

From the newspaper De Duingalm 1921 – 30 September.....translated.

## **Terrible accident in the North Sea.**

**An Norwegian ship sunk by a mail boat Jan Breydel. Twelve victims.  
The story of an eye witness**

Friday evening a message came in Ostend that the mail boat Jan Breydel, on service on the Ostend-Dover line, had sunk a Norwegian ship between the Goodwin banks East and West. The wireless telegraph from North-Foreland had following message from the Jan Breydel:

**Registered: "We have collided with the steamer Salina on our way to Dover between the sand banks East and West Goodwin. The steamers sunk. We have deployed our life boats to help the crew. We will give full details when the captain has made a full report. We are saving the crew. No life boat was deployed by the Salina. Tugs from Dover were immediately send to the position of the disaster. In a second message the Jan Breydel asked for ambulances and doctors on the quay ready on arrival in order to coop with the wounded.**

**The Jan Breydel arrived at 8 a clock without any further accidents but with a broken front rudder and disembarked 13 members of the crew from the Salina and the eldest child (3 years) from the captain. His wife and youngest child (20 months), the ship carpenter and nine crew members lost their lives.**

**The Jan Breydel left Dover Saturday morning with 397 passengers on board. The navigation was difficult due to the broken front rudder. After five hours the ship arrived Ostend and was awaited by Mr Pierrard, general manager from Zeewezen whom started the investigation on the collision.**

**An eye witness story.**

**The captain Alfred Turlot had 374 passengers on board. Over the North Sea was a heavy fog. On a sudden moment, it was 18.18 hrs the fog cleared and we saw two ships in front of us. The Salina and another vessel. These three ships as the mail boats were blowing the whistle. By the way the Jan Breydel was doing that already some time for the fog. The Jan Breydel was going slow ahead, but on the moment we saw the two ship we immediately reversed. But to it was sadly too late. We were going straight on the Salina (18.19 hrs). The Salina got hit near the bridge on the coal bunkers. The ship sunk in six minutes.**

**Part of the crew jumped overboard and could be saved by the Jan Breydel which deployed the life boats immediately. Those remaining on board were sucked in the water and to the ground by the sinking ship.**

The smallest child from the captain was still lying in bed. The captain asked his mechanical engineer to be so kind and go and fetch the child while he would take care of the order on deck. The engineer obeyed but at the same time the ship went under.

The first officer on the ship (an Italian) jumped with the captain's oldest child overboard and swam about 40 to 50 meters away. He went under as due to the current in the water but came up and could be saved together with the child. The captain was in the boat that capsized. He could get hold of the keel and was picked up.

The Jan Breydel crew could rescue 15 people. Amongst the captain's wife and ship's carpenter. The woman was taken out of the water head down. On board of the mail boat she shortly sick, opened the eyes for a moment and died. After her death the captain demanded to leave him alone with her for five minutes to say prayers. Which was respected. Concerning the ship carpenter, he was probably dead the moment he was brought on board.

The report from commander Turlot.

Captain Turlot entered his report about the collision to M. Pierrard, general manager Zeewezen. From that report it had to be clear the Salina Captain got the blame for the disaster. Due to the fog the Jan Breydel was going very slow. When suddenly the whistle from two boats were heard. The Salina was on starboard and the other vessel on port side of the mail boat. Shortly after the Salina blew the whistle three short times to indicate she was going reverse. But the captain from the Jan Breydel saw the ship changing course straight on the Jan Breydel. Immediately he ordered full speed reverse but the Salina still approached and collided violently on the mail boat. The Salina hit on starboard side and sank immediately.

According to other newspapers the captain has also declared the Norwegian ship did not have its life boats ready to deploy in case of emergency. They were still wrapped in sailcloth and davits were not operational.

Captain Messel from the Salina is 39 years and was questioned by an agent from his company. From this inquiry nothing has yet been released. They say the body from his youngest child was picked up. But they say so many things! One sailor from the Salina was brought to the Royal Victoria Hospital in London. He was delirious. His condition was alarming.

In another paper it has been told that the well-known violin player Kubelick was on board of the Jan Breydel and just had one frightening thought: To lose his violin. Estimated on 25 000 pounds (on the rate of the day 1 million 250 000 francs). Out of precaution he took the violin and tied it to a life buoy. There was luckily no danger for the passengers on the mail boat.

The Salina (ex Solfond, ex Hassia) measured 18545 tons brut / 1166 tons net was built in 1883 in Vegesack. The ship was 254 feet and one inch long and 35 feet and 4 inches wide and had a 21 feet 9 inches draft. It was underway loaded with salt to

Haugesund. Its owner was Actieselskabet Salina (H.M. Wrangel and C<sup>o</sup> , Actieselskab) of Haugesund.

**Before an English tribunal.**

The inquiry about the death of captain Messel's wife from the Salina took place Monday which due to the collision with the Belgian mail boat Jan Breydel was lost and sunk. Also about the death of the carpenter from the Norwegian boat.

The captain declared the ship came from Sicily on its way to Haugesund. There was a very thick fog when we collided. The Salina was going very slow when a steamer passed whistling. I was reversing and the ship went forwards. At this moment M. Grant; which was speaking for the Belgian Zeewezen, interrupted and said that he hoped the captain Messel would not declare as should the Jan Breydel had thrown itself on his ship. As the Belgian marine was not officially represented on this inquiry. He added to hope the public would not be brought to that thought and belief. Captain Messel added he was blowing the whistle every minute. The passing ship answered every time. We were going slow and I stopped the engine every thirty seconds and blew the whistle. Nobody answered anymore. On a sudden moment we did hear the steam whistle from the Jan Breydel and I made my steam whistle work three times. Nothing answered. Then I heard two times a whistle that seem to be closing fast. Almost at the same time the Jan Breydel appeared to our port side and hit us. I gave the order to deploy the life boats but time was too short. Our ship sunk in less than four minutes. The steam boiler exploded which has thrown several crew members into the sea.

Then the captain continued he did not criticize any one on board his ship but I do on the other ship as it was going too fast. Mr Grant again remarked there was no representative from the other ship legally present.

The English magistrate remarked the captain he should not criticize who is to be found guilty for this accident as the accident occurred outside territorial waters.

The first bosun declared the ship was going two miles per hour the moment of collision. To his opinion the Jan Breydel was going too fast in the thick fog. Probably 5 or 6 knots.

**What a passenger said.**

A passenger told a newspaper: nothing could for see the Norwegian ship would change course suddenly. In fact there was a thick fog and when the ship came visible it seems its course would not be any danger for us. But possibly a wrong manoeuvre and change of direction and the Jan Breydel too close which could not react fast enough, hit the ship. A few seconds later and it would be the mail boat itself which was hit.