

Oldham Chronicle 20 January 1934

BOY KILLED

In Presence of His Mother

OLDHAM TRAGEDY

A young life was cut short in the presence of the mother in a distressing road accident in Oldham yesterday. About 12.40 p.m., Peter McMillan Hall (6), residing at Wellington Lodge, Wellington Road, Oldham, was seeking to cross Union Street from near the Midland Bank to the Free Library side. He was struck by a lorry and sustained injuries so severe that he died almost immediately.

Mrs Hall, a girl aged three, and the deceased, were holding hands and had just stepped off the footpath when a four-ton lorry, belonging to the L.N.E.R Co., was noticed approaching. The lorry was being driven by James Wilson, 14 Barker Street, Oldham. Mrs Hall at once stopped in the roadway, but the boy

broke loose and attempted to dash across.

By that time the lorry was only four or five yards away - at the top of Southgate Street. The driver promptly applied the brakes and swerved to the left. The wheels locked and the lorry crashed onward, mounting the footpath almost at the entrance to the Library.

Leg Caught By Wheel

A part of the lorry had evidently caught the boy and knocked him down. One of the wheels was found to be on his right leg and the vehicle had to be backed before he could be released.

When the mother saw what had happened she screamed and ran to pick up her child, but assistance was quickly at hand.

The boy was lying with his head Towards the front of the lorry with The right leg caught by the wheel. His shoe had been torn off the foot, which had lacerated wounds. The boy was quickly removed to Oldham

Royal Infirmary, where one of the House surgeons pronounced life to be extinct. The unfortunate boy had sustained shocking injuries. The upper and lower jaws had been fractured and it is suspected the skull was also fractured. There were also lacerated wounds on the right thigh.

The driver of the motor lorry stated that he did everything possible to avoid an accident. The boy was on him in an instant and he swerved to the left with the object of avoiding an accident. The driver had been delivering articles at Shaw and at the time of the mishap was returning to the goods yard with an empty lorry.

Mr W. R. Hall, the father of the Child, is a director of Messrs. Platt Bros. and Co.

Oldham Chronicle 27 January 1934

Eye-Witnesses' Graphic Stories

OF LITTLE BOY

KILLED IN

UNION STREET

Mother Says Driver

Not to Blame

The terrible tragedy in Union Street on Friday afternoon last week was Inquired into by the Oldham Coroner (Mr. J. L. Watson) in the Town Hall on Monday afternoon, when he held an inquest on Peter McMillan Hall (6), who was struck by a lorry belonging to the L.N.E.R. Co., and received injuries so severe that he died almost immediately.

Mr. Eric Claydon (Messrs. Wrigley, Claydon and Fripp) attended the inquiry on behalf of the parents of the deceased, and Mr. Leonard Clayton (Messrs. Ascroft, Maw and Shimeld) represented the L.N.E.R. Co. and also the driver of the lorry.

Alice Mary Goldie Hall, wife of William Reid Hall, Wellington Lodge, Wellington Road, Oldham, a director of Messrs. Platt Bros. and Co., said that about a quarter to one on the Friday afternoon she was standing on the footpath in Union Street, along with her daughter, Mary[sic] (4) and her son Peter (6).

They had come down Retiro Street with the intention of crossing Union Street. There was no traffic coming

from the direction of the Star Inn. They all three stepped off the foot path. She had hold of the little girl by the hand, and she said to the children, "We will get across behind the lorry coming from the direction of Mumps."

Made Sudden Dash

They had got a yard or two from the pavement near to the Midland Bank when the boy suddenly dashed wildly towards the other side of the road. By that time the lorry was almost in front of him, and the boy seemed to be running absolutely into the lorry. The driver avoided him with the front wheel but he was struck by the rear wheel of the lorry. The lorry driver could not possibly have avoided the boy.

Nichol Jenkinson, 93 Constantine Street, Oldham, said that he was riding his bicycle along Union Street on the afternoon in question. As he was gliding down the incline near the Post Office on the left hand side of the road he noticed a lady step off the footpath in front of the Midland Bank. When she had got about five feet from the pavement a boy, who

was with her, seemed to dash away from her side and run across the road.

When he got to the centre of the road he seemed momentarily to hesitate and then dash on again, and appeared to run into the offside front mudguard. The driver of the lorry swerved to his left, and the vehicle skidded about a foot with the child pinned underneath it. The near side front wheel mounted the pavement. In his opinion the driver could not possibly have avoided the accident.

Quite Unavoidable

Ernest Owen, 63 Chief Street, Oldham, deposed that he was standing on the steps of the Free Library, Union Street, on Friday afternoon, when he saw a boy run suddenly from the pavement near to the Midland Bank. At the time there was a bus going in the direction of Rhodes Bank, and also a lorry coming from the direction of Rhodes Bank. The boy seemed to pass four or five yards in front of the bus and run into the lorry. He was pinned against the off side back wheel. A number of

people came up and the boy was released and taken in the ambulance to Oldham Royal Infirmary. The accident was quite unavoidable.

P.C. Elson said that when he arrived on the scene he saw a four ton lorry on the footpath near the Free Library. A boy was lying underneath it. He was lying on his stomach near the rear wheel. He was bleeding from the nose and mouth, and the flesh was torn away from the right leg. Life appeared to be extinct.

The bleeding from the nose and mouth was suggestive of a fractured skull. He found no signs of blood on the motor lorry. The lorry was not damaged. There were skid marks from a point 19ft. 6in, from Southgate Street, and these had been caused by the near side front wheel.

A Greasy Road

Visibility was good, but the road was very greasy. Witness tested the brakes and found both hand and foot brake in working order. When both brakes were applied together the wheels of the lorry locked and caused the vehicle to skid forward.

Frank Wilkinson, 578 Lees Road, Oldham, stated that he was driving an Oldham Corporation motor bus along Union Street, in the direction of Rhodes Bank, on Friday afternoon. He was passing the Free Library about 12.40 p.m. after having stopped at the Lyceum. He did not witness any accident. He heard that an accident had happened near the Free Library.

Frank Roberts, 6 Park View Terrace, Oldham, a loader in the employ of th L.N.E.R. Co., said he was in the cab of a motor lorry along with the driver, James Wilson, on Friday afternoon. When the lorry was approaching the Free Library, coming from the direction of Rhodes Bank, he noticed a lady, boy, and a girl crossing the road from the footpath in front of the Midland Bank. When they got near to the tramlines the boy seemed to leave the lady and run towards the footpath in front of the Free Library. The mother shouted to him to turn back, and the boy, after turning round to look at her, ran in the opposite direction, and ran right in front of the lorry.

The driver applied both brakes in order to avoid hitting him. The boy, however, was caught by the front offside wheel. The lorry mounted the footpath. Witness jumped down from the cab and went to the front of the lorry and saw the boy pinned down by the offside hind wheel. The driver did all he could to avoid the accident.

Jury Satisfied

The jury Informed the Coroner that They were quite satisfied with the evidence without the driver being called.

The Coroner said it was a very distressing case, and every possible thing appeared to have been done to avoid the fatality. It was a clear case of accidental death.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death."

Mr. Clayton, on behalf of the way officials and the driver of the lorry expressed sympathy with the parents of the child in their bereavement.

The Coroner and the jury also associated themselves with the expression of sympathy.

Mr. Claydon, on behalf of Mr. and

Mrs. Hall, said they appreciated the vote of sympathy, and they would like the Coroner to tell the driver of the lorry that they did not think he was at all responsible for the terrible accident.

The Coroner observed that it was very nice of them to say that.

The Interment

Shortly after the termination of the inquest the body was conveyed by motor hearse, followed by the parents, to Llandysillio Church, Llanymynech, Montgomeryshire. On arrival at the church a short service, confined to members of the family, was conducted by the Rev. R. Davies. The Interment took place on the following day.

A very large number of floral tributes were received, among them being the following: Mummie and daddy; Grandad and gammie; Grandad and granny. Uncle Jock, Aunt Peggy; Uncle Bobs and Aunt Mouse; Nannie; Uncle Joe and Uncle Alfie; Aunt Lizzie and Uncle Alister; Uncle Octo and Aunt Madge; Cousin Robina; Uncle Peter; Cousins Peggy, Elizabeth. godfather and Peter;

aunts and uncles at Glencrosh;
Cousins Marjorie and Dolly; Jack and
Angela Wrigley; Cousins Florence
and Donald and family; Dr. and Mrs.
McInnes; Dr. and Mrs. E. B. Brown;
Dr. and Mrs. Godson; Joan and
Peggy; Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Stott; Mr.
and Mrs. Joseph Cottam; Mrs. F.
Hardman and Yvonne; Mr. and Mrs.
W. S. Stott and Albert; Mrs. Harold
Hague; Derek Stott and Nannie; Mr.
and Mrs. S. H. Linford Greaves and
Joan; Barbara and Jim; Lieutenant-
Colonel and Mrs. Proctor Stott;
Dame Sarah Lees and Miss Lees;
Mrs. Robert E. Braddock; Mr. and
Mrs. H. Wilkinson; Mr. and Mrs. F.
H. Cockell and Alison; Peter Hibbert;
Gertrude Cross and Ida Carrol;
Stella, Michael and Jane staff of
Hartford Works East; Staff at Platt
Bros and Co. Ltd.; Mrs. Harold
Buckley; Dr. and Mrs Allan
Macdonald; Mabel G. Wood; Mr. and Mrs.
Hugh McGill; Mr. and Mrs. Hughes;
Mr. and Mrs. Humphries; Mr. and
Mrs. Allan W. Rippon and Peter;
Miss Macgregor; Michael Hague;
Outside staff, Pentreheylin Hall;
Indoor staff, Pentreheylin Hall;

Tenants of Pentreheylin estate; Miss
Moon; Cecil Haines; Winifred Halked;
Lieutenant-Colonel and Mrs.
Costabadie and Molly; E. and F.
Humphries and Ernest; Mr. and Mrs.
Youens; A. M. and E. Perrott; Mr.
and Mrs. Boffey; Llandysillio and
District Nursing Association; Four
Crosses Women's Institute; Teachers
and scholars Llandysillio C.E. School.
The funeral arrangements were
carried out by Messrs. Buckley and
Prockter Ltd., Oldham.