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Accident at Vulcan Foundry

Female Crane Driver Killed

Mr. S. Brighthouse, County Coroner, conducted an inquiry at the Warrington Police Station on Saturday last concerning the death of Martha Hampson Huxley, a crane driver employed at the Vulcan Foundry, Earlestown. Mr. H.E. Brothers, His Majesty's Inspector of Factories, watched the proceedings on behalf of the Government. Mr. Healey, Solicitor, Earlestown, represented the firm, and Mr. J. Longland, solicitor, Warrington appeared for the relatives.

Mary Lilian Huxley, widow of James Hampson Huxley, 30 Barry Street, Warrington said the deceased was her daughter. She had been employed at the Vulcan Foundry for 18 months, and during the last eleven months had been driving a crane. She left her home at 5 a.m. on 4th instant, and in the evening at 8.30 she (the witness) was informed that the deceased had met with an accident.

She went to the Warrington Infirmary where she saw her, remaining all night with her. Witness added that she was present when her daughter died on the following day.

Mary Frazer a crane driver employed at the Vulcan Foundry said that on the 4th instant she was driving an electric overhead crane. At seven o'clock she "backed" her crane to allow Huxley's crane enough room to discharge it's load – when the load had been deposited she moved her crane forward, and, when she had only gone about four feet she felt an obstruction and heard the deceased scream. Witness stopped her machine and when she got out of the driver's box she saw Huxley pinned between the column and the crane.

William Taylor, a chargehand employed at the Vulcan Foundry, said he was working when he heard a scream which appeared to come from overhead. He went to the ladder leading to the overhead cranes, and when he reached the top he looked round and saw the deceased clinging to the pillar. He immediately went for assistance. Huxley was conveyed to the works ambulance room and attended to by the doctor, who instructed them to send her to the Warrington Infirmary.

A verdict of "death from misadventure" was returned, the jury expressing their sympathy with the mother. Mr. Healey, on behalf of the Vulcan Foundry, expressed their sympathy with the relatives. The deceased was, he said, one of the best crane drivers the firm employed, and was a most careful girl.

(extracted from microfilm records at Newton-le-Willows Library, Crow Lane East, Newton-le-Willows).