

The Vanguard Court-Martial.

(BY SPECIAL TELEGRAM TO THE BROAD ARROW.)

(Continued from page 41.)

The court martial on Captain Dawkins, Lieutenant Hathorn, Navigating Lieutenant Thomas, and the remainder of the officers and ship's company of Her Majesty's ship *Vanguard*, for the loss of that vessel off the coast of Ireland on the 1st of September last, was continued on board Her Majesty's ship *Royal Adelaide*, flagship at Devonport, on Saturday last. The court was composed of the same officers as on previous days, Lord John Hay, C. B., second in command of the Channel Squadron, presiding.

Mr. Lishman, R.N., again appeared for the officers of the *Vanguard*.

On the opening of the court, Lieutenant Evans, who had been under examination the previous day, was recalled.

The President: Were you aware that your station was two cables astern of the *Vanguard*?

Witness: Yes, and also that the speed of the flagship was indicated at seven knots; also that no signal had been made by the flagship to reduce that speed.

The President: Have you any explanation to offer for having intentionally and deliberately forsaken your station and sheered the *Iron Duke* out of the line?

Witness: It was and is my opinion that in a fog, knowing the speed my leader is going at, I should be safer one point, or nearly one point, on her port quarter than directly astern. This opinion coincides with the opinion of the officers of the former watch expressed at the time, and is in accordance with Article 16 in the General Signal book.

The President: Did you consider yourself justified by Article 16 in leaving your station, as ordered by the admiral in command without first obtaining the authority of your captain?

Witness: Yes, as the captain was not on deck at that time. I had on one occasion previously kept officer's watch in a squadron in prescribed order of sailing in a fog. My watch at that time was for about an hour. I have been in the combined squadron, and know their custom in a fog. I am aware that there is an instruction in the fog signal book that close order is to be maintained in a fog.

The President: Did you increase the speed to sixty revolutions without previously communicating with the captain; and, if so, why?

Witness: My orders to the engine room were "As fast as possible." My check on the number of revolutions they would be going was their answer. "If we had the other half boiler turned on we should be going 58." My idea was we were going 54 or 55 revolutions. I have not been in the habit of letting the captain know when I altered the revolutions.

The President: It appears by the registers that the engines were going 54 at 12.30, before being ordered to go full speed at 12.40. Were you aware of that?

Witness: No. No order of 54 revolutions had been given, and the order "As fast as possible" was at 12.35. The orders that had been given were before 12.20, 50 revolutions, 52 then, and at 12.35 as fast as possible. The reason of my going full speed was to get into station. When I heard the steam whistle of the *Vanguard* first it was three points on our starboard bow. I only heard a whistle sounded once for from three to four seconds,

By Captain Lethbridge: I saw the steam flag of the *Vanguard* indicating the speed of her engines immediately before the fog. It was No. 4 flag, but I am not positive what height it was above the gunwale. My impression is that it was half way up. That flag represented to me either 44 or 46 revolutions. If half way up it represents 45. That flag was neither raised nor lowered to my knowledge during my watch and prior to the fog coming on.

Capt. the Hon. J. Ward: You have stated that you placed a man at the steam whistle at 12.30. What was he there for?

Witness: To sound it. He tried to sound the whistle before the steam was turned on from below; again on the captain's orders, and just at colliding. The whistle was not sounded before the collision. The *Iron Duke* met the fog at 12.40. I have never steamed at full speed in squadron in any ship I have been in in a dense fog.

Captain Ward: Are you aware of the precautions to be taken by an officer of the watch in fogs?

The President here ordered the court to be cleared. After being closed about ten minutes it was reopened, and the witness then gave an affirmative reply to the last question of Captain Ward.

Captain Ward: When you last saw the *Vanguard*, before the fog, did you consider that the *Iron Duke* was gaining on her?

Witness: No; I looked through my sextant about 3 minute before the fog, and she was not gaining perceptibly.

Captain Dawkins: In your letter of September 1, addressed to Captain Hickley, you state that you gave the *Iron Duke* a good sheer off. Do I understand that one point alteration in your course is what you would call a good sheer off?

Witness: At the time of steering I did not know exactly how much we had sheered. My authority for it's being a point is the quartermaster.

The President: When did the quartermaster tell you that?

Witness: I think the day after. At the commencement of the fog I could see the *Vanguard's* wake, and I also, I think, just before colliding.

William Mains, chief officer of the Coast guard, who was attached to the *Iron Duke*, was next called, and in reply to the president, stated that he kept watch on the 1st of September on the topgallant forecabin. It was his afternoon watch. He sent a lookout man to the jibboom end. After this he heard the captain give orders about the fog horns. Shortly after he heard the steam whistle. He should think he heard the whistle about fifteen or sixteen minutes to one o'clock. He reported the circumstances, and the officer of the watch held up his hand in reply. The signalman Martin came in with the fog horns. At this time the witness sighted the *Vanguard*. He got up from the position he was kneeling and shouted out, "Go astern, Sir, the *Vanguard* is close under our bows." He received no reply. He then ran along the forecabin, and placed his foot on the ladder leading to the upper battery when the collision occurred. He then saw the officer of the watch. The order then had been given to go astern full speed.

Captain Ward: In what direction did you see the *Vanguard* during the fog.

Witness: When I saw her first she appeared to be close under our starboard bow, inside of our flying boom, but I only saw her for a moment. She was not across the bows of the *Iron Duke* when I saw her. She was then heading about one point to port.

Captain Dawkins: When you heard the whistle of the *Vanguard*, did it have a jerky

kind of sound with it, as if there was some very short interval between the sound?

Witness: No; it sounded like one continuous blast. The sound was more like steam being blown off than a steam whistle. When I first heard this whistle I did not wait to hear it out, but reported it immediately to the officers of the watch.

Lieutenant Hathorn: How long a time elapsed from when you first heard the whistle to the time of sighting the *Vanguard*?

Witness: from one to two minutes, I should think.

James Watson, the look out man placed on the jibboom end of the *Iron Duke*, said he had orders to keep a strict lookout. Nothing was said specially about the *Vanguard*. The witness did not hear any steam whistle while on watch. The only sound he heard was on board the *Iron Duke*. He saw no object. He was not relieved until after the collision. The collision occurred a short time after he went on the jibboom end. When he first saw the *Vanguard* she was distant, he thought, between twenty and thirty yards. He reported her. He did not remember hearing the *Vanguard's* steam whistle at that moment.

The President: This is an important question. Do you mean to say that you have forgotten it? "To the best of my recollection" seems to imply that you had forgotten it. What the court wish to know is what you absolutely did or did not hear?

Witness: At the time the *Vanguard* came in sight I do not believe she was blowing her steam whistle.

The President: Have you forgotten what took place on the occasion referring to the steam whistle?

Witness: No. I do not remember any steam whistle at all from the time of my being first placed on the look out up to the moment of seeing the *Vanguard*. The only thing I heard was a little waste steam from our own valves.

At the opening of the court on Monday a witness, who was on the forecabin look out, and another who was on the top masthead look out of the *Iron Duke* immediately before the collision, both deposed that they heard no steam whistle from the *Vanguard*.

Thomas Price Rose, quartermaster of the *Iron Duke*, stated that on the 1st of September he was at the "conn" between noon and four p.m. After hauling up in a line with the *Vanguard* in the port division the *Iron Duke* was steered a S. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. course. When the fog came on the *Vanguard* was right ahead, distant about two and a half cables. After the fog came on he did not continue to steer the same. The officers of the watch told him to give her a sheer out to port, which he did. He gave the *Iron Duke* half a turn of the helm. The order to do this was repeated by a man named Hicks to the helm man, named Caven. The helm was kept half a turn to starboard for about a minute. When the *Iron Duke* was righted he did not remember what helm he gave her. He gave the order, "Steady port." The ship was steering easily that day. She "yawed" about a quarter of a point each way. When steering S. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. the most helm he had to give her was sometimes two spokes to a quarter of a turn, to keep her on her course.

The President: State the exact words of the officer of the watch in regard to giving her a sheer.—I do not remember the exact words, but, as far as I recollect, I was to give the ship a sheer out to port. I do not remember his saying a broad sheer; he might have said a broad sheer.

Did you ever hear the *Vanguard's* whistle