

### **June 7 1882**

**CHARGE OF KIDNAPPING A BOY IN DERBY** At the Derby Borough Police Court, **Joseph Thay**, a boatman, was charged on remand with having on December 8<sup>th</sup> 1851, feloniously and unlawfully, and by force, enticed away and detained a boy named James Howe, aged ten years. James Howe said he lived with his mother in Cambridge Street, Derby, his father being a soldier, who was in Ireland. One day in December last he went on the canal side with three boys. A barge came along the canal, and in it the prisoner lay asleep. There was a boy driving the horse. One of the boys who was with him named Stafford, asked the boy driving the horse if they could have a ride. He said they could, and he and a boy named Rowe got onto the boat when the boat got near the iron bridge, near Allenstown. Rowe and Stafford jumped off it on to the towing-path, but he could not do so. The prisoner was asleep then. He began to cry, and the prisoner awoke. Prisoner said, "What are you crying for?" He said he wanted to go home to his mother. Prisoner said, "I want a boy to drive my horse." That night prisoner told him to get off the barge and to go home again, and put him off the barge. It was dark, and so he did not start to come back to Derby. He lay down all night under a hedge. It rained, and he got "wringing wet". Next morning prisoner asked him to drive the horse and he did so. The first day the boy boiled some turnips, and gave him one to eat. That was all he had to eat that day. The second night he slept in a shed where the horse was put. The boy dipped his head in the canal, and said he would throw him in if he did not stop with them. The prisoner lifted him into the barge and drove the horse himself. They took him as far as Wolverhampton. The boy made him steal a hammer, saying he would throw him into the canal if he did not do so. The barge was laden with pig iron. The prisoner heard the boy tell him to help unload the barge, and he did so. The food consisted of bread and butter on Sundays, and dry bread and turnips on other days. Prisoner said he should not go to Derby any more. The barge was taken in another direction, and they went to prisoner's mother's. He ran away, and walked back to Derby. He was walking the better part of two days and two nights. A man who was also walking to Derby gave him something to eat, but he had to sleep under hedges, as the man had not enough money to pay for lodgings for two people. He never asked the prisoner to let him go home, but he asked the boy, who said, "No". He was away from home about a fortnight. In reply to prisoner, the witness said the boy gave him some bread and meat the first day. He denied that he ever slept in the cabin, because the prisoner slept there with his boy and another boy, and said there was not room for him. Detective Clamp deposed to having received the prisoner into custody from the Birmingham Police on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Prisoner made a long statement. He said that when the barge got near Swarkstone he told the boy to go home, but he would not do so, saying that his father was a soldier and his mother had too many children. They went to Birmingham, and he and his wife took Howe to New Street Station. He bought the boy a ticket, gave him a bun and a penny, and put him in charge of the guard of a train to go to Derby. Prisoner was committed for trial at the next Borough Quarter Sessions.

### **June 28 1882**

**SINGULAR CHARGE OF KIDNAPPING A BOY** A singular story was related at the Derby Quarter Sessions yesterday. A canal boatman from Birmingham, named **Joseph Thay**, better known by the alias of "Thirza", was charged with stealing a boy under ten years old, named James Howe. The boy stated that one day in December last he and other boys, who had played truant from school, were on the canal bank, when the defendant promised to give them a ride. They accordingly got on his boat, and were conveyed some distance up the canal, after which two of them jumped off, but Howe was unable to do so. Prisoner was asleep at the time, but on awaking, and hearing the boy crying for his mother, he told him he should not let him go, as he wanted a boy to mind his horse. He was accordingly detained, and spent the first night under a hedge, although it was raining and he had no covering. He was wet through, but he kept his clothes on all the following day, when he had to mind the horse, and at night he slept in a stable. The other nights, for upwards of a week, he slept out of doors, and his only fare was dry bread and boiled turnips. At length the boat arrived beyond Wolverhampton, and while the prisoner was at a house the boy made his escape. He walked along the canal bank to Derby, the journey occupying two days, and he subsisted on food given to him. The result of his exposure was that he had been ill ever since. The prisoner alleged that the boy refused to go home, and the jury acquitted him.