, with heavy snow and thick weather. About two o'clock I was standing on the starboard bow when I saw the Kish Lights, broad on the port bow; the Bailey Light I could not see then, on account of the snow. At half past two o'clock she struck. The mate about this time called out "Stop her," but she was on the rocks before it could be done. The engines were immediately reversed, and she receded into deep water. At this time the captain was alongside the man at the wheel, and one of the men reported that the vessel was filled with water, and the captain gave directions to steer for the land. At this time the water had extinguished the fires (before she proceeded farther); she was fast settling down; great confusion arose on deck. She had four boats, one at each quarter and two farther forward. I saw the starboard quarter boat in the water, and many of the passengers struggling for life; the boat sunk; I believe the persons to have been drowned. I went round to the port side, and found the quarter boat had been lowered. The tackles were not clear when I took hold of one, and lowered myself down into the boat. We had great difficulty in managing the boat, the oars being securely lashed, and the boat fast filling with water in consequence of our not being able to find any plug. There were no sailors belonging to the vessel in the boat, but fortunately three of the passengers in the boat had been to sea; one of them put his fingers into the plug-hole, and the other two succeeded in pulling the boat to the rocks under the Head of Howth, where fourteen passengers were landed, there having been seventeen in the boat altogether. D'Arcy, Kegg, and myself saw at this time a steamer's lights, which proved to be those of the "Roscommon." There being much water in the boat at this time, we pulled towards her, thinking to get a cork to put in the plughole, which we succeeded in doing. We then pulled the boat towards the "Queen Victoria," which by this time had sunk about a hundred yards from the shore, only her mastheads being visible. Four or five passengers were clinging to the foremast, whose lives we succeeded in saving. Some few were clinging to the mainmast, who we would have taken in, only the "Roscommon's" boat came up. We then proceeded to the "Roscommon," when we were taken on board, and landed in Kingstown at about half past seven A.M. I was on deck the greater part of the way. I saw two or three persons on the look-out over the bridge and on the paddle boxes. I heard no orders given by the captain or mate, nor did the sailors give any assistance to save the lives of the passengers. The vessel was going at full speed when she struck. As a sailor I consider great want of care was evinced by not slackening the speed when they were so near the land, the Kish Light having been very distinct about half an hour before she struck. The weather cleared up immediately after the ship struck, when the engines were reversed. We saw the Bailey Light directly over head. The lead was not hove at any time during the passage, nor did I see any extra care evinced as we approached the land.

CHARLES RALPH.

At one o'clock the inquiry was adjourned, Captain Walker having proceeded to Kings town to attend the coroner's inquest, which did not terminate till Wednesday evening 23d February.

Thursday, 24th.—The inquiry was resumed at ten o'clock A.M.

THOMAS DAVIS, *first mate of the "Queen Victoria" steamer, sworn:—*

I HAVE been forty-two years at sea, twenty-eight of which have been in the service of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, and thirteen years as first mate in different steamers.

We left Liverpool at ten minutes past three o'clock P.M. on the 14th February. Passed the North-west Light Ship at 4.23. A smart breeze from the north-east, with cloudy weather. The captain went below, and left me in charge, and desired me to call him when we were near Point Lynus. At 7.45 the captain came on deck, Point Lynus being on our beam. He told me to go below, which I did. The usual practice was for me to go below when the captain came up, and for the captain to go below when I came up. I was not called up, but hearing eight bells strike I came up soon afterwards, and found the captain walking on the quarter deck. He said, "We passed the Skerries at 8.50, course W.N.W. Mind the wheel is relieved at two o'clock, and course given correct. Call me at two o'clock; we shall not be up at the Bailey till 2.45." My reply was, "We will be there before that." He said "No." On that he went below, and said, "Let me know when you see the Bailey." The light was reported nearly right ahead by the man on the bridge. I went from the quarter-deck, and saw it, and satisfied myself that it was the Bailey Light. I looked at the watch, and saw it was 12.50., and then went down, and reported to the captain that we had made the Bailey. The wind was N.E., the night fine, but cloudy, and a smart breeze. The captain said, "Call me at two o'clock, fair or foul. If it comes on thick, call me immediately." At 1.50 A.M. a tremendous shower of snow came on. Immediately I called him up, saying, "Captain Church, it is very dark with snow." He asked the hour, and looked at his watch. I then did the same, and said, "It is 1.50." He replied, "There is no danger from the land; the fear is meeting the vessels." I then returned to the deck, and went on the bridge. The wind came ahead, and I took in the foresail. I ordered four bells to be struck. I called to a man of the name of Jackson who had the look-out, and told him to keep a strict look-out, for I did not see the captain, and to port or starboard if he saw any danger. I walked on the quarter-deck, and saw a man, and said, "Is that you, Captain Church?" He said, "It is." We both walked aft to the binnacle together, and took out our watches. The time was four minutes past two. I then returned to the bridge, as Captain Church never left the deck without informing me. In a quarter of an hour or thereabouts, afterwards, I saw the land right ahead, and immediately called out, "Stop her." The engine was directly stopped. I then said, "Reverse full speed." I saw the captain on the fore part of the quarter-deck. He said, "What is the matter?" I said, "Here's the land." He said, "Oh, my God! reverse." My reply was, "She is reversed." The engine had reversed two or three revolutions when she struck upon the rocks. I then called out, "Stop her, and go a-head full speed." The captain hailed, "What are you going a-head for, why not reverse?" I said, "No. Go a-head, and see what damage is done to the vessel." The reply was, "Well thought of." I then ordered Gilbertson, the third mate, to go to the fore-peak to see if there was any water or damage there. I walked aft, and found the captain at the binnacle. I found it was 25 minutes past two o'clock. We walked to the bridge together, to see if any of the people could be landed. Gilbertson called out, "There is a little water on the fore peak." The captain said, "She does not make so much water; we will go round the Bailey, for no man can land here. We will beach her there if we can." He then gave orders to reverse; after two or three turns she backed off into deep water. We then found she was filling fast. He then ordered the boats to be cleared away, and gave directions to port the helm, and run on shore to save life and property if possible. She soon struck again and remain fixed. I then ordered Gilbertson to take charge of the starboard quarter boat, and save as many lives as he could. He failed in doing so, in consequence of the crowd of passengers. A person unknown had caught the stern tackle, which precipitated the people into the sea. I believe they were all drowned. I ordered John Williams, the second mate, to take charge of the port life-boat. I ordered some of the men to clear away the starboard life-boat, and then went aft, and commenced making signals of distress by burning red lights, which were answered by another vessel, which proved to be the "Roscommon" steamer, the property of the same Company, going from Dublin to Holyhead. At this time the vessel was sinking fast. I called out to the people, "Save yourselves the best way you can." I went up the main rigging with the captain, stewardess, carpenter, some of the crew, and passengers. Before we were many feet above the deck the vessel sunk, and plunged us some depth under water. I succeeded in assisting the stewardess up to the crosstrees, where we remained till we were picked up by the "Roscommon's" boat. We do not keep a regular log, but a journal, which was lost on board the vessel.

The thick weather came on at 1.50, and lasted thirty-five minutes.

What precautions were used after the fog came on?—I told the captain, as I was ordered.

Were the engines going at full speed during the thick weather and up to the time the land was seen, which was about two minutes before she struck?—I gave no orders to ease them.

Did you hear Captain Church give any orders?—I did not. Had any orders been given I should have been aware of them.

At what speed was the vessel going?—I believe eight or nine knots an hour.

Was the water smooth during the passage?—There was a cross sea till we lost sight of the Skerries, and the water was smooth the rest of the passage.

When did you first see the Kish Light?—I saw it about a point before the beam, but did not take any notice of the time.

At what distance do you usually sight the Bailey in fine weather?—Fifteen or sixteen miles.

Were the Kish and the Bailey visible at the same time?—They were not.

As a careful man, and having lost sight of both lights in thick weather, do you not think it would have been prudent to have eased the engines, or to have stopped them?—When the thick weather came on I called the captain, and received no orders from him to do so.

From your own showing you expected to make the land in less than forty or fifty minutes; the speed was eight or nine knots. I ask you whether any prudent man in such case ought to have stopped or eased the engines of his vessel?—Had I command of the vessel I would have done so.

You called the captain at 1.50 A.M. How long was it afterward when he came on deck?—I don't know. I spoke to him at four minutes past two o'clock.

What did you say to him?—I said, "Captain Church, is this you?" He said, "Yes," and he either said, "What time is it?" or "What time did you call me?"

From your proximity to the land, do not you consider that you neglected your duty in not knowing whether the captain was on deck or not?—I do not.

Had you any deep sea lead and hand leads with the lines on board?—We had.

Did you take any soundings?—I did not.

Why did you not do so?—I did not receive any orders.

Having been forty years at sea, and being in charge of the deck of a vessel approaching the land in thick weather, was it not your duty to have seen the captain, and suggest to him that soundings should be taken?—It was never the practice to sound; but had I been master of a vessel I should certainly have done so.

When you went down to Captain Church at 1.50 he said, "There was no fear of the land; the danger was of meeting vessels." The weather being so thick with snow that you could not see more than the ship's length, and the speed of the vessel eight or nine knots, what would have been the result if you met a vessel?—If it had been a small vessel, we must have run her down.

Such being the state of the weather, and having upwards of a hundred people on board, do not you consider it highly imprudent for the persons in charge not to take some precaution in the event of meeting vessels, when it would have been impossible to avoid danger?—I do.

What number did the crew consist of, and what were their stations?—Twenty-four; namely, the captain, three mates, one carpenter, two engineers, six stokers, two coal trimmers, six sailors, one cook, two boys. There was also a stewardess attached to the vessel.

Have you reason to be satisfied with their efficiency?—I think we should have had more strength.

Do you consider six seamen sufficient?—I do not.

Was the "Queen Victoria" found in all respects as to stores and equipments as she should be?—She had everything required.

What number of boats had you?—Four; two of them were life-boats.

Had they their oars and boat-hooks in them, and were they in every respect fit for service?—They had.

Were plugs attached to each boat?—Yes; and a spare cork besides.

Were all the boats suspended from davits?—They were.

Were the davits turned in board, or were the boats suspended over the side?—The two quarter-boats were in chocks on the quarter-deck, and the waste boats on chocks on the house abaft the paddle-box.

Were there any coverings on them?—The starboard life-boat was the only one covered.

Were the oars in the boats lashed in any way?—They were, with a piece of spun-yarn or something, and a piece of canvas tied over them, to prevent their being taken away unknown to us.

How long would it have taken to release those oars ready for service?—About half a minute.

What height were the iron davits above the gunwales?—Sufficient to turn the boats off.

What is your object in keeping the boats so secure, especially in smooth water?—Safety.

The boats being on deck, how long would it take to get them over the side into the water?—About five minutes.

Do you consider it unsafe to have the boats hanging over the side?—I do.

What became of the four boats after the vessel struck?—The starboard quarter-boat was swamped by letting go the stern tackle; the port quarter-boat saved the lives of several passengers; the port life-boat was found full of water, with two passengers in her, whose lives were saved by the "Roscommon" boat; the starboard life-boat went down with the vessel.

How long did you remain on the rocks before you reversed?—I cannot exactly say, but it was a very short time.

Was it three minutes?—I cannot give any time.

After you reversed, what distance did you go from the land before you found the vessel sinking?—About a hundred yards.

Then what time elapsed before she grounded a second time?—I cannot say; but the current took her head from the land, and we ported her helm, and got toward it again.

Did you hear Captain Church give any orders as to saving the lives of the passengers?—He told me to clear away the boats.

Did you do anything more than what you have said in your evidence?—I did not.

How many persons do you suppose your four boats would have conveyed safely to the shore?—They each pulled five oars. I consider the quarter-boats would have contained twenty each, and the life-boat about double that number.

Then if the boats had been properly managed would they have saved the lives of every person?—They would.

How many compasses had you on deck?—Two in our binnacle, placed on each side of the wheel.

Had these compasses been adjusted?—They have been on shore occasionally to be overhauled. I think the last time was a little before Christmas.

After passing the Skerries, shaping your course, allowing for the tide, do you usually make the Bailey correctly?—We do.

What charts had you on board?—I do not know. They were kept in the cabin.

Have you anything more to state?—Nothing, Sir. I have told every word I know.

Supposing there had been a fog-bell on the Bailey, and had it been ringing, do you think the "Queen Victoria" would have been lost?—I do not.

Having crossed the Channel so repeatedly, do you think a fog-bell is necessary?—Certainly.

Who were the persons on the look-out from dark until the wreck of the vessel?—There is always an officer on the bridge, night and day; and a seaman with him during the day, two at night.

THOMAS DAVIES.

DOMINICK SARFIELD, *Marine Superintendent of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, sworn:—*

I am a lieutenant in the Royal Navy.

Was the "Queen Victoria" fully equipped with stores and equipments required by the Steam Navigation Act?—She was, and more than the Act requires.

How long had Captain Church been in the service of the Company?—I believe since the year 1825. I know he was commander of the Company's vessels more than twelve years.

Did you always consider him a sober and efficient officer, and capable of performing his duties?—I did; very much so.

Do the Company issue any regulations as to the general conduct of the officers?—Yes.

Can you favour me with a copy of those regulations?—I can, and will forward it to you from Liverpool.

Do they touch at all as to the management of vessels in foul and thick weather?—Yes.

Had Captain Church a copy of these regulations?—To the best of my belief, he had them on board, as he signed a receipt for it.

Will you tell me whether they have instructions to slow the engines in thick weather?—They have.

Had you been in command of the "Queen Victoria," and having made the Bailey Light right a-head one hour before the thick weather came on, will you, as an officer of the Royal Navy, and having yourself commanded a mail packet, tell me what you would have done?—I should have slowed my engines, and starboarded my helm half a point, to bring the Bailey Light more on the starboard bow, and having run my time nearly I should have stopped the engines.

Would you have considered it necessary to have sounded?—I would not; the rocks are steep-to; the lead would not guide me to them. If I had not seen the Bailey Light at all I would have had the lead going.

Why would you consider it more necessary to sound, not having seen the Bailey?—Fearing I should have been to the southward of the Bailey, I should have sounded for fear of the Kish Bank.

The weather being so thick that you lost sight of the Bailey for half an hour, would it not be necessary to adopt the same precaution?—I think not, because the water is as deep close to the rocks as it is a mile or two from Howth.

Are the Company's vessels furnished with log lines, and do you know if they are kept marked ready for use?—They are furnished with them, and I believe they are kept ready.

Do you consider twenty-four men sufficient for the management of the vessel?—I do.

Do you consider the engines were in good working order?—I do.

Will you kindly tell me to what you attribute the loss of the vessel?—Miscalculating the effects of the flood tide, the distance run, and not slowing the engines.

Do you consider it would be the duty of the mate (he being in charge), expecting to make the land in half an hour, and having called the captain, who was not seen upon deck, that he should have slowed the engines?—I think he should.

Are you satisfied with the mate's conduct on this occasion?—With the exception of his not slowing the engines, I am.

What are the Company's regulations as to the look-out to be kept on board the vessels?—There is always to be a man on the look-out, and an officer on the bridge.

Have you anything to suggest as to the lights in and round Dublin Bay, and are they as well attended and as brilliant as they should be?—I have nothing to suggest in the way of lights, and I think they are well attended and as brilliant as they should be.

Can you tell me if any of the lights in the bay have fog-bells?—The Kish Light and Kingstown Harbour are the only two I know of.

In consequence of the coast being so bold, and the soundings giving so little guide, do not you think a fog-bell on the Bailey necessary?—I think it is absolutely necessary.

Do you consider that had a fog-bell been ringing on the Bailey the "Queen Victoria" would not have been lost?—I really believe she would not, as the bell would have been heard.

Will you tell me if the compasses are adjusted in the Company's vessels?—They are adjusted by magnets in the iron vessels, and the others we have never had cause to complain of.

Are the vessels supplied with charts? If so, are these charts published by authority?—They are; with charts published under authority of the Admiralty.

I believe all your vessels are provided with a small gun and a magazine, in addition to the usual blue lights?—They are.

Have you any further information to give relative to this unfortunate occurrence?—I wish merely to add, that in addition to the equipments required by the Steam Navigation Act, the "Queen Victoria" had ninety cork life-preservers on board.

Will you have the goodness to tell me whether those were made use of?—Not to my knowledge; but they were strewn about the deck, for several of them were picked up floating.

What part of the vessel were they kept in?—On the quarter-deck, under the chains.

Was each life-preserver sufficient to support one person?—Plenty.

(Signed) DOMINICK SANSFIELD.

Friday, February 25, 1833.—Inquiry resumed at ten o'clock A.M.

PATRICK DARCY, of Sir John Rogerson's Quay in the City of Dublin, sworn :—

I am a seaman. I was a passenger on board the "Queen Victoria." Was in bed when the vessel struck. Was on deck before she was reversed. Before I came out of the fore-castle they lifted the hatch; the water was about a foot or a foot and a half from the fore-castle floor. After I went on deck I walked the fore-castle, and then returned to the fore-castle hatch. I saw the water washing about above the floor, as the ship was fast sinking by the head. I then went to the quarter-deck. I stood by one of the boats, to assist in lowering her down, if any orders should be given. Not hearing any, I helped some of the passengers to hoist her over the gunwale, and lowered away the after tackle. There were no orders given by any one; all was confusion. I stood by the after-tackle of the starboard quarter-boat. I lowered away the boat, because I thought they were lowering the fore-tackle. The passengers jumped into her. The pin attached to the davit was bent, so that I could not get a second turn of the rope to prevent it slipping. I lowered away as well as I could, until I was forced to let go. If there was a sailor at the fore-tackle it would have been lowered, unless it was foul; but I did not see any of them, to the best of my recollection. I then went to the other side; helped to lower away one of the tackles there. I do not know who assisted me, but she was lowered properly. I was the last one to get into her. I found the boat half full of water. Knowing where it came from, I put my finger in the plug hole. In searching for the plug-hole, I felt all round, and if there had been a plug attached I should have found it. I cannot swear there was not one, it being in the dark; but I will swear there was not one where it ought to have been; it should be close to the plug-hole. I did not feel one. If any were there, I can solemnly swear I would have found them. It was underneath the water I searched for them. If Ralph Kegg and myself had not been there, there was no one but the passengers to lower the quarter-boats, and they would all have been lost. There were no orders given to lower the boats, as there ought to have been. The weather was good when she struck. When we backed her off the rocks, and turned her head round to the south, I heard a person order to put the helm a-port or starboard, but I don't know which. There was very slight snow falling when I came on deck; an odd flake now and then; and I could see the Bailey Light and land right over our heads. It was about three minutes after she struck until I was on deck, and a snow-storm could not in that time have cleared away. The upper part of the pin of the davit was jammed, and not in order.

How long have you been at sea, and what is your age?—My age is twenty-three. I am nearly eight years at sea.

Was the steamer knocking about much after she struck?—She remained fixed until the engines were reversed. The water was perfectly smooth.

Did you see the captain, mate, or any of the crew assist to lower the boats?—No, Sir.

Had a sailor been stationed at the head and stern tackles, with orders not to leave them, might the lives of the passengers all have been saved?—Had the boats been properly attended to most of them might have been saved.

After lowering the port quarter-boat, what did you do?—I saw a female jump from the deck into the boat, and slipped down by the after tackle into it myself.

How many persons were there in the boat?—Sixteen and myself. The boat being half full of water, we pushed off to the shore.

You then put your finger into the plug-hole?—I did.

What distance had you to pull before you came to the shore?—I think we were about a quarter of a mile from the shore, but in consequence of the oars being lashed the boat drifted some distance, and we had to launch the oars over the stern to clear the lashing.

When you reached the shore, what did you do?—We landed fourteen of the passengers, when Ralph Kegg and myself pulled off to the "Roscommon" steamer, to get a plug, my finger having, with the assistance of a handkerchief, stopped the plughole. We met the "Roscommon" boat leaving the vessel, going to the assistance of the "Queen Victoria." We asked for a plug. They returned to their own vessel to get some.

As the "Roscommon's" boat was going to rescue the passengers, why did she return to get you a plug?—I think I heard one of them say they had not a plug themselves.

After getting a cork from the "Roscommon," what did you do?—Ralph Kegg and myself pulled back, to see if we could save any more passengers.

Did you save any more?—We found the vessel had sunk, but succeeded in saving four or five who were clinging to the rigging of the foremast. These we took on board of the "Roscommon," which vessel took us into Kingstown Harbour.

What time elapsed between your leaving the wreck in the boat and returning to her?—I cannot say, only two persons being able to pull the oars.

How many oars were there in the boat?—I don't know, but believe she had four.

When you were on deck, did you see any persons on the bridge or keeping a look-out?—I did; but I turned in between eight and nine o'clock, and did not awake till the vessel struck.

What time do you think elapsed between your meeting the "Roscommon's" boat and her return to you with the plug?—I should say seven or eight minutes.

Have you any further information to give?—No, Sir.

PATRICK DARCY.

ANDREW ROBERTSON, a seaman on board the "Queen Victoria," sworn:—

I was a seaman on board the "Queen Victoria" on her last voyage from Liverpool to Dublin.

State to the best of your recollection the circumstances attending the loss of the vessel?—It was my watch, and I went to the wheel soon after midnight. Some time before one o'clock, Gilbertson, the third mate, reported a light on the starboard bow, nearly right a-head. I saw the light myself, but could not swear it was the Bailey. About ten minutes before two o'clock I saw the Kish Light nearly a point or two before port beam. I was relieved from the wheel at two o'clock, and went below, and put on a pair of oil skin trowsers, which took me about ten minutes. I then went on the plank by the foremast to look out. Was about ten minutes there when I saw the land, and was going to report it when I heard the mate call out, "Stop her;" but in less than twenty seconds she struck. I jumped off the plank, as we were so close under the rocks that I thought they appeared as if they would fall on our heads. I went to see if the people were getting up, and then returned to the plank. Went back again to the fore-castle, and found the bunks drove in. I went to the port quarter-boat,—me and John Jackson. I then cleared away the gears of the boat. I cut the after-gear to allow the davits to swing as the boat was on chocks on the quarter-deck. I left Jackson there, and went to the starboard life-boat. Kelmody, one of the sailors, and myself, cut away the gripes of her, and another seaman came and was taking the covering off. I left them, and went to clear away the larboard life-boat, and cut the gripes adrift. The second mate then came and put the plug in. We succeeded in getting her over the side, but the passengers jumped in; the boat swamped. The painter being foul, we tried to raise her up, but could not succeed. About this time the vessel sunk. I was washed overboard, and succeeded in getting hold of the topsail braces, and pulled myself to the fore rigging, and was taken off by our own boat, which had returned from the shore, after having landed passengers.

When the Bailey Light was reported, how were you steering?—W.N.W.

Did you continue to steer that course?—I did.

When you first saw the Bailey, was the weather fine and the water smooth?—Yes; the weather was fine and the water smooth, with light breeze from the north east.

Did you see the Kish and the Bailey at the same time?—No, Sir.

You state you saw the Kish Light about ten minutes before two o'clock; had the snow-shower commenced then?—It commenced snowing about ten minutes before I saw the Kish; when I left the wheel it was snowing heavy, and the lights were obscured.

As the weather was such as to enable you to see the Kish, how was it you did not see the Bailey?—The weather was so thick in the direction of the Bailey, which I suppose covered it.

Had the boats their full number of oars, and were they perfectly ready for service?—To the best of my belief, they had, and were ready.

How many of them had their coverings on?—Only one was covered.

Were the davits swung in-board, and the boats resting on their chocks?—They were.

The boats being so placed, how long do you think it would take to get them in the water?—About ten minutes.

How many hands have you always on the look-out?—Always one mate and a seaman.

How many were on the look-out, after you left the wheel, at two o'clock?—There were two; there might have been more.

Was the speed of the vessel stopped, or did you hear any orders given to do so, after the thick weather came on?—It was not, nor did I hear any orders given.

What speed was the vessel going at?—I should think nine knots, to the best of my belief.

How soon after the thick weather came on did Captain Church come up?—I cannot say.

How long did you see him before you left the wheel at two o'clock?—He was then in the act of coming up at the companion.

Did you hear him give any orders up to the time the vessel struck?—I did not.

Did he give any orders about the boats after the vessel struck?—He did not.

Did the mate give any orders?—He did, for he said, "Clear away the boats."

Did he (the mate) say, "Robertson, go and clear away the boats?"—He did not.

To what do you attribute the loss of the vessel?—I should say, from over-running the distance.

How long did you sail with Captain Church in the "Queen Victoria"?—Upwards of six years.

Did you always consider him a prudent and careful man?—He appeared to me to be so.

Who relieved you at the wheel at two o'clock?—Charles Morgan.

Where is he now?—At Liverpool, sick, caused by the wreck of the vessel.

ANDREW ROBERTSON.

MATHEW M'GUIRE of *Liverpool in the County of Lancaster*, sworn:—

I was formerly superintendent of police at Howden in Yorkshire, which employment I resigned. Was a passenger on board the "Queen Victoria" steamer from Liverpool to Dublin, on Monday the 14th instant. Was on deck the whole time. When the vessel struck the rocks, about half-past two on Tuesday morning, I was at the bow. There was no person between the fore-part of the paddle-boxes and the bow but myself. When I passed the paddle-boxes, which might be seven or ten minutes before she struck, on looking over the bow I observed a black cloud like. I thought it rather low for a cloud, and began to think it might be land, when I heard some one on the bridge between the two paddle-boxes cry out, "Stop her, stop her;" when she was stopped immediately. She was then going ten knots an hour, to the best of my opinion. I then saw snow on the rocks, which were perpendicular. I knew she would strike. I laid hold of the top gallant fore-castle. When she struck on the rock she fell back, and again struck, settling on the rock. I looked over, and was convinced it was the lower part of the vessel under her bows that was injured. There was no person on the look-out on the bows from the time I went there but the mate was on the bridge. The snow was not falling thick when I went to the bows, and was clearing when she struck. I did not see the Bailey Light before she struck, but I saw it very brilliant when we backed off the rock. I did not see the lead hove, nor do I believe it was so. The quarter-boats were on the deck, but the boats at the paddle-boxes were, I believe, in slings. I heard the order given to back her off the rocks, which was done. We went into deep water farther out than I liked when she began to sink. The bows came again to the land. It was my opinion that the captain intended to run her round the point, from the course he steered, and run her on the beach, which is sandy there. They then endeavoured to lower the boats. The sea was smooth. It was calm, but there was a long swell. There was great confusion. The passengers filled the boats before lowering, and there was great difficulty in getting them out. In all other vessels I have seen one or more men in the bows on the look-out, but there was no man on the bows from the time I went there. I believe the black cloud which I observed, and which afterwards turned out to be the rock, intervened between me and the Bailey Light, prevented my seeing it, for after she struck I looked back and saw the Kish Light.

How did you escape from the vessel?—I was standing on the port-bow when the vessel gave a lurch before sinking, and a long swell washed me in the sea. I had a small carpet-bag in one hand and a hat-box in the other, but was obliged to let them go, so many people being about me. I then got hold of two planks, which I relinquished in consequence of other parties coming to it. I succeeded in getting back to the rigging of the vessel, and then swam ashore, and, with the assistance of the second engineer there, managed to get upon the rocks. Being much exhausted, and scarcely having the use of my limbs, with great difficulty I got to the lighthouse, where I found seven other persons who had escaped from the wreck.

Do you think that had the vessel remained where she first struck the lives of the people might have been saved?—I do, having succeeded in landing in a state of exhaustion myself.

How far had you to go to the lighthouse after landing on the rocks?—About sixty or seventy yards.

Did you hear any orders given by the captain or mate for the preservation of the lives of the passengers?—I did not. There was great confusion, and much difficulty in raising the boats.

MATTHEW M'GUIRE.

JOHN JACKSON, *an able seaman on board the "Queen Victoria,"* sworn:—

I was on the look-out at the bridge of the vessel when she struck, with the third mate (Gilbertson).

Who reported the Bailey Light?—Robert Gilbertson, the third mate, a little before one o'clock.

About what time did you make the Kish Light?—Some time after we had seen the Bailey.

You did not heave the lead?—Not to my knowledge.

How long did the snow-storm last?—It commenced about two o'clock, and lasted till she struck.

Do you know if the boats were properly equipped for use?—I cannot say positively, to my knowledge. I believe that is the carpenter's business.

At what speed was the vessel going?—About eight to nine knots an hour.

Do you know if there were any cork jackets on board?—There were, in square boxes, on the quarter-deck.

Were those jackets distributed to the passengers after the vessel struck?—I did not see.

How did you escape from the wreck of the vessel?—When the vessel sunk I managed to get to the mainmast head, and was taken off by the boats belonging to the "Roscommon."

When you were on the look-out did you see Captain Church?—He might have been on deck, but I did not see him.

Did you hear Captain Church give any orders to prepare the boat to save the passengers?—I did not.

Did you hear the mate give orders?—I heard him say, "Clear away the boats."

Did he name any particular seaman to do so?—He did not. We heard him say, "Clear away the boats."

To what do you attribute the loss of the vessel?—I suppose to the snow-storm.

Have you anything further to add?—I have not.

JOHN JACKSON.

February 26, 1853.—Inquiry resumed at ten o'clock A.M.

HENRY VEREKER of the City of Dublin, ballast-master, sworn :—

Will you kindly inform me what situation you hold under the Ballast Board?—I am ballast-master.

You were formerly the secretary to the Board, I believe?—I was.

When did you cease to be so?—On the 30th of September last.

Can you furnish me with a copy of the regulations or orders you give to persons in charge of lighthouses or light-ships?—Such matters are intrusted to the superintendent of light-ships, but I shall endeavour to do so.

I suppose the usual orders are given for the lights to burn from sunset to sunrise?—They are.

Is there always some one supposed to be on the watch to see that the lights are properly trimmed?—I think two hands on deck all the night.

How many men are stationed at the Bailey Lighthouse?—Two; a principal and an assistant.

Do you know their names?—George Gregory, the present principal; and Denis Nolan, the assistant.

Do you know the age of Gregory?—I do not; but he is an elderly man.

These men have to keep watch and watch all night?—They have; four hours each.

Do you think two persons are sufficient to keep watch all night, when one of them is between seventy and eighty years of age, and to attend to the trimming of the lights?—I do, as long as the elderly man is in good health.

What sort of lamps are used?—Argand lamps, with best refined rape oil.

Have any complaints ever been made to the Ballast Board respecting the lights in and round Dublin Bay?—I do not recollect any.

Are there any fog-bells supplied to the lighthouses or vessels?—All the light vessels are supplied with gongs, and most of the harbour lights with fog-bells.

What lighthouses in Dublin Bay are furnished with fog-bells?—Kingston Harbour and the Poolbeg Light.

Is the Bailey Lighthouse supplied with one?—There is no bell at present there.

Do you remember the circumstance of the "Prince" steamer striking her bowsprit on the rocks near the Bailey some years ago, that is to say, about six or seven years ago?—I recollect hearing of the occurrence.

I believe you were secretary to the Ballast Board at that time?—I was.

Do you recollect if the subject was brought under the notice of the Board; if so, what was done?—I do recollect the subject being brought under the notice of the Board, and they agreed that a fog-bell should be erected.

Was such a resolution entered on the minute book?—It was.

In accordance with that minute was a bell ever procured?—It was.

Will you have the goodness to state why it was not put up?—The bell was procured from one of the first houses in London, and was intended to have been put up, of course, but matters of more pressing importance induced the inspector whose duty it was to postpone its being carried into effect.

What became of the bell?—The bell is now at the stores of the Corporation, waiting to be erected.

Is it the intention of the Corporation to put that bell up with as little delay as possible?—It is.

Do you consider that were it not for other pressing matters the bell would or ought to have been put up?—Unquestionably it would.

Do you think the wreck of the "Queen Victoria" might have been prevented if that bell had been put up and ringing?—I question very much if it would, from the position the vessel was in, and considering the state of the wind and weather at the time.

H. VEREKER.

PHINEAS HOWELL, *secretary to the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, also member of the Dublin Mercantile Marine Board, sworn:—*

I believe you are secretary to the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company?—I am.

The lists of the crew and passengers per "Queen Victoria" which you furnished me with you believe to be correct?—I do.

Was the "Queen Victoria" fully supplied with stores and the necessary equipments required by the Steam Navigation Act?—She was.

Will you give me your opinion as to the character of Captain Church; was he steady, sober, and efficient?—Quite so, in all these respects; he had been about twenty-five years in our employment.

How did Mr. Davis, the mate, stand in your estimation?—The mates do not come under my observation so much as the masters; but Davis has been in the Company's employment many years, to my knowledge.

Did the Company insure their own vessels?—We do not now insure our vessels when employed on their regular stations.

Will you explain the meaning of "their regular stations"?—We insure when chartered to other parties, or if employed on strange lines.

The Company being their own underwriters, it is of course for their interest to select persons fully competent for performing their duties?—Certainly.

Are there regulations supplied to the masters of vessels as to their conduct in foggy weather and other trying circumstances?—I believe there are such regulations existing in the order book at Liverpool, under the Company's marine superintendent, Lieut. Sarsfield.

Can you inform me where the man who was at the wheel at the time of the accident is at this present time, and also the second engineer who was on duty at the time?—I believe them both to be in Liverpool, sick, as I have received medical certificates from both?

I believe you were a passenger on board the "Prince" when she struck her bowsprit against the rocks under the Hill of Howth, in 1846?—I was.

Will you mention the state of the weather then?—A thick fog on a summer's morning.

What speed was the vessel going then?—Quite slow, and probably the engine stopped at the time of striking.

What do you consider would have been the result had she been going at full speed?—Material damage, if not total loss.

Had there been a bell on the Hill of Howth would it have prevented a vessel going so near?—If heard, it certainly would.

Had you any conversation or correspondence with the Ballast Board on the subject of a fog-bell, to prevent similar occurrences?—I addressed a letter to the secretary on the 19th August 1846, stating the particulars of the occurrence, and suggesting that a fog-bell should be placed in a suitable position at Howth.

What reply did you get?—That the Board had made an order to place a bell there.

Do you know why the bell was never put up?—I do not.

Have you a copy of the letter of the 19th August 1846, which you addressed to the secretary of the Ballast Board?—I have. (*Copy produced, and handed in.*)

Do you consider it of great importance that a bell should be placed on the Bailey?—Certainly; the sooner the better.

Will you tell me to what you attribute the loss of the "Queen Victoria"?—Going full speed, when nothing could be seen, owing to the thick snow.

Have you anything to suggest to prevent future accidents in the neighbourhood of Dublin Bay?—Either a fog-bell at Howth or a bell buoy in the neighbourhood.

P. HOWELL.

COPIES of DEPOSITIONS taken at Kingstown before Henry Davis, Esq., Coroner of the County of Dublin, Captain W. H. Walker being present.

The Information of DENIS NOWLAN, of Howth in the County of Dublin, who, being duly sworn, saith:—

I was in bed when the "Queen Victoria" struck. I was called about three o'clock, by Mr. Gregory, whose watch it was. When I went up at three, or a little before three o'clock, the lights were very good; I would not desire to have better lights. My watch was up to twelve o'clock. John Williams, the second engineer, told me when the vessel struck. Steamers, in making Dublin, pass close to the Bailey Light, as near as from 50 to 100 yards. There is no bell in Howth. There was no bell in it since I went there four years last August. Mr. Gregory was sober when he called me. I never saw him drunk. The

windows of the lighthouse were not obscured by snow being driven against them and sticking to them. I went up to the lights the first thing, with Mr. Gregory. Nothing but a heavy fall of snow or a thick fog could prevent the lighthouse being seen by a vessel. We regulate the lights, but not the heat. I went to bed between ten and eleven o'clock. I did not give my watch up to any one. I did not see Mr. Gregory, who succeeded me in my watch, when I went to bed between ten and eleven o'clock. It is impossible for the light to go out with the oil we have, for twelve hours, or more than that.

The Information of GEORGE GREGORY of Howth, principal keeper of the Bailey Lighthouse, who, being duly sworn, saith:—

I remember the night the "Queen Victoria" was wrecked on Howth. I believe it was between two and three o'clock; it might be a little after. It was my watch on the light at that hour. Denis Nowlan's watch ceased at twelve o'clock, and mine should commence at that hour. I did not go on my watch until I heard screams. When I heard them, the first thing I did was to rap at Nowlan's bedroom. The men in the vessel were calling to me for signals. I replied, I had no signals. By signals I mean noise, such as fire-arms, to attract the attention of some other vessel. I then asked Nowlan, the assistant, to go with me up to the lights. He went with me. The lights could not be much better than they were. We did not put a hand to them. There was no snow on the windows. There was a small shot of snow on the westward, but not opposite the lights. At the time the vessel hailed me she was not more than 200 yards from the land; she might be a little more or less. I have been fifteen years at the Bailey Lighthouse. There was no bell there in my time. My bedroom is off the large room on the left-hand side. Nowlan's bedroom is on the left hand side as you come in at the hall door. The lights do not require to be trimmed during the whole night. It was snowing, but not heavy, when I went out on hearing the screams.

I am between seventy and eighty years old. The weather was so thick at the time of the wreck that I should have had the bell ringing had there been one there. If the lights were out it would take me from three to five minutes to light them, if I put turpentine on the wicks; if not, it would take a quarter of an hour. From what I observed when in the balcony, and without having gone into the lantern, I would not undertake to swear the lamps were lighting. I have only one assistant with me to take care of the Bailey Light. A fog would not clear off so quickly as a shower of snow. A shower of snow might clear off in three or five minutes. I never knew an instance of the light going out in the fifteen years I have been at the Bailey.

The Information of PATRICK O'BRIEN of Omagh in the county of Tyrone, gunner of artillery, who, being duly sworn, saith:—

I was a deck passenger in the "Queen Victoria" on the morning she was wrecked. I did not see any of the crew drunk before she struck. I heard the shout to stop her. The rocks were high and perpendicular, and no means of clinging on. It was a kind of cove into which the bowsprit went, with high perpendicular rocks on either side. I heard the word to back her. She reversed out to sea. On my right I then saw the lighthouse plain. Further on my right I saw another light. On the left of my bows I saw another light seaward. The captain was above me on the bridge, and I called out, "All hands to the pumps if she leaks." The captain said, "Keep quiet; all is right." I ran up to the fore-part of the vessel after she struck, and before the order to back her was given. I then examined the rocks in order to escape. Had there been a possibility of getting out on the rock I certainly would have done so. It was possible that two or three might stand on a small corner, but could not remain there; but they could not get up the face of the rock. I had full opportunity to make my footing there if I could have done so before the order to back her was given; but I knew it impossible. The rock was more than a hundred feet high, right perpendicular. I did not see the captain before she struck. I saw him making his way up from the cabin, scrambling up as if in a hurry. He was not on deck when she struck. My cause of knowing him is, that I knew him, and was speaking to him, in Liverpool, before we sailed. I showed him my military character. I am a gunner, and ought to be a judge of distances. It was from 1,100 to 1,300 yards from the lighthouse where she struck. After backing she made 1,000 yards towards the lighthouse. The night was calm, snowing very slightly. I saw a man with a lantern in one of the boats groping for something in the bottom of it. After the order was given to back I heard no other orders given. All was confusion. I did not see the captain from the time he came on board until I saw him coming up from the cabin. He might be on deck, but I did not notice him. He had on a cap and coat. I spoke to him afterwards on the bridge of the paddle-box. I did not blame the captain, for he was below when she struck; but I blamed the men on the watch. The first cry to stop her was from forward.

The information of PATRICK DOYLE of Bullock in the county of Dublin, who, being duly sworn, saith :—

I am a pilot. I was out in my boat the morning the "Queen Victoria" steamer was wrecked; was out from seven or eight o'clock the evening before. About the time the vessel was wrecked (between two and three o'clock in the morning) I was about a mile and a half or two miles from the Bailey Light. Did not see the light at that hour; it was too thick with the snow-shower.

The "Hibernia" steamer came to us about that hour (she was from Holyhead), and asked us how did the Bar Lighthouse bear from us. The "Hibernia" was not going at full speed. I told them it was no time to look for a lighthouse; it was too thick. A vessel under such circumstances ought to come to anchor or stop. The shower lasted about three quarters of an hour. I did not see the Bailey Light until after the shower, when I saw at the same time two or three red lights, which I suppose were the "Queen Victoria's" lights. At the time pilots were in the habit of taking charge of steamers I would have lay to, and would do so now.

A man, as long as he could see the Kish Light, ought to be able to steer clear of the Bailey, even if he never saw it.

A man seeing the Kish Light ought to be able to shape his course without seeing the Bailey.

Light is deceptive in foggy weather.

The Information of MARY ANNE SPENCE of Liverpool, England, who, being duly sworn, saith :—

I was a passenger on board the steamer "Queen Victoria." I and my husband were helping to launch one of the boats. I heard one of the sailors inquire from another for a plug. He said there was not any about the boat, but that the little boy should go for it. The hold was so full of water that he could not get it, the boy said. The sailor was trying in the boat for the plugs when he asked the other for them. There was no plug produced then. This was the boat the people were saved in. One of the seamen belonged to the vessel; his name was Andrews. I cannot tell whether it was he or the other seaman spoke about the plugs.

APPENDIX.

City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, 15, Eden Quay,
Dublin, February 2, 1853.

SIR,

IN compliance with your request to be furnished with the names of the passengers, and the numbers, as far as they are known, of the persons on board the "Queen Victoria" steamer, unfortunately wrecked at the Bailey Lighthouse, off Howth, on the morning of the 15th instant, I beg leave to hand you herein a list of the names of the captain and crew of the vessel, and noted opposite each whether saved or supposed to be lost. The number of passengers on board cannot be so exactly ascertained, and the names are known of those only who obtained cabin tickets before leaving Liverpool. The names of deck passengers are not taken, but the number of tickets issued will be the probable number on board, as no deck passengers, with the exception of cattle dealers, are allowed on board without producing tickets from the office. The names of the cabin passengers who obtained tickets are—

Mr. Walsh, saved	-	-	-	-	-	} 5 cabin passengers.
Mrs. Walsh, lost	-	-	-	-	-	
Mr. Lipman, saved	-	-	-	-	-	
Mrs. Tott, lost	-	-	-	-	-	
Miss Lowther, lost	-	-	-	-	-	
Supposed to have been also in the cabin	-	-	-	-	-	7 ditto.
Deck tickets issued	-	-	-	-	-	72
Cattle jobbers, as far as known	-	-	-	-	-	3
Captain and crew	-	-	-	-	-	25
						112
						112
Known to have been saved by the "Roscommon" steamer	-	-	-	-	-	45
Landed at the Bailey	-	-	-	-	-	8
						53
						59 supposed to be lost.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. HOWELL, Secretary.

LIST of the NAMES of the CREW, &c. of the "QUEEN VICTORIA" Steamer, lost on the morning of 15th February 1853, near the Bailey Lighthouse.

Absalom Church	-	-	Captain	-	-	Lost.
Thomas D. Davis	-	-	Mate	-	-	Saved.
John Williams	-	-	Second Mate and Pilot	-	-	Lost.
Robert Gilbertson	-	-	Third Mate	-	-	"
Michael Donaghan	-	-	First Engineer	-	-	Saved.
John Williams	-	-	Second Engineer	-	-	"
Nicholas Cash	-	-	Fireman	-	-	"
John Webb	-	-	Ditto	-	-	Lost.
Patrick Dunn	-	-	Ditto	-	-	Saved.
Mathew Hincks	-	-	Ditto	-	-	"
John Boggan	-	-	Ditto	-	-	"
Denis Fagan	-	-	Ditto	-	-	Lost.
Thomas Le Messurier	-	-	Seaman	-	-	Saved.
John Kermodé	-	-	Ditto	-	-	"
Andrew Robinson	-	-	Ditto	-	-	"
John Jackson	-	-	Ditto	-	-	"
Charles Morgan	-	-	Ditto	-	-	"
John Williams	-	-	Ditto	-	-	"
John Mulhern	-	-	Carpenter	-	-	Lost.
Richard Malone	-	-	Coal Trimmer	-	-	Saved.
Patrick Furlong	-	-	Ditto	-	-	Lost.
John Muldoon	-	-	Cook	-	-	Saved.
William Bullock	-	-	Apprentice	-	-	"
Edward Parry	-	-	Ditto	-	-	"
Name unknown	-	-	Stewardess	-	-	"

REPORT
OF
CAPTAIN WALKER,
OF THE NAVAL DEPARTMENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE
ON AN
Inquiry into the Nature, Circumstances, and Causes
attending the Wreck of the "Queen Victoria;"
TOGETHER WITH THE
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Her Majesty's
Command.



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