

# THE HILBRE SKELETON.

## WHO SMUGGLED IT AWAY?



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE ACTUAL SKELETON.

The Hilbre Landmark skeleton mystery has, as indicated in last week's "Advertiser," taken another turn. Instead of pursuing the hopeless enquiry, "Whose bones were found by the Hoylake police?" people are now asking who it is who removed the greater portion of the skeleton which a West Kirby gentleman and his friends dug up on the Landmark, what has been done with the original "find," and why did someone or other run the risk of taking the law into their own hands, as would appear to be the case? Since "One who dug up the Bones" has been able to substantiate his claim (that he practically found a whole human frame) by supplying the "Advertiser" with a photograph, there can be no doubt about the accuracy of his original statement. Cameras don't lie. The photograph reproduced above represents an enlarged view of the bones just after they were dug up and piled in a heap with the skull on the top. The large bones at the sides of the picture are thigh bones. Taken with a small camera, under unfavour-

able atmospheric conditions, the picture was not a very vigorous one in the original, and has lost a little detail in the copying process. Still, it speaks for itself. In our desire to make the most of the primary object we have excluded from the picture the Mersey Locks and Harbour Board sign-board, and a distant view of the Middle Island and the swash. These features in the original leave no doubt as to its genuineness.

The true story seems to be that a picnic party more or less accidentally exhumed the skeleton on the Landmark, piling up the bones and then "snapping" the grim tablecloth. On returning to Hoylake they informed the police, who subsequently visited the Landmark and, finding no bones on the surface, began to dig, with the result that they found a few more bones, which the picnic party had apparently left in the sand. They have never seen the greater portion of the skeleton, which must, perforce, have been smuggled away, as it lay well above high-water mark, where it was found. It is impossible for the tide to reach it.

## HILBRE LIFEBOAT'S SPEEDY RESCUE

One of the quickest rescues on the records of the local lifeboat crew took place last Friday evening, when the Hilbre boat was called out, under the command of the Coxwain, Herbert Jones, to the aid of the yacht, Seabird, stranded on Salisbury Bank.

The crew crossed to Hilbre in one of Messrs. Clark's lorries, and accomplished the journey in eleven minutes. This is the first time that the new Stanley-road

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**In connection with the Scouts World Jamboree, now commencing, in Holland, arrangements have been made for reports and photographs (when possible), with particular reference to the activities of the Birkenhead and Wirral contingents, to appear in the "Advertiser" newspapers.**

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Slipway has been used as a means of transporting a rescuing crew to the Island, for the Hilbre boat had not been used for six years previous to Friday's adventure.

The crew of the Seabird, Mr. C. A. Swinden of Cumberland, and Mr. C. Lockwood of Manchester, were attempting to cross from Rhyl to Rock Ferry, but heavy seas and a half gale encountered at the mouth of the Dee forced their boat aground on the Salisbury Bank, and they had been cut-off for three hours when the look-out on Hilbre noticed their plight, and summoned the Lifeboat to their rescue.

When the boat arrived the yachtsmen had put on lifebelts, but were in serious danger as the threatening seas were likely to break the yacht's back.

Hundreds of visitors and inhabitants watched the launch from the Hoylake Promenade (writes E. Gordon Cumming) and despite the cold winds the majority stayed until the black silhouette of the boat showed against the skyline as she slipped down the runway into the sea.

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# HILBRE LIFEBOAT STATION

## LONG SERVICE COMES TO AN END

### RECORD OF MANY LIVES SAVED

The *Daily Post* was informed last night by Mr. D. W. Hesslegrave, hon. secretary of the Hoylake and Hilbre Island Lifeboat Stations, that official intimation had been received that the station at Hilbre Island is to be closed.

The station has been temporarily closed for some time, but it is now certain that it will never again "go back on service." In view of the fact that there is now a motor lifeboat at Hoylake, two motor lifeboats at New Brighton and another one shortly to be established at Rhyl, it is felt that the "pulling and sailing" lifeboat at Hilbre is no longer required.

#### A Long History

Hoylake station dates back to 1803, when the Liverpool Docks Committee decided that the lifeboat stationed at the docks should be removed to Hoylake. In 1847 it was reported to the Docks Committee that, "owing to the shallowing-up of the west end of Hoyle Lake it had become impossible to get a boat out of the lake earlier than one quarter's flood or later than the last quarter's ebb, and that it was necessary that one of the lifeboats at Hoylake be removed to Hilbre Island in order that she might be available at low water, when the crew could walk across from the main to the island." The committee directed that the duplicate lifeboat should be removed from Hoylake to Hilbre, and in the following year a plan was approved for a station on the island, and a lifeboat house and slipway were constructed. In 1894 both stations were taken over by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

There are no official records of the Hoylake station prior to 1840, but between that year and 1894 the two boats rescued 459 persons. Since 1894, the Hilbre boats have saved 21 lives in the course of 44 service launches.

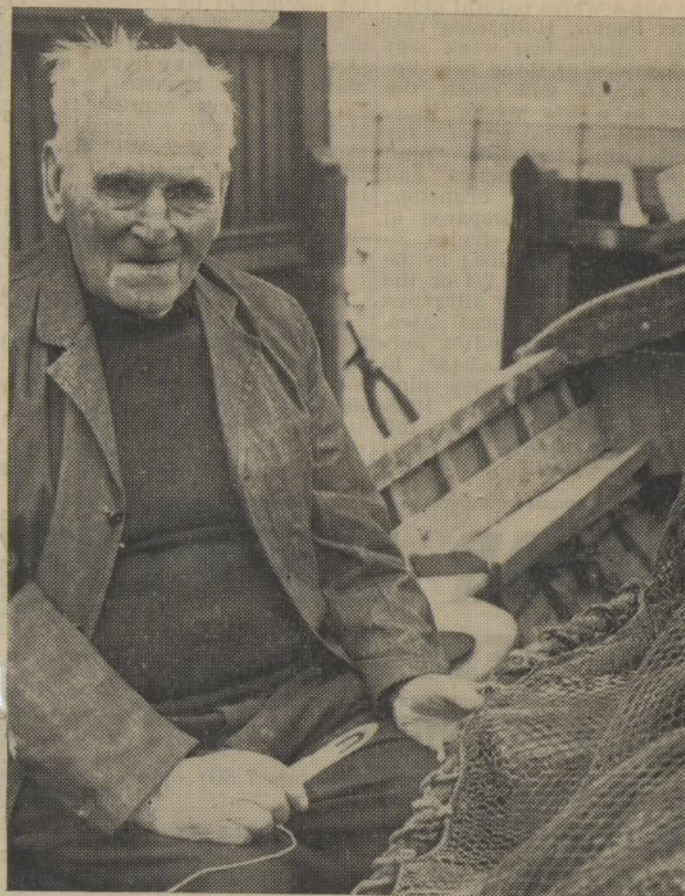
#### Boat's Last Rescue

The present boat at Hilbre is a pulling and sailing lifeboat of the Liverpool type, 35 feet by 10 feet, built in 1901 and sent to Hilbre in 1924. She is named Chapman, having been built out of a legacy from the late Mrs. M. A. Chapman, of London. Before going to Hilbre she was stationed at Gosport, Northern Ireland. Her last service launch was on July 22, 1937, when the yacht *Seabird*, bound from North Wales to the Mersey, got into trouble in a north-westerly gale on the weather side of the Salisbury Flats and became stranded in a dangerous position. The crew of two were rescued by the lifeboat, and the yacht salvaged and towed into Hilbre Pool.

In 1902 Coxswain T. Dodd was awarded a silver medal for "his skill and gallantry when the Hilbre lifeboat rescued the crew of the barque *Matador*, of Riga, and the Imperial Russian Association for Lifesaving awarded him its first-class certificate of merit. The present Hilbre lifeboat is to be sold out of service.

## SOLDIER ON DOUBLE MURDER CHARGE

# At 93 He Knits The Nets



**A**LTHOUGH his sea-going days are over, 93-year-old Hoylake fisherman Mr. Joseph Jones, 11 Strand Road, still bends to the lure of the ocean by knitting nets for the younger generation of local fishermen.

In this character study by West Kirby photographer Marshall Grisenthwaite you can see him at work.

Wonderfully hale and hearty, Mr. Jones was born at the Plasterers Arms, Hoylake, early in 1856. He was married at the age of sixteen and has 13 children, 36 grandchildren, 24 great grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. His eldest son, aged 76, calls to see him every morning.

In the early days of his life,

Mr. Jones was at sea and served in the big trawlers, which were manned usually by four men and a boy. An active life at sea and as a local fisherman has left Mr. Jones an able man at nearly 94. His sight is perfect, his hearing reasonably good, and he is still a most intelligent conversationalist and still has a lively sense of humour. His memory is as good as ever it was and he talks of the time when Hoylake consisted mainly of sandhills, with one road through the centre of what is now the town. The nearest doctor was at Upton. There were no trains when Mr. Jones was a boy. A horse-drawn bus plying between Hoylake's Royal Hotel and Birkenhead provided public transport.

Our congratulations and good wishes are offered to this grand old man who knows how to catch the sunlight that is shed on life's eventide.

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