



Saturday 17 September 2016

SPECIAL ISSUE No 2 - MURDER & MAYHEM!

LUDGATE LANE MURDER SUPPOSED MANSLAUGHTER.

On Saturday evening Mr. W. J. Harris, of Sittingbourne, one of the county coroners for Kent, opened an inquiry into the suspicious circumstances connected with the death of **Ada Johanna, the wife of Robert Waters**, a fruiterer, of *[Pope's Cottage, Ludgate Lane]* Lynsted, a village near Sittingbourne, which occurred early on Thursday morning. It appeared that on Wednesday the deceased and her husband had been drinking during the day, and shortly before 11 o'clock at night **Mrs. Waters** knocked at the door of a neighbour's house begging to be admitted, as she said her husband had knocked her about shamefully and had turned her out of doors. She was not admitted, however, and returned home, and at 2 o'clock on Thursday morning was found by her husband lying on the floor downstairs in the front room quite dead on the case being reported to the coroner, he directed a post-mortem examination of the body to be made, and, as a result of this, the inquest was opened on Saturday evening.

Dr. Pritchard, of Greenstreet, stated that upon an examination of the deceased woman on Friday he found severe bruises over the left temple, in the back of the head, and on the right temple; a bruise on the nose, the left elbow, the left ear, and neck - the skin here being slightly broken; there was a large bruise on the left hip,

and also several minor bruises about the body. A large clot of blood, weighing four ounces, was also found underneath the skull, directly below the seat of the bruise, which was the probable result of the blow. The clot of blood was an unusually large one, and, in the doctor's opinion, was beyond all question the cause of death. After other evidence had been taken, **Robert Waters**, the deceased's husband, was about to be examined, but he presented himself in a disgraceful state of intoxication, refused to be sworn, and was quite indifferent to the serious position in which the coroner told him he stood. The coroner said it was quite clear that the deceased died from other than natural causes, and directed Waters to be detained by the police on the charge of causing her death. Waters was then taken into custody by Superintendent Mayne, of Sittingbourne, and the inquest was adjourned for further inquiry. The interment of the deceased woman took place yesterday afternoon at Lynsted, and was witnessed by a large number of spectators.

23rd August 1886: The Times



MURDERER DIES IN CUSTODY

(24 August) DEATH OF A PRISONER IN HIS CELL AT SITTINGBOURNE.-

Robert Waters, *[fruiterer, aged 52]* of Lynsted, Sittingbourne, died suddenly in a cell at Sittingbourne Police Station yesterday morning while under arrest on a charge of having caused the death of his wife, who was found dead in her house on the 19th Inst. *[covered in bruises]* At the inquest on Saturday he was too drunk to be examined, and was taken into custody on the Coroner's order.

23rd August 1886: "The Pall Mall Gazette & The Standard & Manchester evening News"

Inquest Resumed and adjourned - accused had died

"LYNSTED. THE SUPPOSED MANSLAUGHTER OF A WIFE ADJOURNED INQUEST.

The inquest on the body of Mrs. Waters was resumed at the **Lion Inn**, Lynsted, on Wednesday afternoon, by Mr. Coroner Harris. Mr. Dixon, solicitor, of Sittingbourne, appeared to watch the proceedings on behalf of the friends of the deceased. Mr. Frederick Court was foreman of the jury.

Mrs Seagars was recalled, and the

Coroner read over the evidence she gave on Saturday, to the following effect:- I am the widow, and deceased resided nearly opposite me. Between a quarter and ten minutes to eleven on Wednesday night, the 18th inst., deceased came and rapped at my door, and asked me to allow her to come in. I told her I could not admit her; it was too late, and I was just going to bed. She begged and entreated me to let her come in to sit down a few minutes. I told her again I could not; I was going to bed, and she must go home. She said "Pray do let me come in, for Robert has knocked me about shamefully and turned me out of doors." She again begged for shelter, and then went towards the village. She had been drinking, but knew what she was saying. She was sensible. I never saw her afterwards. I dreaded letting her in, lest she should want drink, and that her husband might come and make a disturbance. I was quite alone in the house. - On being re-examined, Mrs. Seagers said: on the following (Thursday) morning, a little before seven, Robert Waters, the deceased's husband, came and rapped at my door tremendously. I got out of bed and opened the window, and he told me his wife was dead. I told him to wait a minute and I would come down. He then repeated "My wife is dead." I asked him where she was, and he replied "in the kitchen." I asked him who was with her, and he replied "no one." I asked him when she died; he said he did not know, as he was in bed, and I replied "Then, Waters, you have killed her, as she came to me at eleven o'clock last night and told me you had knocked her about shamefully." He said "I did not." He was in the most excited state that it was possible for him to be. He was suffering from the effects of drink.

The Coroner, referring to the death of the husband of the deceased, here remarked that the

jury had no doubt heard of the tragic occurrence since the inquiry was opened. He should examine Superintendent Mayne as to the probability of anyone besides Waters being implicated in the death of his wife, and he (the Coroner) believed they would be satisfied that there was no such probability; and if so there could be no object in continuing the inquiry further.

Superintendent Mayne deposed: I received Robert Waters into my custody about 8 o'clock on Saturday evening last, and he died in the lockup at Sittingbourne on Monday morning. I have made diligent inquiry as to the cause of Mrs. Waters' death; I cannot find that any person was implicated therein besides her late husband; and there is nothing to lead me to suspect any other person of causing her injury.

Dr. Pritchard's evidence as to the post mortem examination was read over, and in re-examination of blood on the brain.

The Coroner: Under these circumstances I do not propose to trouble you with any further evidence. There is no suspicion attaching to any person other than the husband of the deceased, and he has gone to his account, and is beyond our reach. The doctor tells you that the cause of death was extravasation of blood on the brain, and the best course for you to adopt is to return a verdict to that effect, and there leave it.

The jury at once returned a verdict of "Died from extravasation of blood on the brain," and the inquiry terminated."

4th September 1886: Canterbury Journal, Kentish Times and Farmers' Gazette

THE NOBLE KNATCHBULL FAMILY 'BLACK SHEEP'

The Knatchbulls are an important local family, with monuments in the North chapel of Lynsted Church. But this family had a 'black sheep', John Knatchbull, brother to Sir Edward Knatchbull of this Parish.

Looking back from the gallows

"The character of the unhappy culprit, from boyhood upwards, appears to have been brutally tyrannical. When in the Navy his conduct in this respect was so fearfully exemplified, that he was dismissed from the service. Tyranny, however, is not a capital offense; and, although the murderer was looked upon at this period of his life as a man whose principals were bad, there were very few who ever had the most distant idea that his life would be forfeited to satisfy the insulted laws of his country — that his earthly career would be closed on the scaffold. Such, however, has been the case. From tyranny he passed to petty larceny, from larceny to forgery, from forgery to the blackest treachery, from treachery to murder, and from murder to the gallows!"

Start in life — a difficult child

"John Knatchbull (1792?-1844) was baptized on 24 January 1793 at Norton, near Provender, Kent, the son of Sir Edward Knatchbull (1758-1819) and his second wife Frances, daughter of Thomas Graham, an American refugee. His father was a rollicking squire who married three times and had at least twenty children; John was known to have "a temper of extreme violence, at times almost beyond the power of control." From Winchester School, he

entered the navy as a volunteer in August 1804 and in the next years served in the *Ardent*, *Revenge*, *Zealand*, *Sybille*, *Téméraire*, *Leonidas*, *Cumberland*, *Ocean* and *Ajax*. In November 1810 he passed his lieutenant's examination, served in *Sheerwater* until August 1812 when he was invalided home, and then in *Benbow* and *Queen*. In December 1813 he was commissioned to command *Doterel*, but missed the ship and was reappointed in September 1814. Under Lord Cochrane he served in the *Spanish Main*; his promotion was very rapid; he was in a very short time made commander, and appointed to the *Linnet*, ten-gun brig. In this important post his temper overcame him, and his conduct was marked by so much tyranny that he was brought to a court-martial, the several charges against him were proved, and he was at once cashiered, and declared henceforward incompetent to hold any commission in his Majesty's service. After Waterloo the navy was reduced and he retired on full pay until **March 1818**, when his pay was stopped by the Admiralty because of a debt he had incurred in the Azores."

Lost soul

"Thus disgraced, he became the associate of the most profligate of the day, and the frequenter of the hells of the metropolis. At this period a daughter of a wealthy merchant of Old Broad-street, City, met his path; she became his victim, and was married to him by a pretended clergyman; she afterwards died the inmate of a lunatic asylum. He had previously made similar victims at Bermuda, Halifax, and New York."

Caught out.

John Knatchbull, son of the late Sir Edward Knatchbull, of

Mersham, in Kent, was tried at the Surrey assizes on 21 August 1824, for being concerned in the robbery of a gentleman at Vauxhall-garden, "under force of arms" of which offence he was found guilty, and sentenced to be **transported for 14 years**, under the assumed name of **John Fitch**."

Shameless taunts

"In **August, 1824**, he was on board the *Leviathan* hulk, in Portsmouth harbour, and employed in the gangs working in the dockyard; in this capacity he was recognized by many seamen who had felt his tyranny. To such an extent was the feeling against him carried, that the authorities were compelled to confine him to the hulk. He had so little shame that he did not scruple to hail his former messmates. Knatchbull was afterwards removed to the *Asia*, for passage to the colony, which ship was detained for four months in Portsmouth harbour, during which time a man named **Lovett** died on board the *Asia*, whose death was attributed to the improper treatment he received from Knatchbull."

Shameless sneak - rewarded

In **April, 1825**, he arrived at Sydney, and soon obtained a *ticket of leave*, having apprehended several runaways, who, from information subsequently received, no doubt were instigated to the crime by Knatchbull himself.

Forgery

Then, on **25th of February 1832**, he was apprehended on a charge of forgery - which, by-the-by, was not his first offence of this kind - tried and convicted, and **sentence of death** recorded against him, which was afterwards commuted to **transportation to Norfolk Island for seven years**. - Here again, in a short time, his

good fortune served him; he was, through the instrumentality of Captain Lambert, of her Majesty's ship *Crocodile*, admitted approver in a case of mutiny, no doubt, concocted by himself. The story reads: "On his way down to Norfolk Island, an attempt was made to murder the soldiers and crew of the Governor Philip, by poisoning the coppers by means of arsenic, which had been procured and distributed amongst the prisoners. When the plot was complete, and the poison actually mingled with the food, Knatchbull discovered the scheme."

Having served his term of banishment, he returned to Sydney, where he resided up to the committal of the offence for which he paid the forfeit of his life.

Tomahawk Attack and a death sentence

The motive for the murder of the unfortunate Mrs. Jamieson is attributed to the desire Knatchbull had of obtaining some property, though of small amount.

"On the night of the 6th of January, the diabolical act was committed. On Thursday the 18th January, Mrs Jamieson died, and on the same day a coroner's inquest was held on the body, and a verdict of wilful murder returned. On the 23rd his trial came on in the Supreme Court, when he was convicted of the crime, and sentenced to death. An objection was afterwards made by the prisoner's counsel in arrest of execution, as to the formality of the sentence, but on Thursday the 1st of February their honours the judges confirmed the doom already pronounced, and ordered that the culprit should be hanged on Tuesday the 13th of Feb. The following is a summary of the accounts of the offence for which execution has taken place, from

the *Sydney True Sun of January 27*-The facts were, that the prisoner was seen lurking about the door of deceased's house, at the corner of Kent Street and Margaret Place, for upwards of an hour and a half, by Mr Shalles, the builder, and was finally seen by the same party to enter the house, when, suspecting the evil nature of his intentions, Mr Shalles ran up to the door and listened - no sound except a noise like that of someone breaking a cocoa nut with a hammer, he suspected foul play, and procured the assistance of a Mr Jaques and others, by whom the house was forcibly entered and the prisoner secured. On entering the house, the deceased was found lying insensible, with her head dreadfully cut, but the instrument with which these injuries had been inflicted was not discovered until the next day, when Mr Jaques, who was attending the deceased, found a tomahawk, spotted with blood, concealed between the mattress and battens and the bed whereon Mrs Jamieson was seen lying, which tomahawk was proved afterwards to be the property of one Charles Hollowell, with whom the prisoner was then lodging, and in whose yard it had been openly lying for several years past, so that it might easily have been removed by the prisoner. The prisoner was also seen by two of the witnesses, while upstairs, and was observed to put aside the blind, and look out upon them when the alarm had been given. On getting the prisoner to the watch house, and searching him, a woman's pocket was found upon him, containing 10s and 18 sixpences, and apparently torn from her person; they also found a bag containing £4 2s. 8d. in silver, £1 1s also in silver, six £1 notes, and one £5, the whole of which money had been concealed on various parts of his person. Besides this money they found six bank bills, three of which were filled up for £50 each, signed by the prisoner, and addressed to Sir

Edward Knatchbull and the other left blank as far as the amount and signature were concerned, but addressed to the same party. Upon examining the prisoner's trousers, they were found to be spotted with blood, and they were accordingly taken from him for production at the trial. The trousers were accordingly produced and sworn to and the tomahawk and pocket, were also produced, but neither of them could be proved by the police to be the identical ones procured cared in the manner above stated. The tomahawk, however, was sworn to by Mr and Mrs Jaques as the one which was found on the premises, and the Inspector Molly, although he could not swear positively that the pocket produced was the one found upon the prisoner, stated he believed that it was so, inasmuch as it every way resembled that article. The pocket was likewise sworn to by a Mrs Brown as having belonged to the deceased." *24th June 1844: Caledonian Mercury*

The price of taking a life in cold blood

Executed at the new jail of Woolloomooloo (Darlinghurst) nine o'clock on Tuesday morning, 13th February, 1844. He appeared in a gentlemanly suit of mourning, and departed himself with comparative calmness and self-possession during the last awful scene of his earthly existence.

He denied that the murder was premeditated; - "the devil instigated me to do the deed, and I did it!" - such were his words. The following is the only written confession of his guilt which has yet appeared. It was written by himself, immediately after hearing the impressive sermon delivered on Sunday last, by the Rev. Mr. Elder: "Condemned Cell, "Woolloomooloo Gaol, "10th February, 1844. "In the name of the Almighty

God, Amen.

I am guilty of the horrid deed for which I am to suffer death; and may the Lord have mercy on my soul. Amen.

"JOHN KNATCHBULL."

The unhappy man was attended in his last moments by the Rev. Messrs. Elder and Sharpe, the Rev. Dr. Ross and Mr. Threlkeld being also present. On arriving at the scaffold, he knelt down and prayed for five minutes with great fervency, when he ascended the fatal platform, preceded by the executioner, and attended by the two divines, still repeating a portion of the burial service, in which he joined, till the fatal rope was adjusted. The cap was then drawn over his face, and he was left alone on the platform, when he was distinctly heard to utter the following supplicatory sentences: 'Lord have mercy on my soul ! Christ have mercy on my soul ! Lord, do thou have mercy on my soul ! Christ have mercy " when the bolt was suddenly withdrawn, and the wretched man ceased to exist.

His body was given up to his friends for interment, prior to which, a cast of his head and face was taken, for phrenological purposes, in the presence of most of the medical gentlemen of Sydney, by Messrs. Abrahams and Shaw.

It is gratifying to add, that Sir Edward Knatchbull, the brother of the criminal, has sent out a handsome donation for the orphans of Mrs. Jamieson.



Can you find the name "Knatchbull" in Lynsted Church?

MUTINY, LYNSTED NAVAL HERO & MUGGING

THE NORE {a Thames anchorage point off Sheerness}

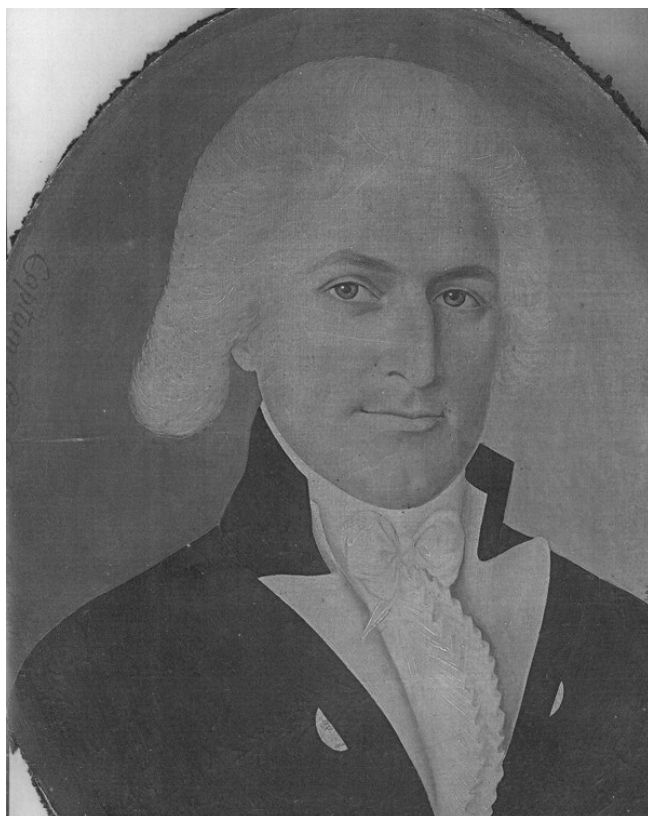
"LONDON, June 13 1797.

The belief which was universally entertained on Saturday, and which originated at the Admiralty, that the Mutiny at Sheerness had completely subsided, arose from some mistake of the Signals made by the Telegraph. The communication was so grateful to the feelings of Englishmen, that it was readily believed, even by the Lords of the Admiralty; and, in fact, the change of the flags on board the several ships, well justified the supposition. We And that since that time, continual contests have arisen; the Bloody Flag of Mutiny being frequently displaced by the Loyal Union Jack, as the several parties of Mutineers, or Loyal Sailors, have from time to time prevailed on board the several ships. We have at present the greatest hopes that all will soon be settled; our only apprehension now is, left the Ringleaders of the Mutiny should by any means be enabled to escape, and to elude the justice of their injured country.

At the time the **Repulse**, **Ardent**, and **Leopard**, made their escape from the Rebel Fleet on Friday night, the **Iris** attempted to follow their example. A very violent conflict took place on board that ship between the Mutineers and the Officers and the loyal Sailors

who adhered to them; in which, unfortunately, the latter were overpowered, and a Serjeant and several Marines were killed, besides a good many wounded.

It appears that the Sailors are extremely disunited, and it is to be feared that dreadful scenes of slaughter have taken place on



Portrait of Captain Delanoe Painted in 1794

board particular ships. In the **Iris** they fought on Saturday twice; in the first battle the Blue (or Loyal) Party had the advantage; in the second the Bloody (Mutineers) Party had the conquest, and midshipman and five Seamen were killed - a woman shot the Midshipman through the head. A number of ships declared their desire of returning to obedience, and on Sunday afternoon and Monday morning, only nine ships continued in a state of obstinate Mutiny.

None of the Seamen on board the **Repulse** were either killed or wounded. This circumstance arose from a conduct on the part of the Officers, which, if any proofs were wanting, must convince the British Sailors of the care and attention paid to them by their Officers, when they deserve it. The moment the fire commenced they ordered every man below, and took upon themselves the management of the **Repulse**; by which they alone remained exposed to the heavy fire of the Rebel Ships for more than one hour and a half; **Lieut Delanoe**, who lost his leg, was the only person hurt on board. The **Repulse** had more than 60 shot in her hull, and had the men remained on deck the slaughter must have been immense.

While the **Monmouth** was firing at the **Repulse**, the **Ardent**, of 64 guns, which was at the same time effecting her escape, fired two broadsides into the **Monmouth**, so admirably well timed, and with such effect, that they must have infallibly done great mischief among the rebel Seamen.— - Some accounts say 10 were killed and 16 wounded.

Yesterday morning a brisk firing was heard from the **Nore**, which lasted half an hour.

Some desperate villains on board the **Repulse** man of war, which now lies in the harbour, laid a plan yesterday to blow her up, which, however, was happily discovered in sufficient time to prevent its being carried into execution. The desperadoes have been taken into custody, and sent on shore. Intelligence was received at the Admiralty from Sheerness, at noon this day, stating that four more sail of the line had returned to their obedience, and had agreed to give up their Delegates.

17th June 1797: Oxford Journal

Cut your cables!

"Thursday morning - The dissatisfaction of the men; the want of confidence in themselves and in their delegates; the fears produced by the decided measures of Government, and their increasing want of water and provisions, operated forcibly during the day, and at half past five in the evening, just at the flood tide, the **Repulse** and **Ardent** of 64 guns, and the **Leopard** of 50, cut their cables, and drifted, being somewhat assisted by their foretop-sails, which were set. A heavy fire, was immediately opened upon them by [*Delegate rebel ships*] the **Sandwich**, **Inflexible**, and other ships, by which they passed. The **Ardent** escaped "with trivial damage", but the **Repulse** having in consequence of the buoys being removed, ran aground within the range of the guns of the rebel ships, suffered considerably in her hull and rigging. One of the Lieutenants lost his leg, and a Midshipman we lament to hear, has been mortally wounded; several of the privates were hurt, but not seriously. By the assistance of the boats from the **Serapis**, &c. the **Leopard**, which had also ran aground, was towed into the harbour. The **Repulse** had her fore topmast and some of her rigging shot away, but favoured by the wind and the flowing of the tide, she righted and reached the Lower Hope, near Gravesend, about 8 o'clock.

Repulse mutineers taken into custody

The ringleaders of the mutiny taken on board the **Repulse**, **Ardent**, and **Leopard**, (between 30 and 40 in number,) are in safe custody at Sheerness. Sixteen of the disaffected part of the crew are secured, and, we hope, will meet the punishment due to their crimes.

17th June 1797: Ipswich Journal

Following the successful escape of Repulse and the loyalty of Lieut Delanoe, he was promoted to rank of captain and soon after retired on pension to live in Lynsted. But that is not the last time we read about this remarkable man.....

MUGGED HERO!

Saturday between 7 and 8 o'clock in the evening, as **Captain Delanoe** (who bore so great a share in bringing in the **Repulse** from the Mutineers at the Nore) and Mr. C. Dyne, were coming from Dartford to London, they were stopped at the bottom of Shooter's hill by two footpads, with capes over their faces, when they desired the postilion to drive on, as they would not be robbed, upon which the villains discharged 6 or 7 pistols at them, but fortunately without effect; and as both the pistols of Capt. Delanoe and Mr. Dyne repeatedly missed fire, the villains, after a contest of about 20 minutes forced their way into the chaise, and beat Mr. Dyne with their pistols in the face, and with horrid imprecations threatened to murder him; after which they robbed them of about 14 or 15 guineas and a trunk.

9th September 1797: Ipswich Journal



Captain Delanoe is buried in Lynsted Churchyard.

His headstone reads:

**GEORGE AUGUSTUS
DELANOE**
R.N.
born Aug. 1762
died Jan. 1802
Aeta 40

Harold Ward wrote to the Society:

George Augustus Delanoe Capt R.N. died unmarried January 10th at Linstead, Kent. His mother's name was Dorothy Harnage the eldest sister of Colonel Harnage who married the R..... John Delanoe of Guernsey. Capt Delanoe was first Lieutenant and Commander of his Majesty's Ship Repulse of 64 guns and is stated in Captain Brenton's Naval History 1st volume page 437 on June 10th 1797 at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. He lost his leg by a 32lb shot now in my possession (fired from the Rebel Admiral Parker's ship. The Repulse being the second ship which broke away from the mutiny at the Nore, on the above day. The Leopard being the first (50 guns).

Oh Lord at all times most fervently pray we may each day be better prepared to meet thee.

George Harnage, Cambridge April 4th 1842. Capt. Geo Delanoe buried at Linstead Jan 10th 1802.