

Captain Percival made the following statement before the Secretary (Mr. A.W. Britton) in connection with the patrol kept to render assistance to survivors of the 'Fitzroy' and 'Our Jack':-

Secretary -

Q. What is your name, please? A. John Henry Percival.

Q. You were acting Pilot at Cape Hawke on the 25th, 26th and 27th June, 1921? A. Yes.

Q. One of the witnesses who was a survivor from the wreck of the 'Fitzroy' at the Preliminary Inquiry gave certain evidence which I will read to you. Pages 26 and 27.

Q. Was there a watch kept on the lookout all that day? A. All day Sir. I do not suppose there were ever less than half a dozen on the lookout. There were three pairs of glasses going all the time. We knew nothing about the wreck of the 'Fitzroy' but we were keeping a lookout for the 'Our Jack.' There were residents on the spot with glasses also, but the visibility was so bad through rain squalls that you could not see two miles along the water.

Q. You were expecting a boat from the north, were you looking towards the south also? A. We were looking all around.

Q. What was the sea like? A. Heavy.

Q. How far from the breakwater would the boat pull up? A. About 8 miles along the beach.

Q. That would be near Black Head? A. She just missed the rocks at Black Head, another couple of yards and she would have been amongst the rocks.

Q. Did you yourself see that the lookout was kept? A. Yes, I was up myself several times.

Q. Did you give orders to that effect? A. Yes. It was a continuous lookout they relieved one another for meals. The Police were up there.

Q. Did our men keep a lookout though? A. Yes, they kept a continuous lookout.

Q. And had you good glasses? A. Yes, Sir. There were three good glasses there. Two private ones and the station glasses. We heard this talk that they could see the windows in the places so on Monday and Wednesday we went out and the policeman was with us and we went to the line of the boat where the wreckage was found and I drew the Policeman's attention, and said, there has been a statement made that they could see the windows at Tuncurry; but you could not see windows or anything else, and it was clear west then. You could only see the houses. And with a black boat submerged and a heavy sea, she might be visible for an instant, but when you looked again she would not be visible.

Q. This witness further stated that his opinion was that they ought to have kept watch on the beach all night and the next day and that they did not do that because Johansen walked along the beach for 9-miles and they did not see him. A. I was told that he was knocked off that night at 2 o'clock. I do not know anything about the Tuncurry side. We were out till daylight the next day.

Q. How far did you patrol on the southern shore? A. From Charlotte Hd. seven miles the other side of Cape Hawke, and we patrolled the beaches in squads.

Q. Has anybody searched the beach south of Charlotte Hd. A. Yes, pretty well every day. On Monday I saw the Policeman going along on horseback and he would go pretty well right along the 7-mile beach.

Q. Is there any settlement south of Charlotte Hd? A. I could not say.

Q. At what time did you hear of the 'Our Jack' wreck? A. At about 11.15 on the Sunday morning.

Q. Did the tug go out that day? A. We could not get out Sir. There was too much sea.

Q. Was she available? A. Yes.

Q. The crew was ready but the sea was too high? A. Yes.

Q. Did the tug go out on the Monday? A. Yes.

Q. At what time? A. 9 o'clock That was the first chance we had of getting out.

Q. Was there any risk then? A. Yes. There was a strong fresh running out and a heavy sea. She got swept.

Q. You went out yourself? A. Yes.

Q. How far did you search that day? A. Along to Black Hd. and we followed what we thought would be her drift. We came across cases and dead cattle. We searched right up to the Hawke and followed the Days close inshore. We could not stay out too long because we would not have been able to get back at all.