

May 14 1860

Wolverhampton

A WOMAN KILLED BY HER PARAMOUR On Saturday night, about a quarter to ten o'clock, a boatman named **Humphreys**, but better known among his associates as "Besom Ned", in a fit of passion, killed a woman who lived with him as his wife. The tragical occurrence took place on the Cannock Road, not far from the woodyard and wharf belonging to Mr Bishton, in whose employment Humphreys is. The boat managed by Humphreys is at present lying at Sheldon's Wharf, at the bottom of Canal Street; but the unfortunate woman, by name Elizabeth Evans, had gone that evening, in company with **Mrs Davis**, the wife of a boatman, to visit her sister-in-law, who is subject to fits, and who had had several in the course of the day. On coming away with Mrs Davis, who seems to have been considerably intoxicated, the deceased met an acquaintance, **Jane Ward**, also a boatman's wife, who observed she had been working hard all day, and would like half a pint of ale. The deceased upon that said if she would accompany her and Mrs Davis to the Fountain Inn, a short way off, she should have some ale, and she (deceased) would pay for it. The trio accordingly set off, and on the way they saw Humphreys, and waited until he should come up. As he approached, Mrs Ward states that she noticed he was very angry, and he came up "raging". She (Mrs Ward) asked him what was the matter with him, to which he replied by asking her what that had to do with her. He then threatened the deceased, and went forward to strike her, upon which Mrs Ward seized hold of him, but let him go on his saying that if she did not leave off he should give her as much as he was going to give deceased. He then struck deceased two or three violent blows, until she fell against the paling which forms the fence of the road, and hung upon it in a fainting state. Next, going back several paces, he took a running kick at the deceased, which took effect under her ribs. On receiving it, she uttered a singularly piercing shriek of, "Murder!" and fell apparently insensible. Humphreys then turned about and proceeded to his boat. Several of the people living in the neighbourhood assisted to carry the deceased to the Fountain, and she was taken into the bar of the house, and laid upon the table. She never spoke, however, after crying out on receiving the kick, and died in a few minutes after being taken into the house. Some persons ran to the Stafford Street police station, and fetched Sergeant Thomas, who sent word to Dr Dehane; and that gentleman's assistant was speedily in attendance: but of course the poor woman was then far beyond the reach of human aid. Another version of the occurrence is given by Mrs Davis. According to it, when Humphreys came up to the deceased he said, "You ---, how should you like my fists?". The deceased replied, "Ned, what have I done to deserve it?" Humphreys then struck out at her, exclaiming, "You ----, take that!" Deceased then fell against the paling as has been already related, and the woman called out she was killed. On which Humphreys, exclaiming, "D--- your eyes, if you are not dead, I'll kill you", gave the unfortunate woman the terrible kick which seems to have killed her almost on the spot. About this time, Sims, the pointsman on the Great Western railway, which passes the Cannock Road near the spot, came forward and asked Humphreys "if he was not ashamed to serve a woman like that". He replied, "You ---, if you come near me, I'll serve you the same", on which, as Humphreys is a big powerful fellow, Sims thought it prudent to draw back. It may be proper to state that Mrs Ward denied that Humphreys made use of any such expressions as those given above: but she is very deaf, and it is possible that they may have been used without her hearing them. Humphreys, as has been said, went off to his boat, whence he was taken about twelve the same night, by two boatman named **William Fancliffe** and **Daniel Simpson**, and conveyed by them to the Police station. When told that Evans was dead, he burst into tears, and expressed great contrition. The deceased had been drinking rather freely during the day, and that, undoubtedly, was the occasion of the violence used towards her by Humphreys.

May 15 1860

Wolverhampton

THE MURDER OF A WOMAN BY HER PARAMOUR An inquest was held yesterday, at the Elephant and Castle, Cannock Road, before Mr T M Phillips, Esq., Coroner, on the body of Elizabeth Evans, who was killed on Saturday night, near the Flowing Fountain Inn, by **Edward Humphreys**, a boatman, with whom she had been living in concubinage for several years. The Jury having been sworn, Harriet Davis, wife of Walter Davis, labourer at the Great Western Railway Station, deposed that she knew deceased, whom she saw last about seven in the evening of Saturday last in the tap room of the Flowing Fountain Inn, Cannock. There were several persons with her, including Edward Humphreys, and the deceased's brother and sister-in-law. They were all drinking together, but deceased appeared to be sober. No quarrelling took place between deceased and Humphreys there. About half past eight, witness left the house with deceased and her sister-in-law, Mary Ann Evans, and Humphreys accompanied them to witness's house door, then went straight on to the Talbot Inn, near the top lock. Witness and deceased shortly afterwards proceeded to that house, where they found Humphreys in the kitchen, with some ale before him in a quart jug. He appeared to be very drunk. Witness and deceased were in the house about ten minutes, and left Humphreys there. Deceased went to Humphreys boat, which was lying by Sheldon's timber yard, and got her shawl. Witness and deceased next proceeded to deceased's brother's boat, by Morris and Griffin's works, deceased having expressed a wish to know if her sister-in-law had got home safe. Witness did not go in, but stayed on the canal bank till deceased came out. This would be between nine and ten o'clock. At witness's suggestion, she and the deceased were proceeding towards the town along the Cannock Road, when they met **Jane Ward**, the wife of a boatman, whom witness's husband had been assisting to load. Mrs Ward asked them to go and have share of a pint of ale at the Flowing Fountain. Witness at this time saw Humphreys coming from the direction of Wolverhampton, and they waited till he came up. When he came up he said, "I have a good mind to give you my fists". He was very drunk. She asked him what for. She said she had done nothing amiss. He said, "You don't care for me, so as you can serve your own turn", and with that he struck her somewhere on the right side of the head. She put her hand to her head, when Humphreys again struck her on the side of the head, and she reeled and

