

Lighterman Found Dead in Barge.

The sudden death of a lighterman, George Charles Moss, aged 55, of 13 Franklin-street, Bromley-by-Bow, was the subject of an inquest held at Poplar on Tuesday by Dr. R. L. Guthrie with a jury.

Mrs. Elizabeth Moss of the same address, identified the deceased as her husband, who was employed by the Commercial Gas Company, Ltd. Witness said that deceased went out to work on Friday about 12.30 p.m., and on Saturday she heard that he had been taken to Poplar Hospital, and she went there and found that he was dead. When he left home he was in his usual good health.

Sidney Whitehorn of 6 Cranford Cottages, Stepney, a lighterman, also employed by the Commercial Gas Company, Ltd., said he had known deceased for a good many years and he always seemed to be in good health except that he complained about the gout. On Friday last, witness met him aboard the barge "Ammonia" at St. Bride's Wharf, Wapping. They left there for Bow Creek at 2.35 p.m., rowing, and got to Bow Creek about 4.40 p.m. They had tea together and waited for the tide and rowed the barge up the creek to Poplar Gas Works, and moored there at 10.45 p.m. They then went into the cabin of the barge where there was a coal fire and had something to eat and turned in about 12 o'clock. About 1 a.m. witness got up and put the barge in deep water, and deceased said he had got a touch of the old complaint (gout) in his knee, so witness said, "stop where you are." Deceased went out to the lavatory about 1.15 a.m. and at 1.40 he asked what the weather was like, and seemed alright then. Witness called him at 1.40, but got no answer. He was lying on his right side on the locker. His face was of a peculiar colour, so witness went ashore and called assistance and the police and ambulance were sent for. Witness had been 14 years in the same barge and never found anything wrong with it. There was no smell of gas nor gas fumes.

P.C. Henry Cornford said he was called to the barge and found deceased lying on his right side on the locker, and he appeared to be dead.

Dr. Stern of Poplar Hospital, deposed that death was due to heart failure following arterial sclerosis.

A verdict of death from natural causes was returned.

This is an account of my Grandfathers death as reported in the East End News, dated 16th November 1928.

Submitted by George Moss – Ex Lighterman.