

Bhagwan Jassiwarra

Dundee Courier - 14 January 1891

THE MURDER OF A FIFE CAPTAIN

At Liverpool yesterday, Jassiwarra, a Hindoo cook, was committed to the Assizes charged with murdering Captain Lyall, of the ship Buckingham, of Dundee. Prisoner sailed in the Buckingham from Dundee to New York in October last. During the voyage he was sent to the captain's cabin for refusing to obey orders, and was left alone with the captain for some time. When the steward entered the cabin afterwards he found Lyall dead, with two terrible knife wounds in his head.

Mr Moss, who prosecuted, explained that prior to sailing prisoner and the deceased captain had had a quarrel, and when one of the apprentices, seeing the former coming on board, asked him if he was not afraid to join the ship, he replied, "No, if the captain strikes me I will kill him." On the following day he was seen sharpening a knife. On the 11th October complaint was made that the cook would not prepare breakfast for the sailors, and the captain promised to see about it. At dinner time the captain, noticing that the men did not go to dinner, inquired the reason, and was informed that Bhagwan refused to cook the potatoes. He sent for the prisoner, who declined to come. One of the officers then went to fetch him, when he said, "I will work no more," and then suddenly jumped up raised a large knife above the witness's head, and said – "If the captain strikes me I will kill him." As he was being brought to the captain, prisoner said – "You men witness the captain struck me two times." Up to that time the sailors never saw the captain strike him. When the prisoner reached the door of the cabin he ran away, and was brought back, when the captain slapped him in the face with his open hand. The captain asked the steward to open the storeroom, in order that they might find a place to put the prisoner in until he promised to do his work. The captain and the prisoner went into the storeroom, where the tragedy was committed. On being asked what he had done, prisoner said – "The captain took the knife to kill him and he took the knife from the captain and killed him." On the passage to New York prisoner volunteered to the boatswain the statement:- "Me killed the captain; do everyone good." Partial evidence bearing out this statement was given – A.M. Brown, Graham Place, Dundee, donkeyman on board the Buckingham, being among the witnesses.

Aberdeen Evening Express – 17 March 1891

THE MURDER OF

A DUNDEE CAPTAIN.

At Liverpool Assizes—before Mr Justice Day— Bhagwar Jassiwarra, Lascar seaman, was indicted for the murder of Peter Lyall, captain of the Dundee ship Buckingham on the high seas on October 11 last. Prisoner, who acted as cook, was reprimanded and struck by the captain. Subsequently he was sent for to the cabin, and soon afterwards the captain was found dead and prisoner was crouching in a corner. Prisoner was found guilty, and sentenced to death. The jury recommended him to mercy.

Cardiff Times – 28 March 1891

THE MURDER BY A LASCAR.

Respite of the Condemned Man.

On Sunday the Governor of Kirkdale Gaol, Liverpool received a communication from the Home Office intimating the respite of the death sentence passed on Bhagwar; the Jassiwarra caste Lascar, for the murder of Captain Lyall, of the ship Buckingham, while on a voyage from Dundee to New York. One of the crew of the Buckingham has since the trial made an important statement, which was sent to the Home Office.

Isle of Wight Observer — 1 October 1898

NEWPORT.

There has just died at the Convict Prison, at Parkhurst, a Lascar, named Bhagwase Jassiwarra, who in 1891 was sentenced to death for murder on the high seas. The sentence was afterwards commuted to penal servitude for life. Deceased, who was 36 years of age, was a victim to consumption, and was an inmate of the prison infirmary from January, 1897.

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