

## MAN EATING SHARK IN MATAWAN CREEK CAUSES DEATH OF MAN AND BOY

### W. Stanley Fisher Loses His Life in Trying to Recover Body of Lester Stilwell.

Joseph Dunn, a Brooklyn Boy, Also Attacked and Escapes  
With Mangled Leg and Foot Made By Shark As He  
Evidently Was Making His Escape from the Creek—  
Dynamite and Other Means Used Ineffectually to Find  
Body of Stilwell Boy.

No time in recent years has there been so much continued excitement in Matawan as on Wednesday, when a man-eating shark came up Matawan Creek as far as the old Propeller Wyckoff dock and attacked one of a party of boys in bathing there, resulting in the disappearance of the boy and the inability to get any clue of his body since. The boy was Lester Stilwell, son of William Stilwell of Church Street, who is employed in Anderson's Saw Mill. Following his disappearance Stanley Fisher lost his life in searching for him and the third person to be attacked was Joseph Dunn of Brooklyn, aged 14 years, who had the flesh on his right leg below the knee cut into strips as well as his foot mangled while in bathing in front of the New Jersey Company's plant.

About 2 o'clock the Stilwell boy, who was 12 years old, accompanied by Johnson Cartan, Frank Clowes, Albert O'Hara and Charles Van Brunt, went in swimming in front of Fisher's bag factory along the creek. In enjoying themselves by repeated diving the boys would swim to the dock and as this was being done for the last time O'Hara and Cartan and Clowes were ahead of Stilwell, when the former suddenly exclaimed "Oh, Lester's gone." His comrades turned toward the creek and they declare they saw the fins or tail of the shark, and without waiting to dress they ran up town declaring

A crowd of men, boys, women and girls soon congregated and an effort at first was made in a boat to find the man-eater and after an hour's effort not producing any results Stanley Fisher, Arthur Smith and George Barlew removed their clothing and in bathing trunks dove overboard. They were cautioned against this course, but persisted, and they went about the edges of the creek, and Stanley repeatedly dove to the bottom in the hope of finding the body. It was while he was thus engaged that he was attacked by the shark, who drew him under the water twice with a grip on his right leg between the knee and hip. As he came up the last time he called out: "Help me," and Arthur S. Van Buskirk and W. H. Bryne, Jr., who were in a motor boat near by went to his assistance, Stanley in the meantime swimming with his free leg toward the sedge. As he neared them the shark crunched his teeth together and stripped the flesh to the bone and disappeared. Mr. Fisher was helped in the boat and with a piece of rope a tourniquet was made which stopped the flow of blood to some extent.

A hurried search for a physician was made, but they were all out of town and about a half hour later Dr. Reynolds came to the dock and gave the injured young man such attention as was possible and he was carried on an improvised stretcher to the Matawan station and placed aboard the 5:00 train for the hospital at Long Branch accompanied by William D. Shepherd. Mr. Fisher was conscious all the time and declared more than once that he had had hold of the boy in the spot where he was last seen, and that the shark had let go of the boy and attacked him. It was after 7 o'clock when Mr. Fisher was placed on the operating table and he died at 7:40 o'clock before any operation had been performed. He was conscious all the time up to within five minutes of his death. Before Mr. Fisher was attacked by the shark Arthur Smith said he felt him brush by him and instead of his following the former he swerved in another direction and an instant later Stanley gave the alarm. There was a crowd of 200 or 300 people present at the time and the sight of Mr. Fisher being brought ashore was sickening to state it mildly.

A half hour later Joseph Dunn of Brooklyn was bitten by the shark while swimming off the plant of the New Jersey Company. Capt. Thomas V. Cottrell of Keyport and Lawyer Jacob R. Loferty of Matawan were passing in a boat and they rescued the Dunn boy. Dr. Cooley of Keyport fled up the leg and had him taken to St. Peter's

Hospital, New Brunswick, where at 4 o'clock this afternoon those in charge said he was getting along nicely and would recover unless blood poisoning set in.

For several hours last night unsuccessful efforts were made to recover the body of young Stilwell and capture the shark by exploding dynamite in the creek. A wire netting weighted on the end and fishing nets were also stretched across the creek to catch the shark, but these proved fruitless. Early this afternoon the shark was declared to have been seen where the first attack was made and another large crowd congregated and more dynamite was exploded, but with no better success than before. One of the New York morning papers had a motor boat going up and down the creek this afternoon with grappling irons, but as we go to press the body has not been found. A large shark hook was also baited with fresh fish and sunk in the spot where it is thought the shark was lying, but it was left undisturbed. A big crowd watched the proceedings a good part of the afternoon, and only a few remain at this writing.

Stanley Fisher was the son of Capt. and Mrs. Watson H. Fisher. He was born April 12, 1892, and lived most of his life in Matawan. He was a splendid type of young manhood and had a host of friends. In March of last year he opened a merchant tailor shop and had conducted it since. He has a married sister, Mrs. Arthur Nichols, who lives in Minneapolis, and Capt. and Mrs. Fisher are en route home from a visit there. They are expected to reach Matawan to-morrow morning and it will, indeed be, a sad home-coming for them. No funeral arrangements have been made, but the services will probably be held to-morrow afternoon.

Both Capt. and Mrs. Fisher and Mr. and Mrs. Stilwell have the sympathy of the community in the misfortune that has come to them as the circumstances under which their respective sons met their deaths are very distressing.

### Bathers Should Not Venture Beyond the Life Lines.

A nine-foot man eating shark was caught by Herman Tarnow, a Belford fisherman, on Tuesday. The shark had badly cut up some of the pounds of fishing nets in the bay and was caught only 120 feet from the low water mark of the Belford shore.

The sharks have entered the bay and are liable to pay Keansburg a visit, but there is not much danger if all bathers along this shore will not take to the deep water.

This notice is published as a warning to all the Keansburg bathers, not to frighten them from going into the water, but as a warning of precaution to the venturesome persons who are forever swimming out past the life lines in deep water.

Sharks do not usually come in shallow water, or in shall water that has a sandy bottom. The cause of sharks being so close to shore, and for that matter in the bay, is on account of the shortage of fish and other food they depend upon for existence. It is also said the testing grounds off Cape Hatteras has disturbed the sharks and caused them to scatter in large schools and it is these that are passing up and down the New Jersey coast.

It is given as a reason why the New Jersey Coast has not before been bothered with sharks that there have been many ocean liners passing to and from New York from which waste has been thrown overboard which has fed other fish and made food for the sharks.

Some people are under the impression that the waters in this section are not warm enough for sharks, but it must be realized that the gulf stream has been coming nearer and nearer to this coast each year, which has not only made a change in the temperature of the water but also the climate. It is said the gulf stream is nearing the New Jersey coast on an average of half a mile each year.