

THE OCEANIC STEAMSHIP COMPANY
MATSON LINE
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

COPY

10th May, 1943.

Mr. Charles E. Brown,
Regional Director,
South & South West Pacific Areas,
U.S.-W.S.A.
7 Wynward Street
SYDNEY

Dear Mr. Brown,

"JANE A. DELANO"

For your information and record we wish to acquaint you with various situations which developed regarding the movements of the above vessel which called here en route to the Middle East.

The vessel arrived in port at 4.48 a.m. April 30 and, as customary, anchored on the bank for medical inspection. Later she proceeded to 1B Darling Harbour where she berthed at 8.50 a.m. She was boarded by the writer and usual customs and immigration formalities were complied with.

The master was questioned regarding supplies, repairs, and a tentative departure was set for early Sunday May 2, which, of course, would depend on further discussions with the Australian Naval Control authorities. The captain, E.R. Small, was notified that there would be a convoy departing from Sydney which would take him as far as Melbourne if he was prepared to leave Saturday p.m. However, he favoured running alone and departing Sunday a.m.

The usual routine having been accomplished, the master was taken to the Naval Control Office by our Mr. Butler, the writer being dropped off at the office en route.

A short time later we had a call from Mr. Butler advising that the captain was now desirous of going in the convoy and to this we readily agreed, although it meant that we had to put considerable pressure behind the people supplying the stores, laundry, etc. to have everything in order for leaving Saturday. The captain required also compass adjustment which we arranged for, figuring departure from the wharf between 11.30 and 12 noon Saturday. This would have given him approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours in which to swing ship and hour to pass the heads to join the convoy at the prescribed time of 3.30 p.m. We might add that inasmuch as the party was fairly sizeable certain latitude was allowed and undoubtedly he would have had an additional half hour to make the convoy if required.

After visiting the Naval Control office and the American Consul, Captain Small presented himself at this office about 12 noon Friday and was acquainted with all arrangements and apparently was quite satisfied. He required funds for advances to crew which we arranged to secure and he stated he would call for same at 2. p.m., then left the office

During the afternoon, inasmuch as the master had not shown up, and he had informed the crew he would advance money between 4 and 5 p.m., we endeavoured to trace. However, were unsuccessful in locating him until about 5.45 p.m. when he learned that he had just returned to his ship. We pointed out the fact that we were holding funds for him and he advised that he would be at the office immediately. He showed up about 6.15 in company with the Chief Officer. Money was advanced and duly signed for and the master then left the office. However, before doing so we asked him to be in the office 9.30 a.m. Saturday morning inasmuch as the convoy conference was called for 10 a.m.

me, and another near my navel, so that this incident
illness but added to my trouble.

By 9.45 a.m. May 1 we had not heard from the master, therefore, checked the ship. We were informed by our Mr. Butler that apparently due to the fact that the main engine was adrift, and other work had to be done, the vessel would not be able to leave as scheduled. We then asked him to check with the chief engineer, which he did, and at approximately 7 minutes to 10 he telephoned this office and advised that the engines would be ready and the ship able to depart between 11.30 and 12 noon, as originally scheduled.

At 10.15 a.m. we had a call from Captain Small. He mentioned that he was over on the north shore but that he was coming directly to this office. We advised Captain Small regarding the engines inasmuch as he intimated that they would not be ready. However, he did not show up in the office and after tracing we learned through Commander Williams of Navy Control about 11.30 that Captain Small had arrived in his office at 11 a.m. and stated he would be unable to proceed in convoy on account of the machinery situation and also the fact that he might have to replace his second assistant engineer, this latter being something which had never been brought to the attention of the agents. He informed Commander Williams also when he was leaving the office that he was going directly to the ship. The time was getting short, therefore, the writer in company with Captain Petersen, W.S.A. Marine Superintendent, went down to the ship, arriving there about 11.50 a.m.

We conferred with the chief engineer who said he was ready to leave and at that time the engines were turning over. In addition, all supplies, laundry, etc. had been delivered to the ship. We waited for Captain Small to appear but he did not show up. We kept in constant touch with our office, however, were unsuccessful in locating him. At 1:30 p.m. it was decided that we would have to cancel the departure inasmuch as it would have been impossible to adjust the compasses and make the convoy.

We continued to check throughout the day but did not hear from Captain Small. The writer was available all Saturday evening by telephone. Sunday morning the ship was contacted personally at 8.45 a.m. and we found that Captain Small was aboard. He gave no tangible explanation of his actions and as the W.S.A. representatives were desirous of seeing him, we took him to the W.S.A. Office and arrived about 9.30 a.m.

At that time I checked Naval control to see when it would be satisfactory for the vessel to leave and they informed me that she would be able to sail at daylight Monday, May 3. They mentioned also that Captain Small had contacted them by telephone at 9.14 p.m. Saturday night and was advised that the writer had been endeavouring to get in touch with him. He was furnished with writer's telephone number and stated that he would call that number immediately.

Captain Petersen and the writer had a preliminary discussion with Captain Small and the seriousness of his actions was pointed out. He admitted that he had been informed over the telephone Saturday morning at about 10.15 that his engines would be ready at 12 noon although he advised that when he left the ship at 9.30 a.m. the chief engineer said they would probably not be ready. He stated also that he was back on board the vessel at 11: p.m. Saturday Night. He also substantiated the comment made by the Naval Control office that he had telephoned there at 9.14 Saturday evening and was told to call the writer. He said he had found it difficult to get a telephone call through.

Subsequently Captain Small was interviewed by Mr. Frazer Bailey, Mr. John McHose and also by you, and in the writer's opinion failed to give any plausible explanation of his neglect to report. You decided that he should be permitted to remain on the ship. Therefore arrangements were made for departure from dock at 3. p.m. so that he could go down the Bay and adjust compasses, remain on the bank overnight and depart at daybreak next day.

A statement was made by the chief engineer regarding the engine situation which coincides with the times mentioned above, dealing with particularly with the engines being ready. Captain Small was asked to give a written statement but refused to do so.

one at the pit of the stomach which has been troubling me, and another near my navel, so that this incident added to my trouble.

Naval Control formalities were complied with and the vessel left the wharf at 3.15 for compass adjustment. A number of the crew were ashore. However, arrangements were for them to be taken to the ship when they showed up at 11 p.m. that night.

At 4.30 a.m. Monday May 3 the writer had a call from South Head stating that his services were required aboard. The call was complied with and the ship was boarded down on the bank about 6 a.m. It appeared that one man was in pain apparently occasioned by kidney trouble. This man's condition has been brought to the attention of our Mr. Bulmer, proper medical forms supplied with instructions as to distribution. The man visited the U. S. Army Port Dispensary and while hospitalization was recommended, he refused and went back aboard the ship. The forms in question, with the doctor's notations thereon, were not brought to the attention of the agent.

There was only one course of action evident. Therefore, the man was taken ashore the writer. Had those concerned on the ship complied with instructions regarding handling of medical cases, this man would never have been allowed to rejoin the vessel.

The scheduled time of departure was 6 a.m. However, ~~due~~ due to this incident there was a further delay of about half an hour. The vessel finally got underway and passed through the heads at 7.21 a.m., 51 minutes later than scheduled.

We can only add that this is the first incident we have had such as this in our experience in servicing and despatching hundreds of ships calling at this port and others in Australia. We feel we did not have proper co-operation from the master and we consider that a severe reprimand is in order when he returns to the United States.

Yours very truly,
The Oceanic Steamship Company
MATSON LINE

Sgd/ D. G. Sissons
General Agent

... in the cabin I have two bruises on my body, one at the pit of the stomach which has been troubling me, and another near my navel, so that this incident... illness but added to my trouble.