

12

76-12

~~Prize~~ ~~Time~~

Boist Marital

3 December 1901

Loss of C. G. Cruiser "Active" on Granton
Breakwater. Chief Officer and
19 men drowned.

Minutes & Sentence of Court Martial

17th Intervent of recovered bodies

X

L

16500

"

16460

"

16625

"

16746

1901.

"

16992

"

17084

1863

~~Original - Duplicate sent to Adm. Secy. & Capt. R.~~

Reporting the death of certain officers
and men who formed the crew of 'Active'

HMS 'Aurion' - Queensferry
14 November 1901.

Sir,

I regret to report the death
of the officers and men shown on
the attached list who formed part
of the crew of H.M. Gunner 'Active'.

The 'Active', as far as is known
foundered on Granton Breakwater
about 3 A.M. yesterday, and became
a total wreck.

The relations of the men drowned
whose addresses it has been

the

Secretary of the Admiralty:

Whitchall

possible

possible to obtain have been
communicated with.

I have the honour to be
Sir

Your obedient servant.

W.C. Fricker

District Captain

FROM WHOM	DATE
Admiral Superintendent of Naval Reserves.	13th November 1901.
REFERRED TO	SUBJECT
	District Captain, Leith. 13th Nov: 1901. Reporting the loss of the Coast Guard Cruiser "ACTIVE" on Granton Breakwater. Chief Officer & 19 men drowned. <i>Loss of officers Breakwater. Men + Sertonian</i>
FORMER	N.R.6463.

MEMORANDA AND MINUTE.

Submitted, the following telegram sent by the District Captain at Queensferry at 10-30 a.m., to-day was received here at 5 p.m. :-,

"Mate of Cruiser "Active" reports that "Active" was lost during night on Granton Breakwater. Captain and 19 hands drowned, 5 saved namely -

Donovan, Mate,

Wakeham, Quarter Master.

Travass, Pearce & Dady, ? Ordinaries.

*referred
to Br. G. 10.11.
J. B. B.
28/11/01
R. H. B.*
"Am sending "Cockchafer" to Granton with my steam boat, launch and divers, am also proceeding myself at once to Granton to make enquiries and ascertain what further steps to take to save ship and recover bodies. Names of Officer and men who formed crew and are not accounted for are -

Chief Officer Charles Culley.

Carpenter's Mate Williams, Official No 340753.

Able Seaman Thompson ,,, 186551

,, Farrow ,,, { 157772

,, Randall, ,,, { 182665

{ 183665

Chief Qr. Mr. Donovan, ,,, 142204

Petty Officer 2nd class Weller,,, 182524

R. H. B.

Able Seaman Gregory:

„	Pearson,	,	156787.
„	Bardon, (?Barton)	,	156259 -
„	Plummer, -	,	167904 (?167984)
Ord. Seaman	Temple, -	,	202391 (?203891)
„	Walker, -	,	205812. -
Boy	Banham, -	,	207566 -
„	Melling, -	,	207571 -
„	P. Rynn, (Rynn)	,	207544, -
Ord. Seaman	Buttons, -	,	188786. -
„	Lyall, -	,	208116. -
Boy	Mulvaney, -	,	206473. -

F. J. Krabbe

Secretary.

The Secretary.

~~Order 13/11/01~~ Information should be furnished to the
Press.

Post Office: Please cause Inquiry to be made
for transmission to the King

W.M.F.
13/11/01

H. D. K.
13/11/01

S

13.11.01

No extra charges are applicable to the repetition of Foreign Telegrams.

S. S. d. (REC)

Handed in at To forward at 7 a.m. Received here at

Charges to pay.

TO { Private Secy Admiralty
The King much regrets to hear
of this great disaster to the
Royal Navy and would be glad
to hear further information of
progress & recovery

ack'd
W.M.
13.11

N.B.—This Form must accompany any inquiry made respecting this Telegram.

From Lord Walter Kerr

I presume there is no need to communicate
the King's message to the Press, at any rate
until tomorrow.

M Baddeley

Resident Clerk

13.11.02.

Private Office

To Branch
Unless you hear further, no steps need
be taken to publish the King's reply - I have
done so to the Executive.

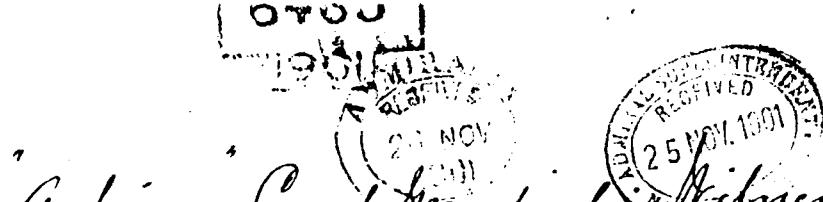
List of the crew of "H.M.S.
Gutter Active" on 12th Nov. 01.

Name	Rank or Rating	Official Number	Whether saved or not
Mr. Charles Bulley	Cb. Officer (in command)	—	No
John ^{Ames} Donovan	Ch. Q.C. Mts	142, 204	No. (body recovered)
Reuben Weller	Po. 2 nd Cl.	182, 524	No
Henry Williams	Carpenter	340, 753	No
William Henry Thompson AB		186, 551	No
Edward James Farrow	—"	184, 772	No (body recovered)
Frederick Randall	—"	183, 665	No
Edwin Thomas Gregory	—"	180, 118	No
Richd George ^{b has} Pearson	—"	156, 789	No
William Thomas Baston	—"	156, 250	No
Edward William Plummer	—"	164, 984	No
Thomas Temple	Ord. Seaf.	203, 891	No
Herbert George Walker	—"	205, 812	No
James Buttons	—"—	188, 786	No
John Greve Duncanflyall	—"	208, 116	No
Henry Amos	Boy 1 st Cl.	207, 553	No
Joseph Mulvaney	—"—	206, 473	No

Name	Rank or Rating	Official Number	Whether Saved or Not
Arthur William Banham Boy 1 st class		209,566	No
William Melling	- "	209,541	No
Alfred Poynt	- "	209,544	No
<u>Mr James Donovan</u>	Second Mate	-	Yes
William Henry Wakeham QTRM ^W (P.O. 1 st)		142,820	Yes
George Thomas Pierce Ordnance		182,984	Yes
William Travis	- "	201,860	Yes
George Charles Dady	- "	203,783	Yes

Min & Cent "A"
days of "activation"

M. H. K.
Captain



"Active" Court Martial. Witnesses for.

HMS Arson. Queensferry

24 November 1901.

Sir,

With reference to Admiralty Letter L. 16625, dated 20 November, 01, N.R. 6463, I beg to submit that I consider the following Officers and Chief Petty Officer should also be present to give evidence at the forthcoming Court Martial on the loss of HMS "Active" (in addition to the survivors) for the reasons stated after their names.

Captain William Blake Fisher, C.B., R.N., who verbally, and by signal, gave the

Admiral Superintendent
Naval Resources

Date

- late Mr. Charles Culley, instructions
as to what the object was in
sending him in 'Active' cruising, and
the precautions he was to observe
to avoid any risk or hazard to
his vessel.

Commander, Richard Morden Harbord ^{R.N.},
who recd to the late Mr. Charles
Culley his written Sailing Orders
for previous cruise, in Captain's
absence on duty.

Lieutenant Francis Ignatius Barwell, R.N.
and, Alfred Edward Locock, Chief Writer,
Official Number 128220. -

This Officer and Chief Writer were
present in the Captain's cabin
when he gave the verbal orders to
the late Mr. Charles Culley in which

the

the latter named officer was
cautioned as to his care for
the safety of his vessel.

I have the honour to be
Sir

Your obedient servant.

W. W. Winslow
District Captain.



Minutes of Proceedings at a
Court Martial held on Board
Her Majesty's Ship "Pembroke" at
Chatham, on Tuesday, the Third
day of December 1901.

Present

Captain Henry Leah, H.M.S. "Diadem"
President;
Captain Spencer Henry Metcalfe Loggin,
H.M.S. "Repulse";
Captain William Graham White,
H.M.S. "Northampton";
Captain Alban Giffard Tate,
H.M.S. "Dactylus";
Captain Frederick Tower Hamilton,
H.M.S. "Furious";
Captain Sackville Hamilton Gardiner,
H.M.S. "Immortalite";
Captain Charles Holcombe Dare,
H.M.S. "Assistance";

Mrs. Harry Robinson, Secretary.
H.M.S. "Wiedpier"; Appointing
as Deputy Judge Advocate

The following Officers,
Junior to the President, did
not sit as Members of the

Court for the reasons stated
against their names respectively:-
Captain Reginald C. Prothero, CB.
Hms. "Pembroke"; - Leave of absence;
Captain George E. Richards,
Hms. "Triton"; - Leave of absence.

The Court being assembled,
the survivors of H.M.'s late
Cruiser "Active", with the exception
of George Thomas, Peice, Ordinary
Seaman, Official Number 182,987;
who was sick in hospital and
unable to travel, were
admitted into Court.

The Prosecutor, Captain
Archibald J. Pocklington, of
Hms. "Sans Pareil," and the
Audience were admitted.

By Albert Hastings Markham, Esquire,
Vice-Admiral in His Majesty's Fleet
and Commander-in-Chief of His
Majesty's Ships and Vessels employed
and to be employed on the Nore
Station.

Whereas the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have
transmitted to me a letter dated the thirteenth day of
November 1901 from Captain William B. Fisher, C.B., of
His Majesty's Ship "Anson", reporting the total loss of
His Majesty's Coast Guard Cruiser "Active", tender to the
said Ship, at Granton on the 11th ultimo, and Whereas
their Lordships think fit that a Court Martial shall be
held to enquire into the loss of the said Cruiser, and
to try the survivors under Sections 91 and 92 of the
Naval Discipline Act.

I send you herewith the said letter, and do hereby
direct you to assemble a Court Martial on board His
Majesty's Ship "Pembroke" on the third day of December
1901, or as soon afterwards as circumstances will admit,
which Court, you being President thereof, is hereby
ordered to enquire into the loss of the said Cruiser,
and to try the said survivors accordingly.

Dated at Sheerness this First
day of December 1901.

Henry Leah Esquire

Captain of His Majesty's Ship "Diadem".

By command of the Commander-in-Chief,

Harry Robinson
Secretary.

Read the names of the Officers
composing the Court.

The Survivors, being asked
individually whether they
objected to be tried by any
Member of the Court, each
stated that he had no objection.

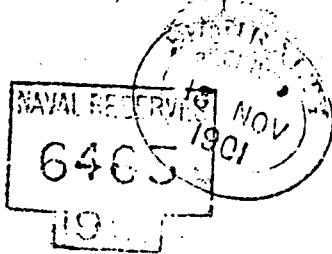
None of the Survivors made
any objection to the Constitution
of the Court.

The Members of the Court
and the Appiating Deputy
Judge-Advocate were then
duly sworn.

Read the letter from Captain
William B. Fisher, C.B. of
Hms. "Anson", dated 13th
November 1901, reporting the
loss of H. M. Cruiser "Active".

—

Loss of HMS "Active."



HMS "Anson"

Queensferry

13th November, 1901.

Sir,

It is with the deepest regret that I have to report the total loss of H.M. Cutter "Active", one of the tenders of HMS "Anson" and also of the officer and men belonging to her crew whose names are given on the attached list.

2. The circumstances attending the loss, part of which have been described to me by the survivors, are as follows:-

3. At 9.30 am on Monday, 11th instant, HMS "Active" proceeded from her buoy at Queensferry to carry out



The Admiral Superintendent

of Naval Resources

instruction

instruction under sail of Ordinary Seamen
and Boys of the "Anson"; being ordered by
signal to return by Thursday afternoon, in
order that her crew might take part
in "General Quarters" on board the "Anson"
on Friday. This procedure was in accordance
with my verbal orders to her Chief Officer,
to whom I had given instructions as to
the nature of his duties and whom I
had (in the presence of the Lieutenant (N)
of the "Anson") given discretionary powers,
informing him that his cruising was
dependent on the weather and that, on
any indication of its being uncertain
or likely to be stormy, he was to seek
a safe anchorage or return to
Quinsberry.

4. The weather at the time of
his leaving on Monday was fine, with
a light wind and no indications of
it becoming rough. Nothing further
was heard of the "Active" until this
morning, 13th instant, when a telegram

was received by me at 9.30am from
M^t John Donovan, Second Mate, of the
- Active, stating that she had gone on
shore on the Granton Breakwater and
that only five lives had been saved.

5. I immediately ordered steam
to be raised in H.M.S "Cockchafer", intending
to send her, if possible, to Granton, with
"Anson's" boats and divers, to endeavour
to save the ship and recover the bodies,
proceeding myself to Granton with the
Senior Lieutenant, Boatswain and two
men.

6. On visiting the scene of
the wreck, I found the ship had
completely broken up, that the position
to windward of the rough stone
breakwater, in the sea that was running,
would not admit of any diving, nor
would any advantage be gained by
attempting it, as only the masts were
floating there and being dashed up
from time to time on to the
breakwater. I therefore telegraphed to

send the "Cockchafer", when the weather moderated, which it was doing fast, and to order her to proceed inside the Granton Harbour to collect the wreckage with which the harbour and beach were strewn. In the meantime, I requested the Collector of Customs and the Police to take care of all articles and wreckage of the "Active", that might be washed on shore, until I could send a ship to collect it. This will now be undertaken by the Cockchafer.

7. Having ascertained that two bodies in the mortuary had been identified by the Quartermaster (William H. Wakeham P.O 1st cl) one of the survivors and having heard what the Second Mate John Donovan, who, with Wakeham, had been on shore at the time of the accident, knew of the matter, I proceeded to Edinburgh Infirmary to visit and interrogate the men who had been rescued, first ordering the Cockchafer to

Granton

Granton, as the wind and sea had subsided.

8. I also sent to the Commanding Officer of the "Durham" at Leith to take any necessary immediate action and inform me if any bodies were recovered and enquiries are now being made relative to permission to inter any from time to time.

9. I have had no time, up to the present, to obtain written statements as to the cause of the loss, but the information I have elicited verbally from the survivors is approximately as follows :-

M^c John Donovan, Second Mate, stated that they anchored, in fine weather, on Monday night, about one mile off Newhaven Pier, (which Pier is about 8 cables east of Granton Breakwater) and that, on anchoring, he and W.H. Wakeham, Quartermaster, had obtained permission to go on shore until the following morning. During the night the wind had freshened and they

were unable to go off, but he watched the "Active" all day, and, though she was plunging in the sea, she was all right and had not apparently dragged up to 10 pm. This is all the information he could give.

10. The survivors state that at about 2 am today (13th instant) the ship, with three anchors down, commenced to drag and, at about 4 am, the Officer in command called everyone on deck and tried to set a staysail. Finding he could not do this, and seeing that the "Active" was near the Breakwater and after a boat had been broken in trying to lower it, he ordered the crew into the rigging. The foremast broke off after she struck and the men went overboard with it. Two men, ^(survivors) were washed over the Breakwater and were picked up by a Swedish steamer inside, which had been prepared for accident, hearing the cries from the "Active". The

third man was washed on to the Breakwater and walked along it to the shore.

11. Previous to striking, the "Active" had fired rockets and signal lights for distress purposes, but failed to obtain any response.

12. This is an outline of what I have obtained locally on the case. Tomorrow I intend sending an Officer to take down a written statement from the survivors and to ascertain what steps will have to be taken as regards the interment of the recovered bodies.

13. I would submit that I may be instructed concerning the disposal of the wreckage, not personal property.

14. As regards the present position and condition of what remains of the hull of the "Active", I cannot supply

- any information at present, as on my visit, $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours after low water, not a trace of it was visible, although the chart shews $1\frac{3}{4}$ fathoms, close alongside the Breakwater, where she struck, so, as the beach was covered with wreckage, including gunwales and upper works of the ship, with chests, rifles, ammunition cases and other articles from cabins and lower deck, I concluded that the deck had broken up and the ship more or less in the same condition on the bottom near the Breakwater, otherwise some portions would have been visible, and so I telegraphed to you in this sense. On reflection, it appears to me possible that she is lying on her bilge under water.

This I will endeavour to ascertain as soon as possible by divers when the sea admits of their going down.

and I may possibly recover anchors,
cables or other articles attached to the
hull.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant

McNamee
Captain.

Mr James Donovan, Second Mate.
Am Coast Guard Cruiser "Active".
~~I~~ called, sworn and examined
by the Court.

1. Q. Is the narrative just read to the Court a true statement of the wreck of His Majesty's late Coast Guard Cruiser "Active"?

A. Yes. So far as I am aware.

2. Q. Have you any complaint to make against any of the survivors of the ship's company of the late Coast Guard Cruiser on that occasion?

A. No.

By the Court to the remaining Survivors:-

3. Q. Have you, or any of you, anything to object to in the narrative just read to the Court, or anything to lay to the charge of any officer or man with reference to their conduct on the occasion of the loss of His Majesty's late Coast Guard Cruiser "Active"?

A. (From each) No.

Captain William Blake Fisher,
CB, Hms. "Anson"; called, sworn
and examined by the Prosecutor.

4 Q. Are you Captain of Hms.
Anson?

A Yes.

5 Q. Were you doing duty as such
on 11th November last?

A Yes.

6. Q. Had you occasion to send
for Mr. Culley, late Chief
Officer in Command of Hm
Cruiser "Active" to give him
his sailing orders?

A. Part of the Sailing Orders
were given by Signal and
part verbally.*

7. Q. Did you see Mr. Culley on
11th November?

A No

8. Q. Did you give him sailing orders
in your cabin on 26th October
last?

A. Yes Verbally.

Captain Fisher
Q. Q. State to the Court what
C.B. those orders were?

A. I informed Mr. Culley that
I had received instructions
that when the "Active" was not
otherwise employed she
would be used for instruction
of the younger Seamen of H.M.S.
"Anson" in practical Seamanship;
that they would be sent on
board in batches, a plan of
which I had arranged, and
I explained to him minutely,
the system of instruction &
his general duties. I pointed
out to him that he was at
liberty to anchor where &
where he chose, that he could
return to Queensferry, if he
thought it desirable at any
time & that on no account
was he to risk or hazard
his ship in the slightest
degree. I showed him on
the Chart the best positions
for anchoring under any
contingency. These were
verbal orders. These orders
were given on or about the
26th October, before I went
on Inspection duties.

By the Court.

Capt. Fisher
HMS Anson

10. Q. Was the position in which the Actae anchored one of those which you pointed out?

A. No.

11. Q. Was this the first occasion on which the Actae "had performed the instruction duty?"

A. She had been on the previous week on a similar cruise.

12. Q. What was the complement of the "Actae"?

A. To the best of my belief 27.

13. Q. How many Ordinary Seamen & Boys were sent on this occasion?

A. About twelve.

14. Q. Do you produce the original Log of HMS. Anson?

A. Yes.

(Log produced)

Capt: Fisher

HMS Anson

15. Q. What was the direction & force of wind when you arrived at Granville after the loss.

A. About N.E. & Force about 4 to 5.

16. Q. Do you produce any other books or documents?

A. Yes. Signals Log - Certified Copy of Log - Press Letter Copy Book -

Books & Copy of Log produced accordingly

Witness withdrew

Lieutenant Francis Ignatius Barwell, HMS "Anson", called sworn and examined:-

By the Prosecutor

17. Q. Are you a Lieutenant of HMS. Anson?

A. Yes

H.M.S. USSON, Monday 11th day of November 1870.
from _____, to _____, or at Duncans Ferry

Course and Distance made good	Distance run through the water	Latitude	Longitude	True bearing and distance	Water Expended	Coal expended in 24 hours	No. on Sick List
	miles	D.R.	D.R.		6	For Engines 7 - 12	
	miles	Under Steam			Distilled	" Ship 1 - 0	
		" Sail	Obs.	Chro.		" Distilling	
Variation		" Steam and Sail		Current in 24 hours.	Remaining	Remaining /031-8	15
	Total				26		

H.M.S. "Anson", Tuesday 12th day of November 1801.
from _____, to _____, or at Queenstown

Hours	Knots	Tenths	Standard Compass Course					REMARKS	
				Deviation	Lee-way points	Wind	State of Sea		
				Direction	Force	Weather	Barometer	Thermometer	Temperature of Sea
1									A.M.
2									
3									
4									
5	<i>Moon at Queensferry</i>		ENE 57° 00' gr				29 60		4-0
6							41 44		
7									4-20 Lighted fires in stores launch R.H. Rescuer men at signals Remainder unemployed as required Received Irish beef 206 lbs
8			ESE 4 00' r				29 51		8-0
9							42 42		Divisions Prayers Excised marines 14-2 = 6" Porter 6" heavy + Shell room parties at divisional drill Training class at rifle drill Training classes B.H.R. A.D & E at heavy gun Cat rifle drill + Tab light Q & T + how Gun Remainder up & down as required Ords & boys at beamanship
10									
11									
12			NE 458 00' r				29 45		
							41 41		Torpedo training always kept up

Course and Distance made good	Distance run through the water	Latitude	Longitude	True bearing and distance	Water Expended	Coal expended in 24 hours	No. on Sick List
	miles	D.R.	D.R.		8	For Engines 6-16	
miles	Under Steam	Obs.	Chro.		Distilled	" Ship 1-0	
	" Sail					" Distilling	14
Variation	" Steam and Sail	Current in 24 hours.			Remaining		
	Total				18	Remaining 1024-12	

1						
2						
3						
4						
5	Morred at Rheusferry	ENE 58 oqr		29 30 42 42		P.M. Training classes R.H.R. A.D & E. at heavy gun Cat rifle drill & Fat lights A.T. & mac Gun drill Ords & boys of watch at seamanship Training class at rifle drill Torpedo training class at Whithead After Barber quarters at divisional drill Remainder employed as required 6-0
6						Quarters
7						Got special leave to Chief & 1 st Cl R.Q.S.
8				29 31 42 42		Excised watch at physical drill
9						6-0 Drew fire w steam launch
10						8-0
11						Excised burning search lights
12				29 55 41 40		12-0 1 st Cl R.Q.S.

H.M.S. USSON, Wednesday 13rd day of November 1890.
from _____, to _____, or at Queensferry

Capt. Carroll

Ans. A. Q. Were you doing duty as such
on or about 26th October last?

A. Yes.

Q. Were you present in the Captain's cabin when Captain Fisher was giving his orders to the late Mr. Culley?

A. Yes.

Q. State what those instructions were.

A. Captain Fisher ordered Mr. Culley to cruise in the Aegean anchoring each night, leaving Queensberry weekly on Monday morning and returning about noon on Thursday, to instruct Ordinary Seamen & Boys. He told Mr. Culley he was to be careful to select sheltered anchorages.

Q. Did he caution Mr. Culley as to state of weather before proceeding for his daily cruise?

A. In a general way he did.

Captain Anson.

By the Court.

22. Q. Do you know whether the Active had her proper establishment of Anchors & Cables?

A. No. I don't.

23. Q. Do you know when they were last surveyed?

A. No.

24. Q. Did ~~Anson~~ correspondence relative to Survey of Chain cables of Active pass through the Anson?

A. Yes.

25. Q. Were any men of the ordinary complement of the Active removed from her to make room for the instructional party on the occasion of her last sailing?

A. No. *

26. Q. Was the Active in the habit of anchoring off Grangon at the evenings during ordinary weather?

A. I don't know. The Captain had a free hand.

Capt: Carville
HMS Anson.

27. Q. You do not know where she generally sheltered for the night? or on the former occasion of leaving for instruction?

A. No.

28. Q. Were you on board the Anson on the morning of the 11th when the Active sailed?

A. Yes. I saw ~~the~~ signal her sailing -

29. Q. Did you then consider the weather settled?

A. Yes.

30. Q. When did you receive the first warning of the storm which took place afterwards?

A. When I turned out on Tuesday morning - It was blowing then.

31. Q. Had you any means of communicating with the Active then?

A. No.

late Ch. Officer
31. Q. Had the Active a free hand to enter Granton harbour if he considered it advisable.

Lieut Carroll
HMS Anson.

on account of weather?

A. I know yes to the best of my belief -

33. Q. Do you know what water the Aegean drew?

A. About 11 feet.

Witness withdrew

Captain C. B. Fisher HMS Anson, recalled and examined by the Court:-

34. Q. Were you present when the Aegean sailed on the morning of the 11th November?

A. However she actually weighed but just after as she was passing the ship.

35. Q. It is not quite clear to the Court what the sailing orders were for this particular cruise. Please state what they were -

A. The actual sets sailing orders were contained in the Signal made by me on Sunday morning, 10th,

Capt. Fisher
H. W. Anson.

36. Q. And were the previous orders given by ~~green~~ - or a general nature?

A The previous orders given by me were on two occasions - The first occasion was prior to the first instructional cruise, corroborated by the written sailing orders of the Commander when I was on duty, who had received instructions to that effect. The second occasion of verbal orders was after my return from inspection duty. This was after the Active's first cruise or or about the 8th instant. At that time I signalled for the Officer Commanding the Active to repair on board as I wished to see him concerning a recent grounding of his ship on Common's Rock. I then again pointed out clearly his instructions and again impressed on him that under no circumstances was he to risk or hazard his ship & that he was to be most

Capt: Fisher
HMS Anson.

Careful to take all precautions to avoid doing so. The first occasion I refer to in this answer is that with reference to which I have already given evidence before the Court. The Signals made on Sunday was the Executive corroborative Signals of my verbal Orders.

Read the following from Signal Log of HMS Anson, dated 10 November

" Unless you receive orders
" to the Contrary you are to
" leave Queenoferry at 9 am
" on each Monday morning for
" the purpose of training
" ordinary Seamen & Boys -
" anchoring daily as convenient
" and returning to Queenoferry
" by Noon on Thursday in
" each week -"

37. Q Were you quite satisfied as to the fitness of the vessel for the work she was employed upon?

A Yes.

38. Q And of the capacity of her ^{Officer} Capt

Capt. Fisher
HMS Anson.

Commanding?

A I had no reason to doubt his capacity. From what I had seen of him he appeared to be a capable officer

39. Q. Were any of the ordinary complement of the Active taken out to make room for the Ordinary Seamen & Boys under training?

A. Not that I am aware of.

Witness withdrew.

Mr. James Donovan, 2nd mate, H.M. Coast Guard Cruiser "Active". Examined by the Court, after caution as to giving evidence against him.

40. Q. Give the Court a description of what happened from the time of the Active leaving ~~for~~ Queen'sferry on the ^{morning} of Monday, 11th November?

A. We seeped from a Buoy at Queen'sferry about 9.30 and proceeded down the Firth cruising - We cruised off Granton harbour & we proceeded to anchor at 5 o'clock, in Leith Roads abreast Newhaven

Mr. Donovan-
2nd mate.

pier. After everything was
fuled up the Captain told
me I caud go on shore until
8 o'clock the next morning.
I left the ship at 6.30 and
next morning I was down
at Newhaven pier at 8
o'clock - when I arrived there
I found no boat had come
in for me, and I supposed
this was because of the
heavy sea - I remained there
until 10 o'clock a.m. thinking
the active might get under
way & pick me up at
Granton, as the Captain
proposed to me if the
weather shoud not be suitable
for me to be picked up at
Newhaven he would pick
me up at Granton - I had
the vessel in sight all day
The last time I saw
anything of her was her
Starlight at 7.30 p.m.
on Tuesday, 12th November.
It seemed to me that she
had altered her position.
At daylight the following
morning I looked to see
whether she was there - and

In re Donagan.
2nd trial.

and she had gone - I then proceeded to Geanton & on my way there I was informed that the Active had been wrecked with all hands on Geanton Pier. When I arrived in Geanton I informed the District Captain of the loss of the Active, by telegram -

41. Q. Was the ship anchored with single anchor when you left?
- A. She was anchored with single anchor, 2nd shackle outside.
42. Q. Were you present when the anchors were weighed after the wreck?
- A. No.
43. Q. Can you inform the Court how long the late Mr. Cullen had been in command?
- A. About two years in command of the "Active"
44. Q. Then he was well acquainted with the locality?
- A. Yes.

Mr. Doroosu.
2nd date.

45. Q. Was the place where you anchored your usual place of anchoring off Graniton?

A Yes.

46. Q. Are you aware of any bearing by which that position of anchoring was known?

A She was anchored in 7 fathoms of water between a mile & a mile & a half North of Newhaven Pier on this occasion?

47. Q. Can you tell me how old the ship was?

A She was built in 1869.

48. Q. How long had she been employed as a Coast Guard Cruiser?

A I could not say - 8

49. Q. Can you inform the Court when the Actives cables were last surveyed?

A Last June.

50. Q. Was the ship was quite sound in all respects?

A Yes.

Mr Donoaaa.
2nd mate

51. Q. What was the direction of the wind on Monday?

A. S.W.

52. Q. And during the time you were watching the ship on Tuesday?

A. East the first part of the morning until 12 o'clock and East North East later in the day - Force of wind increased from about 5 at eight o'clock to 10 about ~~noon~~ at night.

53. Q. Do you know the weight of the Actae's anchors?

A. Six hundred weight.

54. Q. Has the Actae ever dragged before?

A. Yes. About three years ago during an October gale from the ~~E~~astward.

55. Q. Were any logs or records saved from the wreck?

A. No

56. Q. Did any of the officers or men reside at New Haven

Mr. Donagan.
2nd mate.

or fraction of the neighbourhood?

A. Yes. The Captain, myself, and
the Quarter master -

57. Q. Are storm signals displayed
at sea?

A. I don't know.

58. Q. You saw no storm signal
displayed on shore?

A. No

59. Q. In your opinion was there any
reason why the Active should
not have weighed on Tuesday
13th November for the purpose
of returning to Queen's Ferry, or
to seek & clear up the road?

A. If she had got under weigh
between 8 and 10 in the
morning she could have done
so - but after 10 the sea
would be too heavy for
getting the anchors up.

60. Q. Do you think that the fact of
having a ~~man~~ an Officer
a man on shore caused
influence the Commanding
Officer in waiting?

Mr Donnan.
2nd mate

had proposed to pick me up at Granton if the weather had been bad.

61. Q. Did you see any rockets fired from Active?

A. No:

62. Q. Do you know how much cable there was on each anchor?

A. A hundred fathoms on each
BB - i.e. 8. ~~8~~ shackles

63. Q. What anchors had you?

A. Tubowers, a steam and a kedge -

64 Q. Any spare cable?

A. No - but wire hawsers.

65. Q. At the height of the gale on Tuesday, 12th, do you consider the "Active" could have slipped and run for shelter to Queensferry?

A Yes - provided the crew were not sea sick.

Mr Donovan
2nd Mate

66. Q. On the cruise in question had a portion of her regular complement been removed to make room for the instructional party?

A. No.

67. Q. Was ^{any large proportion of the} ~~her~~ regular ship's company subject to sea-sickness?

A. Yes.

68. Q. Sufficiently so to prevent ^{working} their being of use for ~~Navigating~~ navigating the ship on an emergency such as the one in question?

A. Yes - after their having been in the Arctic so long that day at anchor in that weather.

69. Q. Was there a barometer on board and in proper order?

A. Yes - two -

70. Q. What boats did you carry?

A. Two - a Gig & a Whaler - 14 foot & 25 foot boats.

71. Q. Were they lost at the same time as the ship?

A. Yes - The Arctic is allowed a third boat - a 25 foot

Mr. Donoan
2nd mate

Whale which is in store at
Granton - as the Actae cannot
carry it.

72. Q. Did Actae make any signals
of distress before dark on
Tuesday, 12th Nov?

A. No.

73. Q. Were you aware that the
Barometer had been falling
steadily & continuously for
five days before?

A. I did not notice that.

74. Q. Was Granton harbour so
crowded with shipping as to
render it difficult for a
vessel to run there for shelter
during heavy weather from
the Eastward?

A. No.

75. Q. ^{Witness withdrew} Was Mr. Culey in his ordinary
state of health at the
period which has been
referred to?

A. Yes. In very good health

^{Witness withdrew}

William Henry Wakeham, Quartermaster (Petty Officer 1st Class), H.M. Coast Guard Cruiser "Active"; sworn, cautioned that he need not give any evidence against himself, and examined by the Court.

Read to the witness Question No. 40 previously put to Mr. Donough, 2nd mate - & the answer.

76 Q. Have you anything to add to the statement you have just heard read?

A. No.

77 Q. Do you agree to the statement

A. Yes.

78. Q. What was your duty at the time the Active anchored ⁱⁿ ~~under ordinary circumstances~~ on this occasion?

A. Looking out for the head sails.

79. Q. What depth of water did the anchor in?

A. Seven fathoms was the last sounding.

80 Q. How many men went ashore with you that evening?

A. None.

(Witness withdrew)

William Travis, Ordinary Seaman,
HMS. Anson, Edinburgh, Court-martialed, and
examined by the Court.

81. Q. State what happened after
the ship anchored off Granton
Harbor on Monday, 11th Nov?
- A. The weather became bad
about 4 on Tuesday morning.
We dropped the second anchor
at 5 o'clock on Tuesday morning.
- the second anchor was from
the starboard side - About
2 in the afternoon the anchor
commenced dragging - More
cable was then paid out -
about a shackle - I was
on deck all night until about
two o'clock on Wednesday
morning when the ship
started dragging altogether -
helping the Quarter master
with the stay-light to keep
it in - The Captain told me
to Pipe Clear lower deck as
the Quarter master was
getting lights - The tiller
then broke and a spare
one was got up - and
that one broke - We were
then ordered to fire some
rockets - We finished
the rockets about 20 past
three on Wednesday morning

W. Travis.
Ord.

We finished the lights about a quarter to four - Between about a quarter & five minutes to four the ship struck the Breakwater stern first. She started filling up & went broadside on & then broke up altogether - The hands were ordered up the rigging before the struck. Two were down below squaring up the place where we had let off the rockets - The two I refer to were ~~I~~^{myself} and Mulvaney - The Captain ordered us to try and save ourselves - That is all I remember until I found myself on top of the breakwater. There were three of us on the breakwater -

Q. Was a third anchor let go?

A. Yes - The one we had underneath the bowsprit - I was down below when it was let go -

Q. What caused the tiller to break?

A. It was lashed up to the ship's side - hard over -

84. Q

Travis-
@d-

Was any attempt made to
weigh ^{or slip} the anchors & make
sail?

A. The foresail was hoisted
half way up & we could
not hoist it any further -
We tried to head her off &
she headed further in. The
sail was then lowered again.
As far as I know no
attempt was made to
weigh the anchors - the
windlass was not manned
as far as I know.

85. Q. What prevented the foresail
from being hoisted?

A. It was jambed underneath
the winch - & we could not
clear it - it was too rough
for us.

86. Q. How far were you from
the breakwater when you
first anchored?

A. A mile

87 Q. How far when the sail was
hoisted?

A. A mile & half

88 Q. Are you referring to her having

W. Travis-
ard -

Breakwater?

A. Yes.

89. Q. Were any of the crew sea sick?

A. Yes.

90. Q. Do you mean of the proper crew or the Boys?

A. Very nearly all hands were sick.

91. Q. Do you know if any more cable was reared when they let go the third anchor?

A. ~~No~~ I do not know.

92. Q. You say the tiller was lashed hard over when it carried away - which side was it lashed to?

A. Starboard.

93. Q. Was the second tiller in a similar way?

A. That was lashed too. When he had fixed it - on the starboard side -

94. Q. When were you rated an Ordinary Seaman?

A. About 2½ years ago

b. Travis.

Qrd³

95. Q Were you under training or one of the Crew of the Active?

A. Under training

96. Q Did you see the Captain on Deck all Tuesday night?

A. Yes.

97. Q. And during the day on Tuesday?

A. Yes.

98. Q. Did you hear the Captain give any orders. If so what were they?

A. Not while I was there.

99. Q. Were any vessel anchored in the roads besides the Active?

A. No. They were all taken in except us. They were taken in by tugs. Three or four were taken in. This was in the afternoon.

100. Q. Did the Tugs offer assistance to the Active?

A. No.

101. Q Are you quite sure of this?

A. Yes. I was on deck at the time

b. Travis.
C.R.

102. Q. Were any signals made during daylight asking for assistance?
A. No.

103. Q. What was the last you saw of the Captain?

A. When he came down from the upper deck to tell us ^{to leave} to ~~try~~ ourselves.

104. Q. Was there any confusion on board when you struck or after striking?

A. No. They were all thrown off the rigging.

105. Q. You say nearly all hands were sea sick. Do you mean they were incapable of working in a case of emergency?

A. There was only one man who could not move - that was a boy called Amos. The others were ready & capable to work & did so.

106. Q. Do you know why the ship was not moved to a safer anchorage?

A. No.

Witness withdrew

Mr. James Donovan, 2nd Mate.
H.M. late Coast Guard Cruiser "Active"
was examined by the Court.

107 Q. How many ships were at anchor in the roads besides the Active on Tuesday - 12th?

A There were one 8 steamer and four sailing vessels - in the morning

108 Q. What became of the ships which were anchored there?

A. The 8 steamer got under weigh & kept under steam I imagine all night as I saw her in the morning & still under weigh. ~~The~~ Two of the other four sailing vessels were small fishing boats & went into Leith & Granton respectively under their own canvas - Two schooners remained - one was anchored at Burntisland Roads & one between her and the Active. The one between the Active & the schooner at Burntisland dragged a long way -

109 Q. Did you hear any conversation amongst the seafaring people at Granton?

A. No. I never heard the question

discussed -

110. Q. How many tags are there at Granton -

A. One - There were tied up there that day as there was a launch -

Witness withdrew.

George Charles Dady, Ordinary Seaman,
H.M.S. Anson, sworn, cautioned,
and examined by the Court.

111. Q. State what happened after the ship anchored off Granton Harbor on Monday 11th Nov?

A. About 3 o'clock in the morning of Tuesday the ship commenced dragging. The order was given clear lower deck & strike Topmast - A second anchor was let go about five o'clock - The large head sails were un bent & storm sails bent. More cable was payed out. About 5 o'clock in the afternoon the 3rd anchor was let go -

J. C. Dady.

Crd:

The ship did not drag much after that until after two in the morning on Wednesday when "Clear lower deck" was piped and we got the spare letter up on deck as the other one was broken. The foresail was hoisted, about half way - As it was driving the ship fast on to the Breakwater it was hauled down again. She stopped dragging enough to allow the windlass to be runned to keep her further off the breakwater - But she started dragging again & the Captain ordered everybody to try & save themselves - A lot went into the rigging but I went down below & got a life belt on - She struck while I was down below

112. Q. How far off the Breakwater when sail was tried?

A. Above half a mile from Grancion Breakwater.

C. Dady.
Qd.

-113 Q. On Tuesday did any tug or ship offer assistance?

A. Not as far as I know.

114. Q. Has there been a Coroner's inquest on the bodies which have been recovered?

A. I don't know.

115 Q. Did you see any tugs about on the afternoon of Tuesday?

A. I saw two - They were waiting for a ship to be launched. They were outside of Leith Breakwater.

116. Q When the third anchor was let go - what anchor was it?

A. It was a stream anchor with two wire hawsers - as cable.

117 Q. Was more cable secured after the ~~the~~ third anchor was let go?

A. No.

118 Q Have you any idea how much cable was out at that time?

A. About four shackles.

C. Dady.

Ans:

119 Q. Do you mean four shackles
on the first anchor?

A. Yes -

120 Q. Was any more cable heeled
after that?

A. No

121 Q. When the foresail was tried
did the ship's head cant?

A. Yes - a little to Port.

122 Q. Was the second tiller carried
away?

A. Yes. About the same time as
the foresail was hauled down

123 Q. You say that when the ship
was near the Breakwater
cable was hove in - how
much?

A. About a fathom and a
half on the starboard cable
She then started dragging
again -

124 Q. Where were the life belts kept?

A. There were four on the
lower deck - I don't know
whether there were any
others

Captain W. B. Fisher CB. A.M.S. Anson, recalled
and examined by the Court:-

125 Q. Has a Coroners' inquest
been held?

A. No. I don't think there
are held in Scotland.

126. Q. It has been stated to evidence
that several ships were
at anchor near the action
^{on Tuesday, 12th}
+ some were taken into
harbour. In the absence of
any definite evidence please
give us such reports as you
have received from your
subordinates to the Coast
Guard of this part of the
Coast or from the Customs?

A. The only report from the
Coast Guard of which I
have any recollection of
receiving was that a wreck
had taken place off North
Berwick + that a derelict
Schooner was drifting
down the Firth

127. Q. Is there a Coast-guard
station at Granton?

A. As far as I know the
Coast Guard has nothing
to do with Granton.

apt: Fisher
mention.

128. Q. Do you know anything about assistance having been offered to the Actice or any other ship anchored near her on the 12th?

A I know of no actual offer of assistance - but the person who bought the wreck of the Actice who is the owner of two tugs informed me that both his tugs passed close to the Actice on the afternoon of Tuesday, 12th, between 2 and 4, for the purpose of offering her assistance if she was in want of it - but his statement was, so far as I recollect, that there was no one noticed on board the Actice - I speaking from a recollection only of what took place at a personal interview.

AK ~~sates~~

129. Q. Did the Customs Officials give any information?

A. No -

130. Q. Did you hear from any source

Capt Fisher.
Anson.

whether the Actives Signals
of distress were observed
on the night of 12th or morning
of 13th?

A. I have some recollection
that when I went down to
Granville on 13th that a Custom
House Officer or a Policeman,
I am not sure which, had
told me that he had seen a
rocket or signal light
burnt in her direction between
3 & 4 a.m. on Wednesday.

Witness withdrew.

George Charles Dady, Ordinary
Seaman, recalled and re-
examined by the Court.

131 Q. Were you on deck most of
the day on Tuesday - 12th?

A. Yes.

132 Q. Did you see the Captain?

A. Yes. He was constantly
on deck.

133 Q. Is it possible that tugs
could have come past the
ship to offer assistance

C. Dady -
Q.W. Seamer.

- between 2 & 4 that afternoon
& no one be on deck at the
time?

A Not for many minutes.

134 Q. Was the Captain constantly
on Deck afterward?

A Yes.

135 Q. Do you know if the wire
of the third anchor carried
away?

A Not before she struck.

Witness Withdrawn

William Henry Wakeham, Quarter
Master, re-examined by the
Court:-

136 Q. Can you furnish the Court
with any information
about Tugs on the afternoon
of Tuesday 12th?

A I was at Newhaven on
Tuesday afternoon, I saw
2 tugs about 2 o'clock
behind Leith Pier waiting
for a vessel to be launched.
The launch was postponed
on account of the weather.

H. Wakeham.
2nd M.

The Tugs then went into Leith harbour - I saw no Tugs approaching the Active. I could see the Active quite plainly from where I was, all the afternoon -

137. Q. Have you heard it said openly stated since the loss of the Active that Tugs had been out to offer assistance which was not required?

A. I tried after the accident to get information from concerning the Tugs but could get none whatever

138. Q. Is there a life boat station at Granton?

A. No -

139. Q. About what distance was the Active anchored from Granton Breakwater?

A. From a mile to a mile & a half -

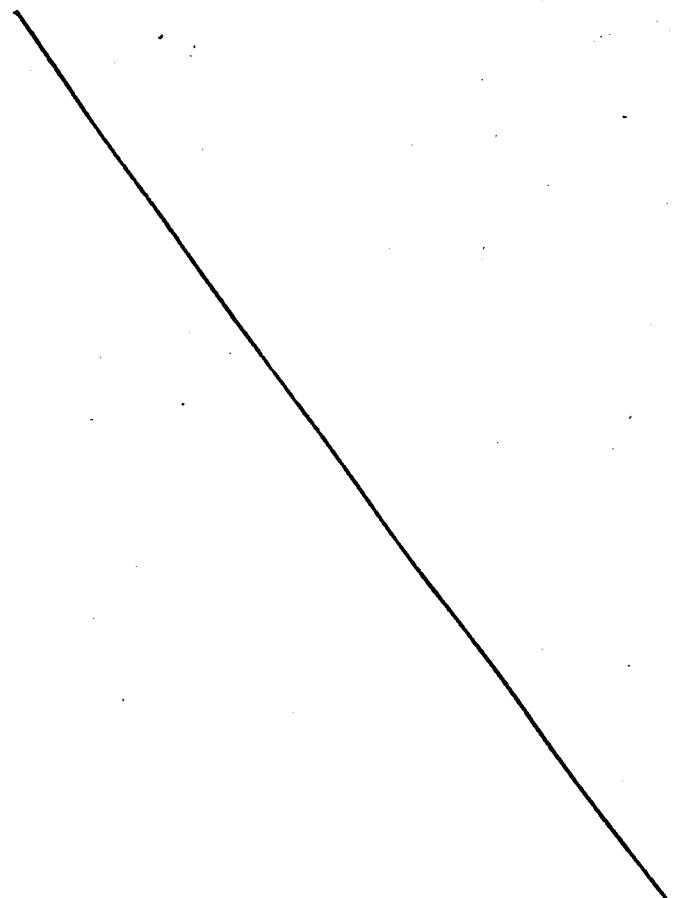
140. Q. Did you hear any rumour that tugs had been out to offer assistance?

H. Wakham.
2nd Inst.

A. Yes - & I enquired of the
people at the Taps which
were out ("Earl of Windsor")
but could get no information
from them - I asked them
if they had been near the
action - & I was told No.

Witness withdrew

The Court was then cleared
and proceeded to consider
the Finding -



Finding

The Court finds that His Majesty's late Coast Guard Cruiser "Active" was lost during an endeavour to ride out a heavy gale off Granton on the Twelfth and Thirteenth days of November 1901, with the result that the vessel was driven on Granton Breakwater and became a total loss.

From the little evidence obtainable and in the absence of any logs or records of the "Active", the Court are of opinion that the Officer in Command would have shown better judgment had he, early on the Twelfth of November, either weighed or slipped, and run for safety; and that, after it was too late to weigh or to slip, he appears to have maintained discipline and to have done all that was possible to save life.

The Court further finds that no blame is attributable to any of the survivors of

of His late Cruiser "Active"
and therefore acquire them.

H. Leah.

Spencer Louis

Lakeham White.

A. G. Tate

J. Hamilton.

J. H. Arden

Chas. H. Dare

Harry Robinson
Officiating as Deputy Judge Advocate.

The Court was re-opened;
the Survivors admitted; the
Prosecutor, witnesses and
Audience admitted; the
Finding read; and the
Survivors acquitted accordingly.

The President declared the
Court dissolved.

Harry Robinson
Officiating as Deputy Judge Advocate