

Emily Dean Drowning

When a Leeds and Liverpool Canal boatman John Eaves* (*see below*) found a woman's body attached to his boat in Burnley, he raised the alarm and helped retrieve her. She was identified as Emily Dean (nee West) daughter-in-law of boatman Thomas Dean of Gannow. The following newspaper reports tell the sad story of her demise:-

Woman Pulled Out of the Canal at Burnley

Blackburn Standard, 7.12.1895

The body of a woman, aged about 22 or 28 years was, yesterday, pulled out of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, near Old Hall Bridge, Burnley. PC Pollard was called by a boatman named Eaves* who told him that a body was fastened to the screw of his steamer. The body was got out of the water and brought to the mortuary at the Town Hall where it has been identified as that of Emily Dean of 25 Anne Street, Burnley.

Burnley Coroner Busy

Preston Herald, 11.12.1895

Yesterday the Coroner for this district had busy day in Burnley, having held no fewer than five inquests. The first was on the body of a woman named Emily Dean, of Anne Street, whose body was taken from the canal near the Old Hall Bridge, Burnley, by PC (69) Pollard and John Eaves*, a boatman of the canal steamer Comet.

The deceased was the wife of Benjamin Dean, journeyman joiner, and was 22 years age, and they had lived very comfortably with her mother the address mentioned. She was confined about six months ago, and had since been in delicate health. She had 'studied' much lately, and had been despondent.

On Thursday she left home at two o'clock in the afternoon to visit some relatives at 20, Newcastle Street. After she had tea there she departed with her cousin to see some friends in Stoneyholme. Deceased left there about six o'clock, with the excuse that she would like to call on someone she knew in Burnley Lane. She was not heard of again, and her husband, becoming anxious when she did not return, went in search of her. Her body was taken out the canal as previously stated. The Coroner's verdict was that she had taken her own life whilst 'of unsound mind'.

*This could be John Eaves (qv), b1872 Lathom, son of boatman Henry Eaves of Halsall, whose family is on this website. John is known to have plied the Canal above Burnley, and is in the 1891 census aboard 'Moon' at Dock House, Colne, near Barrowford Locks.