

May 3 1859 **Wolverhampton**

AN INGRATE At the Petty Sessions, yesterday, **Richard Bristow**, a boatman well known to the police, was charged with stealing four shirts and a pair of boots, the property of another boatman named **Thomas Wildman**. He had met with several other boatmen on the Saturday night, who had given him his supper, and the ungrateful scamp returned, and stole the articles mentioned. He was apprehended next night by Police-constable Niblett. Prisoner alleged that he had taken the boots and shirts from the real thief, whom he had also tried to apprehend. The Bench did not believe the story, and committed him to prison for three months, with hard labour.

May 30 1859 **Tipton**

STEALING MONEY FROM A BOAT At the Public Office, West Bromwich, on Saturday last, before A Kenrick and W Sharp, Esqrs., a lad giving the name of **John Morgan** was brought up on the above charge. **Thomas Nicholls**, a boatman, stated that some weeks ago, he being ill at the time, his wife had taken the prisoner, who was in a state of destitution, to help drive the boat home. He, however, had not been with them but two days when he broke open their cupboard and stole 9s. The young vagabond was sent to gaol for fourteen days, with an addendum to have one good whipping.

November 8 1860 **Birmingham Police Court**

STEALING WEARING APPAREL A boatman, who gave the name of **William Walker**, living in Bromsgrove Street, was charged with stealing a quantity of wearing apparel, the property of **Thomas Kelsey**, a boatman on the Grand Junction Canal. The prosecutor said that he was bringing a boat along a canal in Northamptonshire, on the 18th ult, and when near Fenny Stratford, he met the prisoner and gave him a "lift". The same evening he went to sleep, leaving the prisoner in charge, steering the boat, but on waking up the next morning about two o'clock, he found the prisoner had decamped with a jacket, waistcoat, a knife and other articles. Witness saw him again in Birmingham on Tuesday evening, wearing the jacket, and then gave him into custody. In his possession he also found the stolen knife. He pleaded guilty to the charge, and was sentenced to three months imprisonment, with hard labour. He also admitted being a deserter, upon which charge he was committed to gaol.

April 22 1861 **Wolverhampton**

ROBBERY FROM A CANAL BOAT At the Petty Sessions, on Friday, two boatmen named **Richard Evans** and **John Yates**, were brought up on remand, charged with stealing from the cabin of a canal boat, a watch, a pair of boots, and a pair of trousers, on Saturday, the property of another boatman named **Thomas Wise**, of Penkridge. Evans was apprehended while offering the watch for sale at a pawnbroker's shop, and Yates was arrested by Inspector Thomas, on Tuesday, and found to be wearing the missing boots, and the trousers were found in his lodgings, in Canal Street. The prisoners were remanded to Penkridge.

November 12 1863 **Wolverhampton**

PETTY SESSIONS Yesterday, at the Police Court, before the Stipendiary, **Benjamin Slater**, a boatman, was charged with stealing 13s 6d from the person of **William Higgins**, another boatman. About nine o'clock on the night of Monday last the two met at a public house, and Higgins treated Slater to drink. They afterwards adjourned to a boat, where Slater partook of something to eat, the prosecutor went to sleep, and waking on the next morning he found himself alone, and his pockets rifled of 13s 6d. The prisoner now pleaded guilty, and the Stipendiary sent the prisoner to gaol for six weeks only with hard labour.

February 26 1854 **Smethwick**

HIGHWAY ROBBERY About midnight on Saturday, **John Walker**, a boat unloader at the Soho Foundry, was proceeding homewards, and when near the Blue Gates Inn he was set upon and thrown down by three or four men, one of whom, a boatman named **Thomas Smith**, alias "Hoppy", a very bad character, he had known for several years. Whilst on the ground he felt Smith's hand in his pocket, and cried out, "Hoppy, you are robbing me". The fellows then made off, and Walker found that 5s 6d had been abstracted from his pocket. Next morning he apprised Police-constable Hackney of the robbery, and on Monday forenoon that officer arrested Smith in a canal boat, and on the following day took him before Mr T Jesson, at West Bromwich, who remanded the prisoner until tomorrow (Saturday), and refused to admit him to bail.

September 30 1867 **West Bromwich**

A PARTIALITY FOR WHEELBARROWS **John Brains**, a labourer, living at Tipton, was charged with having stolen a wheelbarrow and other articles, belonging to **James Arch**, a boatman, living in Tipton. The prisoner had been in the employment of the prosecutor up to August, when he took the wheelbarrow and other goods from a boat of prosecutor's, and afterwards disposed of them. It was stated that the prisoner had been in custody previously, for stealing a wheelbarrow, and other offences. Preferring to be tried by the Magistrates rather than go to the Sessions, he pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to six months imprisonment.