

56 DOVER SHARKS

BUDGE ADAMS

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Once upon a time the very usual name for a Dovorian was a "Dover Shark". The following may shed a little light on the reason for this.

"The Dover Boatmen. — Another instance of the nefarious practice of the Dover boatmen is this week brought before the public and we regret to know that it is only one of an almost countless number. The French Government packets, as well as our own boats, engage to bring passengers from Calais to Dover, and guarantee to land them in small boats from the bay, in the event of the state of the tide preventing the packets entering Dover harbour, without further charge. To meet this contingency arrangements are made with a boatowner at Dover to supply boats for the purpose, for which he receives proper remuneration from the French Government. The men employed to row these boats are, in their turn, salaried by that person; but, notwithstanding this, with an insolence worthy of the most lawless of pirates, they claim a "fare" (generally about 2s.) of each of their passengers when midway between the steam packet and the shore, and, by threatening to detain them on the sea until payment is made, succeed in exacting their unjust demand. In the case we now allude to a gentleman resisted the imposition for a considerable time, and at length paid under protest. He very properly brought the case before the local authorities, and they had the owner of the boats before them, and ordered him to supply the town clerk with the names of the crew engaged on the occasion in question, with a view to bringing the case before the magistrates; and we are quite sure, if this is done, that our bench will take

the most effective measures for putting a stop to this practice, by soundly punishing the offenders. With such malpractices as these, it is a matter of no surprise that our boatmen should have earned the cognomen of "sharks"."



PASSENGERS LANDING FROM PACKET IN WATERMEN'S BOATS

The *Evening Mail* acknowledged the source of the item as being the *Dover Chronicle*. 