

River Pilot Recounts Pre-Collision Moves

By GERRY McNEIL
QUEBEC (CP)—A formal inquiry under the Canada Shipping Act began Monday into the collision Sept. 5 of the Canadian bulk carrier Leecliff Hall and the Greek freighter Apollonia. The Leecliff Hall, an 18,071-ton vessel loaded with iron ore, sank several hours after the collision on the St. Lawrence some 60 miles below Quebec City. Three crew members were drowned.

Goal of the inquiry under Mr. Justice Arthur I. Smith of Quebec superior court is to determine causes of the collision and to make safety recommendations.

The inquiry, expected to last at least two weeks, also has power to suspend the certificates of Canadian officers or pilots involved.

Pilot Yves Pouliot, 40, of Ste. Foy, Que., the first witness questioned, testified that the Apollonia moved at full speed from the Ile d'Orleans east of Quebec City along the north channel to the passage between Ile aux Coudres and the north shore.

the Vibert the stern, they tried without success to get the Leecliff Hall to shore.

Pouliot has had a pilot's certificate since 1965.

Captain of the Leecliff Hall, owned by Hall Corporation of Canada, was Walter M. Bowen.

BALTIC

Mr. and Mrs. William H. Burns have taken up residence at their home in Summerside after spending the past few months at their summer home in Baltic.

George Douglas, Norboro has recovered from an attack of pneumonia.

Rev. and Mrs. Reginald Miller and son Bobby of Chatham, N.B. were motorists to Darnley on Tuesday, Oct. 27 and were visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Hickoy.

Major Sinclair has taken up residence with Farmans Phillips at Kensington for the winter months.

Mrs. Elmer Casely, Baltic is a patient in Prince County Hospital.

Sally Crozier, Hamilton, spent the weekend with relatives in Charlottetown.

Roy McArthur, Kensington is a patient in Prince Edward Island Hospital, Charlottetown.

Mrs. Keith Woodside, Kensington, is a patient in Prince County Hospital.

APOLLONIA SLOWED DOWN
 In the island channel the Apollonia, 11,127 gross tons and owned by the Margrande Navigation Co. in a party of Andreas Greece, cut speed to 11 knots. Pouliot said visibility, which had been good, began to diminish. The Leecliff Hall was first detected on radar "right ahead" about five or six minutes before the collision.

At this time, Pouliot changed course five points and said he gave a blast on the foghorn "to let our presence on the river be known."

About one minute before the collision, at about 5:15 p.m., someone on the Apollonia's deck screamed "Big ship, big ship," and the ore carrier could be seen about one-half mile ahead.

Pouliot gave three short blasts and ordered "hard a-starboard, full astern." He got to the telegraph to find Capt. Andreas Ioannis ringing it to "full astern."

The pilot said the wheelhouse watch on the Apollonia was being changed at about this time. Despite the orders, it was too late to avoid a collision and the vessels met, the Leecliff Hall "presenting its port side."

They locked. The Apollonia maintained the full astern movement until it became evident it was doing no good. Later, said Pouliot, officers of the Leecliff Hall came aboard and asked the Apollonia "not to back up."

REFUSES HELP
 Pouliot said he told the freighter Totem Star, which had been following the Apollonia, that help wasn't needed. The Totem Star passed the collision scene five minutes after it occurred.

The Foundation Vibert, a tug working on salvage of the Tritonics about 15 miles upstream, arrived at the scene with the Apollonia pushing the bow, and

Syria's strongman, Gen. Amin Hafez, left Tuesday for kidney surgery and medical tests in Paris. The general, chairman of Syria's Presidency Council, premier and armed forces commander, is expected to stay away 10 to 15 days. Lt. Gen. Mohammed Amran was named acting chairman of the council and Deputy Premier Nureddin Atfiya was named acting premier during Hafez' absence.

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