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[1941] Vol. 2, p. 308: Barrett v. Gravesend Assessment Committee. In the third line of the Help read "when the proposal was made."
 P. 458, ante. Pritchard Jones v. Le Vaye. The Sollcitors for the appellant were Shindler & Co.

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ANNOTATED

LOTINGA v. NORTH EASTERN MARINE ENGINEERING CO. (1938), LTD.

[King's Bench Division (Viscount Caldecote, L.C.J., and Tucker, J.), July 23, 1941.]

Factories—Dangerous machinery—Travelling crane—Men working in or near wheel-track—Employers' duty to ensure safety—Absolute duty—Exhibition of notice insufficient—Factories Act, 1937 (c. 67), s. 24 (7).

An employee of the respondents was working near the wheel-track of a large overhead travelling crane, where he was killed by the movement of the crane. A notice was exhibited in the vicinity of the place that cranes must not approach within 20ft. of men working there and that workmen must notify cranemen of their presence there before starting work. The magistrates found that the system of work in use had been employed for 37 years without accident and that the accident was due to one of the respondents' workmen, well aware of the danger, deferring to take action by warning the craneman until it was too late to avert the danger. It was also found that it was impracticable for the craneman to look out for men at work in or near the wheel-track. Upon these findings they refused to convict the respondents of an offence against the Factories Act, 1937, s. 24 (7):—

Held: the above subsection imposes an absolute duty to take effective steps by warning the driver of the crane or otherwise to ensure that the crane shall not approach within 20ft, of the place where men are working on or near the wheel-track of the crane. The respondents had failed to carry out this duty and should have been convicted.

[EDITORIAL NOTE. Decisions of this type are necessarily of a negative character. It is not for the court or the Act to state how safety in working dangerous machines is to be ensured, but, where the Act places on employers an absolute duty to ensure safety, it is no answer to say that the system adopted has been worked for very many years without mishap, nor is it a sufficient compliance with the statutory provision to post notices warning workinen or giving them instructions to warn others of their presence in the danger zone. The employers must make such arrangements and take such precautions that the safety of the workmen is ensured.

As to Dangerous Machinery, see HALSBURY, Hailsham Edn., Vol. 14, pp. H 594-603, paras. 1130-1146; and for Cases, see DIGEST, Vol. 24, pp. 908-913, Nos. 62-85.]

Case referred to:

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 Sutherland v. Mills (James), Ltd., Executors, [1938] 1 All E.R. 283; Digest Supp.

APPEAL by the inspector of factories by way of case stated from a

decision of the justices of the peace for the borough of Wallsend dismissing an information by a factory inspector against the respondent company to the effect that they had contravened the Factories Act, 1937, s. 24 (7). The facts are fully set out in the judgment of Viscount Caldecote, L.C.J.

The notice referred to in the judgment was in the following terms:

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Cranes must not approach within 20ft. of men working on this gantry. Workmen must notify cranemen of their presence on this gantry before starting work.

Hon. H. L. Parker for the appellant.

J. Harvey Robson for the respondents.

VISCOUNT CALDECOTE, L.C.J.: In this case, it is alleged that a man named Dawson was working near the wheel-track of a 60-ton overhead travelling crane in the erecting shop, in a place where he was liable to be struck by the crane, without effective measures having been taken to ensure that the crane did not approach within 20ft. of the place where he was working. The evidence as found by the magistrates was that this man and two other workmen were employed upon the floor of a gantry, where they were in danger of injury from the movement of the overhead crane, that they had done work similar to that upon which they were engaged, which was that of hoisting the switch on to the gantry and then putting it into position on a steel column, and that they were aware of the danger. It was also found that notices were posted and maintained in the vicinity of this place, which is apparently called a danger zone, warning persons who have to work in this position that they must warn the crane-drivers concerned. The crane-drivers, we are told, cannot look out themselves to see whether there are men in this dangerous position, as they have other duties to attend to. They expect to be warned by the workmen about to work in such a position of danger, and they regularly receive and work on such warnings. The magistrates also found that the cranedriver concerned in this accident had had 37 years' experience of driving the crane in this particular shop and had never before had an accident of this nature. On this occasion, the unfortunate result of the absence of any warning being given to the crane-driver was that Ernest Dawson was killed.

This information is laid under the Factories Act, 1937, s. 24 (7), which provides as follows:

If any person is employed or working on or near the wheel-track of an overhead travelling crane in any place where he would be liable to be struck by the crane, effective measures shall be taken by warning the driver of the crane or otherwise to ensure that the crane does not approach within 20ft, of that place.

It is not superfluous to remember that the Factories Act, 1937, which is the latest of many Acts dealing with the safety of workpeople, is more stringent in its terms than any preceding legislation. This particular section appears in a part of the Act which deals with safety. Some of the sections in that part, like sect. 24, deal with peculiarly dangerous machines and make special provisions with regard to them, as Lord Hewart, L.C.J., said in Sutherland v. Mills (James), Ltd., Executors (1), at p. 285:

A large part of the purpose of these statutes was to save workmen from themselves. That is to say, not to save them from deliberate acts of mischief, but to save them from consequences which they may incur, if, in haste, hurry, carelessness, or, it may be, indolence, they do something in a way in which they ought not to do it . . .

In this particular case, it is said that the obligation resting upon the employers had been discharged because they put up notices forbidding cranes to approach within 20ft. of men working on this gantry and enjoining workmen to notify crane-men of their presence on this gantry B before starting work. The magistrates, having heard evidence to the effect that the present system was one which had been in force for 37 years without an accident ever before having taken place, have found that it was unreasonable to condemn as ineffective the measures taken by the respondents in this case. Then this is worth noticing. They say:

That such failure arose from the act of one of the respondents' workmen, who not by reason of ignorance, neglect or carelessness, but well aware of the danger, and of his duty to take the action designed to avert it, chose in his judgmentunhappily wrong-to defer taking action until what he thought would be a more

If that is not putting the responsibility upon the workman, I can D hardly imagine any language which would be more likely to have that effect. The plain meaning of that finding of the magistrates is that it was the duty of the workman to take action designed to avert the accident, that he exercised a wrong judgment in failing to discharge that duty, and that, in consequence, the respondents had not failed in their duty. E The duty under the Act is put upon the employer, and not upon the workman. They are strong words. The section requires that:

. . . effective measures shall be taken . . . to ensure that the crane does not approach within 20ft. of that place.

So far as the evidence in this case discloses the facts, no measures at all F were taken, either by warning or otherwise, to prevent the crane from approaching within 20ft. of where the workpeople were working, but what was done was that a general notice was exhibited, in terms which did not correspond very closely with the terms of the section, ordering the workpeople to take steps for their own protection.

In my judgment, the magistrates arrived at a wrong decision. I G think that they went wrong because, perhaps, they were captivated -indeed, their case shows it-by the idea that, because an accident had not taken place for a great number of years, the procedure which had been followed during those years must be effective. I think that H that is wrong. Effective steps were not taken in this case, and steps were not taken to ensure that the crane did not come within 20ft. of where these workmen were working. To find otherwise would be to water down the provisions of this section under the Act of 1937, which were intended, apparently, by the strongest words that the draftsman could choose, to place an absolute obligation upon the employer.

This court has always been slow to listen to any argument which in

effect waters down provisions which place an absolute duty upon the employer and transfers that duty to the workman. The argument presented to us here bears some similarity to that which was addressed to the court in Sutherland v. Mills (James), Ltd., Executors (1). The argument there was that the user of a particular machine without accident for a very long period was proof that the machine was not a dangerous machine. As I say, the argument in this case has a certain similarity to the argument in that case. In my judgment, the magistrates here arrived at a wrong decision because they directed their minds to the wrong point. The point which they should have considered was whether or not effective steps were taken on this occasion, and, as there was no evidence of any effective steps having been taken on this occasion, whether due to somebody's fault or not, in my opinion, the offence was proved.

TUCKER, J.: I agree. In my opinion, this case is a very clear one. The Factories Act, 1937, s. 24 (7), is in these words:

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If any person is employed or working on or near the wheel-track of an overhead travelling crane in any place where he would be liable to be struck by the crane, effective measures shall be taken by warning the driver of the crane or otherwise to ensure that the crane does not approach within 20ft. of that place.

It will be observed that two of the words in that section are "effective" and "ensure." In my view, this subsection imposed an absolute obligation on the employers to produce the result that, in the circumstances stated in that subsection, the crane shall not approach within 20ft. of where the workman is working. In my view, that obligation is just as E absolute as that which is imposed under sect. 14, which provides that certain machinery shall be securely fenced. That is a section under which there have been many decisions, and it is a section with which the courts are very familiar. It was argued in this case that subsect. (7) does not impose an absolute duty, but I think that, in effect, the justices have construed this subsection as if it said that, in the circumstances stated, the employers should take reasonable steps to secure the safety of the persons concerned. Those are not the words used. The words used are that they shall take effective measures to ensure a certain result. On the facts shown in this case, they did not do that. In my G view, there is no defence to this information, and the case should be remitted to the justices with the direction that they should convict.

Appeal allowed with costs. Case remitted to the justices with a direction to convict.

Solicitors: Treasury Solicitor (for the appellant); Middleton & Co., Sunderland (for the respondents).

[Reported by C. St.J. Nicholson, Esq., Barrister-at-Law.]

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Re STAPLETON-BRETHERTON, WELD BLUNDELL v. STAPLETON-BRETHERTON

[CHANCERY DIVISION (Simonds, J.), July 3, 22, 1941.]

Contract—Performance—Mode of performance—Contract between brothers to provide for families—Death of one brother—Whether survivor can insist on paying allowances to members of brother's family or must pay brother's executors.

In 1918, two brothers, who were entitled successively as tenant for life in remainder, were desirous of making provision for their respective families. They executed a deed in which Frederick, who was first entitled, covenanted with his brother Edmond that, if he survived his father and succeeded to the settled estate, he would, during his lifetime, pay to Edmond during his life, and after his death to his widow during her life, the annual sum of £1,000. Edmond covenanted with Frederick that, if Frederick survived his father and died without male issue, or if he died in the lifetime of his father, he, Edmond, would, if he succeeded to the settled estates, pay such an annual sum to Frederick's wife and daughters as would, with certain other income, make up the widow's income to the sum of £1,000 per annum, and also would, in the same circumstances, during his life pay to each of Frederick's two daughters such an annual sum as would, with certain other income, make up the annual income of each of them to £300. The father died in 1919, and Frederick succeeded to the settled estates. He paid his brother £1,000 per annum until he died in 1938 leaving a widow and two daughters, when Edmond succeeded to the settled estates as tenant for life in possession. The summons was taken out by the executors to determine (i) whether there was a trust of these annual sums in favour of Frederick's widow and daughters, or (ii) whether these sums formed part of the testator's estate. The executors contended that the consideration came entirely from him, and that they alone were entitled to receive payment, while the covenantor, Edmond, opposed this contention:

Held: (i) there was no trust created in favour of the widow and daughters, and there was nothing in the deed to suggest that the covenanting parties were trustees for those benefiting under the covenants.

(ii) the sums did not form part of the testator's estate, the proper inference being that the destination of the payment was an essential part of the bargain to the covenantor. The sums were, therefore, payable not to the executors, but to the named beneficiaries, the covenantor being entitled to perform his obligation in the manner in which he had agreed to perform it.

G enforce it. After the death of a party, his personal representatives can, of course, enforce it, but, if they, as a result of such proceedings, receive a sum of money, it would, in the ordinary course, be a part of the deceased's estate and liable to satisfy the liabilities thereof to creditors or legatees. In the present case this would have defeated the purpose of the contracting parties, and it is held that the surviving party to the contract is entitled to fulfil his contract by paying the annual sums to the persons named in the contract. It will be noted that the contract was not worded so as to create a trust for those persons.

As to Mode of Performance, see HALSBURY, Hailsham Edn., Vol. 7, pp. 188-190, para. 267; and for Cases, see DIGEST, Vol. 12, pp. 304-306, Nos. 2506-2531.]

Cases referred to:

(1) Cleaver v. Mutual Reserve Fund Life Assocn., [1892] 1 Q.B. 147; 43 Digest 657, 903; 61 L.J.Q.B. 128; 66 L.T. 220.

- 165; 93 L.J.Ch. 616; 130 L.T. 401. (3) Re Sinclair's Life Policy, [1938] Ch. 799; [1938] 3 All E.R. 124; Digest Supp.; 107 L.J.Ch. 405; 159 L.T. 189.

(2) Re Engelbach's Estate, Tibbetts v. Engelbach, [1924] 2 Ch. 348; 43 Digest 567,

SUMMONS to determine the construction of covenants contained in a deed dated Oct. 18, 1918, and made between Frederick Bartholomew Stapleton-Bretherton and Edmond Joseph Stapleton-Bretherton. The facts are fully set out in the judgment.

Wilfrid M. Hunt for the plaintiffs, the executors.

W. P. Spens, K.C., and A. H. Droop for the first three defendants, R the widow and daughters.

W. F. Waite for the fourth defendant, the surviving covenanting party.

SIMONDS, J.: Frederick Bartholomew Stapleton-Bretherton and Edmond Joseph Stapleton-Bretherton were brothers, the sons of Frederick Stapleton-Bretherton, who in 1918, under the will of Mary Stapleton-Bretherton, was tenant for life in possession of certain settled estates in Lancashire and elsewhere. Frederick Bartholomew Stapleton-Bretherton was tenant for life in remainder of the same estates, D which were further limited to certain uses under which Edmond Joseph might become tenant for life thereof. By a settlement made on Aug. 28, 1894, Frederick Bartholomew Stapleton-Bretherton had covenanted with his then present wife, Bertha May Stapleton-Bretherton, that, in the event of his death in the lifetime of his father, he would pay her the sum of £300 per annum during her life or until she should remarry, and he also covenanted to pay, during his life, the sum of £100 per annum to each of his two daughters. In the event of Frederick Bartholomew Stapleton-Bretherton surviving his father and becoming entitled in possession to the settled estate, his wife Bertha would, on his death, F become entitled to a jointure rentcharge not exceeding £700 per annum, and each of his daughters would become entitled to a capital sum of £1,000.

In Oct., 1918, the Great War was still being fought, and the brothers were anxious to make some arrangement which would in any contingency G provide for their respective wives and families. Accordingly, on Oct. 18, 1918, they executed a deed to which they, and they only, were parties, whereby, after reciting the facts which I have already stated, each of them entered into covenants with the other. Frederick covenanted with Edmond that, if he survived his father and succeeded to the settled H estates, he would, during his lifetime, pay to Edmond during his life, and after his death to his widow during her life, the annual sum of £1,000. Edmond covenanted with Frederick that, if Frederick survived his father and died without male issue, or if he died in the lifetime of his father, he, Edmond, would, if he succeeded to the settled estates, pay to Frederick's wife Bertha such annual sum as would, with certain other

income, make up her income to the sum of £1,000 per annum, and also would, in the same circumstances, during his life pay to each of Frederick's two daughters, Rutb and Stella, such an annual sum as would, with certain other income, make up the annual income of each of them to £300.

A Frederick, the father, died on Apr. 13, 1919, and Frederick Bartholomew, the son, then succeeded to the settled estates. He died on Oct. 13, 1938, leaving his widow Bertha and his two daughters him surviving, but no sons, and thereupon Edmond succeeded to the settled estates as tenant for life in possession. Frederick, in pursuance of his covenant, paid Edmond £1,000 per annum until his death. The obligation of Edmond arises under his covenant, and the question is by whom it can be enforced and what its effect is. The summons as originally drawn asked whether the sums paid or to be paid by Edmond under his covenant—that is, the annual sums required to make up the incomes of the widow and daughters to a certain amount-were impressed with trusts in favour of them respectively or formed part of the estate of Frederick, the covenantee. This ignored the possibility that, even though there might be no trust in favour of the widow and daughters, yet Edmond, the covenantor, might discharge his obligation by paying the covenanted sums to them so that such sums would never reach and form part of the estate of Frederick. The summons was accordingly amended so as to enable this question also to be raised.

I have already decided, and it seems clear beyond all doubt, that no trust in favour of the widow and daughters of Frederick is created by the deed of covenant. They are not parties to the deed, and there is not to be found in it one word which suggests that either Frederick or Edmond was a trustee for any third party of the benefit of any covenant, or of any sum of money which might be paid thereunder. The case is covered by such authorities as Cleaver v. Mutual Reserve Fund Life Assocn. (1), Re Engelbach's Estate, Tibbetts v. Engelbach (2) and Re Sinclair's Life Policy (3). The more difficult question is that raised by the amendment, which I have taken time to consider. Edmond. the covenantor, claims that he is entitled to fulfil his covenant according to its terms by paying the stipulated sums to the widow and daughters of Frederick. On the other hand, Frederick's executors claim that the consideration for the covenant came from Frederick, that they alone are entitled to enforce the covenant, and that they can require its fulfilment by payment to them. In effect, they say that, since they alone can sue, they alone can give a valid receipt, and that they will give it only if the money is paid as they require. They rely upon a passage in the judgment of LORD ESHER, M.R., in Cleaver v. Mutual Reserve Fund Life Assocn. (1), at p. 153:

I should say that, on the true construction of the policy, the only persons who could claim under it, and give a valid receipt for the money insured, were the executors of the insured.

I do not think that this claim by the executors is well-founded. Where,