

inst. deponent heard a cry of "Fire." Deponent ran on deck, and could smell burning rope and tar, and then saw smoke coming up from the fore scuttle. The foresail was hauled up, and the engines rigged, tons of water being poured down the fore scuttle. The smoke became very dense and suffocating, and the fire gained rapidly. Deponent was stationed at one of the fire-engines. The crew and passengers were stationed in lines to pass the water buckets along, and by these means and by the engines immense quantities of water were poured down the fore scuttle. The engine deponent was stationed at kept going until the fire drove the crew away. The flames burst up from the fore hatchway; the women and children were nearly all on the poop; the crew and male passengers striving to subdue the fire. The fire gained, and all hands were driven aft, and the engine was abandoned. Deponent and the rest of the crew continued to work with the fire buckets, but all was of no avail. Deponent then went to the long-boat to secure a life belt; the life belts were usually kept in the quarter boat, but deponent, with two other hands, had been employed two days previously in removing most of the gear out of the quarter boats, in order that they might be thoroughly scraped and cleaned inside. The oars were not taken out of the boats. The life belts were gone. Deponent was then going aft to get a life buoy, when he was directed by Mr. McDonald, the second officer, to station himself at the port boat to prevent a rush, and got into the boat as she was lowered. In pushing off from the ship, an oar was broken. There were thirty-five people in the boat when she was lowered. The starboard boat was discovered afloat with twenty-five people, and they called for some seamen to take charge. Deponent, with three other men and Mr. McDonald, transferred themselves into the starboard boat; the boats kept together, and remained by the ship until she sank. In two days afterwards, during the night, the boats separated. Deponent and the crew rigged a sail from an old petticoat, and made for the N.E. The people rapidly sank from want of provisions, &c., and on the tenth day after leaving the "Cospatrick" five only remained, who were picked up by the "British Sceptre." Two died, deponent, McDonald, and Lewis being the only survivors. They were treated with the utmost humanity and kindness by the master and crew of the "British Sceptre." The boatswain was a very careful man, and had the keys of the locker always in his own possession, and visited his locker very frequently. Deponent had been employed by the boatswain about three weeks before the fire to go into the boatswain's locker to clear it up. Observed in the fore part a number of tins of paints, oils, then a quantity of oakum, rope, and, near the door, brooms, brushes, sundries, and gear for present use. The day deponent went into the locker a lamp was lighted on the deck and carefully secured in a proper lantern, and taken down by deponent for him to see to work by. Deponent is of opinion that the fire originated in the boatswain's locker. The bulk of the water thrown down must have passed the boatswain's locker, ran down the trunkway, and flowed into the coal-hole.

EDWARD COTTER,

4, Mall Cottages, Silver Street, Kensington.

Custom House, London, 2nd January, 1875—

J. C. STOCKTON, Receiver of Wreck.

Thomas Lewis, quartermaster of ship "Cospatrick," says:—That he was quartermaster of the ship "Cospatrick," of the Port of London, of the register tonnage of 1,200 tons, her official number being 20400; that said ship was owned by Messrs. Shaw, Savill, and Co., residing at No. 34, Leadenhall Street, City of London; that said ship was rigged as a ship, and built of wood; that crew consisted of forty-four hands; that said ship had on board a general cargo, shipped by Messrs. Shaw, Savill, and Co., of London, and consigned to various consignees of Auckland; that said ship proceeded from London on 11th September last past, at 5 a.m., weather fine; that said ship proceeded on her said intended voyage, deponent being at the wheel; that on Tuesday, the 17th day of November, at 8 p.m., the weather fine, and the wind in the N.N.W., blowing a light breeze, the said ship was in the Southern Ocean, off the Cape. Deponent was at the wheel from ten till twelve p.m., when he was then relieved; the ship had then barely steerage way. When deponent went to the topgallant forecandle to his bunk, there was no smell of smoke nor any indication of fire. In about forty minutes deponent was aroused by the cry of "Fire," and immediately sprang out of his bunk and rushed on deck, and heard that smoke was coming up out of the fore scuttle. The hose of the fire-engines and fire buckets were got to work, and tons of water thrown down the fore scuttle; but without apparent effect, the fire gaining rapidly on the vessel, and the people were all driven aft. Deponent, who had been told off as one of the crew of the starboard quarter boat, went to her, and found her choked with people. Deponent lowered the fore tackle; the boat had too much weight in her, filled, and capsized. Deponent climbed up the foremost tackle, went across to the port boat, and succeeded in getting away in her. The starboard boat was afterwards found righted, with twenty-five people in her. Deponent, Mr. McDonald, and Edward Cotter and two others were transferred to the starboard boat. After remaining by the ship two days, during the whole of which time she was burning, she sank. The people in deponent's boat were much exhausted from the first, and, there being no water nor provisions, many of them rapidly sank. On the tenth day, when picked up by the "British Sceptre," only five remained alive, of whom two afterwards died. Deponent, with his fellow survivors, were treated with all possible kindness and humanity on board the "British Sceptre." Before commencement of the voyage, deponent was stationed as one of the crew of the starboard life-boat; all gear, oars, sails, breaker, &c., were then complete, and in the boat. The boatswain was coxswain. It was deponent's duty as quartermaster to attend to the boats. The gear was kept in the boats during the voyage; but a few days before the fire, some of the gear had been removed from the boats for the purpose of thorough cleaning. Deponent never saw any of the crew worse for liquor on board the ship, and considers his shipmates were a good, serviceable crew—steady, and always attentive to their duties. Deponent had a few boxes of lucifer matches for lighting his pipe. The ship's regulations as to smoking were rigidly adhered to. Deponent cannot account for the cause of the fire.

His
THOMAS X LEWIS,
Mark,

Sworn at the Custom House, London, 2nd January, 1875,
before me—J. C. STOCKTON, Receiver of Wreck.

Molivo, Anglesey, N. Wales.