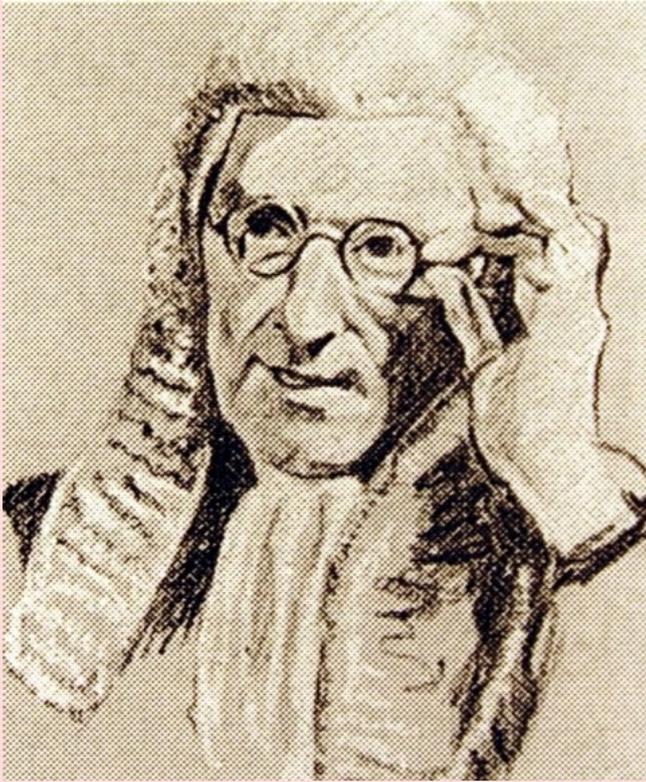


LORD BIRKETT

100th Anniversary of Call

Norman, Lord Birkett (6 September 1883 – 10 February 1962)

Born in 1883, Norman Birkett was called to the bar by the Inner Temple in June 1913 aged 29. In the centenary year of his call, it is important to acknowledge the achievements of one of the all-time great advocates. An impressive figure in the fields of both law and politics, and renowned for his brilliant speeches, Birkett is also remembered fondly as a good man who followed his principles; becoming a judge as a matter of duty despite his personal doubts, intervening in the House of Lords to protect Ullswater from becoming a reservoir, and refusing to depart from his Liberal politics to take up a position in the Labour government under Ramsay MacDonald. Created Baron Birkett of Ulverston in the County of Lancaster in 1958, he died in 1962 aged 78.



The Saviour of Ullswater

Lord Birkett has been called the “Lakes’ Great Advocate”. Two days before his death he gave a great and decisive speech in the House of Lords which saved Ullswater from becoming a reservoir for Manchester. He is remembered in the lakes by a fell named for him and a memorial plaque on Kailpot Crag, with the prestigious Lord Birkett Cup Trophy Race held annually by the Ullswater Yacht Club.



Violette Kaye



Tony Mancini

Brighton Trunk Murder

One of Norman Birkett’s most spectacular cases, and one often quoted as an example of how the most damning circumstantial evidence can be revealed for what it really is by skilled advocacy, was the Brighton Trunk murder.

Bardens, 1963, p.144

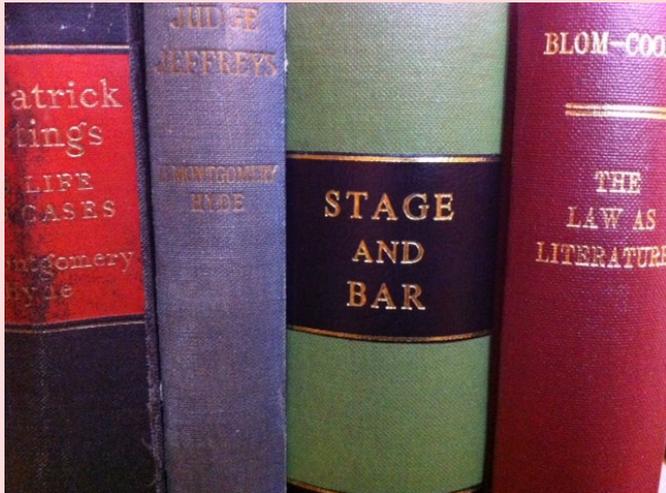
‘It will rank as one of the great defences in the annals of legal medical records and worthy of a Marshall Hall.’

Hyde, 1964, p.418

Brighton witnessed two murders in 1934 that attracted the attention of the media. In each unrelated case a woman’s body was found hidden in a trunk. Birkett appeared as defence counsel for Tony Mancini in the second of these cases. Mancini was accused of murdering his girlfriend Violette Kaye. Despite evidence against him including the trunk containing Kaye’s body being found in Mancini’s apartment, Birkett conducted a famous and successful defence which raised Birkett’s profile as an advocate. Mancini was found not guilty, but Birkett retained a very low opinion of him, saying to his cousin Henry that ‘he was a despicable and worthless creature. But the acquittal seems to have impressed the popular imagination.’ Mancini later confessed his guilt before his death in 1974.

‘If it had ever been my lot to decide to cut up a lady in small pieces and put her in an unwanted suitcase,’ the late Sir Patrick Hastings once remarked, ‘I should without hesitation have placed my future in Norman Birkett’s hands. He would have satisfied the jury (a) that I was not there; (b) that I had not cut up the lady; and (c) that if I had she thoroughly deserved it anyway.’ Norman Birkett : the life of Lord Birkett of Ulverston (Hyde, H. ; 1964)

LORD BIRKETT IN THE INNER TEMPLE LIBRARY



Books by or about Lord Birkett

Norman Birkett : the life of Lord Birkett of Ulverston
(Hyde, H. ; 1964) Collection: LEGAL BIOG.

Famous cases of Norman Birkett, K.C.
(Bardens, D. ; 1963) Collection: CRIM.

Lord Justice Birkett
(Bardens, D. ; 1962) Collection: LEGAL BIOG.

Britain's national parks [Contributions by Lord Birkett]
(Abrahams, H. ; 1959) Collection: TOPOG.

Advocacy : being the Presidential Address of the Right Hon. Sir Norman Birkett, a Lord Justice of Appeal
(Birkett, N. ; 1954) Collection: LEGAL MISC.

The Newgate calendar
(Birkett, N. ; 1951) Collection: CRIM.

Defender's triumph
(Lustgarten, E. ; 1951) Collection: CRIM.

Criminal justice : problems of punishment
(Birkett, N. ; 1948) Collection: CRIM.

Behind the Bar
(Bowker, A. ; 1947) Collection: LEGAL BIOG.

Trial of the major war criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, 14 November 1945 - 1 October 1946
(Presented by Lord Birkett, a Tribunal member, 1956)
(Secretariat of the International Military Tribunal, 1947-1949) Collection: TRIALS

**Lord Birkett: 100th Anniversary of Call
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(2013)**

Forewords by Lord Birkett

The law as literature : an anthology of great writing in and about the law
(Blom-Cooper, L. ; 1961) Collection: LEGAL MISC.

Laughter at law
(Jackson, S. ; 1961) Collection: LEGAL MISC.

Topolski's legal London : [drawings]
(Topolski, F. ; 1961) Collection: INNS OF CT. (FOL.)

Sir Patrick Hastings : his life and cases
(Hyde, H. ; 1960) Collection: LEGAL BIOG.

The verdict of the court
(Hardwick, M. ; 1960) Collection: CRIM.

Judge Jeffreys
(Hyde, H. ; 1948) Collection: LEGAL BIOG.

Stage and Bar : recollections
(Bancroft, G. ; 1939) Collection: LEGAL BIOG.

Nuremburg Trials

Following World War II, the Allied forces (United Kingdom, Soviet Union, United States of America and France) formed the International Military Tribunal to try the military and political leaders of Nazi Germany for war crimes. The trials took place at Nuremberg, Germany, between 14 November 1945 and 1 October 1946.

Lord Birkett was the British alternate judge at the trials. In 1956, as Treasurer of the Inner Temple, Lord Birkett presented to the Library a full set of the official records of the trials. Known as 'The Blue Series', these records are nowadays freely available online at http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/NT_major-war-criminals.html

