

*EXTRACTS from Minutes of Proceedings at a Court Martial, held on board H.M.S. "Victory," at Portsmouth, on the 27th April, 1863, to enquire into particulars of the loss of H.M.S. Ship "Orpheus," on the bar of Manukau Harbour, New Zealand, on the 7th February, 1863.*

Extract from Evidence of Mr. E. A. Amphlett, Paymaster, late H.M.S. "Orpheus":—

"The Commodore then ordered me to come on the Bridge; he called the Master and examined the Chart. He made a remark."

By the Court:—Have you ever gone in without being directed by signals from the Signal Post, at every stage of your progress?

Answer.—I have some difficulty in answering the question. On one occasion, when I went in the "Niger," with the Governor on board, I understood there was no Pilot on the station to direct the signals, which circumstance makes me think the Master of the "Niger" trusted to his bearings.

Question.—Had the remark made to you by the Commodore, as you have stated, anything to do with the position of the ship?

A.—The remark was made after examining the Chart. He said, "You see, Mr. Amphlett, that the correct bearings are on."

Q.—From your knowledge of the Bar should you have supposed that the position pointed out by Commodore Burnett was right for crossing in safety, if it had not shifted since the last time you were there?

A.—Yes.

By the Court.—State to the Court the conversation that passed between you and the Master on the forenoon of the day the "Orpheus" was lost.

A.—I was walking the Quarter Deck with the Master. I remarked what an extraordinary looking place we were approaching. He agreed with me, it was most extraordinary in the appearance of the Breakers, and I asked him if he had the new Chart. He said—"Oh, yes. I have got Veitch's Sailing Directions." "Oh," I said, "that's all right,"—he was the master of the "Niger."

The Witness here stated:—The Hydrographic Notice produced is Veitch's Sailing Directions. It was pasted in our Sailing Directions on board the "Orpheus."

Extract from evidence of Lieutenant D. D. Yonge, H.M.S. "Orpheus":—

"I saw the Commander and Master on the Bridge, evidently steering by signal as being made from the shore."

By the Court:—Were they apparently steering by signal from the Pilot Station at that time?

A.—Yes.

Evidence of William Oliert, Signalman of Her Majesty's late ship "Orpheus."

Examined by Judge Advocate:—Were you Signalman on board H.M. late ship "Orpheus" on the morning of the 7th February last?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you receive any signal from the Pilot Station at Paratutai on that morning?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was it?

A.—Take the Bar,—signal—two squares of the Yard Arm.

Q.—Did you report that signal to any one, if so, who?

A.—To Mr. Mallock, the Signal Officer.

Q.—Did he answer the signal?

A.—Yes.

By the Court:—When was the signal made?

A.—Soon after seven Bells (or 11.30 a.m.).

Q.—Did they displace the signal after you answered it?

A.—Not for some time.

Q.—Was any other signal made after that?

A.—Yes.

Q.—State what?

A.—North Arm with Semaphore raised.

Q.—What did that indicate?

A.—Keep more to Port.

Q.—To whom did you report that?

A.—The Signal Officer.

Q.—Name?

A.—Mr. Mallock.

Q.—Was it reported to the Commodore?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was any alteration made in the ship's course in consequence?

A.—Yes, the Master gave orders to Starboard the helm.

Q.—Did the ship answer her helm and go off to Port?