

“Her Name Was SS. Willowdale”

Past Times

Friday 27th 1934

Dramatic Rescue in River Usk

A dramatic rescue was effected last night, Thursday 26th July 1934 after a nine year old girl fell into the river by the Pontypool Wharf.

While playing on the Pontypool Wharf Jetty, nine years old Mary Sefton slipped and fell thirty feet into the water below.

The problem in rescuing her was complicated by the fact that the steamship, S.S. Willowdale was tied up at the same wharf. This left a gap of three feet of water between the ship and the staging to which she was tied.

While help was being sought, a pensioner, Mr. Arthur Richardson climbed down the staging and was able to grab the girls hand, but unfortunately he could not hold on for long and she slipped from his grasp back into the water once more.

Help arrived in the shape of P.C. Wall, but by now the child was in a desperate state. P.C. Wall sent Mr. George Baulch and Mr. John Delgado to fetch some ropes and ladders so that he could get to the desperate child.

A rope ladder was lowered, and then the two ropes thrown to the child who grabbed them, while P.C. Wall was climbing down the ladder. She was able to hold on until he arrived. He secured the girl to the two ropes and with the aid of the others was able to rescue the child who was by now unconscious.

Help to revive her was given by Mr. Waite of the St. John Ambulance service who had been called to the scene.

Not to long afterwards the young girl was revived and taken to her home and seemed none the worse for her adventures that day.



The above has been reproduced from an A4 size typed piece of paper, I presume copied from a local newspaper by someone interested in this tale. There is no indication as to the original or to the interested party. We have posted it under “Her Name Was SS. Willowdale” in good faith and as an introduction to future research that may occur into the fate of her Captain and crew in later years. We would be pleased to receive any information on both Willowdale and Miss. Mary Sefton. Please Contact Keith at:

hernamewas.ss@tiscali.co.uk`