

POACHING

October 30 1859 Warwick

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS The Magistrates present at these sessions, which were held at the Shire Hall on Saturday last, were E Wheeler and B Jephson, Esqrs., and only one case was brought. A boatman, named **Edward Sharman**, was charged with stealing fifteen turnips worth 3d, the property of Mr Wm Rogers, of the New Inn, Hatton, on the night of Friday week. He pleaded guilty, and from the statement of Police-constable Elvins, stationed at Hatton, it appeared that about ten bushels of turnips having been previously stolen, he secreted himself in a hedge, and on the night in question, about half past ten o'clock, he saw the prisoner actively engaged in gathering his favourite vegetable, and took him into custody. The prisoner, who is in the employ of the Grand Junction Canal Company, was fined 6s 3d the value of the turnips, and 12s expenses.

September 11 1860 Stoke-on-Trent

STEALING HAY FROM A FIELD At the Hanley Police Court, yesterday, **William Fletcher** and **Walter Fletcher**, an old boatman and his son, were charged with stealing 60lbs of hay, the property of George Brassington, farmer, at Trentham. The prosecutor having missed hay from his field the previous night, on the night of Friday last watched for a repetition of the offence. The prisoners' boat was close alongside of the field from which the hay was stolen. He heard the old man whistle, and directly after, the juvenile prisoner jumped from the boat into the field, took two coils of hay, and hastened with them back to the boat. When the prosecutor subsequently went with a policeman to have the prisoners arrested, the latter threw the hay into the canal, and moved the boat to the opposite side of the canal, to prevent the officer going on board. The old man had since offered prosecutor 5s to compromise the case. The old man loudly protested that he knew nothing of the robbery, and his son confirmed that statement, and took upon himself the whole of the guilt and responsibility. There were, however, circumstances in the case which left the Bench no alternative but to punish both prisoners alike, and accordingly each was sent to prison and hard labour for three months before them.

June 12 1862 Wolverhampton

POACHING FISH Yesterday, at the Wolverhampton Police Court, a boatman, named **Richard Meredith**, was summoned for poaching fish on that portion of the Birmingham and Liverpool Canal which passes through the estate of Mr Giffard of Chillington. One of the keepers of the plaintiff deposed to having seen the defendant in a boat, using a net with very small meshes, while his wife was beating the water in advance. Defendant refused to give his name, and the keeper then went on board and secured the net. Mr Turner, solicitor, who appeared for Mr Giffard, complained that, the meshes of the net being so small, fish of every size were taken by it, and therefore the depredation was of a serious character. Mr Bartlett appeared for the defendant, and urged that his client was unaware that the act he was committing was an illegal one. The magistrates fined the defendant in the mitigated penalty of 40s and costs, in all £2 19s, which was paid.

March 30 1865 Coleshill

PETTY SESSIONS **Joseph Goddard**, a boatman, no fixed residence, was charged by William Hiatt, gamekeeper to the Earl of Aylesford, with having used a dog for unlawfully destroying game, on the 22nd instant. The prosecutor saw the defendant start the dog after the rabbit, and after its capture take it to his boat and hide it. John Gibbs, an under-keeper, corroborated the prosecutor's statement. The prisoner had been convicted three times previously. The magistrates fined the prisoner in the full penalty of £5 and costs, or in default three months imprisonment with hard labour.

December 18 1876 Solihull Petty Sessions

TRESPASSING IN PURSUIT OF GAME **Charles Clarke**, boatman, Leamington, and **John Twist**, boatman, Birmingham, were summoned with trespassing in pursuit of game, on Sunday, the 20th ult, on land in the occupation of Thomas Glover, Knowle. It was proved by Police-constable Walker that the defendants were beating about the field with a dog. They were fined 10s each and costs 15s 6d, or in default fourteen days imprisonment.

December 16 1884 Wolverhampton

KILLING A HARE At the County Police Court, yesterday, **George Meek**, boatman, Kingswinford, was charged with killing game without a license. Mr E H Thorne prosecuted. The defendant was conducting a boat along the canal, near Hinksford, Wombourn, when a hare ran on to the tow-path. His son frightened it, and the animal attempted to swim the canal. Defendant, however, picked up his boat hook and killed it. A keeper employed by Lord Dudley, who witnessed the occurrence, asked him for the hare, but without success. The magistrates imposed a fine of 20s and costs.