

# SHARK KILLS 2 BATHERS, MAIMS 1, NEAR NEW YORK

Swims Ten Miles from Sea  
Through Raritan Bay, and Into  
Small Creek for Its Prey.

## BOY TORN FROM HIP TO KNEE

Another Dragged Down to  
Death by Monster Fish—Leg  
of Third Twice Bitten.

## TOWN SCORNS 2 WARNINGS

Man Eater Seen in Matawan Creek  
on Sunday — One Boy Seized  
in Three Feet of Water.

†

*Special to The New York Times.*

MATAWAN, N. J., July 12.—Captain Thomas Cottrell, a retired sailor, caught a glimpse of a dark gray shape swimming rapidly in the shallow waters of Matawan Creek this morning as he crossed the trolley drawbridge a few hundred yards from town. So impressed was he, when he recalled the two swimmers killed by sharks on the New Jersey coast within two weeks, that he hurried back to town and spread the warning among the 2,000 residents that a shark had entered Matawan Creek.

Everywhere the Captain was laughed at. How could a shark get ten miles away from the ocean, swim through Raritan Bay, and enter the shallow creek with only seventeen feet of water at its deepest spot and nowhere more than thirty-five feet wide? So the town-folk asked one another, and grown-ups and children flocked to the creek as usual for their daily dip.

But Captain Cottrell was right, and tonight the people are dynamiting the creek, hoping to bring to the surface the body of a small boy the shark dragged down. In the Long Branch Memorial Hospital lies the body of a youth so terribly torn by the shark that he died of loss of blood, and in St. Peter's Hospital in New Brunswick doctors are working late tonight to save the left leg of another lad whom the shark nipped as the big fish fled down the creek toward Raritan Bay.

The dynamiters hoped, when they brought their explosives to the creek, that besides the body they might bring up the shark where men, waiting with weapons, could kill it. Others hastened to the mouth of the creek where it empties into the bay a mile and a half from town and spread heavy wire netting.

### Two Warnings Scorned.

The people of Matawan had been horrified by the tales of sharks which came to them from Spring Lake, Beach Haven, Asbury Park, and the other coast resorts. They had been sympathetically affected by the reports of the death of Charles E. Vinent and Charles Bruder. But those places were far away, and the tragedies had not touched them closely.

Tonight the whole town is stirred by a personal feeling, a feeling which makes men and women regard the fish as they might a human being who had taken the lives of a boy and a youth and badly, perhaps mortally, injured another youngster. The one purpose in which everybody shares is to get the shark, to kill it, and to see its body drawn up on the shore, where all may look and be assured it will destroy no more.

The death of the boy and youth and the injury to the other youngster were due to the refusal of almost every one to believe that sharks would ever enter the shoal waters where clamdiggers work at low tide. As long ago as Sunday, Frank Slater saw the shark and told it everywhere. He stopped repeating the tale when every one laughed him to scorn.

Then today came Captain Cottrell's warning, and with that Lester Stilwell, 12 years old, might have been the only victim had it not been for the unfortunate coincidence that the boy suffered from fits. It was supposed that an attack in the water had caused him to sink, and rescuers, with no notion that a shark had dragged him down, entered the water fearlessly.

It was while trying to bring young Stilwell's body ashore that Stanley Fisher, son of Captain W. H. Fisher, retired Commodore of the Savannah Line fleet, lost his life. The third victim, Joseph Dunn, 12 years old, was caught as he tried to leave the water, the alarm caused by Fisher's death at last having convinced the town that a shark really was in the creek.

Stilwell was the first to die. With several other boys, he had gone swimming off a disused steamboat pier at the edge of the town. He was a strong swimmer and so swam further out than his companions.

#### **Shark Retakes His Prey.**

So it was that none could follow him, but several boys, instead, raced through the town calling that Stilwell had had a fit in the water and had gone down. They said the boy rose once after his first disappearance. He was screaming and yelling and waving his arms wildly. His body was swirling round and round in the water. Fisher was one of the first to hear and immediately started for the creek.

"Remember what Captain Cottrell said!" exclaimed Miss May Anderson, a teacher in the local school, as Fisher passed her. "It may have been a shark."

"A shark here!" exclaimed Fisher incredulously. "I don't care anyway. I'm going after that boy."

He hurried to the shore and donned bathing tights. By the time he was attired many others had reached the spot, among them Stilwell's parents. Fisher dived into the creek and swam to midstream where he dived once or twice in search of Stilwell's body. At last he came up and cried to the throng ashore: "I've got it!"

He was nearer the opposite shore and struck out in that direction, while Arthur Smith and Joseph Deulew put out in a motor boat to bring him back. Fisher was almost on the shore and, touching bottom, had risen to his feet, when the onlookers heard him utter a cry and throw up his arms. Stilwell's body slipped back into the stream, and, with another cry, Fisher was dragged after it.

"The shark! The shark!" cried the crowd ashore, and other men sprang into other motor boats and started for the spot where Fisher had disappeared.

**Continued on Page 3.**

## SHARK KILLS 2 BATHERS, MAIMS 1

Continued from Page 1.

Smith and Deulew were in the lead, but before they overtook him Fisher had risen and dragged himself to the bank, where he collapsed.

### Leg Stripped of Flesh.

Those who reached him found the young man's right leg stripped of flesh from above the hip at the waist line to a point below the knee. It was as though the limb had been raked with heavy, dull knives. He was senseless from shock and pain, but was resuscitated by Dr. G. L. Reynolds after Recorder Arthur Van Buskirk had made a tourniquet of rope and stanchied the flow of blood from Fisher's frightful wound.

Fisher said it was a shark that had grabbed him. He had felt the nip of its teeth on his leg, and had looked down and seen the fish clinging to him. Others ashore said they had seen the white belly of the shark as it turned when it seized Fisher. Fisher said he wasn't in more than three or four feet of water when the fish grabbed him, and he had had no notion of sharks until that instant. If he had thought of them at all, he said, he had felt himself safe when he got his feet on the bottom.

Fisher was carried across the river and hurried in a motor car to the railroad station, where he was put aboard the 5:06 train for Long Branch. There he was transferred to the hospital, but died before he could be carried to the operating table.

At the creek, meantime, dynamite had been procured from the store of Asher P. Woolley and arrangements were being made to set it off, when a motor boat raced up to the steamboat pier. At the wheel was J. R. Lefferts, and in the craft lay young Dunn. With his brother William and several others, he had been swimming off the New Jersey Clay Company brickyards at Cliffwood, half a mile below the spot where Stilwell and Fisher were attacked.

News of the accident had just reached the boys, and they had hurried from the water. Dunn was the last to leave, and as he drew himself up on the brick company's pier, with only his left leg trailing in the water, the shark struck at that. Its teeth shut over the leg above and below the knee and much of the flesh was torn away.

### Fearful to Alarm Mother.

Apparently, however, the fish had struck this time in fright, for it loosed its grip on the boy at once, and his companions dragged him, yelling, up on to

the pier. He was taken to the J. Fisher bag factory near by, where Dr. H. J. Cooley of Keyport dressed his wound and then he was carried in a motor car to St. Peter's Hospital in New Brunswick by E. H. Bomick. There it was said last night the physicians hoped to save his leg if blood poisoning did not set in.

The youngster steadfastly refused to tell where he lived, for, he said, he did not want his mother to worry about him. From his relatives, however, it was learned that his home is at 124 East 128th Street, New York. He and his brother had been visiting an aunt in Cliffwood.

Fisher was the son of Watson H. Fisher, Commodore of the Savannah Line. For more than fifty years the elder Fisher commanded boats of that line up and down the coast. He retired from active service a few years ago. About ten days ago the father and mother went to Minneapolis to visit a daughter there, and they had intended to remain for another week, but when word was sent this evening of the death of their son they sent a message that they would leave for home immediately.

News of the tragedies here spread rapidly through neighboring towns, and from Morgan's Beach, a few miles away, came a report that two sharks had been killed there in the morning by life-guards. One was said to be twelve feet long.

Persons who saw the shark when it grabbed Fisher said they thought the fish was about nine feet long.