

APPENDIX.

EVIDENCE TAKEN ON INQUIRY; WITH COPIES OR EXTRACTS FROM THE PRINCIPAL DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO.

WEDNESDAY, 17TH APRIL, 1872.

GEORGE HENRY HARRINGTON, being duly sworn, saith as follows:—

I have made two voyages in the ship “England” to this port, as commander. On my arrival in England last voyage I remained seven weeks, and then returned to New Zealand. Time occupied in discharging cargo was three weeks. I commenced to re-load outward cargo about 20th November, fifth week after arrival, so that the ship was empty for a fortnight, one week of which she was in dry dock. Ship was thoroughly repaired, scraped, varnished, and painted throughout before commencing to take in cargo. The bilge of the ship was found in good order. Nothing unusual in the state of the ship, in my opinion, at this time. On the last week of November I commenced taking in cargo, but the bulk of the cargo did not come in until 2nd December, or within seven days of sailing. Loading is done by a stevedore, under directions from me. Shaw, Saville, and Co. are charterers of my vessel, and chartered the whole ship, having full power to put any sort of merchandise and any number of passengers they liked on board. The number of passengers was received by me about the end of November, in order to give time to the charterers’ carpenters to provide berths. I was aware I was to have emigrants when I was chartered, and took steps to have the ship surveyed, and it was surveyed while in dry dock. Subsequently, about the end of November, after the number of emigrants had been communicated by the agents, the passenger accommodation was measured off by the Government Surveyors, and inspected by them after they were built—that is, the berths and hospital, and all other accommodation. Emigrants arrived on board on Monday, 4th December; the ship sailed on the following Thursday. Soon after I was chartered, I was informed that I must be ready to receive emigrants on 4th December. My ship, so far as under my control, was ready on the 4th, but I should have wished it to have been in a more advanced state on that date; I mean with respect to the receipt of cargo and putting up of the fittings, which were behind hand. On this date, fully half the cargo had not been received; the principal fittings were put up, but not completed; the joiners were not out of the ship when we left the Dock on Thursday, nor was the ventilation completed. I employed men at my own expense to put the fittings in order, and paid their passage from Gravesend, where the fittings were inspected. The official inspection was made about 3 o’clock, on Thursday afternoon, at Gravesend. The name of the surveyor is Captain Westbrook; he was one of the surveyors who had inspected the ship in dock. Government Medical Officer accompanied the Surveyor, as also Dr. Featherston, whom I however did not see. The inspection took place in my absence, while I was clearing ship in London, at the request of the charterers. The provisions and water were examined and sampled on the dock quay, before bringing on board. I was not present, but my chief mate was. I first saw the emigrants on Monday before we sailed, on board my ship; they lived on board between decks from that time. Cold north-east winds, frost, and snow, prevailed during this time. I thought the emigrants miserable in appearance, which I attributed to their having recently come off a sea voyage. The emigrants were not well clothed, but did not look sickly, but just as if they had come off a hard voyage. They had full permission to go about, and I met them on different occasions outside the Docks. The above remarks only apply to the foreign emigrants. The inspecting medical officer informed me that his inspection was satisfactory, and did not inform me of any sickness on board, but recommended me to be careful on account of the large number of children on board. The spaces were ample, according to the Passenger Act. The ship was in good sea-going order on leaving Gravesend, and there was nothing to incommode the passengers during the first part of the voyage. I believe, to the best of my recollection, the first case of sickness, excepting coughs and colds, was a case of measles, one of the foreigners’ children; one of the Scotch women was the party who informed me of this (Mrs. McDonald). I saw the child, and there was a slight eruption, appearing to me as if it were measles; the child was about twelve months old, and had only a slight attack, and recovered in a few days.

[The official log of ship “England,” marked A, produced; and identified by Captain Harrington.] This log has been kept by the chief officer of the ship, but signed from time to time by me—that is, all entries requiring my signature. The list of the crew contained in the log is correct, and the name of the surgeon who signs the articles is also correct. It is the duty of the surgeon to report to me any cases of sickness occurring on board; no report was made by him to me of the case of sickness already mentioned. I do not think the parents had reported the illness of their child to the doctor. The surgeon seemed to be out of health, on account of sea-sickness as I suppose, for over a fortnight. Two or three days after we left, I went down between decks and found the place was not kept properly clean by the emigrants, who should have done so under direction of the doctor. I represented to the doctor that the place was not kept clean, and he said they refused to do it. I at once took steps to have the ’tween decks cleaned, and I informed the doctor that I and my chief officer would afterwards attend to all sanitary arrangements during the voyage, and that he should only attend to the medical wants of the emigrants, as I considered he was inexperienced. The doctor agreed to be thus relieved. I consider the doctor was thus relieved from any attendance as to sanitary arrangements. I consider