

# TALES OF THE RIVERMAN 120



## THE EGG MAN OF THE CENTRAL STATION RAILWAY BRIDGE



Bennie Parsonage was called one very cold winters day, snow on the ground, to search at the Bridge Wharf for a man who had been seen by the Policeman to enter the river, Clyde. The Officer was on points duty at the corner of the Broomielaw and Oswald Street. In those days there were no traffic lights and a Police Officer usually in a white tunic or white arm coverings, would be sited in the centre of the crossing to direct the traffic.



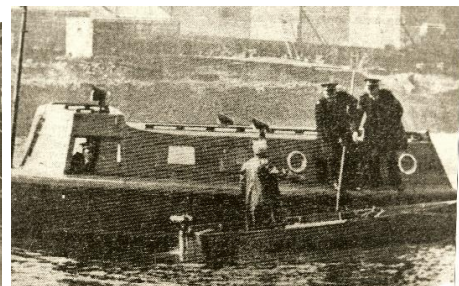
The Police Officer had a good view of the area of quay beside the river under the railway bridge. While directing the traffic he watched a man behaving strangely in this area. The man suddenly took his trousers, shoes and socks off, and, in his shirt-tails started to climb up one of the land piers of the Railway Bridge. The Policeman ran across the road to find out what was happening. He saw the man above him crawl along the girders until he was above the river and watched as he dived off the bridge, into the river and disappeared. The officer immediately went to the nearest Police box and informed the Control Centre who immediately contacted Bennie. Bennie Parsonage as usual arranged for a Police Landrover to tow his boat to the locus and he was able, as the tide was at a suitable height, to launch his boat at the Port Authority staging where the Police boat Semper Vigilo also moored, at the north west side of the river between the Railway Bridge and the George 5<sup>th</sup> Bridge.



Ben on the phone to Police



Landrover towing boat to an incident.



Beside Semper Vigilo at another incident.



The piers and girders of the Central Railway Bridge.



The actual search for the "egg man"

After some hours of search Father could not understand why he had not yet recovered the body, if the witness's story was correct, and he couldn't really get a better witness than the police officer.

Day after day the search went on in the freezing conditions, as Bennie would not stop if he was sure the entry and locus were obviously correct.

After 3 days of search, Bennie was informed that he could give up the search. It seemed that the missing man still in his shirt tails but blue with cold had climbed down off the bridge and given himself up to the amazed points man. He had dived into the water, as witnessed by the Officer, swam underwater until he was near the quay wall where the Policeman could not see him, waited until he saw the Officer leave the area, climbed out of the water and then up onto the girders of the Bridge. Crouched freezing in a corner he had stayed watching the search going on. He claimed he had lived for three days only on pigeons' eggs. Definitely away with the birds.



Pigeons eggs



Mattress fom bridge

The amount of room that is among the girders of the Railway Bridge is seemingly amazing. Over the years it seems that many down and outs have lived among the girders of the bridge. I know that some of the good time girls took their clients up among the girders where they had mattresses. We discovered this one night when we were searching for a man who drowned off the Glasgow Bridge and witnessed one of the girls and a man coming down off the girders. Police checked and found mattresses and other items which were removed. As said amazing what goes on.