

BRITISH EMPIRE )  
COLONY OF CEYLON )  
CITY OF COLOMBO )  
CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA )

SS:

Before me, David T. RAY, Vice Consul of the United States of America in and for the consular district of Ceylon, duly commissioned and qualified, personally appeared Louis Van Rillaer, Chief Mate, S.S. Jane A. Delano, who being duly sworn, deposes and says as follows:

After this vessel arrived in Madras, June 17, 1943, while eating breakfast at 9:30 a.m. I informed the 2nd Mate and 3rd Mate that we were to stand regular sea watches as this was the Master's orders. When the Stevedore Boss came aboard I was told that we would have to supply all the slings so the Master ordered all deck gang including the Mates to make slings so that we could discharge the cargo. We made up on coil of five inch manila rope slings which was completed at 11 a.m. At about 5:30 p.m. the 2nd Mate and 3rd Mate went ashore. At 8 p.m. the 3rd Mate was supposed to relieve me but he did not show up. The Master came on board at that time and asked me why I was still on deck, since 4 a.m., and I told him that I had no relief so the Master went ashore again. I am a sick man suffering from a gastric ulcer and was in a hospital in Calcutta for same, but I came back to the ship before sailing with necessary medicines and diet list with strict orders to keep off my feet as much as possible, these orders were given me by both the doctor and the Master. However, I continued working cargo and about 11:45 p.m. the 2nd Mate and 3rd Mate came on board and went to their rooms. At midnight I looked for the 2nd Mate and after a search found him by the galley. When I took a good look at him I could see that he had been drinking and smelled of liquor, so I ordered him to his room for it was my judgment that he could not look after his work, whereupon he became very insulting and abusive. But I said "You had better be a good soldier and keep off the deck." Then he threatened and grabbed me around the waist and struck at my side. In the tussle 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 has not improved my illness but added to my trouble.

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After this affair was over he, the 2nd Mate, went to the 3rd Mate's room and made all kinds of noises but the 3rd Mate's door was locked so the 2nd Mate didn't get in. The 2nd Mate then finally went into his own room and locked the door. When the Master came on board at 2 a.m. I was standing by the number two hatch and he asked why I was still on deck instead of in bed. I explained the trouble I had had which made him very angry. He immediately went to the 3rd and 2nd Mates rooms but could not get in. After banging on both doors and neither would open his door the Master asked me to get my pass keys and with them he opened the doors while the men were both still lying in their bunks. The Master then wanted to know why the Chief Mate was not relieved for he is a sick man. An argument between them started. However, I went on deck and looked after the cargo until 8 a.m. when the 3rd Mate finally relieved me. Up until that time I had been on watch 28 hours continuously. At 10 a.m. the Master ordered me to my room and to bed. I went to bed but found it impossible to rest for I was bothered all the time with checkers, foreman and harbor officials so that I did not actually get to bed until after 8 p.m., June 19, 1943, so one can readily see just about the condition I must be in after going through this siege.

This was not the first time with the 2nd Mate for similar trouble. First of all after leaving San Francisco, California, at 5 p.m. he was unable to take his watch at midnight, ~~so the 3rd Mate stood the watch at midnight,~~ so the 3rd Mate stood the watch until 2 a.m. and I relieved him from 2 to 5:30 a.m. being too tired to keep a good lookout after 5:30 a.m. I then sent for the 2nd Mate who relieved me at that time.

The next time the 2nd Mate gave similar trouble was while the ship was in Sydney, Australia, when he was intoxicated so much of the time that during the time of shifting from the pier to an anchorage that the crewmen came to me and reported his using abusive language with them.

On June 4, 1943, at 5:00 a.m. while the 2nd Mate was on duty in Calcutta working cargo, which included the discharging of ammunition, I found him lying on a bench in a drunken condition, so I went to the Master and told him what I had seen and asked for the Master to come down and see for himself. After the Master saw the condition of the 2nd Mate,

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in such a stupor that he just mumbled, I decided to take over his duties. When I asked the 2nd Mate for a master padlock key which he had, instead of immediately producing it he became very abusive but finally gave it to me and pushed me out of his room using bodily force. When the Master heard this he came and told me to get the harbor police to take the 2nd Mate to jail. At 7:10 a.m. the 2nd Mate, E. Westin, was taken, with the charges made, to jail in the City of Calcutta. The next day I was called to the U.S. Consul regarding the charges, which the 2nd Mate denied. The Consul asked him if he would promise not to drink during the rest of the voyage. The 2nd Mate answered with "I wouldn't promise that besides I don't want that axe over my head the rest of the trip." Only a few days later in another port the same trouble occurred again but worse.

Now I wish there could be something done about this for I as Chief Mate cannot do my patriotic duty any longer under these conditions for I am losing my health fast and have a family. I am more than willing to do my share and more to win this war but am being prevented under these conditions. Hoping that speedy and effective action will be taken,

And further deponent saith not.

L. VAN RILLAER

(signature of affiant)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 21st day  
of June, 1943.

DAVID T. RAY

David T. Ray

Vice Consul of the United States of America

(SEAL)