

SAD END TO HOLIDAY

A CHELMSFORD SCHOLAR DROWNED AT CLACTON

Sister Rescued Unconscious

Tragedy in Crossing Family

On Wednesday afternoon a sad bathing fatality occurred at Clacton, Master Clive Moss, third son of Mrs. Moss, farmer, Rooks Hall, Crossing, Braintree, being drowned in sight of a sister and brother. Clive Moss, who would have attained his 15th birthday on Sunday, was a scholar at Chelmsford Grammar School, where he had been for a year, and his box was packed ready for his return to the school next Tuesday.

On Wednesday, the deceased, his elder sister, Miss Olive Moss, who was in charge, Miss Phyllis Moss, aged 16, and their brother Vincent, aged 12, were motored from their mother's farmhouse to catch the 9.36 Clacton excursion train at Kelvedon to spend a day at the seaside. Mrs. Moss, who is a widow, and works a 200 acre farm, motored with her children to Kelvedon and kissed them farewell when they started on what proved a tragic holiday. The party arrived at Clacton about eleven o'clock. The two boys bought an engine and went to the beach with their sisters.

BATHING FROM THE BEACH.

At a quarter to one Miss Phyllis and Master Clive went for a bathe from beach tents, and Miss Olive Moss sat on a mackintosh on the shingle close to the edge of the sea while the bathers paddled for a few minutes near a breakwater. Phyllis, who could swim about 20 strokes, suddenly struck her foot on a breakwater and headed straight into deep water. She uttered a shriek, which let Miss Olive Moss know she was in difficulties. Master Clive Moss followed his sister into the deep water, the beach shelving very rapidly at the spot, and at once he was in danger. He could swim only six strokes, and the current was too much for him. Miss Olive Moss, who cannot swim, shouted for help for her drowning brother and sister, and ran along the breakwater to get to them, but fortunately she was restrained by others who quickly gathered.

A GALLANT RESCUE.

A pathetic circumstance of the accident was that Miss Olive and her brother Vincent were only a few yards from their drowning brother and sister whom they were powerless to aid. Miss Olive Moss caught hold of a life belt, which was thrown in by a man. Miss Phyllis Moss went down several times, when a young man named Haydock, aged 19, plunged in and just managed to get hold of her, and she was brought out of the water in extremis. Clive Moss, it is assumed, struck his head on the breakwater and sank. There happened to be no boat near, and it was an hour and a half before the body was recovered by the police some six yards from the scene of the accident.

The sea was rough, and a strong current was running. Miss Olive Moss was overcome with grief. Her sister regained consciousness after treatment by Nurse Osborne, but artificial respiration, which was applied for over an hour on Clive Moss, failed to revive him. There were marks of injury on the boy's forehead and temples, indicating that he had struck his head on the breakwater.

A PROMISING BOY.

Miss Olive Moss telegraphed to the Rev. G. H. Bishop, vicar of Crossing, who broke the news as gently as possible to Mrs. Moss, who was attending Braintree Market on Wednesday afternoon. The Misses Moss and Master Vincent returned to Rooks Hall, and Mrs. Moss, accompanied by the Vicar of Crossing, and her son, Mr. Frank Moss, motored to Clacton.

The greatest sympathy is felt with Mrs. Moss, a hardworking and capable lady

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THE CROSSING TRAGEDY

Sea Bathing Safety.

Gallantry at Clacton.

Dr. J. Harrison, coroner, held an inquest on Friday on the body of Clive Moss, third son of Mrs. Moss, widow, Rooks Hall, Crossing, Braintree, who was drowned at Clacton under sad circumstances, as fully reported in the last Essex CHRONICLE.

Giving evidence, Miss Olive G. Moss, sister of the deceased, stated she took her two brothers and sister to Clacton on Sept. 12 for a day's outing. At 12.45 they were on the East Beach, opposite Ambleside boarding-house. Clive, aged 14, and Phyllis, aged 15, went in the water for a short swim, each being able to swim a few strokes. They were near the last groyne on the east side. Phyllis was two feet in front of Clive. Witness, who was seated on the beach quite near, could see they were in difficulties, and she called for help. A young man dived into the sea fully dressed and rescued Phyllis; Clive was struggling with his head above water several seconds, then he went down, and did not come up again. A life buoy was thrown, but the rope was not long enough to reach him, and there was some difficulty in getting it unfastened. After the body of Clive was recovered artificial respiration was applied, but he did not revive.

BANK CLERK'S BRAVERY.

Charles H. Heycock, bank clerk, Stratford, Clacton, stated that he was sitting on the beach near the east groyne, and heard someone shouting. On looking towards the sea, he saw two persons obviously in difficulties. They were quite near the east side of the groyne, where the water was deeper than on the west side. The groyne was covered with water by the rising tide, and apparently neither deceased nor his sister knew they were over the groyne. Witness at once jumped in and got hold of Miss Phyllis Moss, who was nearest. A life buoy was thrown, and witness took told of it, and they were pulled out.

Frederick Wayland, bathing hut attendant, Clacton, said he saw four persons bathing in the sea, and hearing shouts, he saw a life line thrown to the east of the groyne, and two people pulled out. Witness procured a life buoy.

P.S. Mynott said information was received at the police station at 1.35 p.m. that someone was drowned near St. Paul's groyne. He went there immediately, and the body was recovered with the aid of two boatmen and a boat. It had been in water about an hour. Artificial respiration was applied for an hour without effect.

Dr. Jenner Clarke said he continued the artificial respiration, but life was extinct. The marks on the body were post mortem, except a bruise on the lower lip, which was caused just before death. The cause of death was suffocation by drowning.

DANGER OF THE GROUYNE.

A petition signed by 150 guests at Ambleside boarding-house, near the scene of the accident, was handed to the Coroner, with the statement that a copy had been sent to the Clacton Council. The Coroner stated that it suggested better methods to secure safety for bathers at the spot, that there should be a man and a boat on duty at the service of bathers, and that a rail should be placed along the groyne. He thought a rail on the groyne would lead to more accidents. Another suggestion was that a notice board should indicate that bathing on the left side of the groyne was dangerous at high tide. The Coroner said this was quite feasible, and pointed out that on the day of the fatality there was a new moon, which would mean an exceptionally high tide. Bathing accidents had been considerably reduced at Clacton. Whereas last year there were five fatalities, this year the present sad occurrence was the first. The suggestions for securing safety for bathers, which he had previously made to the Clacton Council, had all been carried out. The Coroner returned a ver-

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The greatest sympathy is felt with Mrs. Moss, a hardworking and capable lady farmer, in the sad affliction. Her son Clive was a particularly bright and cheerful boy. He formerly attended the Franciscan School at Bocking before going to Chelmsford Grammar School, and was a great favourite wherever he went. He played the violin quite well, and was a very promising boy.

Dr. J. Harrison, coroner, will hold the inquest upon Clive Moss at 11.45 a.m. to-day (Friday).

SISTER'S TERRIBLE ORDEAL.

Miss Olive Moss yesterday gave the following touching story to a representative of THE ESSUX CHRONICLE:—

I was seated on the beach a yard from the sea, when my brother and sister went in to bathe. It was luncheon time, and the usual bathers had gone home, so there was no one near who could swim, only a few children paddling. I saw Phyllis take a few steps forward by the breakwater, and she was out of her depth in a moment. Clive followed here, and he also was out of his depth. I called out that they were drowning, but it took some time to make people realise there was danger. Phyllis gave a piercing scream, but Clive went down in the sea like a log. He did not speak, but he looked at me, and I could tell by the look in his face that he was drowning and knew it, but could not call out.

ON THE BREAKWATER.

Clive had bumped his head on the breakwater, and Phyllis had struck her foot. I cannot swim, but I rushed forward to try to save them, but people held me back. A young man took his glasses off and jumped in fully dressed and saved Phyllis, who was nearest the breakwater. It was a terrible struggle, because the sea was so deep, and there was a strong current. Clive was farther away, and could not be saved. The pitiful scene of my brother and sister drowning so near to me and I unable to save them nearly drove me frantic. I think there ought to be some warning near the breakwater that the sea there gets deep so quickly, so that bathers might be aware of the danger. There should also be some more ready means of rendering assistance. Clive was a very bright and lovable boy; he was overjoyed with the engine he had just bought, and wanted to have a sea dip. He was looking forward to returning to Chelmsford Grammar School next Tuesday.

had been considerably reduced at Clacton. Whereas last year there were five fatalities, this year the present sad occurrence was the first. The suggestions for securing safety for bathers, which he had previously made to the Clacton Council, had all been carried out. The Coroner returned a verdict of Accidental death, and expressed great sympathy with Mrs. Moss and her family in their sad loss. The Coroner also remarked upon the gallantry of the young man who saved Miss Moss, and said he would bring this before the authorities.

BURIED ON BIRTHDAY.

Moving Scene in Churchyard.

The funeral of Master Clive Moss took place at Cressing Church on Sunday in the presence of a large and sympathetic gathering of friends. By a pathetic coincidence, it was on what would have been his 15th birthday, had he lived four more days, and took place at the church where on the previous Sunday he attended service. A very touching and moving scene was witnessed around the grave, where five hundred people assembled, and there were tears in many eyes during the impressive service. The coffin was carried by young men of the village the short distance from Rooks Hall to the Parish Church, the mourners walking behind. They included: Mrs. Moss, mother; Messrs. Frank, Stanley, and Vincent Moss, brothers; Mrs. Ratcliffe, the Misses Ruby, Olive, and Phyllis Moss, sisters (Miss Eunice Moss, another sister, was in Belgium); Mr. Derwent Ratcliffe, brother-in-law; Mr. and Mrs. H. Birkin, Mr. and Mrs. A. Birkin, Mr. and Mrs. W. Birkin, Mr. and Mrs. F. Birkin, Mr. and Mrs. Alec Birkin, uncles and aunts; Mrs. Birkin, grandmother (Tiptree); Messrs. Harry, Arthur, George, and Miss Laura Birkin, Mr. W. Martin, Miss Vera Martin, Messrs. George and Fred Birkin, juniors, nephews and nieces. Among the large company, which included friends from Braintree and district, were Mr. T. Hay, M.A., headmaster of Chelmsford Grammar School; Mr. G. Cousins, Mr. C. Theobald, Mr. G. Farthing, Cressing; Mr. and Mrs. A. K. Wallace, Rivenhall; Mr. and Mrs. Stowe, Mr. S. Ely (representing Dr. Harrison, coroner), Braintree; Mrs. Crow, Mr. and Mrs. R. Adams, Mr. W. J. Adams, Mr. S. Joslin, Mr. F. Butler, Mr. W. Brown, Cressing; Mrs. A. Taylor, Mrs. Silcox, Braintree; Messrs. T. Johnson, J. Collins, H. Hudson, White Notley; and most of the villagers of Cressing.

As the cortège entered the church, the organist, Mr. Hitching, played "O rest in the Lord." During the service, the hymns, "My God, my Father," "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and "On the Resurrection morning," were sung, the 23rd Psalm and the Nunc Dimittis were chanted, and the organist played the "Dead March" as the procession passed out of the church. There were floral tributes from relatives and friends, the workmen on the estate, and King Edward VI. Grammar School, Chelmsford.