



Merchant Shipping Act 1894

1894 CHAPTER 60

PART XIII

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

Provisions in case of Offences Abroad.

689 Conveyance of offenders and witnesses to United Kingdom or British possession.

- (1) Whenever any complaint is made to any British consular officer—
 - (a) that any offence against property or person has been committed at any place, either ashore or afloat, out of Her Majesty's dominions by any master, seaman, or apprentice, who at the time when the offence was committed, or within three months before that time, was employed in any British ship ; or
 - (b) that any offence on the high seas has been committed by any master, seaman, or apprentice belonging to any British ship,that consular officer may inquire into the case upon oath, and may, if the case so requires, take any steps in his power for the purpose of placing the offender under the necessary restraint and of sending him as soon as practicable in safe custody to the United Kingdom, or to any British possession in which there is a court capable of taking cognizance of the offence, in any ship belonging to Her Majesty or to any of Her subjects, to be there proceeded against according to law.
- (2) The consular officer may order the master of any ship belonging to any subject of Her Majesty bound to the United Kingdom or to such British possession as aforesaid to receive and afford a passage and subsistence during the voyage to any such offender as aforesaid, and to the witnesses, so that the master be not required to receive more than one offender for every one hundred tons of his ship's registered tonnage, or more than one witness for every fifty tons of that tonnage ; and the consular officer shall endorse upon the agreement of the ship such particulars with respect to any offenders or witnesses sent in her as the Board of Trade require.
- (3) Any master of a ship to whose charge an offender has been so committed shall, on his ship's arrival in the United Kingdom or in such British possession as aforesaid, give

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the offender into the custody of some police officer or constable, and that officer or constable shall take the offender before a justice of the peace or other magistrate by law empowered to deal with the matter, and the justice or magistrate shall deal with the matter as in cases of offences committed upon the high seas.

- (4) If any master of a ship, when required by any British consular officer to receive and afford a passage and subsistence to any offender or witness, does not receive him and afford a passage and subsistence to him, or does not deliver any offender committed to his charge into the custody of some police officer or constable as herein-before directed, he shall for each offence be liable to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds.
- (5) The expense of imprisoning any such offender and of conveying him and the witnesses to the United Kingdom or to such British possession as aforesaid in any manner other than in the ship to which they respectively belong, shall, where not paid as part of the costs of the prosecution, be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament.

690 Inquiry into cause of death on board ship.

- (1) Where a case of death happens on board any foreign-going British ship, the superintendent at the port where the crew of the ship is discharged, shall, on the arrival of the ship at that port, inquire into the cause of the death, and shall make in the official log an endorsement to the effect, either that the statement of the cause of death in the log is in his opinion true, or the contrary, according to the result of the inquiry.
- (2) A superintendent shall for the purpose of an inquiry under this section have the powers of a Board of Trade inspector under this Act; and if in the course of any such inquiry it appears to a superintendent that any such death has been caused on board the ship by violence or other improper means, he shall either report the matter to the Board of Trade, or, if the emergency of the case so requires, shall take immediate steps for bringing the offender or offenders to justice.
- (3) This section shall not apply—
 - (a) except in Scotland, to fishing boats, nor
 - (b) to ships registered in a British possession when those ships are within the jurisdiction of the government of that possession ; nor
 - (c) to pleasure yachts, or ships belonging to any of the three general lighthouse authorities.

691 Depositions to be received in evidence when witness cannot be produced.

- (1) Whenever in the course of any legal proceeding instituted in any part of Her Majesty's dominions before any judge or magistrate, or before any person authorised by law or by consent of parties to receive evidence, the testimony of any witness is required in relation to the subject matter of that proceeding, then upon due proof, if the proceeding is instituted in the United Kingdom that the witness cannot be found in that kingdom, or if in any British possession that he cannot be found in that possession, any deposition that the witness may have previously made on oath in relation to the same subject matter before any justice or magistrate in Her Majesty's dominions, or any British consular officer elsewhere, shall be admissible in evidence, provided that—
 - (a) if the deposition was made in the United Kingdom, it shall not be admissible in any proceeding instituted in the United Kingdom ; and
 - (b) if the deposition was made in any British possession, it shall not be admissible in any proceeding instituted in that British possession; and

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- (c) if the proceeding is criminal it shall not be admissible, unless it was made in the presence of the person accused.
- (2) A deposition so made shall be authenticated by the signature of the judge, magistrate, or consular officer before whom it is made ; and the judge, magistrate or consular officer shall certify, if the fact is so that the accused was present at the taking thereof.
- (3) It shall not be necessary in any case to prove the signature or official character of the person appearing to have signed any such deposition, and in any criminal proceeding a certificate under this section shall, unless the contrary is proved, be sufficient evidence of the accused having been present in manner thereby certified.
- (4) Nothing herein contained shall affect any case in which depositions taken in any proceeding are rendered admissible in evidence by any Act of Parliament, or by any Act or ordinance of the legislature of any colony, so far as regards that colony, or interfere with the power of any colonial legislature to make those depositions admissible in evidence, or to interfere with the practice of any court in which depositions not authenticated as herein-before mentioned are admissible.