

## HUDDERSFIELD CHRONICLE

**1 August 3 1850**

**Marsden**

**BOY DROWNED** On Monday last a boy aged about 10 years, the son of **John Webster**, a boatman of Marsden, was unfortunately drowned in the canal near Slaithwaite. He had started early that morning with the boat, in company with his father; and while the boat was in one of the locks he stepped upon it for the purpose of crossing over, when the poor fellow's foot slipped, and he fell into the canal. Before he could be got out life was extinct.

**2 September 21 1850**

**WASTING WATER ON THE HUDDERSFIELD CANAL** Mr Freeman of the firm of Brook, Freeman and (Batley) appeared before the magistrates at the Guildhall on ( ) day last, with instructions from the London and North Western Railway Company to prosecute ( ) **Sykes**, boatman, under the following circumstances. (Sykes was) master of a boat navigating this canal, and ( ) instant, when passing through Field-house Green (locks) neglected to close the bottom cloughs or paddles (before) opening the upper ones, so that after the boat had ( ) through the lock free egress was allowed to the (water in) consequence of which a large quantity was wasted. Two of the police acting on the canal ( ) the above facts and stated that the defendant was ( ) fresh at the time. In reply, Sykes did not appear (to understand) the matter at all, and could not ( ) what had been stated was true or false. His (memory was) refreshed by a fine of £2 and expenses.

**3 April 19 1951**

**Huddersfield Police Court**

**CRUELTY TO ANIMALS** **John Bray** and **Paul Bray**, his son, boatmen, were charged with brutally ill-treating a horse, the property of the elder defendant. Mr Dransfield appeared on behalf of the complainant, and Mr J I Freeman for the defendants. The charge was made by William Calvert, a bank walker on Sir John Ramsden's canal, from whose evidence, corroborated by other witnesses, we gathered the following facts. About half past five on the night of the 4<sup>th</sup> inst, the defendants were on Sir John's canal, near to the Annislee Lock, with their horse and boat. The younger defendant was steering the boat, and the father, who was drunk, was on the bank driving the horse, and beating it with a large stick in a most violent and cruel manner. On nearing the lock, so great was the velocity obtained, that in order to avoid damaging the lock gates, the boat was run into the canal bank, when the tow rope snapped, and the horse was liberated. The defendant Paul Bray then jumped out of the boat, and seizing a windlass handle made of iron, beat the horse most brutally over the head. The poor animal at this time was trembling all over from pain, and appeared scarcely able to stand. In various parts of its body there were large lumps and bruises, caused by the ill-treatment of the defendants. Mr Freeman, in addressing the bench for the defendants, endeavoured to prove that the complainant was actuated by vindictive feelings, and denied that there had been any cruel treatment of the defendant's horse, but acknowledged that they had been compelled to use some severity, in consequence of the horse becoming restive and refusing to do its work. No evidence was called to support this view of the case, and the bench being of opinion that the case was of a most aggravated character, inflicted a penalty of 10s upon the father and 2s 6d upon the son, with expenses, amounting in the whole to £2 9s.

**4 June 28 1851**

**ATTEMPTED MURDER AND SUICIDE IN WORCESTER** On Saturday night last **John Waters**, a man who plies as a boatman in Worcester, made a murderous attack upon a woman named Mary Ann Burk, who has been living with him for several months. Having quarrelled with her he inflicted a serious wound upon her neck with a knife and subsequently stabbed himself in the throat in two places. An inquiry into the circumstances took place at the police station on Monday before two of the city magistrates, who remanded the prisoner Waters for a week in consequence of his being too ill to undergo an examination. The woman Burk is recovering from the effects of her wounds, and is considered out of danger. It appears that the prisoner Waters had been heard to say

several times in the course of Saturday that he would murder the woman, and was seen to sharpen his knife (a pocket one) which was found covered with blood on the floor of the room.

#### **5 July 12 1851**

**DEATH FROM FALLING INTO A LIME KILN** On Wednesday morning last, about six o'clock, when a workman named Robert Johnson opened a lime kiln at the Ardwick Lime Works, Lime Kiln Lane, Ardwick, he found a boatman named **James Buckley** inside. Johnson had previously told Buckley not to come there to sleep, and on this occasion he told him he would have to go before the magistrates if he were found there again. Johnson then went round to open the door on the other side, but hearing a scream, he returned; not being able to see Buckley, he looked into the kiln (about four feet deep) and saw him upon the fire at the bottom. With the assistance of several of the workmen, the unfortunate man was got out, and immediately conveyed to the Royal Infirmary, where he died on Monday, in consequence of the severe burns which he had sustained. *Manchester Guardian*

#### **6 July 26 1851**

**SHOCKING BRUTALITY** A boatman named **James Wick** is in custody at Manchester on the charge of kicking a woman to death. Police-constable Moores was going down Back Irwell Street, about twenty minutes to five o'clock on Monday morning, when he heard screams from a cellar, and on going there found Wick kicking and beating two women, whom he accused of having robbed him of four half crowns. One of the women was bleeding about the head and face, and appeared to be dying. She was afterwards conveyed to the Infirmary, but died on the way. The other woman was also carried to the Infirmary, where she lies in a precarious state. The prisoner was taken before the borough magistrates on Monday, but was remanded.

#### **7 August 23 1851 Slaithwaite**

**THE RESULTS OF THE WAKES** On Tuesday last, at the Guildhall, Huddersfield, Daniel Sykes of Lingards was charged with, on the 9<sup>th</sup> inst, damaging a wall belonging to Mr John Farrer. From the evidence given, it appeared that about half past eleven on the night of the 9<sup>th</sup> inst, the defendant was seen throwing "toppings" off a wall adjoining the canal, and belonging to Mr John Farrer. The charge was denied, and the defendant stated that at the time mentioned he met with a man named **Brier**, a boatman, who challenged him to fight, and because he refused, he (Brier) threw him over the wall, and in doing so knocked the coping stones off. The defendant was corroborated by a witness named May, but the bench considering the case proved, convicted for the damage 2s and costs 12s or in default of payment, twenty one days in the House of Correction.

#### **8 January 3 1852 Marsden**

**ROBBERY OF FLOUR** On Thursday last, two canal boatmen named **John Tasker** alias Suttly and **Joseph Bailey** alias Chenney were brought before George Armitage Esq at the Guildhall, Huddersfield, charged with stealing a sack of flour, value 30s, the property of Mr John Dowse, corn miller. The prisoners had been remanded from the previous Tuesday, together with a woman named Wild, who was then admitted to bail, but now called as a witness for the prosecution. It appeared from the evidence of the several witnesses examined that on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November a truck belonging to the London and North Western Railway Company was placed on a siding belonging to Mr Dowse, near to the tunnel end, and loaded with forty bags of flour, after which it was sheeted up, and at half past six in the evening the truck and its contents were safe. About eight o'clock on the night of the same day Richard Hanson, a servant in the employ of the railway company, was returning home from the station, and when near to the prosecutor's siding, he heard voices, and on stepping to one side of the road he observed two men coming across a field from the direction of the siding, and at a distance of about 60 yards from the truck. On coming up to the place near to where he was standing he observed that one of the men (Bailey) had a sack on his back, whilst the other was assisting to steady it. On seeing Hanson they dropped the sack, and one of them made off, but

the other remained a short time, and Hanson said, "Let's put it on your back", and enquired what it was. In reply the man muttered something to the effect that it was a piece of beef, and then ran away. Information was given to Mr Sykes, the station master, and on the truck being examined, one of the bags was discovered to be missing, and in consequence of this circumstance a communication was made to the parochial constable, Francis Goodall, and the prisoner Tasker was taken into custody shortly afterwards. In the earlier part of the evening the prisoners were at the Junction Inn, and left between six and seven, observing that they would go and look for a job. About an hour afterwards they called in at a beerhouse, kept by a person named Wild, and offered Mrs Wild some flour for sale. After a little demur, and stating that she did not want any, she gave them 8s, and lent them a sack to put it in, after which they left, but returned in a short time with a sack nearly full of flour (but not the sack she had given to them). Bailey carried the sack, and after delivering the flour Tasker asked for a glass of ale. Mrs Wild replied that she durst not fill any, and the two prisoners left the house. Bailey was afterwards seen at the Hare and Hounds, where he remarked to a person named Joseph Bulmer, whom he had also met at the Junction Inn, "We have made a job of it at last," and on Bulmer asking him, "What was up?" he replied, "You will hear of it in the morning. They've taken Cheney". After making this remark Bailey showed Bulmer his legs, which were quite wet, and said that he had had to run through the water. After the prisoner had left Wild's, news of the robbery spread through the village, and on Mrs Wild hearing of it the same night she emptied the flour into another sack, and threw the one in which the flour was originally over a wall at the back of the house into an adjoining field, and where it was found on the following morning by one of Mr Dowse's men, named Arnold Schofield, and identified as the property of his master. Bailey succeeded for a time in making good his escape and in eluding the vigilance of the police, but was ultimately taken into custody by Mr Superintendent Heaton, on Monday night last, at Ashton-under-Lyne, when he denied all knowledge of the robbery and said he had not been at Wild's house for twelve months. The sack was produced and identified, and the prisoners were committed to Wakefield to take their trial for the offence.

**9 March 13 1852 Huddersfield Police Court**

OFFENCE AGAINST THE HUDDERSFIELD CANAL ACT **James Bottomley**, boatman, pleaded guilty to a charge of having, on the 28<sup>th</sup> ult, neglected to close the lower cloughs of the Field-house gate, Wood Nook, and Joe Kay's locks, on the Huddersfield canal, before opening the upper cloughs. Mr Batley appeared on behalf of the London and North Western Railway Company, but the charge was not pressed, and the defendant, after being duly reprimanded, was discharged on payment of the expenses.

**10 March 20 1852**

DEATHS On the 12<sup>th</sup> inst aged 39, Ann, wife of **Mr David Ellis**, boatman, Paddock.

**11 April 17 1852 Huddersfield Police Court**

OFFENCES AGAINST THE CANAL ACT **Charles Balmforth**, a boatman, was charged with, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> instant, wasting water at the 9<sup>th</sup> lock by opening the cloughs of the lower gates before closing the cloughs of the upper gates. The offence was acknowledged, and as the case was not pressed, the defendant was fined in the mitigated penalty of 40s and 9s 6d expenses. **Frank Wilson**, boatman, was next charged with, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst, suffering the water to remain in the 3<sup>rd</sup> lock a longer time than was necessary. The defendant pleaded guilty, and the charge not being pressed, he was convicted in the mitigated penalty of 40s and 9s 6d expenses. Mr Batley, of the firm of Brook, Freeman and Batley, appeared to prosecute on behalf of the London and North Western Railway Company.

**12 June 12 1852 Huddersfield Police Court**

WASTING WATER ON THE CANAL **William Henry Poppleton**, boatman, was summoned by the London and North Western Railway Company, and charged with on the 25<sup>th</sup> ult drawing the

shuttles of the lower gates of Wood Nook lock, on Sir J Ramsden's canal, before the upper ones were closed. Mr Batley appeared on behalf of the company. From the statement of **William Calvert**, lock-keeper, it appeared that about five o'clock on the afternoon of the day named defendant went down the canal in charge of a boat belonging to **Mr John Bray** of Deighton. The boat was steered into the lock by a person named **Paul Bray**, after which defendant closed the outside paddle, but neglected to close the off-side one for about a minute, in consequence of which there was a great waste of water. Defendant in defence acknowledged the main facts and was convicted in the mitigated penalty of 40s and 10s 6d expenses.

**13 August 7 1852 Huddersfield Police Court**

WASTING WATER ON THE CANAL **James Daw**, boatman, was charged with wasting water on Sir John Ramsden's canal. Defendant did not appear. Mr Batley appeared on behalf of the London and North Western Railway Company, the lessees of the canal. On the 20<sup>th</sup> ult the defendant was taking a boat down the canal, and in passing through the 26<sup>th</sup> lock at Slaithwaite, he opened the lower cloughs before closing the upper ones. Convicted in the penalty of 40s and 12s 6d expenses.

**14 January 8 1853 Huddersfield Police Court**

STEALING AN IRON SWAITH Mr Carter, on behalf of the London and North Western Railway Company, charged a boatman named **Joseph Swallow**, with stealing an iron swaith or handle, used for the purpose of opening the sluices of canal locks, from one of the locks of Sir John Ramsden's canal. Mr J I Freeman appeared for the prisoner. The handle was found in the prisoner's boat, but as he had several similar handles of his own in the boat, and as no effort was made to conceal it, the bench considered there was no proof of felonious intent. After telling him that he had committed a very imprudent act, their worships thought the justice of the case would be met by the defendant paying the expenses.

**15 April 2 1853**

BODY OF A MAN FOUND IN THE CANAL BASIN On Thursday morning, a little before eight o'clock, the body of a man named Giles Shaw was found in the Canal Basin, Shorehead, by a boatman named **Thomas Richardson**. The deceased was a pensioner, residing at Lockwood, and eked out his pension by working as a weaver for Messrs Wilkinson and Beevers, King Street. The last time he was seen alive was on Monday afternoon in St George's Square, when he told a friend he was going to Raistrick to look after some work which he had been promised. He never reached home, and nothing more was heard or seen of him until his body was found, as stated above. There were no marks of violence on his person, and his clothes, which were on his body, did not indicate any struggle or unfair treatment. On the pockets being searched, 4s 2d were found, along with other articles. An inquest was held on the body before George Dyson Esq at the Wharf Inn on Thursday night, when a verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

**16 June 18 1853 County Court**

JOSEPH SMITHSON V ISAAC CLIFF Mr Leadbetter was for the plaintiff, who is a corn miller at Mirfield, and Mr J I Freeman for the defendant, who is a boatman. This was an action to recover £20 17s 3d under the following circumstances. In December last defendant took a boat of the defendant(*sic*), the terms being that plaintiff was to receive one fourth of the profits for its use. The boat remained in defendant's possession up to the 12<sup>th</sup> of March last, since which he had refused to render any account of the profits, in consequence of which plaintiff had charged fees at the rate of 15s per week. The difference between this sum and the amount claimed was for materials on the boat at the time when she was let, and balance of a former account. The defence was that there had only been one voyage, which realised £12, the plaintiff's share of that being £3, and that the materials had been returned. Verdict for the plaintiff for £12.

**17 July 16 1853**

**Saddleworth**

OFFENCES AGAINST THE CANAL ACT At Uppermill, on the 13<sup>th</sup> inst, before the Rev R Whitelock and T Robinson Esq, Mr John Hutchinson, on behalf of the canal company, charged **John Brierley**, boatman, with needlessly wasting the water of the canal, by drawing the lower paddles of the 31<sup>st</sup> lock before he had closed the higher gates. Brierley acknowledged the offence, and was fined the sum of 40s and costs. Another man, named **James Partington**, was also fined 40s and costs for a similar offence.

**18 September 3 1853**

EXECUTION AT LANCASTER On Saturday, **Richard Pedder** suffered death at Lancaster for shooting his wife at the village of Hambleton, near Garstang, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April last. It will be remembered that immediately after the perpetration of the crime the murderer repaired to the village inn and coolly announced to the assembled company, "I have killed our Bet". Scarcely crediting the startling statement, two of the men present proceeded to Pedder's house, and there, in the garden at the back of the premises, they discovered the lifeless body of the unfortunate woman, her head and face being mutilated with gunshot wounds. After attempting to shoot himself Pedder was conveyed to the police station, and on his way thither he stated that he shot his wife from the kitchen window, adding, "I'm a good shot; I aimed at the killing place, and that was her head". Subsequent to the trial, a memorial was got up on behalf of the culprit, and with 530 signatures appended (headed by the vicar and the Mayor of Lancaster), was presented to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Mr Wright, the prison philanthropist, of Manchester. On Thursday an unfavourable answer was received from Lord Palmerston, who intimated that he saw no ground for interfering with the course of justice. At half past eleven the convict received the sacrament along with Mr Wright. This solemn ceremony over, Pedder was conducted to the scaffold. An immense concourse of people, numbering many thousands, had gathered round the gallows during the morning, some having travelled a considerable distance, by train and on foot. Calcraft officiated at the execution. Pedder was about fifty years of age, and was formerly employed as a boatman on the Preston and Lancaster Canal. There had been no previous execution at Lancaster for upwards of 15 years.

**19 March 11 1854**

**Huddersfield Police Court**

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY **John Beverley**, a boatman from Mirfield, was charged by Police-constable Marsden with being drunk and incapable on Sunday morning, the 26<sup>th</sup> ultimo at midnight in Castlegate. Fined 2s 6d and costs 12s, or seven days imprisonment.

**20 April 7 1854**

**Huddersfield Police Court**

OFFENCE AGAINST THE CANAL COMPANY **John Tasker** was charged with having, on the 5<sup>th</sup> instant, wasted water in the navigation of the Huddersfield Canal. It appeared that John Mellor, one of the servants of the company, had requested the defendant, who is a boatman, to draw up the two top paddles and drop the bottom one in the first lock; but as he conceived that very little water would be wasted by his omitting to do so, he refused. Water, however, was wasted, and a regulation of the company broken, therefore he was fineable to the extent of 40s and expenses; the magistrates having no power to mitigate the penalty.

**21 August 5 1854**

**Huddersfield Police Court**

WEDDED EXPERIENCES **John Turner**, a boatman, was charged with assaulting his wife, Mary, on the 24<sup>th</sup> ultimo. The charge was admitted by the defendant, but complainant sought surety that her husband might not resume his brutalities. Complainant stated that defendant was her third husband, and that she had a son 18 years of age, who earned 6s a week which, with her own labour, made her willing to "skiff without anything from defendant;" that in fact defendant never gave her a farthing, but "hugged her about by the head while she was as black as a coal". She did not wish "a finger end of defendant to work for her"; all she wanted was "to be shut of him entirely". The Bench bound defendant over to keep the peace against complainant for a twelve month – himself in

£10 and two others in £5 each.

[Use of the word “while” to mean “until”, as is common in Lancashire, where I'm from]

**22 February 24 1855 Barnsley**

DEATH OF TWO SISTERS A distressing case of the death of two sisters occurred here a few days ago. Elizabeth Milner, aged 63, widow of **Charles Milner**, a boatman, having been seized with illness, sent for her sister, Jane Storey (who resided at Sheffield, and whom she had not seen for 15 years), to come over to see her. On her arrival at her sister Milner's house, and on learning that she was dead, the shock was so great that she was instantly seized with a fit of apoplexy, and died a few hours afterwards.

**22 March 17 1855**

DEATHS On the 16<sup>th</sup> instant, aged 13 months, John, son of **Mr John Hirst**, boatman, Brierley Wood, Lockwood.

**23 July 21 1855 Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

STEALING A BRASS WEIGHT **George Smith**, a boatman in the employ of the gas company, was charged with stealing a brass weight, the property of Ann Challand, provision dealer, Lowerhead Row. The prisoner, during the afternoon of Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> instant, went into prosecutor's shop and stole the article in question. Police-constable John Kaye, who was in search of the prisoner on another charge, apprehended him in the shop. He was committed to the sessions for trial.

**24 November 24 1855 Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

A NEGLIGENT BOATMAN **James Pickles** was charged that on the 9<sup>th</sup> instant he, being the conductor of a boat hauled by men, did refuse to stop at a certain lock until other boats drawn by horses had passed. Mr Batley supported the information, and stated that it was laid under one of the company's bye-laws to the following effect :- “The directors of the Huddersfield and Manchester section of the London and North Western Railway Company, by virtue of the powers invested in them by the 70<sup>th</sup> and 113<sup>th</sup> sec of the 34 Geo 3 cap 53, have ordered that in case any boat hauled by a man or men or in any way other than by horses, and arrive at the head or foot of any lock at a time when another boat hauled by a horse shall be within 300 yards, the former shall stop until the latter shall have passed through such lock, under the penalty of 40s”. **Mr S Brown**, keeper of the No 3 lock, Huddersfield, said that on Friday morning, the 9<sup>th</sup> instant, Pickles brought his boat into the lock at the time that there was another boat only about 100 yards distant. Pickles's boat was without horse; and there were three boats with horses at the time within the prescribed distance. The defendant asserted that he had been brought there for spite. He could go faster than the men with horses, and knew nothing of the bye-laws. The defendant was fined 10s, which would be remitted on his paying expenses 10s, and conducting himself properly for the future. The man refused the offer, and the full penalty was consequently ordered to be enforced.

**25 December 22 1855**

A BOATMAN DROWNED NEAR MIRFIELD A fatal accident occurred on Monday last to a boatman named **Joshua Charlesworth**, in the employ of J Ingham Esq, coal dealer, Huddersfield. The man had arrived with his boat at the lock below Cooper Bridge. When he got his boat into the lock, he drew one of the sluices, and was going over the lock door to draw the other, when he accidentally slipped into the canal, and was drawn through the sluice hole into the lock, under the boat, receiving such injuries from coming into contact with the boat as to completely disable him from making any exertion to save himself. Twenty minutes elapsed before his lifeless body was got out of the canal. He was a married man, but had no children.

## **26 March 8 1856**

**A WOMAN KILLED BY FALLING DOWNSTAIRS** At the Welcome Inn beerhouse, Fleet Street, Deansgate, Manchester, about one o'clock on Tuesday week, a woman named **Mary Haddock** was killed by falling from the top to the bottom of the stairs. The inquest was held the same afternoon by Mr Herford, city coroner. The deceased was about 50 years of age, and the wife of a boatman living at Northwich. She had been a week at the Welcome Inn, drinking a good deal with another woman; and she went upstairs to fetch a pair of clogs to give to the woman, who was at that time sleeping in a room downstairs. The deceased, however, was sober at the time. She never spoke after falling; a surgeon was sent for immediately, but she was dead before he arrived. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

## **27 March 15 1856**

### **Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

**CAUTION TO BOATMEN** **Joseph Shaw**, a boatman, appeared to answer a charge that on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February at Linthwaite he wilfully and needlessly drew water from the 9<sup>th</sup> lock of the Huddersfield Canal. The defendant admitted that he was in fault. He had been 15 years in the employ of the Canal Company, and had never been summoned before. Mr Batty said the action was brought for a wilful waste of water, under the 14<sup>th</sup> section of the act. The case being proved, the bench could not inflict a smaller penalty than 40s. The learned gentleman addressing himself exclusively to the bench, was almost inaudible; but we understood from the bench that he proposed that the company should not enforce the penalty, but hold it over him, as security for his future good conduct. A fine of 40s and expenses 19s 6d was inflicted.

## **28 March 22 1856**

### **Saddleworth**

**DEATH OF A LEGGER IN THE STANEDGE TUNNEL – INQUEST** On Saturday last, the 15<sup>th</sup> instant, an inquest was held at the Gate Inn, Weakey, before George Dyson Esq, coroner, and a respectable jury, touching the death of **Joseph Brierley**, boatman, who died in a boat coming through the Stanedge canal tunnel on Saturday evening, the 8<sup>th</sup> instant. It appeared from the evidence of Ann Brierley, the widow of deceased, that on Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> instant the deceased left Ashton under Lyne to follow his calling as a boatman, or what is termed a "legger" through the Stanedge canal tunnel; that he had not been in good health for a month before, but was compelled to go to work as they had no food in the house. Deceased complained of having pains at his heart if he moved about quickly or did any active work, but was not so ill when kept quiet. **John Tasker** was examined, and stated that deceased engaged at the Marsden end of the Stanedge tunnel to assist him to "leg" his boat through the tunnel; that he was taken ill, and had to give up "legging" and go into the hold of the boat, where he died. Deceased was perfectly sober, witness believed he had not tasted of beer, but he complained of something rising up in his throat when he was doing his work. Deceased was about 36 years of age, and witness understood that he was a Saddleworth man. The jury believed from the evidence that deceased had died from disease of the heart, and returned a verdict accordingly.

## **29 May 3 1856**

**A MAN BURNED TO DEATH BY SLEEPING ON A LIME KILN** Yesterday (Friday) a man named David North, a coal heaver working at Berry Brow, aged about 40, died at the Infirmary. Death resulted from the following circumstances :- On the 16<sup>th</sup> ult, about half past seven o'clock in the evening, he was seen in a state of intoxication near the Navigation Inn, Shore-foot. About a quarter past twelve the same night, he was found lying by the side of Kaye's lime kilns, Aspley, with his clothes on fire, by **Jabez Normington**, a boatman. Normington and others tore off his clothes and, as he refused to be taken to the Infirmary, they placed him in a boat cabin and applied the ordinary remedies for burns. Next morning they removed him to the Infirmary, where he lingered until yesterday. An inquest will be held on the body this day (Saturday) at the Acorn Inn, West Parade.

### 30 March 15 1857

SUDDEN DEATH Last Monday an inquest was held at the Navigation Inn, before J R Ingram Esq, deputy coroner, on the body of **Benjamin Sheard**, aged 58, boatman. The deceased had been seen all right about six o'clock on Saturday evening, and was found dead in bed in the cabin of his boat, which was stationed at Varley's basin, about twelve o'clock on Sunday morning. A verdict of "Found dead without marks of violence" was recorded.

### 31 March 28 1857

#### Magistrates in Petty Sessions

ROBBERY FROM A BOAT **James Ellis** was charged with stealing a rope, the property of John Blakeley. The prosecutor deposed that he is executor to the late **Hannah Blakeley**, who had several canal boats, and on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February last, one of the boats was secured at the King's Arms Wharf. The following day all the goods were safe on board; but on the 21<sup>st</sup>, he found the cabin had been broken open, and part of a river line, a sack and a piece of pack sheeting had been stolen. He got a new lock put on to the door. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> the cabin was again broken into, and the other part of the line taken away. On Wednesday last, a part of the rope was found at Waddington's rag warehouse, where it had been removed from Hellawell's old stores, to whom the prisoner had sold it on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February last for 1s, saying he was a boatman and the rope was old and good for nothing. On a second case he was charged with obtaining half a crown by false pretences, with intent to defraud **Thomas Taylor**. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of February last, Taylor had a vessel loaded with deals, and he engaged the prisoner and another man to discharge her for 2s 6d, but as it was late that night, it was agreed to defer it until the following morning; but at half past eight that night the prisoner went to Taylor's house and demanded 2s 6d, saying they had discharged the boat. The money was given him and he was not seen again till he gave himself up at Wakefield on Wednesday last. The prisoner was committed for trial on both charges. He has been convicted before at the Pontefract sessions six years ago, for stealing a rope. He admitted his guilt.

### 32 April 11 1857

BRUTAL OUTRAGE AT BARNSELEY On Thursday last week, at the Barnsley Court House, William Barrat, Wm Ellicker, John Newton and Alfred Hargreaves were brought before T Taylor Esq, charged with brutally assaulting and robbing a man named **James Squires**, who was so injured that he is lying in a dangerous state, his death being daily expected. The case was not gone into, but it appears, according to the information received at the police office, that Squires, who is a boatman about 40 years of age, left his boat at Cawthorne basin on Friday last and went to Barnsley, where he was drinking at several public houses. About midnight he met the prisoners, who took him to Ellicker's house, where he is supposed to have passed the night. Early on the following morning he was found lying in a helpless and insensible state near to Ellicker's door. Assistance was obtained and he was removed into a lodging house, and the services of Mr Wainwright, surgeon, were promptly obtained. He was found to have obtained injuries of a very dangerous character. During the morning he vomited a quantity of matter, which led the medical gentleman to believe that some noxious drug had been administered to him. Information was given to the police, and circumstances led to the apprehension of the prisoners. Squires had been robbed of his money (about £2), a coat, watch and ring, the last mentioned article having been traced to the possession of one of the prisoners, who had sold it.

On Saturday night, an inquest was held at the Court House, Barnsley, before J Taylor Esq, touching the death of Joseph Squires, belonging to York. Mr Wainwright, surgeon, had made a *post mortem* examination of the body, and found that the skull had been fractured to the extent of eleven inches, extending from the orbit round the side of the head, and which had ruptured the meningeal artery, causing an effusion of blood upon the brain. There were also other injuries, but there was no doubt that death was caused by the fracture of the skull.

### 33 April 18 1857

DEATH BY DROWNING On Thursday afternoon last an inquest was held at the Wharf Inn,

Aspley, before J R Ingram Esq, deputy coroner, on the body of Samuel Lucy, a dyer of Mold Green, who was found drowned in the canal about half past seven o'clock on Wednesday morning. Daniel Dyson, woollen spinner of Folly Hall, was the first witness called. He said he had known the deceased from a child, and had last seen him alive on Tuesday evening last, at the house of Mr Wood, the Kaye's Arms, King Street. Deceased went into the house about nine o'clock, being at that time the worse for liquor. He left about twelve o'clock. Whilst in the house, deceased had no quarrel with anyone, though he was rather noisy. Witness did not observe any marks of violence on his face. George Andrews, cabinet maker of Aspley, stated that he was in his own house on Wednesday morning about a quarter past one o'clock, when he heard someone in the passage close to his house, upon which he went out, and found the deceased, who had fallen down a flight of stone steps. Witness got hold of deceased's arm and endeavoured to raise him on his feet, but he was unable to stand. His face was bleeding. Witness left him for a short time, and then went to him again. He asked deceased if he thought he would be able to find his way home. And he answered in the affirmative. Witness went with him a short distance towards his home, and then left him. **Henry Brown**, boatman of Slaithwaite, deposed that he found the body of the deceased on Wednesday morning, about half past seven o'clock, in the basin of the Huddersfield and Manchester Canal, close to Aspley. He called for assistance, and an uncle of his came to assist witness in getting deceased out of the water. Witness's brother found deceased in the canal some weeks since, when he was drunk; and he had then a narrow escape of being drowned. Witness did not examine his pocket. Francis Wood, innkeeper of Huddersfield, said he was present when the deceased's clothes were searched, and that there was nothing at all in any of the pockets. Deceased's hat could not be found. The pockets did not appear to have been disturbed. **Christopher Dyson**, who appeared to watch the case on behalf of the company, said he had been in the employ of the canal company as superintendent for 30 years, during which time about 20 deaths had occurred from drowning in this locality. After a few words from the coroner, the jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned; supposed to have fallen in accidentally" with a recommendation that the company should be communicated with in order that something might be done to render the bank of the canal less dangerous, as so many deaths had been occasioned in a very few years.

**34 September 12 1857**

DEATHS On the 8<sup>th</sup> inst, aged 43, Betty, widow of **Mr William Matthewman**, boatman, Cowcliffe.

**35 July 14 1858**

DAMAGE **Joseph Balmforth**, a boatman, was charged with doing damage to a gooseberry tree, the property of Daniel Brook, at Golcar. The defendant was seen by a boy to enter the complainant's garden and pull up a gooseberry tree, with which he walked away. The boy informed the complainant, who with other men pursued and caught the defendant with the tree in his possession. The defendant offered to pay 5s for the damage, but complainant refused to accept it. The bench committed the defendant for one month to the House of Correction with hard labour.

**36 August 21 1858**

On Saturday, a shocking accident occurred to a boatman named **Herbert Holt**, at the Chesterfield and Stockwith Canal near Wheeldon Mill. It appears that deceased and another man were loading some ironstone, and the deceased was intending to shoot a cartload of ironstone into a boat, and put a stone under the wheels of the cart to stop it from running into the canal. The stone gave the cart a sudden jerk, and the horse wheeled around and knocked deceased into the boat, the cart falling on him, breaking his back and seriously injuring his body, in consequence of which he died before he could be got from under the cart.

**37 August 28 1858**

A LOVING PARENT **James Balmforth**, a boatman, was charged with having run away and

allowed his son to become chargeable to the township of Slaithwaite. Mr Wood, relieving officer, stated that the child had by the defendant's desertion been chargeable to the township for some years, the amount allowed being 1s 6d per week, and the sum paid amounting to £25 2s 6d. The defendant had once before been apprehended, and then made an arrangement to pay the money, but as soon as possible he decamped, and had not been heard of for four years, until he was caught last week in Cheshire. He (Mr Wood) believed that the defendant had never seen his child since it was born. The bench ordered the defendant to be committed for three months with hard labour.

### 38      **October 2 1858**

**SUSPICIOUS DEATH OF A BOATMAN AT BLACKBURN** On Wednesday morning, about half past seven o'clock, the body of a boatman named **William Walmsley** was found in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and in consequence of information given to the police, another boatman, named **James Tasker**, was apprehended on suspicion of having thrown the deceased into the water about midnight on Tuesday. It appears that the deceased was aboard Tasker's boat on Tuesday night, and that he and Tasker were quarrelling. The language which was overheard was very violent and threatening; and about ten minutes to twelve a splash was heard in the water, and then all was quiet. Tasker was brought before the magistrates on Wednesday morning, and formally remanded to Friday. Tasker's wife was on board at the time of the quarrelling, and after the splash she was seen to look over the side into the water, and then go back into the cabin. She was also taken into custody on Wednesday afternoon.

### 39      **October 30 1858**

**A YOUNG MAN DROWNED AT LONGROYD BRIDGE** On Wednesday an inquest was held at the Electrician's Hotel, Longroyd-bridge, before G Dyson Esq, coroner, on the body of Thomas Allen Rushforth, aged 19, worsted spinner, who had been found drowned in the canal, near that place. After the jury had been sworn, **Joshua Gibson**, boatman, deposed that he resided at Longroyd-bridge, and that a few minutes before four o'clock on the morning of that day, he was going out to his work, when he saw the deceased in the canal, near the bridge, about 30 yards above the bridge lock. He obtained the assistance of other persons, got the deceased out of the canal, and sent for a policeman. The deceased was not stiff, and did not appear to have been long dead. Joseph Spencer, of Crosland Moor, stated that for four or five weeks he had worked with the deceased, at Crosland's Mill. Last night after work, about half past nine, they went together to the Railway Inn, Yew Green, and had a quart of beer together. They afterwards called at the Woodman Inn, and had some more beer together. Next they went to the Knagg's (*sic*) Head Inn, Paddock, and had more ale, and at last parted to go to their respective homes. The deceased was not drunk, and he (witness) was quite sober. The deceased's nearest way home would be by the canal bank or towing path. Mr J Sykes, the foreman of the jury, said it was customary for people who wanted to go by the canal towing path, in order to save going round and over the bridge, to jump on the fence on to the canal outer bank, near the lock, and then cross the lock head to get on the regular towing path. It was probable that the deceased had jumped over the wall at the wrong spot, and instead of dropping on the bank, as he intended, had fallen into the canal, and was drowned. The jury returned a verdict that "The deceased was found drowned, but as to how he was drowned no sufficient evidence appeared".

### 40      **May 7 1859**

**DEATHS** On the 29<sup>th</sup> ult, aged 45, **Mr James Savage**, boatman, Charles Street.

### 41      **June 11 1859**

**OFFENCES AGAINST THE HUDDERSFIELD CANAL ACT** On Wednesday last, at the petty sessions, Uppermill, before James Lees, Thomas Robinson and F F Whitehead Esqs, **Thomas Bottomley**, a boatman from Marsden, was charged on the information of **James Pogson**, lock-keeper, between the Tunnel End and Royal George on the Huddersfield and Ashton Canal, with

having, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> instant, unlawfully drawn a clough of the lower gates at No 20 or Hall's Lock, before he had shut the upper gate of such lock, thereby causing a great waste of water. Mr Freeman of Huddersfield, solicitor, appeared to prosecute on behalf of the Railway and Canal Company. The charge was clearly proved, and it also appeared that defendant had previously been cautioned by Mr Greenwood, the canal agent, who had caught him committing similar offences against the Canal Act. The bench inflicted a fine of £2 and costs, being the lowest allowed by law. As defendant was an old offender they did not recommend that any part thereof should be remitted.

**42 June 18 1859**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

**INFRINGEMENT OF THE CANAL REGULATIONS** **James Holmes**, a boatman, pleaded guilty to having on the first of June, at Cooper Bridge, navigated a certain vessel, and given a false account of the goods with intent to avoid payment of the duties. Mr Batley, who prosecuted on behalf of the London and North Western Railway Company, to whom the canal belongs, said this practice had of late considerably increased, and the company were determined to put a stop to it. As this was the first case brought before the magistrates, and the defendant pleaded guilty, it was proposed to take a penalty, but not to levy it, in order to keep the defendant on good behaviour for the future. The penalty to be inflicted by the bench was £5, and was not mitigable. The bench accordingly fined the defendant £5 and costs 9s 6d.

**43 June 25 1859**

**FATAL ACCIDENT** An inquest was held at the Kayes Arms Inn, Quay Street, on Saturday last, before G Dyson Esq, coroner, on the body of **George Brearley**, aged nine years, son of John Brearley, boatman, Turnbridge. The circumstances which led to his death were briefly these : On Friday last Benjamin Lee, a half witted lad 17 years of age, cart driver for Mr Read Holliday, was entrusted with two carts to go to the coal pits. He had to cross the bridge, which was about a foot askew, with his carts, and he gave the coupling chain of the second cart into the hands of the deceased, for him to lead the second horse and cart over the bridge, telling him to pull up at the near side. In passing over the bridge the deceased got his head crushed between the cart wheel and the bridge so severely that he died almost instantaneously. Mr Read Holliday was present at the inquest, and the coroner suggested to him that as Lee was evidently incapable of managing even one horse and cart, it was advisable some other employment should be found for him. He (the coroner) did not wish the boy to lose his place, and doubtless Mr Holliday could find some other employment for him. Mr Holliday promised to comply with the coroner's request. The jury then returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

**44 November 5 1859**

**Marsden**

**ACCIDENTAL DEATH** A melancholy accident, of a fatal nature, occurred yesterday (Friday) week to a native of Marsden, named **John Marsden**, a man close upon 60 years of age, of weak intellect, but of a most harmless character. For years the deceased has been in the habit of bringing, from the Diggle terminus, over the top of Stanedge, during the night, the horses of boatmen who have sent them over, the boats having to be pushed through the tunnel by the men themselves, Marsden meeting them at the tunnel terminus at Marsden, with the horses. During Friday night the deceased performed his customary duty, and arrived at the tunnel end, Marsden, with a horse, about six o'clock a m. Shortly afterwards the horse was seen, but no man with it, and a search was instantly instituted by his neighbour. Adjoining houses were visited, but Marsden could not be found. The canal was then dragged, and unhappily at seven o'clock the lifeless body of poor Marsden was discovered. It seems that on arriving at his destination he had contracted the habit of listening for the coming boat or boats. It is supposed he was doing so when he met with his untimely end, and that losing his balance he fell into the canal. An inquest was held on Saturday last at the Junction Inn before George Dyson Esq, coroner and after the jury (Mr John Dowse, foreman) had heard the evidence, a verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

#### 45 June 16 1860

EXTRAORDINARY DEATH FROM DRINKING BRANDY An inquest was held at Grappenhall, near Warrington, on Tuesday, on the body of **James Randalls** aged 20. The deceased and a man named **James Parry** (both employed as boatmen on board a flat) had got to a cask of brandy considerably over proof, which was being conveyed in the vessel. Randalls drank three teacupfuls of the raw spirit, and Parry likewise took a considerable quantity. Soon afterwards Randalls became deadly sick, and lay down on the deck of the vessel. Previously of drinking the brandy, Randalls had dined plentifully of mutton. This he vomited up; but not having muscular effort sufficient to eject it from his mouth, some of it was drawn into the windpipe, and choked him. After death his mouth was found quite full of the mutton. The other man (Parry) remained for some time in a state of coma, but is now recovering. Verdict "Died from excessive drinking".

#### 46 August 25 1860

##### Magistrates in Petty Sessions

ASSAULT ON A SLAITHWAITE POLICEMAN **John Sykes**, a boatman, was charged with assaulting Police-sergeant Caygill on the 13<sup>th</sup> instant at Slaithwaite. The assault, which was of a somewhat peculiar nature, appears to have been the result of that elevation of spirits natural among the Slaithwathians on the occasion of those enlightened festivals, "the wakes". The sergeant, or his subordinates, had been interfering with a female acquaintance of the defendant, who had imbibed too freely of "cordialised waters", and the result of that interference was, as usual, "5s and costs". In the eyes of the Slaithwaite guardians of the peace the defendant had also rendered himself amenable to their indisputable authority. They consequently repaired to the floating home of the transgressor, and Caygill, whose love for *aquae purae* is well known, stepped forward onto the boat. But here the defendant interfered, and by a movement worthy of a professional clown, tripped the officer off his legs, gave him sundry kicks and cuffs and when, through the assistance of a few friends in need he regained *terra firma*, it was some time before he could sufficiently recover his breath to speak of his narrow escape from compulsory immersion in the canal. After such conduct on the part of defendant, the officer, of course, could not do less than assert his authority before the magistrates, by causing him to be summoned to answer and atone for the offence, and this cause resulted in defendant being fined 10s and the expenses or, as an alternative, one months imprisonment.

#### 47 November 24 1860

A BOATMAN DROWNED IN A LOCK On Saturday evening last, a young man named **John Milnes**, 18 years of age, a boatman residing at Brighouse, was drowned in the Kirklees lock of the Aire and Calder Canal, in the parish of Bradley. Deceased was in the act of opening the lock gate to let a boat through, and in stepping on to the footboard from one gate to the other, his foot slipped, and he fell into the water beneath. The force of the current forced him under the lock gate into the basin, and before he could be got out, which was half an hour afterwards, life was extinct. He was taken to the White Cross Inn, where an inquest was held on Monday, before G Dyson Esq, coroner, and a verdict of accidental death returned.

#### 48 March 30 1861

A MAN SHOT AT ALTHAM NEAR HUNCOAT Early on Tuesday morning, a disturbance took place at the Waltons Arms public house, Altham, which resulted in the death of a boatman named **John Whittaker** of Craven, Yorkshire. It appears that Whittaker, a man named Henry Webster of Padiham, and a man named James Hodgson of Hapton, went into the Walton Arms Inn on Monday afternoon, about five o'clock, and remained drinking together till midnight. Whittaker then went to the landlord, Benjamin Williams, and asked for a bed, but Williams told him he could not have one. Whittaker then commenced kicking and striking the landlord, and the landlady called on a man named Redfern and, with Redfern's assistance, Whittaker and his friends were put outside the door. Redfern then prepared to leave the house, and took up a loaded gun he had with him, and had got to the lobby, when Whittaker and his two friends returned, and again commenced to attack the

landlord, who was soon overpowered. One of the men seized the gun from Redfern, who had just time to step back a few yards and call out, "That gun is loaded, and will shoot every b----- of ye", when the gun went off, and the charge lodged in Whittaker's left side. Medical aid was at once called in, but the unfortunate man died at half past four o'clock. The men are in custody.

#### **49 June 1 1861**

#### **Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

**CAUTION TO BOATMEN** **Luke Barry** and **John Postle**, boatmen, were charged on the information of the London and North Western Railway Company with wasting water in Sir John Ramsden's canal. Mr Batley appeared on the part of the London and North Western Railway Company, and stated the defendants had passed through three of the locks at Whitsuntide, while the canal was cleaning in another part, thereby causing a considerable waste of water. It was the first offence, and as the defendants had promised not to repeat it, he did not press for the full penalty of £5 which the law allowed them to inflict. The merely nominal penalty of 5s and expenses was accordingly inflicted; total 14s 6d each.

#### **50 October 19 1861**

**A HYPOCHONDRIAC FOUND DROWNED** On Saturday afternoon last J R Ingram Esq held an inquest at the White Cross Inn, Bradley, on the body of Charles Feather, whose body had been found on the previous day in the Calder and Hebble Canal. **William Holt** of Halifax, boatman, stated that on Friday morning last, about seven o'clock, he was coming with a boat down the canal, about 300 yards above the Kirklees Top Lock, when he saw the body of the deceased come from beneath the boat. With the assistance of the lock-keeper, **Joseph Hebblethwaite**, he got it out, and had it conveyed to the White Cross Inn. There were marks of blood upon the body. Thomas Reid, county police-constable, said he saw the deceased after he was got out of the water, and observed that his nose was partially crushed in, and his eyes and whole face very much swollen. He searched him, and found no money, but a pocket book, together with one or two old nails, skewers, string, chalk and slate pencil. The pockets were not turned out. He was without cap. In consequence of a name found in the pocketbook he (witness) went to Bradford and enquired for Feathers, and found deceased's mother had married a second time to a person named Holroyd, living in Albion Street. Having ascertained from Mrs Holroyd that she had a son, Charles, he then learnt that he had been missing since the Wednesday previous. Mrs Holroyd subsequently identified the body by the dress as that of her son. She said he had been poorly for some time since, and had still a bad ankle. He had been working at Mirfield with his father-in-law as a slater. When in a low state of mind, he had been asking a man who lodged with his mother which was the easiest death, that by drowning or by prussic acid. The deceased was seventeen years of age last May. His regular business was that of a carver and gilder. John Holroyd of Bowling, slater, said he knew the deceased. He (witness) had married deceased's mother as her second husband. He last saw the deceased alive a week since last Wednesday morning. He was with him at Mirfield, where they had gone to work on the previous Monday. On Wednesday morning he got up about half past six and went away without breakfast, whilst he (witness) was temporarily absent. He had a cap on, but no money about him. On the Monday and Tuesday he was cheerful. The depression of spirits could only be accounted for on the ground of his defective ankles, which made him unable to pursue his own business or that of a slater. There had been no quarrel at home. He was in the habit of reading a great deal, and thought much, and occasionally he was absent minded. He attended the Harley Lane Independent Sunday School. The Coroner having briefly summed up, the jury returned the following verdict :- "Found floating on the water of the Kirklees Canal, but how he got there there is not sufficient evidence to show".

#### **51 January 25 1862**

**WEATHER CASUALTIES** The most serious accident reported is one of a fatal character, which occurred on Monday evening at No 2 lock of the Huddersfield Canal. A boatman named **James Senior**, contrary to the advice of his fellows, persisted in crossing the narrow footboard of one of

the locks after drawing up the paddles. The board was very slippery from the frost and the deceased, who is said to have been slightly the worse for liquor, fell into the lock. An instant attempt was made to rescue him, but a quarter of an hour or more elapsed before the body could be got out. Life was then extinct. Police-constable Fieldsend was sent for, and under his directions the body was conveyed to the Butcher's Arms Inn, where on Wednesday an inquest was held before J R Ingram Esq, and a verdict of "Accidentally drowned" returned. The deceased, who resided at Kirkheaton, was a married man with a family.

## 52 February 13 1862

DEATHS On the 9<sup>th</sup> inst, aged 20, Sarah, daughter of **Mr Samuel Ackroyd**, Boatman, Rashcliffe.

## 53 April 19 1862

### Magistrates in Petty Sessions

MURDEROUS OUTRAGE AT A LOW BEERHOUSE John Conroy and Wm Conroy (in custody) were charged with unlawfully and maliciously assaulting **Henry Wood**, by inflicting upon him divers blows with a poker, with intent to do grievous bodily harm. Mr Leadbetter prosecuted; Mr Learoyd defended. The complainant (who appeared to be suffering from violent injuries about the head) is a boatman living at Mirfield, which place he left on Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> inst, with a load of coals for Messrs Taylor of the Colne Mills. The water having to be off the following day, the coals had to be delivered on the Sunday, and the work was completed about five o'clock. Complainant and his five mates then went to the Navigation Tavern, where they had two quarts of beer. They then went to a beerhouse called the Sweep's Arms, in Kirkgate, kept by Ned Wright, and between ten and eleven left there and went to a beerhouse in Castlegate, kept by the prisoner John Conroy. On entering, complainant was struck on the head with a poker by a man he could not swear to. The prisoners struck him on the back of the head and bruised him with their fists. Afterwards he was struck with the tongs across the head, but did not know by whom. In all that was done the two prisoners took an active part. He was at length rescued in a senseless state by his brother Samuel. Cross-examined : Was not very fresh when he entered the house, but was not sober; called for a quart of beer the first thing; a man then struck him over the head, but he did not know what for. There were six in his party, and there might altogether have been a dozen in the house. None of the party pulled Wm Conroy when asleep off the long settle. **Samuel Wood**, complainant's brother, said he was with his brother that evening. His brother entered about a minute before he did. On entering he (witness) heard a scuffle, and was struck on the cheek with a pair of tongs; the blow struck him silly. His brother was down when he got in. Cross-examined : Did not know who was using the poker or tongs. After recovering from the effects of the blow he pulled his brother towards him and went out. **Wm Schofield**, another of the complainant's party, was also struck on the back of the neck. Complainant was down when he got in. On getting him outside they took him to the Navigation Inn and sent for Mr Gardner, surgeon. **John Brook**, another of the party, was struck four violent blows with a pair of tongs; the blows pierced his hat and inflicted a wound on his head. He could not tell by whom he was struck. Mr Gardner, surgeon, said that when called in to attend the complainant he found him bleeding profusely. There were three extensive wounds on his head, penetrating to the bone, and several smaller bruises on the head and face. Complainant's life was placed in considerable jeopardy. He considered the injuries might have been caused by blunt instruments and some might have been caused by kicks. Police-sergeant Mellor went with witnesses to Conroy's house, when they identified the two prisoners. The two prisoners on being apprehended said, "We have committed the assault, and we wish we had killed him". They were both under the influence of drink. In cross-examination of Mellor, Mr Learoyd elicited that the prisoners also said in answer to the charge, the complainants commenced the row, and that they had ill-used Wm Conroy. At the conclusion of the evidence, the Clerk said it was evident the highly penal charge of assault with intent must be abandoned, as there was no proof that prisoners had used the weapons complained of. Mr Learoyd then addressed himself to the defence in relation to the charge of aggravated assault. He imputed to the complainant and his party the blame for having commenced the row by pulling Wm Conroy off the long settle as he was asleep, and by using

violent and provoking language; and he called several witnesses to prove that complainant and his party were the aggressors, and that John Conroy, the landlord, did the best he could to prevent the row by sending his wife for a policeman. John Conroy's wife was called as a witness for the prisoner William Conroy, and the evidence was allowed to be taken, notwithstanding that Mr Leadbetter raised a legal objection as to its admissibility, and staked his legal professional character on the correctness of the fact that in a similar case heard at the recent Pontefract sessions it was almost unanimously decided that such a witness could not be heard. Two of the witnesses spoke of the complainant and another of his party as being "mad drunk" before they left Ned Wright's. The magistrates decided to deal with the case summarily; and the Chairman, addressing the prisoners, pointed out to them their extreme culpability in being concerned in such a violent and disgraceful outrage. Although it was not proved they had used dangerous weapons, yet such weapons had been used, and it was proved that they had at any rate used their fists. The complainant was evidently badly ill-used; he was suffering from the effects of blows from some blunt instrument, and they were of such violence that the man might have been killed. The bench could not countenance any such conduct and they considered that, as the landlord of the house, the prisoner John Conroy was especially to blame in not using every endeavour to prevent such violence, instead of taking part in it. He ought at once to have called in the assistance of the police. "With regard to you, Wood (addressing the complainant), I wish (said Mr Brooke) I could look on your case differently to what I can. It is clear the prisoners were greatly insulted; otherwise they would not have behaved as they have done, and although I am sorry to see a man in such a state as you are, I cannot help saying that if men will keep such company they must take the consequences. A man of your age ought to set a better example to the rising generation. The magistrates don't say you are rightly served, but they do say that you have brought your suffering upon yourself. What can we do with young lads if men of your age act in this sort of manner? It is quite shameful". A fine of £4 each, including expenses, allowance to complainant, &c, was then inflicted, and the money being forthcoming the prisoners were discharged from custody.

**54 May 24 1862**

DEATHS On the 16<sup>th</sup> inst, aged 3 years, Henry, son of **Mr Saml Kitson**, boatman, Rashcliffe, Lockwood.

**55 August 16 1862**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

CHARGE OF STEALING HAY FROM A STACK **Joseph Milnes**, a boatman, was charged with stealing three stone weight of hay, the property of Thomas Robinson, a farmer at Deighton. On Saturday night, about twelve o'clock, prosecutor took a walk around his stack yard to see that all was safe. Having some suspicion, he put a handful of wet hay upon the top of a small stack, to enable him to say whether anything was taken from the bulk. On going to the stack on Sunday morning at six o'clock, he discovered that the wet hay had been disturbed, and as near as he could guess about three stone weight of hay had been taken away. He traced hay from the stack to a stable occupied by the prisoner, about 18 yards distant; and on searching the stable he found some hay which, as nearly as he could guess, corresponded in quality with that he had lost. He went in search of the prisoner and charged him with the robbery; and upon denying it, sent for Police-constable Wigglesworth, who afterwards examined the stack and the stable, and discovered that some of the hay in the stable was wet. The prisoner accounted for this by saying he had bought it of another boatman for 1s, and that it was wet when it was thrown off the other boat. The prosecutor complained that he had lost a good deal in this way. He recommended the magistrate, however, to deal leniently with the prisoner. Upon this recommendation, and then being some doubt upon the case, the magistrates gave the prisoner the benefit, and discharged him with a caution.

**56 August 23 1862**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

ASSAULTING A BOATMAN **Henry Bray** was charged with assaulting **Edward Swinburne** and **Edward Greenwood**, the latter the Superintendent of the London and North Western Canal.



had taken notice of Johnson's boat coming up before he commenced filling the lock, it would have been his duty to have let Johnson enter first; but it was said he did not see Johnson's boat until after the upper "shuttles" were drawn. Whether, however, the first boatman's conduct was right or wrong, it was contended that Johnson had no right to raise the lower "shuttles" and thereby waste the water. The defendant was fined £2 penalty and 10s expenses.

**61 June 13 1863**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

ASSAULT UPON A SERVANT OF THE LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY John Trainer was charged with assaulting **William Furniss**, a canal labourer in the employ of the London and North Western Railway Company. Mr Bantoft supported the case on behalf of the Company, stating that the simple object of the prosecution was to afford protection to the Company's servants. On the evening of Wednesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst, complainant saw two men, whom he knew to be in the employ of Mr Thos Armitage jun, builder, removing some of the stones taken out of the canal off the towing path near the Turnbridge. The defendant Trainer was one of the men. Complainant asked them by whose orders they were taking the stones, and one of them replied, "Our master's". Complainant warned them that they belonged to the Company, and one of the men hereupon put back the stones; but defendant shook his fist in complainant's face and wanted him to fight, and afterwards seized him by the beard – a flowing one. **Charles Bray**, a boatman, witnessed the assault. The defence was that complainant had called Trainer a "d-----d scamp and Irish vagabond". A fine of 2s 6d and 13s expenses was inflicted upon defendant; in default ten days imprisonment.

**62 June 27 1863**

SUICIDE OF A YOUNG WOMAN NEAR HALIFAX On Monday, a young woman drowned herself in the canal at Binns Bottom in the township of Southowram, Halifax. She was seen to jump into the water by two boatmen named **Samuel Schofield** and **Joseph Schofield**, who immediately ran to the spot with a boat hook and pulled her out, but not in time to save her life. Her name is not known. She appears to be seventeen or eighteen years of age, and a mill hand.

**63 October 31 1863**

BOATMAN FOUND DROWNED A boatman named **Thomas Hutchinson**, of Deighton, was taken out of the canal at Fieldhouse in a lifeless state about eleven o'clock on Thursday forenoon. The deceased was 55 years of age. He was last seen alive about five o'clock the previous evening by a fellow boatman named **Samuel Hudson**, at which time deceased was in his boat. From the presence of a wound on the back part of deceased's head, it is supposed that as he was sitting on the side of the boat he fell backwards and was drowned. The body was taken to the White Horse Inn, Bradley, to await an inquest.

**64 December 19 1863**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

AN ACCIDENTAL IMMERSION An eccentric old man called **George Shaw**, alias "Old Mush", a boatman, stepped from amongst the batch of drunkards when his name was called on, and created some amusement by relating his last night's experience. The old man said he was a native of Lockwood, but had spent many years in "going up and down". His last journey had been "down" - almost "amongst the dead men". Police-constable No 10 of the town police force, heard a man call for help when on duty at half past one in the morning near Folly-hall Bridge, and directed by the sounds, got to the canal side in time to see the defendant struggling out of the water. When on *terra firma* the old man explained how he got into his dangerous position. He admitted that he was the worse for liquor, and said that in attempting to cross a plank to get to his boat, his foot slipped and he fell "into the cut". He was taken to the lock-up on the charge of drunkenness. The magistrates asked him where he got his beer. His reply was, "The landlord gave it me for paying for". [Laughter] The magistrates : Will you promise to try to keep from drink in future? Defendant (scratching his head) : Yes, I'll do that, but that is whether I can or not. Prisoner was discharged with a caution.

## 65 July 2 1864

It is stated that there are employed in secular work on the Lord's Day in the United Kingdom the following:

Railway servants 100,000 ; boatmen on rivers and canals, with their families 100,000; Post Office Officials 20,000; Cabmen and persons connected with omnibuses in London alone 24,000; Publicans and beershop keepers 275,000.

## 66 November 19 1864

### Bradley

A WOMAN FOUND DROWNED Much excitement was caused in the quiet village of Bradley on Monday morning last by the discovery of the body of an aged woman in the river Calder in a state of nudity, and with marks of violence upon it. It appears that a man was going up the river side about half past seven o'clock in the morning when he observed something floating in the water. On getting nearer to it he ascertained that it was the body of a female, completely naked with the exception of a buff spotted handkerchief tied round her head. A boatman named **William Carter**, who was passing at the time, at once rendered assistance in rescuing the body, which was found to be in a state of partial decomposition. Police-constable Reed being sent for, the body was conveyed to the White Cross Inn, where an inquest was held on Tuesday afternoon last, before George Dyson Esq, coroner, and a respectable jury, of which Mr James Scholes was foreman. The following evidence was adduced :- Hannah, widow of John Eastwood, labourer, of Rishworth near Ripponden, stated that deceased was her mother. She was 68 years old, and up to the time of her death resided with her (witness). She last saw her alive about half past ten o'clock on the night of the 26<sup>th</sup> October, when deceased brought her (witness) youngest child to bed with her, and she told deceased to take the candle and go to bed. The following Monday deceased was missing from the house, and although search was made for her in every direction, no trace of her could be found. Deceased left all her clothes behind her with the exception of her chemise and the buff handkerchief. The chemise had been previously found about two miles from Rishworth, at a place called Thorpe. The deceased had not been subject to any illness, but at times of late had appeared weak in her mind and nervous. There was no suspicion that anyone had ill-used her. Mr Thomas Clough, surgeon of Sheepridge, deposed to having made a *post mortem* examination of the body on the previous evening. He believed deceased to be about 60 years of age. He found the scalp of the deceased about two thirds stripped off the skull. This might have been caused partly by the time the body had been in the water, and partly by being caught by thorns or briars, some of which adhered to the hair. There was a fracture on the right temple that radiated round past the posterior part of the right orbit to the base of the skull. There was also considerable tumefaction (blackness) of the eyes; the brain was contained in its proper membrane, but pulpy; all the other organs were in their natural and normal state. On opening the chest he found the lungs highly congested and highly injected, but very healthy. On opening the cavity of the chest he found the ribs on both sides near their angles fractured. On stripping the integuments there was considerable effusion of blood. His opinion was that the wounds on the skull and ribs had been caused before death, and were sufficient to cause death in no inconsiderable time after they were inflicted. **Wm Carter**, a boatman of Colne-bridge, deposed that, about half past seven o'clock on Monday morning last, he was just starting with his boat from Cooper Bridge when he found a man holding the deceased by the side of the river. He did not know the man. It was about 40 yards below the bridge. The body was just at the corner going into the lock. He helped the man to get her out. Deceased had no clothing on but a handkerchief on her head, by which the man held her to the side. He drew the body on to the bank, threw a small cover over her, and then proceeded with his boat. The body was afterwards removed to the inn. The Coroner then summed up shortly, pointing out the fact that the deceased had wandered from home, and suggesting that in all probability she had received the wounds spoken to by Mr Clough in falling before she got into the water. There was a total absence of all suspicion of foul play. The jury without hesitation returned a verdict that deceased was found drowned in the river Calder with marks of violence on her body, but how caused there is no evidence to prove.

**67 November 26 1854****Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

ALLEGED ROBBERY BY A BOATMAN **Abraham Stansfield**, remanded from Saturday for additional evidence, was charged with stealing three sovereigns, one half sovereign and two florins of the current coin of the realm, the property of **Joah Bray** of Brighouse. Mr J I Freeman defended. Prosecutor is a waterman, and on Tuesday night came up with his boat to Huddersfield with a load of sand for Mr Armitage of Turnbridge. On Wednesday he delivered the sand, and received £9 18s for it. After paying the allowance to the men who had been unloading the boat, he left in company with his nephew, Joah Bray, and went to the Quay Inn, in search of a lock filler. While there the prisoner came in, and they engaged him in that capacity. Prosecutor gave him 2d to get a pint of ale, and told him to come to the Turnbridge at half past three o'clock in the morning. About ten o'clock the Brays went aboard their vessel, and went to bed. About one o'clock the prisoner made his appearance in the cabin, and wanted to go to bed with them. They refused to allow him to do so, upon which he blew out the candle and said, "To h--- with you then". Prosecutor when he went to bed had in his trousers pocket £3 14s in the coin above mentioned, and in his waistcoat pocket he had a £5 note in a book. When he got up in the morning the money was missing, and the book had been taken out of the waistcoat pocket, but replaced in the locker with the £5 note in it. At a quarter to four the prisoner went again to the vessel, in company with William Burgess, and prosecutor then sent for a policeman. William Burgess deposed that he was a private watchman for Mr Richard Armitage of Turnbridge. He said he found the prisoner at the door leading from their yard at one o'clock on Thursday morning, and learned from him that he had been to the said boat, which was moored in the canal in the yard, and said that he was going back because he wanted something to drink; and that if he (witness) would go up to the Lion he would pay for a glass for him. They went accordingly, and prisoner paid with a 2s piece. He afterwards communicated with the prosecutor that he had been in the company of the prisoner, whom they called "Navy Jack". Prisoner afterwards went back again to the yard, and he (witness) accompanied him to the boat, when prosecutor charged him with taking the money, which he denied. Joah Bray, the nephew, corroborated prosecutor's statement. Police-constable Worship apprehended the prisoner on the charge. Prisoner said he had no money belonging to anyone. Only 6d in silver and 8 1/2d in copper were found upon him. Joseph Boocock (the additional witness) was present when the engagement was made between prosecutor and the prisoner, and saw prisoner at two o'clock on the following morning, when he promised that if he (witness) would get up and go with him he would pay for his lodgings. This being the whole of the evidence, the Bench were unanimous in immediately discharging the prisoner.

**68 December 3 1864****Mirfield**

REFUSING A CHANCE OF ESCAPE On Thursday at the West Riding Police Court, Dewsbury, **Thomas Wall**, boatman of Brighouse, was brought up on the charge of stealing a coil of rope, belonging to Mr Jesse Bowley, shopkeeper, Mirfield. The evidence went to show that on the 22<sup>nd</sup> ult the prisoner entered the prosecutor's shop on the premise of purchasing some herrings, and that when he had left, footsteps were heard on some steps leading to a place where some coils of rope had been stored. Mr Bowley looked out of a window on his premises and saw the prisoner steal a coil, throw it across his shoulder and make off with it. He followed him in the direction of the Calder, watched him fling the rope to a companion on board a boat moored in the river, then noticed the man fling it back, as if he did not want to have it. The prisoner was seen by Mr Bowley to pick up the coil and go away with it to an adjacent public house. He followed him, and having found the rope in the prisoner's possession, charged him with stealing it, and promised, if he would replace it, to look over the affair. This Walker flatly refused to do, and the prosecutor then went in search of a policeman, and having found one, gave the thief into custody. When the prisoner found that he was to be taken to the lock-up, he begged earnestly to be forgiven, but he was told he was too late. The prisoner remarked to the officer as he was being taken to the police station that he wished he could be forgiven, for he had been convicted of housebreaking on a former occasion. When before the

Bench he made no defence. He was committed for trial.

**69 December 17 1864**

**EXTENSIVE ROBBERIES BY THE HOUSEKEEPER OF A HALIFAX MANUFACTURER** A woman named Ann Haydon and a Wigan boatman named **Luke Parkinson** were charged at Halifax, on Saturday, with being concerned in some extensive robberies from the residence of Mr J Wilson Hadwin, silk manufacturer, Ripponden, Halifax. It appears that Haydon had been in the service of Mr Hadwin about two years. She left his service on 10<sup>th</sup> November last, ostensibly to be married to Parkinson. The arrival of the two large boxes at Wigan, which were taken possession of by Parkinson, led to some suspicion. The police were put on the alert, and eventually they were found to contain goods stolen from Mr Hadwin's. The female prisoner was traced to York Street, Manchester, where she was lodging, and there was found a large amount of stolen property belonging to her late master. The whole was seized and brought to Halifax. There was altogether nearly 1 cwt of goods, consisting of sugar, raisins, tea, cocoa, rice, pickles, preserves, currants, mustard, starch, bacon, hams, and a whole hamper of wine. She at first affirmed that her late mistress had made a present to her of the articles, but eventually she admitted that she had stolen some of them. She was sentenced to four months hard labour, but Parkinson was discharged.

**70 April 15 1865**

**A FAMILY DROWNED** On Sunday morning the bodies of **William Pendlebury**, a boatman, his wife and child, two years of age, were found in the Rochdale Canal at Gaythorn. It is supposed from the position of the bodies that the parents had lost their lives in attempting to rescue the child.

**71 July 8 1875**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

**WASTING THE CANAL WATER** **Robert Hoyle**, boatman, was charged with wasting the canal water. Defendant pleaded guilty, and the case was not fully gone into. Mr Battye stated that the offence was committed at Cooper Bridge, where the defendant had his boat in one of the locks of the canal. When the boat was in the pool, the defendant opened the lock, and run the water to waste, rendering himself liable to a penalty not exceeding £5. The mitigated fine of 5s and costs (in all 15s 6d) was inflicted.

**72 August 5 1865**

**SHOOTING CHILDREN AT LEEDS** On Saturday last, at the Leeds Town Hall, **Thomas Greenwood** was brought up on remand charged with firing a gun into a crowd of children. The prisoner is a boatman on the River Aire, and on Friday the 21<sup>st</sup> ult, being annoyed by several people throwing stones from the banks, he fired a gun at them. Five children were injured, one of them, Jane Simpson, so severely that she had to be taken to the Infirmary. The Mayor said that for boatmen to have resort to firearms for their defence was one of the surest way of aggravating the evil, and of leading to a more serious disturbance than had yet taken place. He would instruct the chief constable to place an extra watch on the river side, and warning would be sent to the workers in the mills by the river. The prisoner was then committed to take his trial at the ensuing assizes at Leeds, but was liberated on bail.

**73 August 12 1865**

**West Riding Summer Assizes**

**THE CASE OF SHOOTING AT CHILDREN IN LEEDS** **Thomas Greenwood**, 19, boatman, was charged with unlawfully discharging a loaded gun on the 21<sup>st</sup> July, and wounding Jane Simpson, Joseph Pickersgill and Edward McDermott. Mr S Thompson prosecuted; and Mr Shepherd defended the prisoner. Jane Simpson, on being examined, said that she lived in Cherry Tree Yard, and worked at Holdsworth's mill. On the day named, about one o'clock, witness was walking on the side of the river Aire, and when turning a corner the prisoner discharged a gun from the deck of a boat which was going up the river towards Leeds, and several shots struck her in various parts of her body. As will be remembered, from the facts of the case which appeared a short time since,

children on the side of the river have been in the habit of throwing stones at passing boats. On the day named, the prisoner had been attacked, and in order to frighten them away had taken up the gun which was lying near the chimney of the boat, and presented it three times, and on the last occasion fired it off with the results stated. The prisoner was found guilty, but without intent to do grievous bodily harm. Sentenced to three months imprisonment.

**74 September 9 1865**

**Saddleworth**

INQUEST On Saturday last, an inquest was held on view of the body of **Albert Parkinson**, at the Granby Arms, Uppermill, before George Dyson Esq, coroner, and a respectable jury, of whom Mr Edmund Travis was appointed the foreman. It appeared from the evidence that the deceased was the son of Elizabeth Parkinson of Hillhouse, Huddersfield, widow, and was fourteen years of age. On Friday the 1<sup>st</sup> inst, he was along with the boat *Fred*, which was going from Manchester to Huddersfield on the canal, with a cargo of logwood. When the boat entered No 20 or Hall's lock, deceased was clearing out the cabin, while the captain, **Abraham Hinchcliffe**, and the other boatman were opening the cloughs of the top lock. When the lock was nearly full, they saw the deceased on the off bank of the canal emptying the ashes pan. Shortly after they heard a scream, and ran to the stern of the boat, but could not find deceased, they noticed bubbles ascending in the water and concluded that he must have slipped off the side of the boat when returning to the cabin with the ashes pan. They immediately procured the boat hook and dragged the canal at the stern of the boat, but in consequence of the lock being full of water, the hook would not reach the bottom; they tied two boat hooks together and dragged a second time, and soon caught the body, which was removed to Mrs Kershaw's, stripped, and rubbed with hot flannels and warm water, and everything was done that they considered necessary to restore animation, but all their efforts proved unavailing. Verdict : Accidentally drowned in No 20 or Hall's lock, in the Ashton and Huddersfield Canal. The jury kindly entered into a subscription for Mrs Parkinson, and collected her the sum of one pound, for which she expressed her thanks.

**75 February 3 1866**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

ALLEGED FELONY **James Mellor**, a boatman, was brought up charged with stealing two blankets and a quilt, value 5s, the property of **Joah Bray** of Brighouse. The prosecutor is a waterman, and on Monday brought his boat to Turnbridge, where the cargo was discharged. In the evening he went home to Brighouse, leaving the boat in charge of the prisoner and a boy. On Tuesday afternoon the prisoner left the boat, telling the boy, **Walter Waterhouse**, he should not be back till the next morning. In the afternoon the boy fastened down the cabin hatch with a cross bar and lock which, it was stated, could only be opened by a person acquainted with it. On Wednesday morning the hatch was found open, and the articles were missed. On Saturday the prisoner was apprehended at Cooper Bridge, and charged with the theft, which he denied, alleging that the boy had "perhaps taken them". John Pickering, assistant to Mr James Hadfield of Castlegate, proved receiving the articles in pledge on Tuesday evening from a man resembling the prisoner, but he could not positively swear that the prisoner was the person. The prisoner was discharged.

**76 March 17 1866**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

FELONIOUS ASSAULT **John Brierley**, canal boat owner of Slaithwaite, was brought up charged with feloniously assaulting **Frances Westwood** on the night of the 8<sup>th</sup> inst. Mr J I Freeman defended. The prosecutrix, a thin, spare woman, appeared with a dreadfully disfigured face, having two black eyes and a swollen and bruised face. She stated that she lived with a boatman named **John Hudson**, who was in the employ of the prisoner. On the previous Thursday night Hudson was away with his boat, and she retired early to bed in her cellar dwelling at Nab Lane, Slaithwaite. About one o'clock in the morning she was awoken by a violent knocking at the door. Enquiring, "Who's there?" a voice replied, which she knew to be "Joss o'Briggs", "It's me, open the door, I've a bottle of rum and want to come in". She refused to comply, and requested him to go home. He replied, "Jack's here (meaning Hudson), and if you do not open the door, I'll come in at the

window". She then dressed herself, struck a light, and opened the door. Immediately "Joss" entered the house, followed by the prisoner and a third man whom she did not know. They all sat down and drank some rum; and the third man, stranger to prosecutrix, then left the house. The prisoner sent "Braggs" for some more rum, giving him a shilling to pay for it. As soon as Joss left the house prisoner seized her, and made improper overtures to her, which she resisted. At this moment "Joss o'Briggs" returned and stated that he could get no more rum. The prisoner sent him to another place and, again left alone with prosecutrix, he renewed his felonious attack, dragged her from the bed to the floor, beat her unmercifully over the face, and swore he would "kill her if she did not give in". When leaving the house, he threw a knife at her. Shortly afterwards the man "Joss" returned and found the woman laid on the floor bleeding. At half past five o'clock she met Police-constable Holmes, and related to him what the prisoner had done. After hearing the prosecutrix's statement, and having the same morning met the prisoner and two other men going in the direction of prosecutrix's house with a bottle of rum, the officer accompanied her to prisoner's house, and charged him with the assault. The prisoner denied having either seen the woman or been at her house. The officer subsequently accompanied prosecutrix to Huddersfield, and having received a warrant apprehended the prisoner at the Globe Inn, Slaithwaite. He again declared that he had neither seen nor touched prosecutrix. Mr J Johnson, physician (at present with Mr Clarke, surgeon, Huddersfield) deposed to having attended prosecutrix at the county police office the previous day, and found her suffering from black eyes, contused face, head, neck, and lacerated thighs. Mr J I Freeman, in cross-examination, endeavoured to show that prosecutrix was a woman of loose character, unworthy of belief, and wished the magistrates to deal summarily with the case. This the Bench refused to do, and Mr Freeman reserved his defence for another tribunal. The prisoner was committed for trial at the assizes, bail being refused.

**77 March 24 1866**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

**A DANGEROUS BED** **Arnold Schofield, Geo Richards**, boatmen, and John Martin, a tramp, were brought up for sleeping at the Aspley Lime Kilns. The policeman on the beat found them at half past three o'clock that morning, asleep within a yard of the fire in the lime pits. The two former, giving a "good account" of themselves, were discharged, and Martin was sent to prison for seven days.

**78 June 16 1866**

**MURDEROUS ATTACK AND ROBBERY NEAR BRADFORD** On Monday at the West Riding Court at Bradford, **Abraham Varley**, master of the boat *Ada*, running on the Liverpool and Leeds Canal, and another young man named **Isaac Furrbeck**, boatman, were charged with having, at an early hour on Saturday morning, made a murderous attack upon Jonathan Sugden, a weaver, residing at Windhill near Bradford, and also with stealing a Paisley shawl from Mrs Sugden. Between one and two o'clock on Saturday morning the prosecutor, who was slightly the worse for liquor, was smoking in front of his own door, when his son, a young man, came up, hotly pursued by the prisoners, in the direction of his father's house. As the prisoners ran across a bridge, the prosecutor asked what was the matter and the prisoners, without giving a reply, immediately knocked him down, and made a violent attack upon him, kicking him upon the head and face till the blood flowed profusely therefrom. Alarmed by her husband's cries, Mrs Sugden, who had a shawl on her head, went to his assistance, when the prisoner Varley took the shawl from her head and went off with it to his boat. The prisoners made a second attack upon the prosecutor, and the prisoner Furrbeck on this occasion produced a large iron bar, which was found to be marked with blood, though there was no direct evidence of its having been used in the murderous onslaught. The prisoners were committed for trial at the next assizes at Leeds.

**79 June 23 1866**

**Crosland Moor**

**SUICIDE THROUGH DRINK** On Tuesday afternoon an inquest was held at the house of Mr James Taylor, the Junction Inn, Crosland Moor Bottom, before Mr J R Ingram, deputy coroner,

touching the death of **John Hirst**, a boatman, who committed suicide by hanging himself the previous Sunday afternoon. From the evidence of his widow, Salomi Hirst, it seems deceased had been a habitual drinker and, to use her own expression, he had “drank all his life”. For the last fortnight he had drank heavier than usual. On Saturday night he went home about six o'clock, in a half intoxicated state, after having attempted to borrow 1s 6d of his son, Thomas Hirst, a cloth finisher, who lived near him, under pretence of purchasing a coat from an Irishman at the Britannia beerhouse. Deceased remained in the house the whole of the evening, and had no more beer. About ten o'clock he went to bed, in his usual cheerful state when in drink. At half past ten on Sunday morning deceased was left in bed, his wife going to church, deceased refusing anything to eat. On returning from church at noon, deceased was still in bed, and refused his dinner. At half past two o'clock his wife left home again and went to church, first asking her husband if she should “leave the key or the door open?” He replied cheerfully, “No; take it with you”. On her return from church at twenty minutes past four she found him suspended by a child's skipping rope from a beam behind the front door. Immediately on discovering him she ran out and gave an alarm, when her son Thomas went to her assistance and cut the body down, but life was then extinct. His feet were resting flat on the ground, there being no doubt he had committed the rash act immediately his wife had left the house to attend divine service, as the limbs were quite stiff. The jury, after a short consultation, returned a verdict to the effect “That deceased hung himself, but there was not sufficient evidence to show the state of his mind when he committed the act”.

**80 August 11 1866**

**Bradley**

A BOATMAN'S SON DROWNED On Monday an inquest was held at the house of Mr Joshua Berry, the White Horse Inn, before Mr J R Ingram, deputy coroner, touching the death of **Henry Lodge**, a boy ten years of age, who was drowned in the Huddersfield Canal on Sunday. The boy's father, who is a boatman residing at Mirfield, was on Sunday, with the deceased and an elder son, hauling his empty boat down the canal from Huddersfield to Mirfield. The deceased went forward along the canal bank to draw the “clowes” or shuttles of the lock gates, in order to fill the lock to float the boat into it. When drawing the “clowes” of Miles Lock – about 300 yards below Cinderfield Dyke – the winch with which the deceased was raising the shuttle slipped off the pin, and deceased fell into the canal. The force of water drew the lad through the “clow” into the lock, and considerable time elapsed before the body could be recovered by the father and his elder son, both of whom saw deceased fall into the canal. When the boy was taken out of the water, life was extinct. Police-constable Wrigglesworth was communicated with, and the body was removed to the above inn to await the inquest. The jury returned a verdict of “Accidentally drowned”.

**81 August 11 1866**

**Yorkshire Summer Assizes**

ROBBERY FROM THE PERSON Thomas Baldwin, 29, and William Baldwin, 19, were indicted for feloniously assaulting **John Muff**, and stealing from his person a neckerchief, a purse and £2 7s, his property, on Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> day of July last. Mr Middleton appeared for the prosecution. The prosecutor is a boatman living at Bradford, and after having finished unloading his boat on the day in question he was passing along Bowman Lane, between four and five in the afternoon, when the two prisoners came up behind him, threw him down, and rifled his pockets of the purse and money. The defence set up was that the robbery was committed by another man. Against Thomas Baldwin there was a previous conviction. Both prisoners were found guilty. Thomas Baldwin seven years penal servitude; William Baldwin to be imprisoned with hard labour for 12 calendar months.

**82 October 20 1866**

DEATHS On the 12<sup>th</sup> inst, aged 86, Mary, relict of the late **Mr Abraham Bray**, boatman, Bradley.

**83 November 24 1866**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

CANAL OFFENCE **Charles Dyson**, a boy twelve years of age, was charged with having drawn

the upper clowes of the 5<sup>th</sup> lock before closing the lower clowes. Mr John Freeman, of the firm of Messrs Brook, Freeman and Batley, appeared on behalf of the railway company. The penalty for the offence is £5. A witness named **Joseph Milnes**, a boatman, said he was going out at the bottom end of the lock on the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst, and saw the defendant open the clowes of the top gates before the lower gates were closed, thus causing a waste of water. There were about half a score persons at the side of the lock, but he distinctly saw the defendant turn the handle of the winch. The daughter of Milnes, who was in the boat at the time, corroborated the statement. The defendant denied the offence, alleging that although he put the handle on, someone else turned it. A fine of 10s and expenses, 12s 6d, was inflicted, or in default fourteen days in prison.

#### **84 November 24 1866**

#### **Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

ASSAULTING A BOATMAN Charles Cockroft, Joe Boothroyd, James Brook, Josh Lodge, James Binns, Josh Booth, Josh Haigh and Thos Brook were charged with assaulting **Joseph Milnes**, a boatman, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst. The complainant stated that, while proceeding down the Huddersfield Canal with his boat, the whole of the defendants jumped on board his boat and annoyed him. He ordered them off. At first they refused, but ultimately they left the boat. On getting to the canal bank they pelted him with stones and sods, several of which struck him. The lads admitted being on the boat, but denied throwing the stones. Cockroft, who appeared to be the ringleader in the mischief, was fined 5s and costs, the others being dismissed on payment of expenses only.

#### **85 January 12 1867**

#### **Saddleworth**

STEALING FOWLS Four boatmen named **Thomas Hyde, William Brown, John Hudson** and **William Hyde**, were charged with having on Monday night, the 7<sup>th</sup> inst, feloniously stolen a game cock and two game hens from the shippon of Mr James Buckley of Frenches Wharf, beerseller and farmer. It appeared that on the night in question the prisoners were working a narrow boat belonging to John Webb of Wakefield, from Manchester to that town, and when the boat was near to Frenches Wharf on the Ashton and Huddersfield Canal, the boat was stopped near the Wharf, and the prisoner Brown was seen to leave it with a sack and go towards Mr Buckley's shippon; he returned to the boat in about a quarter of an hour with something in the sack. Mr Buckley saw the boat stopping near to his Wharf, and thought the parties in charge of it were going to tie it up there for the night, and put their horse in his stable. Shortly after seeing the boat Mr Buckley had occasion to go to his shippon, which adjoins the stable by the side of the Wharf, and then found some horse gears had been knocked down, and on taking them up and placing them in a more secure place, he noticed a quantity of feathers on the shippon floor. He then examined his poultry, and discovered that a game cock and two game hens were missing. He suspected the party with Webb's boat, and sent information of his suspicion to the Police office at Wool Road. Police-constable Balderstone went in search of the boat, and found it at Wool Road Wharf. The prisoner Hudson was alone in the cabin, he being ill from injuries received at Manchester a few days before. A large pan was on the cabin fire, and in the pan was a fine fowl boiling, which resembled Mr Buckley's game cock. Hudson was taken into custody, and charged with being concerned in stealing Mr Buckley's fowls. He replied that he had been very ill for some days, and had not left the boat between Manchester and Wool Road. Thomas Hyde was next apprehended, and he said that the prisoner Brown left the boat with a sack near to Frenches Wharf, and returned with something in it. Brown said he knew nothing about the fowls. His shoes were marked with blood, and his white slop was also stained with recent blood marks. His shoes were taken off and compared with foot prints leading from the canal side to Mr Buckley's shippon and back again to the side of the canal, and the impression left by the foot prints exactly corresponded with the prisoner's shoes. The prisoner Thomas Hyde, who was captain of the boat, went to Huddersfield by the seven pm train from Saddleworth with a bundle, and afterwards sold the hens to Mrs Postle, Bridge-end, Moldgreen. The prisoners Hudson and William Hyde were discharged. Thomas Hyde and William Brown, who pleaded guilty, were sentenced to two calendar months imprisonment.

**86 April 20 1867**

**Slaithwaite**

FATAL RAILWAY ACCIDENT TO A SLAITHWAITE MAN Yesterday week a lengthened enquiry took place at the Huddersfield Infirmary before Mr George Dyson, coroner, touching the death of **John Hayton**, a boatman of Slaithwaite in the employ of Messrs Ingham, coal proprietors, Thornhill. It seems that the deceased was engaged on the Tuesday previous, about eight o'clock am, in assisting to unload a truck of timber at the Thornhill Lees Station of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, on to waggons belonging to his employers. While thus engaged, a luggage train arrived on the down line and stopped at the station to shunt some waggons into the first siding. During the time of shunting, the deceased and those engaged with him were obliged to desist from work and he, with Mr Richard Brook, foreman of the carpenters employed by Messrs Ingham, went towards the siding, the deceased being on the left hand side of the rails and Brook on the right. A waggon had been shunted by the engine of the arrived train on to the siding, but in order to get it into the warehouse for unloading, it was necessary for it to be removed higher up the rails in order to catch the slips leading to the warehouse. This had to be done with a horse, in charge of Wm Earnest Hartley. At this time the deceased was leaning against the buffer of a stationary truck a short distance from the points of the slip, the shunting waggon being only three or four yards from him. The evidence of George Sharp, porter at the station, the horse driver Hartley and Benjamin Walker, the breaksman of the luggage train, went to prove that before the waggon was moved by the horse, notice was given by Hartley to "Look out" in a voice loud enough to be heard by deceased had he been paying attention to what was going forward, but it appeared that his attention was taken up in watching the engine of the goods train. The driver and breaksman being on the opposite side of the rails could not see where the deceased was standing. Immediately on the notice "look out" being given, the waggon began to move up the siding, and the deceased was instantly caught between the buffers of that and the stationary truck, receiving such injuries as necessitated his immediate removal to the Huddersfield Infirmary, where he expired on Monday from a rupture of the bladder and other internal injuries. In considering the verdict, two of the jury (Messrs J Haigh and J Stott) contended there had not been sufficient notice or caution given by the company's servants to enable the deceased to get out of danger, and considered the servants deserving of censure for their conduct, believing that a man being only three yards from a moving waggon, the bare calling out by the driver "look out" and starting the waggon instantly, was not a sufficient warning to any person in a dangerous position. Mr Clement Wood of Slaithwaite, brother-in-law of the deceased, with the permission of the coroner, enunciated similar views, and gave an instance occurring the previous day at the same station, when trucks were shunted and moved on the same siding where deceased met his death without the least warning whatever being given by the servants in charge. After a long consultation the jury agreed to a verdict of "Accidental death" to which they added, "and the jurors further say, that when shunting waggons sufficient notice is not given by railway servants previous to removing waggons". The horse driver and breaksman were then called into the room, informed of the verdict, and cautioned as to their conduct, and particularly recommended to allow more time after giving notice before removing waggons.

**87 April 27 1867**

DEATHS On the 20<sup>th</sup> inst, aged 42, **Mr James Morton**, boatman.

**88 July 27 1867**

**Slaithwaite**

DEATH OF AN OLD BOATMAN On Wednesday afternoon, the remains of **James Sykes**, or as he was more familiarly called, old "Jim o'Bens", 75 years of age, were interred in Slaithwaite churchyard. The deceased was the oldest boatman on the canal, having been employed by the firm of Messrs Varley to ply between Slaithwaite and Wakefield for more than forty two years. His character during the whole of that lengthened period had been that of a faithful and trustworthy servant. The deceased, among his compeers, had obtained the appellation of the "Slaithwaite Mail" from his determination to proceed in his boat, fearless of all obstacles. Some few weeks since, the deceased had the misfortune to be thrown into the canal by the sudden starting of the hauling horse.

Although rescued, the old man never recovered the shock, and expired on Sunday.

**89 August 10 1867**

**Rastrick**

DEATH FROM DIVING FOR A WAGER An inquest was held by Mr Ingram, deputy coroner, at the Railway Hotel, Rastrick, on Thursday, on the body of William Holdsworth, better known as "William Gooder", aged 33, cart driver in the employ of Messrs Crossley, dyers, Brighouse, who was drowned in the river Calder on Sunday afternoon. On that day, deceased left his house in Rastrick at half past one in the afternoon, and proceeded to the Anchor Pit beerhouse, Bradley Wood, at which place he remained till three o'clock, and at half past four made a wager with John Holmes to dive him in the river for half a gallon of beer, not being sober at the time. On plunging into the water, he floundered about for five minutes and then sank to the bottom. He was ultimately got out by a boatman named **Timothy Bentley**, who was in a boat near the spot. Verdict : "Accidentally drowned while diving for a wager". Deceased, along with Holmes and others, had been drinking at the beerhouse kept by Mrs Sykes.

**90 October 12 1867**

**Saddleworth**

DROWNED IN THE CANAL On Monday an inquest was held at the Marquis of Granby Arms, Uppermill, before John R Ingram Esq, deputy coroner, on view of the body of John Slater, who was found drowned in the Huddersfield Canal, near to Wadelock, on Saturday morning last. It appeared from the evidence that the deceased called at the house of John Henry Marsden at Uppermill, about half past nine o'clock on Friday night, to enquire if his wife was there, and being told that she was not he left, as was supposed, to return to Oldham, where he had been residing for several months. He was not seen alive after leaving Mr Marsden's house. It also appeared that the deceased had recently drawn a legacy, and had been drinking for several weeks, and his general conduct was that of a person temporarily deranged by drink. On Saturday morning, a boatman named **Marshall** found a cap, a pair of stockings and boots on the canal towing path, about 60 yards from where the body was taken out of the water. These articles were identified as belonging to the deceased. Several witnesses were examined whose evidence tended to show the intemperate habits of deceased, and that at times he had been in a low desponding state of mind. The jury returned a verdict that deceased drowned himself in the Huddersfield canal, being at the time of unsound mind. The deceased was 43 years of age, and was formerly a carter in Uppermill.

**91 October 26 1867**

**Brighouse**

SELLING AND RECEIVING A SACK OF HORSE CORN At the West Riding Court, Halifax, George Denton, carter in the employment of Messrs Sugden and Son, was charged with stealing a sack containing horse corn, their property; and Wm Aspinall, landlord of the Victoria beerhouse, Brighouse, with feloniously receiving the same knowing it to have been stolen. The offence took place on Friday last, and it appeared that on that day Henry Clough, horse-keeper for the prosecutors, delivered two sacks of horse corn to the prisoner Denton, and in the evening Denton was taking the sacks to the lower stables at the mill. On his way, he would have to pass the beerhouse of Aspinall. On Saturday morning, Clough had had occasion to go to the stable, and seeing there was not the quantity of corn which there ought to be, he made enquiry, and some of the drivers said the prisoner Denton, instead of bringing two sacks, only brought one into the stable. Clough then told the prosecutors of the circumstance, and they gave information to the police, who shortly afterwards apprehended the prisoner, when Denton confessed to having disposed of it to Aspinall, saying that if they would give him time he would fetch it back from Aspinall, to whom he had sold it, but had not been paid for it. **Susannah Hall**, wife of **William Hall**, a boatman, told the police that Aspinall had brought the sack of corn to her house, where it was found. It further appeared that Aspinall had sold the corn to Hall for 5s. The prisoners were committed for trial. Mr Chambers of Brighouse appeared in support of the charge, and Mr A C Foster of Halifax for the prisoner Aspinall.

**92 January 18 1868**

**A WOMAN ACCIDENTALLY DROWNED AT WAKEFIELD** On Monday evening, Mr T Taylor, coroner, held an inquest at Wakefield, on view of the body of **Mary Ryecroft**. The deceased was 30 years old, and the wife of Edward Ryecroft, a canal boatman. She lived with her husband on board the boat, and on Saturday evening she was marketing. When she returned to the boat her husband was away, and from the evidence that was given, it appeared that she fell into the river close to where the boat was, adjoining Thornes Lane, Wakefield. Her cries as she fell, and those of a little child who was with her, were heard, and two boatmen who were near immediately pushed off from their boat to attempt to rescue her. They were not successful, however, and the body was not found until Sunday morning. The verdict was that she had been accidentally drowned.

**93 March 14 1868**

**MISCELLANEOUS NEWS** The child, 18 months old, whose father, a boatman on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, named **William Barrow**, a few weeks ago poured the boiling contents of a kettle upon it and its mother, died on Sunday from congestion of the lungs. At the inquest on Tuesday, the surgeon who had made a *post mortem* examination expressed his belief that the scalding had caused the congestion, but as there had existed disease of the lungs for some months, he was unable to swear positively that such was the fact. An open verdict was therefore returned, though one of the jury for a long time fought for Barrow's committal for wilful murder.

**94 April 18 1868**

**Bradley**

**MIDNIGHT AFFRAY** At the Court House, Huddersfield, on Tuesday, Harding Daniels, pointsman, **Richard Hebblethwaite**, boatman, John Ibberson, miner, Bradley, were charged with assaulting James Beaumont, mechanic, Hightown; Benjamin Beaumont, mechanic, Hightown; William B Watmough, maltster, Armley and Edward Woodcock, machinist, Hightown. Mr N Learoyd appeared for the complainants, and Mr J I Freeman on behalf of each of the defendants. Mr Learoyd stated that his clients complained of an assault committed upon them by the three defendants, the facts of the case being these :- The complainants came to Huddersfield from Liversedge on Saturday night last. They were intending to return by the last train but, being just too late for the train, were left behind. They endeavoured to get a cab to take them to Liversedge, but in vain, and therefore set off to walk. When they had got as far as Bradley, not far from the Three Nuns, after twelve o'clock at night, the defendants rushed out of a house and, without a word having been said to them, attacked the complainants. The first man seized by the defendants, who were accompanied by two others, was Watmough, and he was struck and violently kicked in the head, face and other parts. Having rendered Watmough unable to defend himself, they threw him over a high wall, and he had a fall of seven feet. The defendants and their companions then assailed the other complainants, and afterwards rushed back into the house from which they had come, leaving their caps behind. The complainants went forward to the Three Nuns, but returned to the house into which the defendants had retreated. After they had been apprehended the explanation they gave of their conduct was that they had been drinking, had taken some whiskey home with them, and had drunk until they did not know what they were doing. Watmough gave his version of what occurred. They were walking arm in arm home when the defendants ran up to them, knocked him down and kicked him until he was stunned, about the head and face and on various parts of the body. They then threw him over a wall, three feet or four feet high, and with a drop at the other side of six feet. He recognised Daniels as one of the men who had assaulted him, but he could not identify the others, for he was stunned. In cross-examination Watmough said he and the other complainants only went to the Argyle singing room in Huddersfield, and afterwards to Simpson's Temperance Hotel, Westgate. He had only partaken of one glass of sherry, and was quite sober. James Beaumont, another complainant, said he was knocked down and kicked on the head twice. He could swear that the defendants were three of the men by whom they were attacked. They picked three caps up in the road, and the defendants took to them. When the policeman went to the house, the defendants alleged that they (the complainants) had kicked at the door, but they had kicked no

doors at all. After witness had been struck and knocked down, he defended himself. Woodcock said Daniels was the man who first struck him. Daniels got hold of his legs, pulled a portion of his whiskers off, and he (complainant) "brayed" his face until he left loose. A stone struck him on the breast. He was sure the defendants were three of the men who attacked them. Cross-examined : After they struck me, I went into it right and left. Mr Freeman : Perhaps you blackened this man's (Daniels's) eye? Complainant : Undoubtedly. Mr Freeman : And the other too (Ibberson)? Complainant : Perhaps I did. Mr Freeman : You are a formidable man. The complainant said very likely he was, but he struck back in self defence. Mr Armitage (to Mr Freeman) : You would have done so yourself? Mr Freeman : Quite so. Benjamin Beaumont deposed that Daniels struck him and knocked him down, and Hebblethwaite kicked him on the hand. He was sure all three defendants took part in the assault. In cross-examination, he said Ibberson did nothing to him, but he saw him running about. Police-constable Balfour said he went to the house of Daniels and charged the defendants with having committed the assault. The defendants said the complainants had been kicking at the door, and they pitched into them. The complainants said they had not kicked at the door. The caps were given to him by one of the complainants, and they belonged to the defendants. Both parties were quite sober. In defence, Mr Freeman said the explanation he was instructed to give of the affair was that the complainants kicked at Daniels's house door. The defendants followed, a general fight ensued, and the complainants were worsted. The Bench considered the assault proved, and fined the defendants as follows :- Daniels 10s; Hebblethwaite 5s; and Ibberson 2s 6d, and costs, which Mr Armitage stated amounted to £1 7s 8d in each case, or in default one months imprisonment.

#### **95 April 18 1868**

**A DRUNKEN MAN DROWNED** An inquest was held before G Dyson Esq, coroner, at the Waggon and Horses Inn, Leeds Road, kept by Mrs E Mallinson, touching the death of **John Kilner**, 41 years of age. The deceased had been in the habit of lodging in the canal barges, and obtained a livelihood by assisting boatmen; and he does not appear to have been a temperate man. He was last seen leaving the Wharf Inn, Aspley, in a state of intoxication, between 11 and 12 o'clock on the night of the 4<sup>th</sup> inst, and nothing further was heard of his fate until the body was discovered by Wm Normington of Deighton, floating in the water near Red Doors Lock, Leeds Road, about two miles from the place where the man was last seen alive. Normington found the body in the water at half past one o'clock at noon, on the 14<sup>th</sup> inst, and gave information to the police, and assisted in taking the body out of the water. There were no marks of violence on the person; and the coroner, in addressing the jury, said there was little doubt but that the man had fallen into the canal by mistake. Police-constable Wrigglesworth said he had been told the eyesight of the deceased was impaired. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

#### **96 June 13 1868**

#### **Moldgreen**

**THEFT BY A CLOTH FINISHER** At the Court House, Huddersfield, Ben Hanson, a young man, a cloth finisher of Birkby, was charged with stealing 2s 11d, the money of **David Richardson**, boatman of Kilner Bank, Dalton. The prosecutor stated that on the 16<sup>th</sup> May he gave the prisoner 3s 6d to buy some horse corn at the shop of Mr Matthewman. The prisoner brought back 7d, saying that was change out of the 3s 6d; and brought the horse corn. On Thursday last he took out a warrant against him. Mrs Matthewman, wife of a provision dealer at Aspley, said on the 16<sup>th</sup> May the prisoner came to their shop, asked her for one and a half stone of corn, and said she must give him a note, as his master had not come down. Knowing him to be in the employ of Richardson, she gave him a note for 1s 11d; and, although she asked him for the money afterwards, he never brought it. Inspector White stated that on Friday last he received a warrant, and apprehended the prisoner at two o'clock that morning asleep in a privy at Birkby. When the warrant was read, the prisoner said, "I think it is not quite so much". The prisoner, who alleged that he was only entrusted with 2s 6d, was sentenced to two months imprisonment, having been previously convicted.

**97 June 27 1868**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

AN INFURIATED DRUNKARD IMMERSSED IN THE CANAL **Thomas Rochester**, boatman of Leeds, was brought up charged with being drunk. It appears that on Tuesday the defendant imbibed too freely of intoxicating liquors and began to fight with one of his mates. The keeper (**Charles Shaw**) of the canal lock at Field House, near Mr Brooke's works, interposed, and was assaulted by the defendant who, about nine o'clock, ran down to the canal side, and either jumped or fell into the water, but was rescued. Police-constable Balfour, of the county force, was sent for, and on arriving at the canal bank, three men were holding the defendant near the locks to prevent him from being immersed a second time. The defendant, who was locked up, now pleaded guilty to being drunk, and was fined 5s and costs.

**98 July 11 1868**

**Brighouse**

ATTEMPT TO COMMIT SUICIDE About five o'clock on Sunday afternoon, a number of children who were playing near the Ganny lock of the canal heard a splash in the water, and on looking round saw a man struggling in the water. An alarm was given, and a boatman named **Wm Smith**, with a boat hook, proceeded to rescue the man who, however, resisted the humane endeavours of Smith to save him. With considerable difficulty Smith got the man to the bank, and then discovered his billycock hat, tobacco, pipe and other articles under the hedge. Smith tried to persuade the poor fellow to go home, but he positively refused to yield, and expressed his determination, as soon as he was released, to jump into the water again. A policeman was sent for, and the man was locked up. His name is John Finn, tailor, of Bradford. He had been to Huddersfield on Saturday, and was on his return home. While in the lock-up his conduct was very strange. On Monday he was placed before the West Riding Magistrates at Halifax. It was evident that he was labouring under a species of insanity, induced by religious study. His wife, who had been sent for from Bradford, informed the Bench that he had been low in his mind for a considerable time, and she could not tell what to do with him. After a brief consultation, the magistrates committed him to the Union Workhouse with instructions for his safe custody.

**99 August 15 1868**

**Brighouse**

ROAD OBSTRUCTIONS At the Halifax Police Court on Saturday, **Samuel Ledger** jun, boatman, and **Jabez Marsden**, who did not appear, were charged with wilfully obstructing the free passage of the causeway in Briggate, Brighouse. There had been much complaint of such conduct, and the defendants had refused to "move on" when requested by the police. The offence took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> inst. Defendants had each 11s to pay.

**100 October 3 1868**

**Marsden**

OPENING OF THE CANAL The canal of the London and North Western Railway Company, after being closed from want of water nine weeks and six days, was reopened on Monday, much to the satisfaction of the boatmen and others in Marsden, and the traffic has since been uninterrupted.

**101 December 12 1868**

**Marsden**

THEFT FROM A PUBLIC HOUSE BY A MINER John Ryan, a miner, was charged at the Huddersfield Police Court on Tuesday with stealing a pair of woollen cord trousers, the property of Henry Sykes, landlord of the Junction Hotel, Tunnel Mouth. It appeared that, on Friday morning, 4<sup>th</sup> December, about nine o'clock, four men, of whom the prisoner was one, called at Sykes house, and he supplied them with a quantity of rum. Three of them said they had come from Scotland, and he gave them some bread and cheese. Margaret Harburn, domestic servant at the hotel, saw the prisoner sitting in the kitchen at a table, and the trousers hanging on a rail above him. In about five minutes afterwards, she again went into the kitchen and missed the trousers. The prisoner had left the house, but no other person. About half past twelve o'clock on the same day, **John Ramsden**, boatman, saw the prisoner with the trousers in his inside jacket pocket near the Swan Inn. Police-constable Bradley took the prisoner into custody, and charged him with the theft. The prisoner

made no reply. Two pawn tickets were found in his possession. The trousers could not be discovered. Mr Superintendent Heaton stated that the trousers might be found in a few days, and requested the bench to commit the prisoner for trial. The Bench said they would remand him for a few days, if the police believed they could find the trousers. It was a strong case of suspicion, but the Bench were of opinion that, if the prisoner was committed for trial, the case would break down. The accused was then discharged.

**102 January 30 1869**

DEATHS On the 22<sup>nd</sup> inst, aged 78, **Mr John Flath**, boatman, Bradley.

**103 January 30 1869**

**Brighouse**

DROWNED IN THE CANAL On Wednesday noon, the body of **Samuel Drake**, a boatman of Brighouse, aged 26 years, was taken out of the canal near the Black Swan Inn. It seems the deceased, with other boatmen and labourers, had indulged very freely in drink on the previous night, and had gone on board a boat to sleep. Not appearing on Wednesday morning, search was made for him, but he could not be heard of. His brother and some other men then dragged the canal, and at one o'clock recovered his lifeless body. From the position in which he was found, it is supposed that he accidentally fell into the water during the night. An inquest was held yesterday at the Black Swan Inn, before Mr G Dyson, when a verdict in accordance with the facts was returned.

**104 March 13 1869**

**Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

AN OLD WOMAN IMMERSSED IN THE CANAL – JUMPING AFTER A SHADOW Mary Kelley, an old woman who resides in Castlegate, was charged with attempting to commit suicide. From a report made by the police, it seems that at 11.30 pm on the 6<sup>th</sup> inst, a boy heard someone plunge in the canal basin at Aspley, and gave an alarm. Two men named **James Bailey**, boatman of Manchester and Wm Fearnley, cloth finisher, Back Union Street, went to the place and found Mary Kelley in the water. They rescued the old woman; and Police-constable H Learoyd brought her to the office. She then stated that she had been very much troubled about her son, and thought she would drown herself. Dry clothes were brought by her sister, and eventually the prisoner, who was under the influence of drink, was locked up. Mr Withers stated that the woman was not quite right in her mind, and that it was, he believed, the second time she had attempted to commit suicide. The son had promised to take care of her, if they would let her go, but he was not in court. A young daughter of the offender stated that the old woman had been grieved by the conduct of a son; but she had been a good mother. She had never attempted suicide before, and she had a good home. The accused gave an almost unintelligible explanation of how she was immersed in the water. She was looking for her son, who was very “fresh”, and she asked some persons whether they had seen him. Afterwards she looked into the canal, and saw her own shadow in the water. She slipped in, and not only screamed but threw her shawl away, and kept her head above water. Mr Armitage : Well, if the daughter will take care of her, we will discharge her. Daughter : Oh yes. Mr Armitage: Then she is discharged. Accused : Thank your worships.

**105 May 29 1869**

**Brighouse**

CHILD BURNT TO DEATH An inquest was held at the Royal Hotel on Monday afternoon, before Mr G Dyson, coroner, touching the death of Mary Bray, aged eight years, daughter of **Joah Bray**, boatman of Mill Lane. From the evidence adduced it seems the child's mother is addicted to drinking, and although the husband allows her 15s per week to maintain the house, the children are in the most neglected condition. On Friday, Bray left his wife the 15s as usual and went to his employment. Immediately afterwards his wife left the house and went to some of her associates, and about half past nine the child ran out of the house screaming, her ragged clothes being in flames. The neighbours rushed to her assistance and extinguished the fire, and Mr Pugh, surgeon, was sent for; but death supervened at eight o'clock the following night. The jury, after severely censuring the mother for her careless, disreputable conduct, returned a verdict of accidental death.

**106 July 10 1869****Magistrates in Petty Sessions**

**CHARGE OF STEALING A COAT** **Joseph Clay**, boatman, was charged with stealing a coat, the property of Samuel Haigh, on the 27<sup>th</sup> June. It appeared that, on the above day, the prisoner was at a beerhouse kept by James Wood, Linthwaite, at three o'clock in the afternoon. Wood was putting away a coat belonging to his son-in-law Haigh, but the prisoner said it was his coat and, Wood not knowing whose it was, he permitted the prisoner to walk off with it. Joseph Taylor, weaver, Cartworth said, on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June, when at the Lamb Inn, he gave the prisoner a crown and a quart of ale for the coat, which he afterwards delivered to Police-constable Holmes on the previous day. Holmes, at six o'clock on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup> inst, apprehended the prisoner at a blacksmith's shop and charged him with stealing the coat; but he said that he was never there, that he had never stolen a coat, and that he had never seen one. The prisoner, who pleaded not guilty, was committed for trial, when he asked the magistrates to inflict upon him summary punishment.

**107 July 24 1869****Brighouse**

**EXPLOSION OF GUNPOWDER** An accident occurred at the house of **David Weldrick**, boatman, residing in Park Row, Park Street, on Saturday night, and two persons were seriously injured. About twelve o'clock a young man, who is paying his addresses to Weldrick's daughter, went to the house, and left there a fowling piece, a flask containing five ounces of powder, and other articles. Shortly afterwards Weldrick returned home in a state of intoxication, and seeing the flask, began to examine it. The daughter leaned over the back of his chair, with her arms across his shoulders. From some unexplained cause the powder in the flask exploded with a terrific noise, and in a moment some twelve squares of glass were blown from the windows, both hands of the unfortunate man were dreadfully burnt, and a gash many inches in length inflicted across his forehead. At the same moment, both hands, head and face of his daughter were frightfully burned. Medical assistance was promptly procured, and the injured man was removed to the Huddersfield Infirmary, after the laceration of the forehead had been stitched, and where he still remains. The daughter's injuries were also attended to, and she is rapidly recovering, although at present her face presents a frightful spectacle.

**108 September 11 1869****Bradley**

**BODY OF A MAN FOUND IN THE CANAL** About three o'clock on Thursday afternoon, the body of a man named Kaye was discovered in the canal by **Henry Clay**, boatman of Brighouse. The deceased, it is said, was last seen by Ann Addy, Mirfield, about 2 45 pm, walking in the direction of the place where the body was found. The body was removed to the Anchor Pit beerhouse, Rastrick, and now awaits a coroner's inquest. The deceased was about 70 years of age, and formerly lived at Lane Head, Brighouse. Latterly he had been in depressed circumstances, which is believed to have affected his mind.

**109 October 2 1869**

**A FEMALE PAUPER DROWNED** Yesterday an inquest was held at the Royal Hotel, Longroyd Bridge, before Mr Barstow, touching the death of a woman named **Frances Westwood**, whose body had been found in the canal near Longroyd Bridge. The body of the deceased was discovered on Wednesday morning by a man named Hallas, employed by Mr Sharpe, Carr-pit, Moldgreen. It appeared that the deceased had been seen on the previous night by a man who worked on the Manchester Road, going down Chapel Hill with a man who appeared to be "fresh". She left the man, however, and walked on the Manchester Road. The woman, whose body was discovered in the water under the bridge at six o'clock in the morning, is supposed to have fallen into the canal when in a state of intoxication. She is said to be the widow of a boatman; and for several weeks had been an inmate of the Birkby Workhouse, which she left on a few hours' leave. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned, without marks of violence".



however, he was removed shortly afterwards. In order to clear Carter's character, Mr Gill asked the court to allow Mr Blakebrough to be examined, but acting under the advice of their clerk, they said they could not allow this course to be adopted unless Mr Gill wished to prefer a charge of perjury, which that gentleman was loth to do without further consideration. They said that perhaps the publicity which would be given to his statement would serve Mr Gill's purpose, and with that, the case ended.

### **115 July 30 1870**

**A DRUNKEN WOMAN DROWNED** On Thursday afternoon an inquest was held before Mr Barstow, deputy coroner, at the Wharf Inn, Aspley, touching the death of Harriet Boocock, 42 years of age, of Upperhead Row. The body of the deceased was found in the first lock, near the Shoe Foot Mill, on Wednesday evening and, as it had been alleged that marks of violence were discovered upon the person, some interest was attached to the enquiry. Mr John Mallilieu was appointed foreman of the jury.

Susannah Boocock of Upperhead Row, said the deceased was her mother, but had never been married. She last saw her alive at home on Tuesday evening at eight o'clock. The deceased, whom she left in the house alone, was not sober. She did not say she was going out; but when witness returned from her "class meeting" at Buxton Road Chapel, between nine and half past nine o'clock, the deceased was not in the house. For the last few days she had taken too much to drink, and she told witness on Tuesday that she (witness) would not see her again, but she had said so before, and witness did not think anything about it.

Inspector Townend : Hadn't you been finding fault with her drinking?

Witness said she advised with the deceased for her own good, but her advice appeared to be of no use. She locked the deceased in the house, fastened the window, and left the key in the door outside, as she expected home Henry Lockwood, the man with whom deceased had cohabited for some years, before her return. Lockwood and the deceased had quarrelled on Tuesday morning about her drinking, but no blows were struck. Before Lockwood left, he told witness to stay at home and keep the deceased in the house, but it was beyond her power to do so.

Mr Withers : Has he been in the habit of striking her?

Witness : Well, he has struck her, but I didn't see any blows struck on Tuesday.

The Coroner : When was the last time you saw any?

Witness : Well, I am not sure whether it was on Monday or Saturday I saw him strike her in the face with a towel.

Mr Withers : Was that all he did?

Witness : It was all I saw.

Mr Withers : When did he strike her before that?

Witness : I cannot say, to tell the truth, but a fortnight ago, she complained to me of his having kicked her. I have seen black marks on her breast, where he has struck her, but not just lately.

The Coroner : Did you ever see him strike her yourself?

Witness : Yes, I have had to go between then many a time.

A Juryman : It appears they were frequently quarrelling.

Witness : They have lived very disagreeably together this last few years. Lockwood is not my father; but the three of us have lived together. The lived together so uncomfortably that I did not notice exactly what she said when she complained to me.

Mr Giles : Did she assign any reason why you would not see her again?

Witness : Not to me she did not.

Mr Giles : You say you locked the door – how did she get out?

The witness said she was told that the deceased got out of bed, and asked a girl to open the door.

Mr Giles : She assigned no reason?

Witness : No but she has told me at times that I did not know all.

By the Coroner : When I returned from the "class meeting", Lockwood was sitting on the cellar steps. He followed me into the house, and did not go out again until Wednesday morning. He told

me my mother had got away and gone down South Parade. Lockwood went about six o'clock in the morning. He worked for George Eastwood, greengrocer, and on market days generally went out before six o'clock in the morning. She and her cousin's husband went in search of the deceased, but could find no tidings of her whereabouts after she left South Parade.

A Juryman : She told the people she was going to drown herself, but no one took any notice of her, for she had been in the habit of saying so before.

Jane Heady of Upperhead Row said she last saw the deceased alive, crossing the road opposite her shop, at half past eight on Tuesday evening. She was going towards South Parade, and was alone. Deceased was not sober when witness saw her. Witness had seen her several times in the afternoon, and she was so much the worse for liquor that she had to cling to some rails, and witness made the remark that deceased would have to be taken to the asylum. At half past eight o'clock the deceased walked steadily, but she had been in bed. Witness lived over the house where deceased lived, and had occasionally heard quarrels between her and Lockwood, but nothing of a serious character. She did not see Lockwood about the house in the afternoon. Deceased did not speak to her at half past eight; but the witness Susannah Boocock said to witness, "I think she is asleep, and I may venture to go to chapel".

Wm Hirst of Mirfield said about five minutes to nine on Tuesday night, he found the shawl produced on the canal towing path, near the first lock above the bridge at Aspley. The shawl had been carelessly thrown down. There were no footprints or marks of any struggling that he saw of. He saw no woman or any person at the spot; but there were some boatmen about 100 yards from the place. He heard no cries, nor any splash in the water.

**John Richardson**, a boatman of Lodge Terrace, Huddersfield, stated that about ten o'clock on Tuesday night, when they got to a lock with the boat, they could not get the bottom gates of the first lock of the narrow cut to close. They drew the boat back, and he tried to ascertain, with a boat hook, what prevented the shutting of the gates, but they did not find it out. Presently they got the gates closed, and passed on with the boat.

**Joseph Renton**, boatman of Bradley, stated that about eight o'clock on the evening of the previous day, he found the body of deceased in the Huddersfield Canal, about three yards below the first lock in the narrow basin. They had stopped the horse, and the towing rope got under the body, and threw it to the surface of the water. They pulled the body into a byewash, and eventually got it on to the canal bank, and sent word to the Borough Police Office.

Mr J B Pritchett, surgeon, stated that about ten o'clock on Wednesday morning, he saw and examined the body. There was a small wound on the left forehead, which was bleeding; and there were also several bruises on both breasts. There was an old bruise, which had punctured the skin, on the lower part of the right side of the abdomen. There was a very large bruise on the right thigh; and, he should think, about a dozen bruises distributed over the front of both legs and shins; but the largest bruise was on the right buttock. The body was quite cold and beginning to be stiff. On Wednesday afternoon at four o'clock he made a *post mortem* examination, and found that the immediate cause of death was drowning. Some of the bruises were several days old, and deceased appeared to have been subject to ill-usage.

A Juryman : Don't you think that the bruises might have been caused by her falling into the canal?

Mr Pritchett : They were large and extensive bruises, which must have been done by some heavy substance, and some considerable time before she was drowned.

By the Coroner : The small wound on the forehead, doubtless caused by the fall into the water, was not sufficient to produce death. Some of the bruises on the shins I believe to have been caused by "punching". There were no bones broken.

Henry Lockwood was called and, although not sworn, examined, at the request of the jury, by the coroner. He stated that he last saw the deceased alive on Tuesday morning, about six o'clock, when she was in bed. When he returned home about nine o'clock on Tuesday night, she was not in, and he went to several public houses in search of her, but could get no information of her whereabouts. The deceased had been drinking all the week. She was not his wife, but he had lived with her 15 years. He had not been in the habit of beating her. He had given her a tap with a towel or his hat,

but had neither kicked nor struck her in his life.

The Foreman : Well, she has some bruises on her at present.

Lockwood : Well, they are not from me.

The Foreman : Were you aware she had those bruises?

Lockwood : No.

The Foreman : Never heard her complain of any?

Lockwood : No.

Mr Giles : Have you ever heard her say she would make away with herself?

Lockwood : I never have.

The Coroner : But you have quarrelled a good deal lately?

Lockwood : Well, I might have called her for her carryings on.

The Coroner : You have not been comfortable lately?

Lockwood : How could we be.

The Foreman : I suppose you don't call it quarrelling unless you fight?

Lockwood : Not unless you make wounds with hitting them a bit.

The Coroner : Why, hadn't you some words on Tuesday morning?

Lockwood : Well, we might have had a few words, but there were no blows struck.

The Coroner : Then you have never struck her at all?

Lockwood : I have only struck her with a towel or my hat, but never with my hand. I have never seen any black marks on her body. Susannah Boocock had, on one occasion, to step in between us to prevent me striking her.

The Coroner : Still, for all that, you say you never did strike her.

Lockwood : Only with the towel, and that was through her own bad conduct.

The Coroner : Then when Susannah came between you, what were you going to strike her with?

Lockwood : My hand, but I shut it up then. I don't know how the bruises on the body were produced. I don't remember the deceased saying I should never see her again; but I set the daughter to watch her because I thought, from her wildness, she was deranged.

The Coroner : Never struck her?

Lockwood : No.

The Coroner : But you have done everything except strike her?

Lockwood : Yes, but she ought to have had it.

Mr Withers : Well you speak very feelingly, I must say.

The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned, but with marks of violence upon the body".

## **116 August 20 1870**

### **Marsden**

FATAL EXPLOSION IN THE CANAL TUNNEL Yesterday, about four o'clock in the afternoon, a boat, of which one man was in charge, was dispatched with two large canisters of powder, intended for blasting processes in the railway tunnel now in course of construction. When the boat had reached the middle of the canal, which passes through the Stanedge Hill, and runs almost parallel with the railway tunnel, the powder ignited, and exploded with a terrific crash. The report was heard at a distance of half a mile by some men who were employed in the tunnel and, upon an examination, they found the boat near one of the apertures communicating from the railway tunnel to the canal, and the boatman literally shivered to pieces. The cause of the explosion is a mystery.

## **117 October 15 1870**

### **Bradley**

A BOAT BOY DROWNED On Monday an inquest was held at the White Cross Inn, Bradley, before Mr Barstow, touching the death of **Thomas Whittaker**, eleven years of age. Mr Geo Haigh was foreman of the jury. A man named **Arthur Whittaker**, brother of the deceased, was on Saturday in charge of a boat. When they arrived at the lock, near the junction between the canal and the river Calder, the witness (Arthur Whittaker) threw out a line to the boy, who was on the bank. In attempting to catch the rope, the boy seized a roller round which the line passed. The roller began to revolve, and the boy, missing his hold, fell into the river. The witness, hearing a splash,

went to the other side of the lock and, seeing his brother struggling in the water, called to him to swim until he procured a pole to rescue him. When he got the pole he found it was broken; but he still urged the boy to swim on until he obtained something else to assist him out of the water. The man obtained another pole, and with it could reach his brother within about four inches; but when the boy stretched out his hand to grasp the pole, he sank, and was carried down the stream by a strong current. **James Lund**, a boatman, stated that he was filling the locks when he heard last witness calling out that his brother was in the river. Witness ran to the boy's assistance, and everything was done to save him, but without avail. In ten or fifteen minutes the body was recovered, and every means adopted to restore life. A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

### **118    October 15 1870**

**SINGULAR FATE OF A FAMILY** In our district news today will be found, under the head of Bradley, a paragraph having reference to an inquest on the death of a boy, **Whittaker**, who was drowned in the river at that place on Saturday. It transpired during the investigation that no less than six of the deceased's relatives had met with their death by drowning. Twenty five years ago the boy's grandfather, who was employed as a boatman, was drowned in the river Calder; an aunt was drowned at Black Coft-road, near to the mouth of the Humber, about five years ago; a brother, 13 years of age, who was engaged on a boat, was deprived of life about three years ago, in a similar manner; and other members of the family had, in various ways, met with watery graves. The deceased, Whittaker, who came from Stanley Ferry, Wakefield, fell into the canal near that place on Tuesday morning, and narrowly escaped the fate which awaited him on the following Saturday.

### **119    December 10 1870**

#### **Brighouse**

**A COLD BATH** An unpleasant circumstance occurred about five o'clock on Wednesday morning to a boatman named **Simon Murgatroyd** of Brighouse. It seems he was on his way with a boat to Mirfield and, when near Cooper Bridge, he met a boat coming in the opposite direction, the hauling line of which (it being dark at the time) caught him, and knocked him into the water. Being unable to swim, he clung to the rope until rescued by the other men with the boat. The man had to walk to Brighouse, a distance of two miles, to obtain dry clothing.

### **120    December 10 1870**

#### **Brighouse**

**A YOUTH DROWNED** An inquest was held at the house of Mr John Howgate, the White Cross Inn, near Cooper Bridge, on Monday evening before Mr W Barstow, deputy coroner, touching the death of **Thomas Howarth**, aged sixteen years, who was drowned in the canal on Saturday night. The youth was employed on a boat named the "Goole" of Goole, under the command of **Captain Towney**. The deceased, who belonged to Wakefield, about half past five o'clock, was crossing the tail end of Carr Ford Lock at Cooper Bridge, for the purpose of attending to the clowes or shuttles and, his foot slipping, he fell into the lock. With considerable difficulty the body was got out of the water by the Captain and a man named Barrett, but not until life was extinct. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned".

### **121    December 17 1870**

**MISCELLANEOUS NEWS** At Aspull, near Bolton, on Monday a coroner's jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against the wife of a boatman named **Gill** who had, while in bed drunk, suffocated her infant child. The man Gill was also drunk at the time.

### **122    March 8 1871**

#### **Borough Police Court**

**ASSAULTS** **Francis Hirst**, boatman, was charged with assaulting **Job Goostrey**, another boatman. The parties quarrelled about their boats, and the quarrel ended in blows being struck by the defendant. The magistrates fined the defendant, including costs, 11s 6d.

**123 April 13 1871**

SINGULAR EFFECTS OF A COLD DINNER On Thursday, Dr Lankester held an inquest at the Hall Arms Tavern, Paddington, on the body of **Richard Taverner**, aged 38 years. Deceased, a boatman, was called Black Billy; he was single and of very sober habits. On Monday last, he was found in the canal at the bottom of Hobbs' Wharf, Paddington, having been missed over three weeks. The *post mortem* was made by Dr G Westmacott, who failed to discover any marks of violence, and was inclined to think that deceased must have taken a cold meal and drunk cold liquor, which brought on a fit of apoplexy, in which he fell into the water. Verdict: "Death from an effusion of blood on the brain, but how he got into the water the evidence failed to show".

**124 April 29 1871**

**Huddersfield Borough Police Court**

CHARGE OF ASSAULT George Scholes, innkeeper, Batley and William Brook, carrier, Batley were charged at the County Police Court, Huddersfield, on Tuesday, with assaulting **Edward Moffatt** and **Charles Whitfield**, boatmen of Colne Bridge, at Batty Mill, on Thursday. Mr J Sykes appeared for the defendants. The complainant stated that he was going along in his boat on the canal when the defendant came up and charged him with stealing some gears from the granary. He knew nothing about it, and went back to see whether it was correct or not. The defendants then struck him a good deal on the head and shoulders, so much so that he was insensible. A witness named John Hirst was called, who stated that he saw the defendant Scholes strike the complainant three times with a rake across the head and shoulders as hard as he could. John Stacey gave similar evidence. Mr Sykes submitted that the complainant and another man named Whitfield, who was with him, had no business at the granary, and were asked to leave, but they would not, and the defendants endeavoured to put them out. The complainant was the aggressor. Defendant Brook said he had an engagement with the other defendant at Battyeford, and put his horse up at the Navigation Inn. Subsequently he missed a strap from the harness, and charged Moffatt and the man with him, Whitfield, with stealing it. Both of them denied it, and followed the defendants back to the granary, and they took their coats off and wanted to fight. Scholes asked them to go out, and in consequence of their refusal he tried to put them out. They were the first beginners, and Scholes did strike the complainant Moffatt on the lip. The defendants were then charged with assaulting Whitfield. The complainant's case was that he went back to the granary with Moffatt, on being accused of stealing the strap, and the defendant Scholes attacked them with a rake. Brook was the first who struck witness. The magistrates dismissed the case against Brook in the first instance. They were of opinion there had been a good deal of unnecessary violence used, and fined Scholes 20s and expenses in the first case. In the second case, each defendant was fined 5s and costs.

**125 April 29 1871**

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE Shortly after six o'clock on Thursday evening, a woman named Hannah Whitney attempted self destruction by jumping into the canal at Turnbridge. Mary Taylor, a married woman living at Turnbridge, saw Whitney run along the pathway and leap into the water. Taylor immediately called for assistance, and **Thomas Rochester**, a boatman, who was at work in his boat a short distance from the spot, immediately left his work and, jumping into the canal, rescued the unfortunate woman from drowning. She was taken to the Police Station by a police officer, and was placed before the magistrates yesterday morning on the charge of attempting to commit suicide.

**126 May 27 1871**

DEATHS On the 24<sup>th</sup> inst, aged 18 years, Sam, son of **Mr Isaac Cliffe**, boatman,

**127 June 17 1871**

**Golcar**

ACCIDENT TO A BOATMAN On Thursday afternoon, an accident befell **John Bottomley**, boatman, Mirfield, in the employ of Joshua Gibson. It seemed a boat load of coals had been taken to the dyehouse of Mr Charles Lockwood, Low Westwood, Golcar. Bottomley was in charge of the

horse, and when backing down a steep incline, the horse slipped. Assistance was at hand, and while they were endeavouring to free the animal from the gearing, a number of women set up a fearful scream. The horse sprang up, knocked Bottomley down and, the shaft falling upon him, broke his right leg. He was removed to the Huddersfield Infirmary.

**128 June 17 1871**

**Sheepridge**

**A CHILD FOUND DROWNED IN THE CANAL** Yesterday morning, about half past eight o'clock, as a boatman in the employ of Edward Hinchcliffe was proceeding with his boat along the canal belonging to the London and North Western Railway Company, he, on nearing Red Doors Lock, near Whitacre Park, observed the body of a child floating in the water. Obtaining the assistance of **Wm Furness**, of the Lock House, the body was recovered from the water, and proved to be that of a female that had not been long in the water. It was removed to the workshop of the Lock House to await an inquest. At present there is no clue as to who the child belonged to. It has been examined by a medical gentleman. The remains were subsequently removed to the Borough Police Station, Huddersfield, and underwent an examination by Mr Pritchett, surgeon, who was of opinion it was but a seven months child. From the decomposed state of the body, he was unable to state whether death had occurred before or after it had been thrown in the water.

**129 September 23 1871**

**BOY DROWNED** On Thursday morning, a lad named Jim Carter, between six and seven years old, who lived with his stepfather George Hanson, mill hand, Rashcliffe, met with an untimely death. The lad had gone from Rashcliffe to Mr Jere Kaye's timber yard in Quay Street, to see his cousin **Alfred Wilcock**, a boatman belonging to Hull, who had come to Huddersfield with a cargo of timber for Mr Kaye. Several other lads accompanied Carter, and for some little time they amused themselves by playing about the deck of the vessel. The other lads after a time went below, leaving Carter in possession of the deck. As he did not join his companions in the cabin, they became uneasy about him and went to seek him, but they could not find him on deck. Very shortly afterwards his body was taken out of the canal by the side of the vessel, and it was found that life was quite extinct. An inquest was held on the body at the Kaye's Arms yesterday afternoon before Mr Barstow, deputy coroner, and a verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

**130 September 30 1871**

**Brighouse**

**FATALITY TO A BOATMAN** On Monday the body of **Jonas Marsden**, boatman belonging to Brighouse, was brought to where he had resided in Mill Lane, to await interment. It seems that the unfortunate man was proceeding to Goole with the boat, and when between Wakefield and that place, he fell backwards into the hold or bottom of the boat, fractured his skull, and died shortly afterwards. Deceased has left a wife and several small children.

**131 December 9 1871**

**West Riding Gaol Delivery**

**SENTENCES** **William New** (27), boatman, and Henry Land (23), labourer, who had pleaded guilty to unlawfully wounding Isaac Moss at Halifax on the 14<sup>th</sup> November, were sentenced to six months imprisonment each.

**132 March 2 1872**

**Huddersfield Borough Police Court**

**BOATMAN CHARGED WITH OBSTRUCTING THE CANAL** A waterman named **Henry Clay** was charged with obstructing the Calder and Hebble Canal on the 20<sup>th</sup> December last. Mr Sykes prosecuted on behalf of the Calder and Hebble Navigation Company, and in opening the case stated that the defendant was proceeded against under the 35<sup>th</sup> bye law of the company just named, which provided that any person who should place a vessel in such a position as to obstruct another vessel on the said canal was liable to a penalty not exceeding £5. The company had power to pass these bye laws, and they were signed by the common seal of the company. It appeared that on the 20<sup>th</sup> December last, a boatman named **John Martin** was proceeding with a loaded boat, and when he got

near Kirklees Lock, he noticed the defendant, who was in charge of a narrow light boat, a distance behind him. Martin proceeded to the top lock, but whilst he was there, the defendant came up with his boat to a point where he had no business, and tried to put into the lock before him. By this means, the defendant obstructed the canal, and delayed the Navigation Company two hours and a half. In point of fact, he ought to have waited his turn and allowed Martin to proceed on his journey first. The defendant had been cautioned about this several times, but when they found that he took no notice, the company thought it advisable to lodge proceedings against him as a caution to others. John Martin was called, and after giving corroborative evidence, **Joseph Happlethwaite**, keeper of the Kirklees Lock, said he remembered the circumstances which took place between the defendant and complainant on the morning in question. It was Martin's place to take the lock first, and by the act of the defendant he was delayed two hours and a half. Four other boats were kept waiting. The defence was that he came up to the "distance post" before Martin, and it was therefore his, the defendant's, turn to go through the lock first. The defendant was found guilty, and fined £2 and expenses £1 5s 6d, total £3 5s 6d.

### **133 March 30 1872**

#### **Leeds Assizes**

ASSAULT AND ROBBERY AT LEEDS Bernard McGough, 18, cloth dresser, was indicted for an assault upon **Benjamin Loft**, and robbing him of 2s at Leeds on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Prosecutor is a boatman who resides at Beverley. He was with his boat at Leeds on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December, and at seven o'clock in the evening he came ashore to get some tobacco. There was a florin in his left waistcoat pocket. Having crossed Warehouse Hill and reached the foot of Call Lane, the prisoner came up and asked the prosecutor if he had not struck him 20 minutes before. Prosecutor denied that he had, and told the prisoner to stand aside and let him pass. The prisoner struck him a blow on the mouth, and then prosecutor seized hold of the prisoner, and a scuffle took place. There was another man in league with the prisoner, and whilst prosecutor was down on the ground some other persons kicked him. Loft sustained very great abuse, and during the struggle the prisoner stole the florin. Both the prisoner and his companion got away. The latter is still at large; the prisoner was not arrested until the 12<sup>th</sup> of February. Having been convicted, sentence was pronounced of six months imprisonment, with twenty lashes. His Lordship remarked that the prisoner was probably one of a gang who had lain in wait for the prosecutor as he came ashore.

### **134 May 4 1872**

SUSPICIOUS DISCOVERY OF A DEAD CHILD NEAR HUDDERSFIELD About six o'clock on Tuesday night, Sergeant Jno Nutton received information that a new born child had been taken out of the "Red Door" Lock. The sergeant, accompanied by Police-constable Ford, proceeded to the place, and found the child buried by the stump of a tree near the canal side. **Wm Furness**, labourer for the Canal Company, who resides near the lock, dug the child up, washed it, and brought it to the police office. Dr Pritchett was called in, and he stated that the child was a seven months' child, but in consequence of its being in an advanced state of decomposition, he could not say whether it had been born alive. It afterwards transpired that **James Carter** and **William Carter**, boatmen, employed by the Huddersfield Gas Company, and residing at Colne Bridge, were bringing a boat load of coals to the gasworks about a quarter past nine on Tuesday morning when, on arriving at the "Red Door" Lock, they found the lifeless body of a child floating in the lock. They got it out of the water, and buried it in the place where it was afterwards found by the police.

#### INQUEST ON THE BODY

On Thursday afternoon, an inquest was held at the Victoria Inn, Huddersfield, before Mr Barstow, deputy coroner and a jury, of which Mr Alfred Sharp was foreman, on view of the body of an unknown male child, discovered on Tuesday morning in the London and North Western Canal near Woodhouse.

The Coroner, before swearing the jury, said from the information he had received from Mr Pritchett he did not think they would be able to make anything of that case. It was thought best on the whole to have an inquest, because it appeared the body of the child was found by the boatmen on the

canal, and they foolishly, and perhaps innocently, thought best to go and bury it, whereas the proper course would have been to inform the police. If people were to pursue a course of that kind – finding a body and then burying it, without informing the authorities – there would be no end of mischief done in some cases. It was as much on that account as any other that an inquest was called. He believed Mr Pritchett would tell them the child was so decomposed that it was impossible to make anything of it in the way of giving a verdict to be acted upon.

James Carter, who was the first witness called, said he was a canal boatman and lived at Colne Bridge. He was passing through the “Red Door Lock” about nine on Tuesday morning, when he saw the body of a dead child floating in the lock. He fetched a woman named Furness, the lock-keeper's wife, to look at the child, and he showed it to her. When they had filled the lock, the body was got out with a bucket. It smelled so much that they buried it near a tree close to the lock tail. The body was quite naked. He should say it had probably been in the water two or three weeks. They then went on with the boat, and thought no more about it. It was a long time since he found the body of a child in the canal before.

By a Juror : He did not inform the police, because they did not always think of these things.

**Sarah Furness**, wife of the “Red Door Lock” keeper on the London and North Western Canal, said between nine and ten o'clock on Tuesday morning, the brother of the last witness drew her attention to the child in the lock, and asked her what she thought it was. She at once said it was a child. She saw the child taken out of the lock, and it was soon after buried by James and William Carter by the side of the canal. She told her husband about it an hour afterwards, and he went the same evening to Mr Greenwood, the canal superintendent, and told him about it. Her husband afterwards dug the child up.

Sergeant John Nutton stated that on Tuesday night, about six o'clock, the husband of the last witness came to the Police Office, and stated that a child had been taken out of the lock and buried. In company with Police-constable Ford, witness went down to the place, and Furness dug up the body near a tree root at the lock tail. They washed it, and wrapped it up in a newspaper, and brought it to the Police Office, and it was examined by Mr Pritchett, surgeon, the same evening. Witness could not discover the mother of the child.

Mr Pritchett, surgeon, stated that he examined the child about half past seven on Tuesday evening at the Police Station. It was very much decomposed, and the skin was peeling off. Its head appeared very much crushed, and the whole body had a soaked appearance, as if it had been in the water a long time, probably between two and three weeks. The naval string seemed as if it had been torn and not cut. It seemed about a seven months' child. It would be impossible, from its state of decomposition, to say whether the child was born alive. From the fact of the naval string being torn, he should say that the child had not been fairly dealt with after birth. From its age and size, it might have been born alive, and have lived.

The Coroner said, in the face of Mr Pritchett's statement, there was not sufficient evidence to find how the child met its death. Before a person can die, he must live, and as the doctor could not say whether it had ever lived or not, the jury could not come to the conclusion whether it ever died or not. Therefore they could not find the cause of death; but there had been so many children murdered, and so much baby farming, that it was deemed necessary to enquire into the case.

The jury returned the following verdict : “The child was found in the canal, but there is not any evidence how it came there, or who is the mother, and from the decomposed state of the body, there is not any evidence to say whether the child was born alive”.

### **135 June 15 1872**

### **Slaithwaite**

**STEALING A KNIFE AND LEATHER BELT** At the County Police Court, Huddersfield, on Tuesday last, before G Armitage and J Beaumont Esqrs, James Armitage, labourer, was charged with stealing a knife and leather belt of the value of 2s, the property of **Sam Pogson**, on the 4<sup>th</sup> inst at Slaithwaite. Sam Pogson said he was a boatman and lived at Slaithwaite. On Tuesday night, the 4<sup>th</sup> June, he was sleeping in his boat. About half past eight o'clock that evening he went to bed. He put his trousers upon the bed in which he slept. He had in his pocket a knife and a leather belt. He

awoke about half past four o'clock the next morning. He was disturbed by a noise. When he awoke up, he saw the prisoner going out of his room. He said to the prisoner, "What are you up to?" He said, "Naught". He then got up out of bed and examined his trousers. The prisoner had then got out of the room. Witness found his trousers pocket, and missed his knife and belt. He searched for them on the bed, but could not find them. He dressed himself and followed the prisoner nearly to the Star Inn, Linthwaite. He saw the prisoner there, and told Sarah Ann Wilkinson to watch which way the prisoner went, whilst he went for a policeman. Witness then went and gave information to Police-constable Holmes of the robbery. He went in search of the prisoner. The pocket knife then produced was his property. Sarah Ann Wilkinson, the wife of James Wilkinson, farmer, Lingards, stated that on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup> inst, about five o'clock, she was standing at her own door when the prisoner came running past, the prosecutor running after. Prosecutor said, "I will have you taken up". Prisoner made no reply, but run as fast as he could across the fields towards Linthwaite. The prosecutor asked her to watch which way the prisoner went whilst he went for a policeman. She saw the prisoner in about an hour after in a field near Manchester Road. Police-constable Holmes, stationed at Slaithwaite, stated that on Wednesday morning last, the 5<sup>th</sup> instant, he went along with the prosecutor in search of the prisoner. That was about five o'clock in the morning. They could not find him. About nine o'clock the same morning, he apprehended the prisoner at Blackmoor Foot. Prisoner said he had never met Pogson, and he had been "legging" from Huddersfield all night. Witness searched the prisoner, and found the pocket knife upon him which he then produced. He brought the prisoner to Huddersfield the same morning. Cross-examined : Prisoner was perfectly sober when witness arrested him. Mr Milnes, for the prisoner, addressed the Bench in mitigation of punishment, arguing that the prisoner was so far under the influence of liquor at the time of the theft, as to mitigate against the presumption of a felonious intent. The Bench committed prisoner for a months imprisonment.

### **136 July 13 1872**

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS A boatman belonging to Shipley, named **James Tempest**, 26, was on Wednesday fined 40s and costs at the Leeds Police Court, in default one months imprisonment, for cruelly flogging a horse of which he had charge on the canal bank at Armley, on Sunday week. Inspector Peet, RSPCA, prosecuted.

### **137 July 13 1872**

#### **Slaithwaite**

STEALING WOOD FROM A CANAL BOAT At the County Police Court on Tuesday at Huddersfield, before L R Stakey, J Beaumont and J A Armitage Esqrs, **James Hinchcliffe**, son of the captain of a canal boat, and **John Cookson**, also a boatman, were charged with stealing two pieces of scantling, valued at 2s, the property of the London and North Western Railway and Canal Company. Mr S Learoyd defended the prisoners. James Shaw Lawton, a carpenter in the employ of the above company, said that on the afternoon of the 5<sup>th</sup> inst, he left two pieces of scantling in his boat near the 30<sup>th</sup> lock on the canal at Slaithwaite, and the following morning, at seven o'clock, both were gone. He gave information to the Huddersfield Police. At Engine Bridge, he saw the prisoner Hinchcliffe in charge of his father's boat, drawn by a grey horse, and on the boat he found one of the pieces of scantling that had been taken from his boat. James Dunn, signalman at Slaithwaite, said that on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) he saw a man go to the boat of the prosecutor, and take a piece of wood out of Lawton's boat that was in the canal, bring it along through a field, and lay it alongside the lock until another boat, drawn by a grey horse, that was coming down the canal, arrived at the spot, when he put the wood on to his own boat, and took it away. Police-sergeant Hellowell apprehended the prisoner, and took possession of the piece of timber which, the prisoner Hinchcliffe said, he found floating in the canal. This was the defence set up by Mr Learoyd, and a witness named Joseph Jackson said he saw Hinchcliffe on the Saturday morning go on board a boat and pick a piece of wood out of the water, carry it down the field side, and take it on board his own boat, but he could not identify the man, as he was 250 yards from the place. The Bench, having a slight doubt in their minds, gave the prisoners the benefit of it, and discharged them.

**138 September 7 1872****Huddersfield Borough Police Court**

NEGLECTING TO SUPPORT AGED PARENTS Mr E J Sykes, collector for the Guardians of the Huddersfield Union, applied to the magistrates for orders of maintenance against the following parties :- David Boothroyd, blacksmith, **Tom Boothroyd**, boatman and John Boothroyd, plasterer, were charged with not supporting their father, who is 70 years of age, and is receiving 3s per week from the funds of the Union. Orders were made upon each for 1s per week to recoup the Guardians the amount of relief allowed to the old man.

**139 November 16 1872**

OBSTRUCTING THE HIGHWAY AT MIRFIELD At the County Police Court, Huddersfield, on Tuesday, before G Armitage, S W Haigh and B Shaw, Esqrs, Benj Buckley, Jas Mellor, cloth finishers; **Samuel Wormald**, boatman; Jos Oates, maltster; Benj Oates, Wm Oates, Benj Saynor, masons; Saml Hinchcliffe, millhand; John Clay, cord cutter; Samuel Clay, cloth finisher; Joseph Johnson, plasterer; all of Mirfield: **Duke Carter, John Abner Berry**, boatmen; Saville Cliffe, millhand; and Wm Clayton, labourer, of Colne Bridge, were charged by Superintendent Heaton with playing at various games and pastimes on the highway and obstructing the highway at Kirkheaton, on Sunday afternoon the 27<sup>th</sup> ult. Mr S Learoyd defended. Police-constable Preston proved the case. It seems that for a long time past complaints have been made by the inhabitants of Batty Mill, Kirkheaton, of young men congregating together on a Sunday near the railway arch at Batty Mill, and playing all kinds of games and pastimes during the Sabbath. Many attempts have been made to bring them to justice, but these have failed. About a quarter to four o'clock on the above afternoon, however, Police-constable Preston succeeded in getting near to the whole of the defendants, and took down their names. The game the defendants were amusing themselves with was this : one of the number was blindfolded with a handkerchief opposite the entrance to the arch, and he was then turned around three times, and throw a stone if he could through the arch, the others betting upon his success. The constable, while listening, heard someone say after a stone had been thrown, "Carter has lost a penny, and Johnson has won it". When attempting to get up to the defendants, they ran away, but he followed and captured one of them. The defendants were each fined 1s and costs, and the Bench expressed the hope that the young men would in future attend some school or place of worship instead of spending their time in desecrating the Sabbath.

**140 December 7 1872****West Riding Winter Gaol Delivery**

A BOATMAN CHARGED WITH MANSLAUGHTER **Samuel Mountain**, 29, waterman, was indicted for the manslaughter of **Ralph Greenwood** at Walton near Wakefield, on the 28<sup>th</sup> August. The prisoner's wife was also charged in the calendar, but the Grand Jury ignored the bill against her. Mr Wheelhouse prosecuted; Mr Campbell Foster defended. The deceased was the captain of a coal boat belonging to the Oaks Colliery, near Barnsley. While at Walton with his boat on the day in question, a dispute took place between the parties as to who should first pass through the lock. A quarrel followed, during which the accused struck the deceased five or six times on the head with a heavy hatchet. The injuries were very serious, and caused the deceased's death on the following day.

One of the witnesses (John Ashtoft) deposed to having heard the prisoner say that he had a spite against the deceased, and that he would pay him off as soon as they reached the bridge.

On being taken into custody, the prisoner said, "It's a bad job, I'm very sorry".

In defence, Mr Foster urged that the injury which caused death might have been inflicted by a blow from the wife, or perhaps by the struggle which the deceased had with the prisoner.

The prisoner was found guilty. Sentence deferred.

**141 December 14 1872**

SERIOUS EXPLOSION OF GAS LIQUOR A few minutes before 11 o'clock on Friday week, a boatman named **John Renton**, employed by the Alum Works Company, Goole, and who resides at

Brotherton near Goole, was seriously injured in his boat, near the Huddersfield Gasworks, by an explosion of gas liquor. It seems a quantity of gas liquor had been pumped into the boat from the gasworks, to be conveyed to Goole, when suddenly the gas from the liquor exploded, burning Renton very severely on the face, head and neck. From enquiries at the Gasworks, the accident appears to have arisen from the man's own incautiousness, in going to the boat with a naked oil lamp before he had allowed sufficient time for the gas generated by pumping the liquor to evaporate, hence the explosion. The man was so seriously injured as to necessitate his removal to the Infirmary.

#### **142 December 14 1872**

**THE CASE OF CHILD SELLING AT LINTHWAITE** A few weeks since we recorded a case of child selling at Linthwaite, near Huddersfield. Nothing more was heard of the inhuman mother of the child till Monday, when she enquired at the Police Station as to the whereabouts of her child, and was apprehended by the directions of Superintendent Heaton.

The woman, who gave the name of Elizabeth Hackings of Blackburn, was brought up at the Huddersfield County Police Court on Monday, before G Armitage and J Beaumont Esqrs, and charged with having, at Linthwaite, in the parish of Almondbury, unlawfully abandoned and exposed a certain child under the age of two years, whereby the life of the said child was endangered.

Mr Superintendent Heaton said the prisoner was charged with selling a child under 16 months old. It appeared that on 21<sup>st</sup> November she went into a public house at Linthwaite with a child in her arms. There were a number of men drinking, one of whom said he had a boy that he would not take £400 for. Prisoner said, "I will take 5s for this child of mine". The man offered 3s and subsequently 2s 6d. The woman accepted the bargain, and delivered the child to the man, who afterwards sold it to another man for 6d : but it was afterwards returned to the first man. Nothing was heard of the woman from that time until last Monday, when she called at the Police Station, and made enquiries for the child. He apprehended her, as he thought it a most disgraceful affair; the child being left among a lot of drunken men.

Joseph Balmforth, cart driver said : On Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup> November last, I was at the Star Hotel in Linthwaite. I went there between five and six o'clock in the evening. The prisoner was at the Star Hotel when I went there. She had a child with her on her knee. She said she would sell the child for 5s. I said I had three children, and I would not take £2000 for them. She afterwards agreed to take 2s 6d for it, which I agreed to give her. I gave her 3s and she then gave me the child. She would not give me anything back out of the 3s, but paid for a quart of ale, which was drunk by the company. I went away with the child out of the house for about two minutes, and left the prisoner in the house. When I returned, I offered the prisoner the child back for 2s. She said she would not give it me, as she would get another that night. Whilst I was talking to the prisoner, a person of the name of John Brown came up and took the child from me, and said he would give me 6d for my bargain. Brown took the child away and left the prisoner in the hotel. She went away shortly after. On the following day, when I returned from my work at night, I found the child at my house. I received no money from Brown for the child. I have never seen the prisoner since until this morning. The child now produced by Amelia Dyson is the one I bought of the prisoner.

**John Brown**, boatman, said : I went into the Star Hotel, Linthwaite, on Thursday night, the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, about six o'clock in the evening. The prisoner was there. Joseph Balmforth had a child in his arms, and was talking to the prisoner. I went up to Balmforth whilst he was talking to the prisoner, and said I would take it off his hands for sixpence. I took the child from Balmforth whilst the prisoner was there, and went home with it, and gave it something to eat that night and also next morning. I gave the child to John Armitage on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November last to take it to Balmforth's. I gave Armitage fourpence for taking it.

Amelia Dyson, wife of Simeon Dyson, weaver, Golcar, said : On Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup> November last, I went to witness Balmforth's house. I asked him if he would give me the child. He gave it to me, and I have had it in my possession ever since. I produce the child I received from Balmforth.

Police-constable Wm Holmes said : I received information on Friday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November last of the sale of the child in question. I have made a diligent search in the neighbourhood and in Huddersfield for the prisoner, but have been unable to find her. I gave a description of the woman to Mr Superintendent Heaton.

Mr Sykes, the magistrates' clerk, said there was not sufficient evidence of abandonment under the statute, whereby it could be proved that the life of the child was endangered. It was not a misdemeanour at common law, and he advised the Bench not to send the case for trial.

The Chairman (to the prisoner) : Where do you come from?

Prisoner : My sisters and brothers live in Blackburn. My husband is a cotton spinner, but it is two months since I saw him. I was married at Colne Church, in Lancashire.

The Chairman : This case is a very disgraceful one, and I think it very proper that depositions have been taken. We are advised by our legal adviser that it is not a criminal thing, and we cannot send you for trial. At the same time we think it is a disgraceful thing that you should have taken a little child and disposed of it in that way. Your conduct has been unmotherly and hardhearted in the extreme. If you get the child, are you prepared to take care of it?

Prisoner said she was, and she was forthwith discharged, the child being given to her. The clerk instructed Mr Bradley to pay the prisoner's fare to Blackburn.

### 143 January 4 1873

**A MAN FOUND DROWNED IN THE CANAL** On Monday afternoon, about twenty minutes past one o'clock, the body of a man was found drowned in the canal, near the bridge crossing it at the bottom of Commercial Street, better known as "Clegg Lane". It should be stated that near this place a young man was drowned about 12 months since, and the jury who met to enquire into the cause of that death requested the coroner to write to Sir John Ramsden, or his agents, in order that the place, which was then considered dangerous, might be made secure against future accidents. In the present case, it seems that at the time above mentioned, a boatman named **Samuel Carter** of Crosland Moor, was passing along the canal with his boat when he observed the body of a man in the water. With assistance, it was got out, and the police sent for. The body proved to be that of a carpet weaver named George Hodgkinson, apparently between 50 and 60 years of age, who belonged to Kidderminster, but who had worked in this town for a considerable time, and had lodged at Primrose Hill for the last four years. The body was conveyed to the Ship Inn to await an inquest. The deceased left his lodgings on Saturday, and visited the town, and was last seen alive about nine o'clock at night, at a beerhouse in Victoria Street, kept by Midgeley Marsden. After leaving this place soon after the above hour, nothing more is known of him until his body was found in the canal on Monday afternoon. On Thursday afternoon an inquest on the body was held at the Ship Inn, before Mr W Barstoe, deputy coroner. Mr E Greenwood was the foreman of the jury. Mary Kaye, living at Primrose Hill, said the deceased had lodged with her for the past four years. He was 62 years of age, and a carpet weaver by trade. He did no work last week, and was the worse for liquor every day after Monday. John Haviland, living in Spider's Yard, Kirkgate, said he was for a long time the fellow workman of the deceased. He last saw him alive a few minutes before eight o'clock last Saturday night. Deceased was at that time the worse for drink, but he was well able to take care of himself. Mary Ann McMillan, landlady of the Saracen's Head Inn, Shorehead, said the deceased left her house about ten o'clock last Saturday night. He was alone, and that was the last time she saw him. She did not know which way he went. He was quite sober, so far as she could judge. He did not seem to be troubled about anything. Samuel Carter, a boatman living at Crosland Moor Bottom, said, on Monday afternoon about twenty minutes past four, he was coming up the canal just below Clegg Lane Bridge, when the boy called out to him that there was a man in the canal. Witness saw deceased floating in the water. He got him out, and saw that he was quite dead. Witness then sent for a policeman. Witness saw no marks of violence on the deceased's person. Police-constable William Goldthorpe said he examined the deceased about ten minutes after he was taken out of the canal. There were no marks of violence on his person, and he seemed to have been dead one or two days. There was nothing to show how he had got into the water. The jury returned

an open verdict of "Found drowned" and recommended that Sir John Ramsden should be asked to erect a fence at Clegg Lane Bridge.

#### **144 January 4 1873**

**A BOATMAN CHARGED WITH ROBBERY** At the Leeds Police Court on Thursday, **Benjamin Horn**, waterman, was charged with stealing £3 15s, the property of Mr J Hunt, canal agent and carrier, Leeds. The money had been given to the prisoner for the payment of dock dues. He had not paid them, and on being questioned by Mr Hunt as to why he had not done so, he said that a woman he had had on board had stolen the money. In reply to Mr Bruce, the prosecutor said that he had not taken out a warrant until the 9<sup>th</sup> December, although the theft had been committed some days previously. He held back because the prisoner promised to pay the money. Mr Bruce said that by doing so he had compromised the felony. The case must therefore be dismissed as that was not a court for the recovery of debts. Mr Hunt said that he had lost about £40 under similar circumstances at different times. Mr Bruce said he could not help him, and discharged the prisoner. Mr Hunt : I shall know better what to do with the next case. The prisoner was then liberated.

#### **145 January 11 1873**

**FATAL BOILER EXPLOSION NEAR BARNESLEY** On Sunday morning about nine o'clock, a boiler exploded at the New Gawber Hall Colliery, a short distance from Barnsley, by which one man was blown almost to pieces and another much injured. The colliery is the property of the Low Moor Iron Company, and at it is raised the well known Barnsley seam of coal. For working the engines there are six ordinary horizontal boilers, and it appears that one of these exploded. The only persons near the boilers at the time was a boatman named **Robert Atkinson**, whose boat, the *Reward* of Gainsborough, was lying close to the pit, but who was engaged to wheel slack and take away the ashes to and from the boilers for the day, and the engine tender, Charles O'Keith. Just as Atkinson had got near the boiler with some slack, the end of one of the outside engines burst, and he was sent with great force into the air and across the canal, alighting in a field 84 yards from the boiler shed. The poor fellow was literally smashed to pieces, his clothes stripped off, and several of his limbs torn off. O'Keith, the engine tender, was considerably hurt, but not dangerously. The body of Atkinson was removed to the Keel Inn. A good deal of damage was done to the boiler foundation, the bricks having been sent at least 200 yards in a straight line. About six years ago, a similar occurrence took place at the same colliery.

#### **146 April 11 1873**

##### **Borough Police Court**

**UNPLEASANT MIDNIGHT VISITORS** John Smith, painter, and Martin Foy, labourer, of no fixed residence, were charged with having about two o'clock on the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst feloniously and burglariously broken into and entered the dwelling house of **George Richardson** in Kirkgate, with intent to commit a felony. **Dan Richardson**, son of the prosecutor, deposed that on the night of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst, his mother went to bed about ten o'clock. He stayed up till twelve o'clock waiting for his father, who was out with his boat. He shut the door, latched it, and put a chair behind, so that he could hear when his father came. He then went to bed, leaving some spare rib on the table for his father's supper. A little before two o'clock he was awoke by his mother saying, "Dan, there are two men in the house". He went downstairs, and fetched a policeman, who came back with him. Prisoners refused to go, and the policeman took them into custody. **Maria Richardson** said her husband was a canal boatman. On the night of the 7<sup>th</sup> April, she went to bed about ten o'clock, leaving her son Dan downstairs. She awoke a little before two o'clock, and while she was thinking about her husband not having come home, she heard a cough. She went part downstairs and peeped, and saw the prisoners sat by the fire in the kitchen. She asked them who had sent them there. The big one, Smith, looked at her, then turned his head away. Neither of the prisoners spoke. Having called her son, she asked the prisoners to go three or four times, but they refused to do so. Her son went for a policeman, and prisoners were taken into custody. Before going to bed she left her husband's supper, consisting of some spare rib, potatoes and butter. She

found the prisoners had eaten all the spare rib, of which there was about two pounds. The chair which had been placed behind the door by her son was near the fire. The prisoners were total strangers to her, and she did not take in lodgers. Police-constable Winn deposed that when he apprehended the prisoners and charged them with the offence, Smith said Foy had taken him there to get him lodgings, and prisoner Foy said Smith had taken him there to get lodgings. Prisoners both made a statement to the effect that they met each other on Monday night at Huddersfield, after travelling some miles, and went into the house thinking it was a lodging house. The Bench committed them for trial at the sessions.

**147 May 10 1873**

**Brighouse**

**ACCIDENT TO A BOATMAN** On Wednesday a boatman's labourer, living in Taylor's Yard, Commercial Street, Brighouse, met with an accident while attending the clowes belonging to one of the locks in the canal. From some unexplained cause, while engaged with the clowes, his hand became jammed in the cogs, and was badly crushed. The man, whose name is **Luke Brown**, was taken to the surgery of Mr Johnson, who at once advised his removal to the Halifax Infirmary, where it was found necessary to amputate one of his fingers,

**148 May 15 1873**

**A CHILD FOUND IN THE CANAL** Yesterday, as a boatman named **Richardson**, residing in Firth Street, was engaged at No 2 lock, near Clegg Lane, Huddersfield, he observed something floating in the canal, and on further examination he found it to be the body of an infant child. The man at once communicated with the police, and the body was brought to the police office. It was there examined by Dr Pritchett, who pronounced it to be the body of a full grown child, but as it was in a state of decomposition, and there were no means of ascertaining whether or not it was born alive, he recommended that it should be buried. His instructions were accordingly obeyed.

**149 June 10 1873**

**Borough Police Court**

**UNPROVOKED ASSAULT** **Thomas Senior**, a boatman, of Goole, who did not appear, was charged with assaulting J M Hassall, manufacturer, Huddersfield, on the 31<sup>st</sup> ult. It seems that on the evening of Saturday the 31<sup>st</sup> ult, the complainant was walking along the canal bank, when he met the defendant's boat. The boy who was with the horse used abusive and obscene language, but complainant took no notice of that. On getting opposite the boat, the defendant, who was on the boat, threw a bucket of dirty water over the complainant, wetting him through and necessitating an entire change of clothing. Not the slightest provocation had been given to the defendant. The Bench fined him 10s and costs, total £1 12s 6d, or one months imprisonment.

**150 August 12 1873**

**Borough Police Court**

**A DRUNKEN MAN SELLING HIS MASTER'S HORSE** **Wm Houghton**, boatman, Longroyd Bridge, was charged with having stolen a horse (while a bailee of the same) belonging to Joshua Gibson, coal dealer, Longroyd Bridge. Prosecutor stated that prisoner was in his employ as boatman. On Thursday morning he sent the prisoner and two other men to Barnsley with a horse and two narrow boats for coal. In consequence of information he received from the police on Saturday night last, he accompanied Inspector White to the Police Office, and saw the prisoner in custody. He saw his horse in charge of the police. Prisoner had no authority to sell the horse. He expected the prisoner to return from his journey on the Saturday after he left Longroyd Bridge. He saw the boats near the Aire and Calder offices at Wakefield on Saturday. William Clayton, horse dealer, Wakefield, said on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> inst at a quarter past ten in the morning, he saw the prisoner in Wakefield offering a horse for sale to Thomas Liddel. Liddel said he did not know the value of the horse, and that witness would buy it. Prisoner asked £18 for the horse. Whilst they were bargaining for it, prisoner said he had bought it from William Green, greengrocer, Barnsley. He said he gave £17 for it. Witness ultimately bought the horse for £6. Witness suspected the man had not got the horse honestly. He took it to the Brunswick Hotel and sent for a detective officer.

Prisoner said he did not care how soon witness paid the money, as he wanted to be going. A detective officer came and took charge of the horse. William Walker Pearce, detective officer, who apprehended the prisoner, said he admitted the horse belonged to Joshua Gibson, coal dealer, Longroyd Bridge. Inspector White, who received the prisoner from the last witness, said when charged with the offence, prisoner said, "It is drink that has done it". Prisoner said he had no intention to sell the horse, but he met with a man who gave him some rum, which upset him, and after that he did not know what he did. The Bench committed the prisoner for trial at the sessions, and said they would accept competent bail.

### **151    October 14 1873**

**BREACH OF THE BYE LAWS OF THE AIRE AND CALDER NAVIGATION COMPANY** At the Dewsbury Police Court yesterday, the magistrates on the bench being Mr T F Firth, Mr W Crowther, and Mr Joshua Whittaker, **Richard Milnes**, a boatman residing at Brighouse, was charged with having on the 20<sup>th</sup> ultimo, broken the 10<sup>th</sup> bye law of the Aire and Calder Navigation Company, the said bye law directing "That no boatman shall cause the boat under his command to enter a lock without having in his possession, or using, a stern rope." Mr Ibberson, who appeared to prosecute, stated that on the 20<sup>th</sup> September about six o'clock pm, the defendant had the charge of a boat. The defendant and four of the crew were very drunk, and the former ran the boat with great violence against the locks at Mirfield. The stern ropes ought to have been used, but they were not, and thus the defendant was guilty of a breach of the 10<sup>th</sup> bye law. The magistrates ordered the defendant to pay a fine of 40s and costs, or in default of payment, undergo two months imprisonment.

### **152    October 16 1873**

**VIOLENT ASSAULTS – THROWING A MAN INTO THE ROCHDALE CANAL** At the Manchester City Police Court yesterday morning, **George Ashley**, a boatman, was charged with assaulting Thomas Ward and Mary Ward. The prisoner was mate of a barge, of which Thomas Ward was acting captain. On Tuesday morning, he left his work at the boat, which was lying in the Piccadilly basin, and in a few hours came on board again the worse for liquor. In the meantime, Ward had engaged a man to do the prisoner's work. The prisoner said Ward had no right to do this, and, as Ward was steering the boat down the basin, the prisoner took hold of him and threw him into the canal, and endeavoured to keep him down with a boat hook. Ward, however, succeeded in getting on board again, when the prisoner knocked him down and "kicked him up and down the deck". Subsequently he again threw Ward overboard, but he was got out of the water with the assistance of some men. The prisoner then came into the cabin where Mrs Ward was, struck her and kicked her. He was taken into custody in the afternoon by Police-constable Wagstaffe, who said that he met Mrs Ward in Piccadilly, bleeding from the mouth, nose and ears. Mr C H Richards, the presiding magistrate, said he could not think of disposing of the case in a summary manner. The prisoner had committed violent and unprovoked assaults upon two persons, and he would be committed for trial.

### **153    December 6 1873**

**DEATHS** On the 30<sup>th</sup> ult, aged 48 years, **Mr George Richardson**, boatman, Kirkgate.

### **154    December 19 1873**

**DEATH BY DROWNING** The body of a boatman named **William Jenkins**, aged 22, was yesterday found in the canal at Lower Aspley by **Walter Haigh**, a night scavenger in the employ of the Corporation. Haigh was loading a boat with manure, when he heard a splash as if a man had fallen off a boat. Nothing was seen of the body until the canal was dragged about one o'clock yesterday. He was last seen about ten minutes past 11 o'clock at night, when he was thought to be drunk. The body was taken to the Saracen's Head Inn, where it awaits an inquest.

**155 February 3 1874**

**A BOY DROWNED NEAR BRIGHOUSE** On Sunday afternoon, a boy 15 years of age named **Joseph Clay**, son of **Henry Clay**, boatman, Park Street, Brighouse, was drowned in the canal near Anchor Pits, in the hamlet of Bradley. It seems the deceased and several other boys were playing near a narrow shoot or bridge, over which the coal trucks from Bradley Wood Pit are run for the purpose of loading the boats. While attempting to turn the wheel on which the rope runs, the spring fastening gave way, and the lad being caught by the wheel, he was hurled off the shoot and fell a depth of six yards into the water, and was instantly drowned. His companions raised an alarm, when Joseph Hebblethwaite and Parker Nutter, who live close by, after a search of three quarters of an hour, found the body and sent to Bradley for the Huddersfield Borough Police, in whose division the accident occurred. Before their arrival, two Brighouse officers appeared and had the body removed to the house of the boy's father. An inquest will therefore be held on view of the body at Brighouse.

**156 March 14 1874**

**NARROW ESCAPE FROM DROWNING** At a late hour on Saturday night, a man named **Joseph Boocock**, apparently about 36 or 40 years of age, who is a boatman's labourer, experienced a narrow escape of his life. The circumstances appear to be these. The man had been drinking, and while attempting to get on board a boat that was lying in the canal basin, he missed his footing and fell into the water. How long he remained in is not known, but about eleven o'clock at night, information was given to Police-constable Samuel Crow, who was on duty at Aspley, and that officer hastened to the place, and there found that the man had been got out of the filthy water, and a person named Wm Whitwam was holding his head up on the canal bank. The constable ran to the police office for assistance. Police-sergeant John Nutton immediately communicated with Mr Pritchett, surgeon and medical officer of health for the borough, by whose advice Boocock was removed to the parade room at the police station, where circulation of blood was with great difficulty restored. The man was carefully conveyed to the Infirmary, in a cab, about seven o'clock on Sunday night.

**157 March 28 1874**

**DEATHS** On the 15<sup>th</sup> inst, aged 30 years, **Mr Joseph Boocock**, canal boatman, Infirmary.

**158 April 25 1874**

**DEATHS** On the 18<sup>th</sup> instant, Margaret, wife of **Mr John Doud**, boatman, Dock Street.

**159 May 2 1874**

**Huddersfield Borough Police Court**

**FIGHTING IN LEEDS ROAD** **Richard Henry Whitwham**, boatman, Horseshoe Yard, and Bill Taylor, gas stoker, Castlegate, were charged with collecting a crowd by fighting and brawling in Leeds Road; and Richard Langton, labourer, of no fixed residence, was charged with aiding and abetting the same. Police-constable Paxman stated that a little after four o'clock on Sunday afternoon, he was on duty in Castlegate, in company with Police-constables Winn and Johnson. He received information that some parties were fighting in Leeds Road. He then proceeded, with the other officers, in that direction, and at a distance of 50 yards they saw a crowd of several hundred people. As soon as the cry of police was raised, the prisoners gave up fighting and ran away. They caught Whitwham near the bridge, and he was without a shirt. They afterwards received information that Taylor had hid himself in a cellar dwelling. He (witness) found the door locked and opened it with great difficulty. They then found Taylor without a shirt, and wearing nothing but his trousers. Prisoners were very drunk at the time. Police-constable Johnson stated that he was on duty with the other officer on Sunday afternoon. From information he received, he apprehended Langton, whose hands were much besmeared with blood. Two women, respectively named Mrs Elliott and Mrs Walker, living in Leeds Road, spoke to seeing Whitwham and Taylor fighting, and Langton picking one of them up, wiping his face, and saying, "Go into him, I will keep time for

you". Prisoners Whitwham and Taylor pleaded guilty, and said they were drunk; Langton, on the contrary, said he was not guilty and was sober. The Bench fined each of the defendants 10s and 5s 10d costs; in default of payment to be committed for 14 days.

**160 May 28 1874**

**Borough Police Court**

**GAMBLING Wm Hyde**, boatman of Manchester, was charged by Police-constable Beaumont with gambling at Aspley Place on the 26<sup>th</sup> instant. The officer stated that he found the defendant gambling on the previous evening opposite Dyson's stables. The charge was admitted and, it being a first offence, a fine of 2s 6d was inflicted.

**161 June 5 1874**

**BOY DROWNED IN THE CANAL** Yesterday afternoon, shortly after one o'clock, a boy named George Edwards, aged thirteen, residing with his parents in Bradford Road, was drowned in the canal opposite the yard of Mr James Brooke, marble mason and ironmonger, Leeds Road. It appears that Edwards, who was in the employ of Mr Brooke, was in the habit of bathing in the canal with other lads, and yesterday afternoon he went into the water with two of his companions. He appears to have got amongst the mud, and not being able to swim, he was unable to reach the side. One of the workmen was proceeding to his assistance, when a canal boat dragged by horses came up, and refused to hold back although requested, when some distance off, to do so. As we are informed, the boatmen were told that a body was being got out of the water, but for some unexplained reason they maintained their course, and the workman who had so bravely gone to the rescue was obliged to put back, to save himself. About ten minutes elapsed before the body was got out, and before Mr Knagg's assistant arrived some 20 minutes more were wasted. A galvanic battery was then applied, but without effect, and the body was thereafter conveyed to the boy's home in Bradford Road, to await an inquest.

**162 June 9 1874**

**BOY DROWNED AND INQUEST – SHOCKING INHUMANITY OF A BOATMAN** Yesterday morning, an enquiry was held before Mr William Bairstow, coroner, and a jury of which Mr George Rayner was foreman, touching the death of George Edwards, aged thirteen years, who was drowned while bathing in the Huddersfield Canal on Thursday in last week, under circumstances that were stated in Saturday's *Chronicle*. The jury having viewed the body on Friday evening to allow of its interment the following day, evidence was addressed yesterday, an epitome of which is appended.

Jane Hughes, Hebble Terrace, aunt of the deceased, identified the body as that of her nephew, who had no parents, his father, Richard Edwards, and mother being both dead. The deceased was 13 years of age, and was an errand boy for Mr Brooke, marble mason &c.

John Coney, thirteen years of age, of Leeds Road, was bathing with the deceased and James Henry Sykes, another boy, on Thursday afternoon. The deceased was walking out into the water and suddenly dropped over head, and caught at the witness, who was able to swim, to save himself. The deceased could not swim, and seized hold of witness, pulling him down under water twice. A man named Edward Salthouse, who works for Mr Brooke, went into the water to get deceased out. A boat was coming past, and Ned had to get out of the water to save himself. The man with the boat stopped the horse when witness and others shouted to him, and in a short time drove the horse on again. After the boat passed, Salthouse got the deceased out of the water.

At this point Mr Greenwood, canal engineer, informed the jury that the boat belonged to the Aire and Calder Navigation, was a narrow one, and loaded with corn, but the driver was a hired man, and it was possible **Swift** was not steering.

James Henry Sykes corroborated the evidence of Coney.

Edward Salthouse said he worked for Mr Brooke, marble mason, and was at the top of the yard about one o'clock on Thursday afternoon last, when Isaac Hammond, who works at the same place, told him the boy was drowning in the canal. He immediately ran down, undressing as he went, and plunged into the water. He dived three times in search of the body, and seeing a boat coming up the

canal, he shouted out twice, and lifted both hands to signal the boat to stop. The driver did stop the horse, but a voice from the boat called out "Go on", and the driver went on with the horse. The witness again shouted out, "Stop, stop, there is a lad in the water drowning". The man in charge of the horse again stopped, when the voice from the boat again called out, "Go on", and accompanied it with swearing. When the boat was within a yard and a half from the witness, the latter was forced to get out of the way of it to save his own life, before which the witness had felt the deceased "click" at his leg. As the boat passed over where the deceased was found, the man on the boat called out, "He's drowned now; he's dead enough now". Immediately after the boat had passed, witness found the body, and on getting it out he took it in his arms and carried it to Brooke's side of the canal, and gave it to Wm McDuff and Jim Crowther, but he did not see what means were adopted to restore him.

In reply to the Coroner, the witness said it was Isaac Hammond that gave him the first alarm of the boy being in the water.

In reply to Mr Greenwood, the witness said he went under water three times to search for the body before he saw the boat, which was then below Heppenstall's dyeworks, near the gasworks.

The Foreman of the Jury thought this evidence ought not to be taken unless Swift, the captain of the boat, was present.

The Coroner replied that that could only be done by adjourning the enquiry and having Swift, or the steersman, present.

Mr Greenwood, in reply to the Coroner, said the name of the man that was steering could be ascertained by writing to the agent at Wakefield, Mr G B Atkinson, Aire and Calder Navigation.

The Witness continued : When he first saw the boat, he shouted out at the top of his voice, "Stop, stop, there's a lad in the water, drowning". The boat was then 100 yards off, and could easily have been stopped. Although the horse stopped twice, the boat never stopped at all, and it could have been brought to a stand in 30 yards. The witness could wade the canal at any part near that place. Witness believed the deceased was not dead when he was got out of the water.

William McDuff said he saw the last witness go into the water. He took the body from him after he had found it in the water. He believed the lad was alive at the time, because he noticed the hands of the deceased move. The witness held the deceased up by the heels while other persons rubbed the body down, and did all they could to bring the lad round. Both water and dirt flowed from the deceased's mouth. Brandy was given to the deceased, but he could not swallow it. A doctor was sent for about a quarter of an hour afterwards, but the boy was then dead. Several persons were on the canal bank, and shouted to a boat which was coming up the canal to stop, as a lad was drowning. The boat was then 100 yards below the place, but did not stop. The witness Salthouse called to the boat to stop twice, but the man on the boat took no notice of it. The man with the horse stopped twice, when the man who was steering cried out, "Go on". When the boat was passing over the place where the body was found, the steersman remarked, "He's drowned enough, he's dead enough now". If the boat had stopped when first called to, the witness had no doubt but that the lad would have been living now. Between the time of hailing the boat and the body being got out, two or three minutes had elapsed. Witness saw the deceased move his hands. Witness further believed that if proper appliances and assistance had been at hand when the lad was got out of the water, life would have been saved.

Mr Beevers, also in the employ of Mr Brooke, corroborated the foregoing evidence, and in reply to the foreman and jury stated that the boy Edwards and others were constantly in the habit of bathing in the canal, and had done so every day that week up to Thursday, notwithstanding the constant caution given to them not to do so. On Wednesday, the day before the accident, the boys were driven out of the water by the workmen at Mr Brookes's. He believed that but for the boat proceeding as it did, the lad would have been at his work that day (Monday).

The witness Salthouse was recalled, and reiterated his former statement, explaining that what he meant by diving was that he went under water with his head, and the lad was only a few yards from where he had "clicked" as his (Salthouse's) leg, before the passing of the boat over where the body was found.

A short conversation here ensued among the jury as to the necessity of having the captain of the boat present before any censure was passed upon him, at the conclusion of which the foreman enquired if there was anything so far that would criminally affect the captain of the boat.

The Coroner : Not at all. However inhuman the man may have acted, there was no criminality about it. The jury would have to be satisfied that this boatman had, by his "gross negligence" been guilty of the boy's death, and that there was sufficient and fair evidence to warrant a verdict of manslaughter. For his own part, taking all the circumstances into consideration, and putting the most stringent points in the case, if they brought in a verdict of manslaughter it would break down at the assizes.

The room was then cleared, and the jury, after deliberating for 20 minutes, the coroner was readmitted into the room, when he found that the jury considered they would not be doing their duty if the enquiry was now closed, and that it would be more satisfactory to them if the steersman of the boat were present to hear any remarks that might be made about his want of humanity. The enquiry was then adjourned till Monday afternoon next, at five o'clock.

### **163 June 16 1874**

**ALLEGED INHUMAN CONDUCT OF A BOATMAN** Last night, the adjourned inquest was held at the Fitzwilliam Hotel, touching the death of George Edwards, a boy 13 years of age, who resided with his uncle and aunt in Edwards Buildings, Bradford Road, who met his death by drowning in the canal, near the gasworks, under circumstances detailed in last week's Chronicle.

Mr William Barstow, Coroner, presided, and Mr George Rayner was Foreman of the Jury. The first witness called was:

Isaac Hammond, Marble Mason, in the employ of Mr Brooks. After partaking of dinner on the day of the accident, he heard that a boy was in the water and went and told Salthouse of it, who stripped and went into the water for the deceased, but he did not see him in the water, as he stopped at the top of the yard and shut the gates to prevent the public rushing down the yard.

Hiram Ellam, aged 16 years, employed at Brook's, stated that he saw the deceased in the water, and, after seeing him go down for the third time, he ran for a straight edge to give to Coney: but, on getting back with it, Coney was out of the water. Witness then went to tell deceased's aunt, and when he came back he saw a boat coming up the canal and shouted, "Hey, stop the boat". The horse stopped a bit, and he heard a word which came from the direction of the boat, but could not tell what it was, and immediately the horse went on again. Just before the boat reached where the boy was found, Salthouse called out "He's here" and immediately afterwards had to get out of the way of the boat, and it passed up the canal.

Salthouse was again recalled, and in reply to the jury said that, to his knowledge, he never said, while in the water, before the boat passed, "He's here" or anything of that kind, until after he had got out of the water. As near as he could judge, he was in the water five or six minutes before he found the body of the deceased. He reiterated his former evidence as to his shouting out to the boatmen to stop, and the horse stopped on both occasions, and that a voice from the direction of the boat called out "Go on", the latter time accompanied with swearing. He had no doubt that if he could have got the deceased out of the water when he felt the boy "click" at his (the witness's leg) he would have been got out alive, and before the boat passed over him.

The Foreman said that, after consulting and weighing over all the circumstances, the jury said they could not see that there was any criminality on the part of the boatmen; but the jury would like to hear what they had to say.

The Coroner acquiesced, and

**Jabez Marsden**, driver of the horse drawing the boat in question, being called in, said – He remembered coming to Huddersfield on a Thursday week, but did not see any men in the water. He heard someone call out "There is a lad drowning in the cut". He slackened the horse for the boat to stop, but it did not stop at all. He (witness) stopped the boat a second time, but only slackened the line to clear the rings on the side of the canal.

In reply to the foreman, witness said the captain of the boat told him to "Go on" twice, and keep his

line clear of the rings for fear of pulling the boat over. His intention was to stop when the captain ordered him to "Go on". Had there been any danger of the boat being drawn over, he could have turned his horse round and unhooked the rope from the horse. He did not see anyone put his hand in the water. Someone on the canal bank called out for him to stop the horse. The boat could have been stopped by the captain in about 20 yards, but he altered the course of the boat by keeping nearer to the towing path side.

**John Swift**, the captain of the boat driven by the last witness, said that he did not hear anyone call out to stop the boat on the afternoon in question. He did not hear anyone say a boy was drowning. He knew nothing about it until he got up to a man in the canal and thought he was bathing. No one said anything to him until he saw three women standing at the bottom of the yard, that said "a poor lad was drowned". In reply to the jury, he said the man stopped his horse and he told the man to "Go on". The driver did not tell him what he stopped for. He called out to the driver to go on, for fear of danger to the boat, or the line becoming foul of the bank. He could not see beyond the length of the boat, because he had a heavy top load on it. The witness was not aware that he said "If he's not dead before, he's dead enough now". In passing up the canal between Huddersfield and Wakefield, they met many scores of people bathing in the water, and they call out to them all sorts of remarks. At the speed the boat was going it was impossible to stop without danger.

At the conclusion of this evidence, the jury again requested the room to be cleared in order to consult as to their verdict. After a consultation of nearly half an hour, and being readmitted into the room, the Foreman said, the jury, after due consideration, had come to a unanimous verdict that George Edwards was "Accidentally drowned", But the jury wished to express an opinion that they could not exonerate the boatmen from blame, and they wished the Coroner to call them before the jury and to give them some caution as to their future conduct. The jury further unanimously concluded that Salthouse was highly commendable for his endeavours to save the life of the lad, and that he deserved the thanks of the jury for the manner in which he exerted himself on that occasion.

The two boatmen, Marsden and Swift, were then called into the room, when the Coroner informed them of the verdict of the jury, and the terms in which it was couched, adding that on the first occasion the case assumed a serious complexion for one or both of them, but from their own explanations that complexion had been somewhat altered. Still the jury did not think them free from blame, and thought it would have been much better if the boat had been stopped, and they (the boatmen) had waited the result of a search for the deceased before they had proceeded with the boat.

Salthouse was then called into the room and complimented by the Foreman, on behalf of the jury, for the manner in which he had tried to rescue the deceased boy.

#### **164 June 16 1874**

#### **Borough Police Court**

**EMBEZZLEMENT James Ellis**, boatman, was brought up on a warrant, charged with embezzling 15s 4 1/2d, the property of a waterman named **John Richardson** of Colne Road, Huddersfield. The evidence went to show that on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, prosecutor entrusted prisoner with the money which he was to convey to Mirfield to **Wm Richardson**, son of the prosecutor. The money was intended to pay for the canal dues on two boats at Mirfield, and also the prisoner's railway fare to the later place, and the prisoner was to receive half a day's wages when he brought the boats back to Huddersfield. Prosecutor never afterwards saw the prisoner until that morning. He had not brought back the boats, nor had he returned the money. After waiting some time in vain for the money, the prosecutor's son was obliged to leave one of the boats at Mirfield. On Saturday the 13<sup>th</sup> inst, Police-constable Firth Jagger apprehended the prisoner at the Plough Boy, Paddock. In answer to the charge he then offered to pay back the money. The prisoner said he was very sorry. He had been twice previously convicted, and was committed to take his trial at the sessions.

#### **165 August 1 1874**

#### **Brighouse**

**NARROW ESCAPE FROM DROWNING** On Wednesday night, **George Fenton**, boatman of

Brighouse, experienced a narrow escape of his life. It seems the man had been at Rastrick, where he had partaken of several pints of beer. On leaving that place, a little the worse for liquor, he proceeded on board his boat, which was laying in the north cut. Having gained the deck, he sat down on the boat rail to rest himself, and while in that position he overbalanced himself, and fell backwards into the water. Finding himself in the water, he shouted out most vociferously, and his noise attracted the attention of some men in Brighouse Wood who, on going to the spot, discovered Fenton floundering in the canal. As speedily as possible, he was rescued in an almost exhausted state, and without delay conveyed to his home.

## 166    **October 5 1874**

THE EXPLOSION AT REGENTS PARK, LONDON    On Saturday, Dr Hardwicke, the deputy coroner for the central district of Middlesex, opened the inquest upon the bodies of the captain of the Tilbury, **Charles Baxter, William Taylor**, and another man unknown, who formed the crew of the ill fated barge which exploded on Friday.

The Regent's Canal Company was represented by Mr Meadows White, barrister, instructed by Messrs Ellis and Ellis; and Edwin Rogers, the engineer of the company, was also present. The Grand Junction Canal Company was represented by Mr Roscoe, of the firm of Field, Roscoe and Co, and the gentlemen connected with that company present were Mr Mercer, the secretary, Mr Rogers, a director, and Mr Hughes, the traffic manager. Mr Thomas Sampson, solicitor to the Portland Building Society, represented some of the sufferers; Major Majendie, her Majesty's Inspector of Gunpowder Works, and Major Ford, of the Royal Artillery, attended on behalf of the Home Office.

The jury, of which Mr Henry Chaplain of Paddington Street, was foreman, was sworn at a quarter past twelve o'clock.

The Coroner said : Gentlemen, with regard to this fatal case of explosion, we shall proceed to the identification of the bodies, and simply open the case. There is a great deal to prepare, and much evidence to be obtained, so that it is impossible to proceed further than this. Therefore so far we shall proceed, and no further. The sitting shall be very short, and we shall adjourn the case until Monday at twelve o'clock, or if you like, eleven.

The Foreman : We shall arrange that among ourselves.

The jury then proceeded to view the bodies.

Mr Sampson, whilst the jury were absent, said : Will you allow me, Mr Coroner, to mention that it is intended to open a subscription on behalf of the poor sufferers by the accident. Dr Allen has consented to accept contributions, and I intend to mention it to the police magistrate who, I think I am justified in saying, will also receive subscriptions.

On the return of the jury in the course of a few minutes, the case of **William Taylor**, the assistant boatman, was taken up.

Coroner (to witness) : What is your name?

Witness : **William Awl**.

Where do you live? Brandstowne (*sic*), Northamptonshire.

What was Taylor? A labourer on the boat.

When did you see him last? Yesterday morning, at Camden Town, at half past four.

How old was Taylor? I don't know his age. He was about 25 or 26. He was a single man.

What was he doing when you saw him? The boat was waiting at the top lock. We were pulling our boat through the top lock. I belong to the *Limehouse* boat, which was also sunk.

What was Taylor's boat doing? It was lying above the lock in tow by the *Readie* – the steam tug.

What had he on his boat? A general cargo. I did not know what it was.

What was the name of the boat? The *Tilbury*.

How many other boats got through? The *Readie* and the *Jane* had got through. The *Dee* was abutting the *Tilbury* in front.

They went through in pairs? Yes, we go in pairs.

Did you see nothing more of them? We were hanging on behind, and went on behind to the bridge

where the explosion was.  
What time did you get there? About five or six minutes to five.  
Tell us what you saw? I never saw anything after Camden Town top lock. I was in the cabin, and had just undressed and got to bed.  
What happened? I have no opinion, unless it was the lightning.  
What became of the boat? She sank.  
You heard the explosion and felt it. What happened to the boat, was it shivered to pieces? Yes, it was knocked all to pieces.  
Where were you sent to? I was knocked out of bed against the stove or fireplace.  
Did you lose your senses? Yes.  
How long before you came to? I don't know, I was in the water.  
I am asking you about Taylor. I saw nothing more of him.  
When did you last see him? At the Camden Town top lock.  
Who told you he was one of the sufferers? I knew that.  
When did you find out that he was? It was an hour or so before we knew what boat it was.  
You have seen the body here? Yes.  
And you identify it as Taylor? Yes.  
Has he any relatives? Yes, his father and mother work for Price and Co at Brierley Hill.  
The Foreman : When you last saw him he was in his own boat?  
Witness : Yes.  
Coroner : Was there a fire in your grate?  
Witness : A small bit.  
Did you see any spark come from the steam tug? Not to come that distance.  
Have you seen them fly from the chimney? Yes, but they don't get more than two or three yards.  
A Juror : Do you think the draft would drive them further as the tug went through the bridge?  
Witness : No, it was still morning.  
What order were the boats in? First the *Readie*, then the *Jane*, then the *Dee*, then the *Limehouse*, and the last was the *Hawksbury*.  
A Juror : Was there any fire on the *Tilbury*?  
The Coroner : Don't ask him more than he is likely to know.  
How were you saved? I got in the water, but I did not know how I got there.  
John Hill was next examined.  
Where do you live? 26 Brunswick Road, Upper Holloway. I work in a brick field.  
Do you know Buxton? Yes, I have known him for the last six or seven years.  
What was he? He was the captain of the *Tilbury*.  
How long had he been captain? I cannot say.  
How old was he? About 35 or 36.  
Was he a married man? Yes.  
Where did he live? At Loughborough; he has a family.  
When did you see him last? On Thursday night about eight in the evening.  
What was he doing? He was loading his barge.  
What with? With goods, I think.  
What did you see? Bags and casks of all sorts.  
Did you know what was in them? No.  
You thought they were goods of all kinds? Yes.  
Did you know if there was any gunpowder there? No.  
When you heard of the accident did you go up? Yes.  
When? At about twelve o'clock yesterday.  
You heard of his death then I suppose? Yes.  
What were you told? I was told he was drowned.  
Were you told there was an explosion? Yes.  
You went up? Yes.

Where? I went up to the canal.

Were you engaged to drag? I was wanted to help to shift the goods out of the boat, and whilst I was doing so I felt him.

Where did you discover the body? Just under the cabin of the *Limehouse*.

Did you understand he was in the *Limehouse*? Yes.

Was the body in the water? Yes.

You know the body was got out and put on the stretcher and taken away? I do.

You have seen the body here at this dead house? Yes.

That body is that of Charles Baxter? It is.

You are sure of it? Yes.

Coroner : Are you satisfied so far, gentlemen, in the identification of the bodies?

Foreman : We are.

A Juror : I presume we shall have an opportunity of seeing this last witness again. There is a phase of the case he may be able to elucidate.

Coroner : Yes, but not the first one. The orders for the burial will be given today. Can anyone identify the third body?

There was no answer to the coroner's enquiry.

The Coroner : Now, gentlemen, the question is as to the time of your adjournment. It is for you to say Monday; or if you like Tuesday or Wednesday. Wednesday would, I think, be the better day, as it would give an extra day for the gathering of the evidence of witnesses. If you like, then, I shall say Wednesday at twelve o'clock.

The jury agreed to this proposition.

The Coroner then said : I wish to announce here that Major Majendie, Inspector of Gunpowder Works, is willing to attend here at the adjourned sitting of the court. Major Tyler, of the War Office, will also attend. Mr Meadows White, counsel for the Regent's Canal Company, is here. Mr Haynes, solicitor, is here on behalf of the owners, leaseholders and tenants &c of the property which has been destroyed. Mr Roscoe acts for the Grand Junction Canal Company; Mr Mercer and Mr Rogers also belong to the Canal Company. Mr Edwin Thomas, engineer to the Company is here.

The Coroner having repeated the announcement made by Mr Sampson at the commencement of the proceedings,

The enquiry was adjourned to Wednesday next, at 12 o'clock.

### **167 November 10 1874**

A TODMORDEN MAN FOUND DROWNED IN THE AIRE AND CALDER CANAL Yesterday morning, Mr Thomas Taylor, coroner of Wakefield, held an inquest at the Bull's Head Inn, Ravensthorpe, touching the circumstances attending the death of **John Southwell**, a boatman from Todmorden, whose body was found in the Aire and Calder Canal at Ravensthorpe on Saturday last, by **Samuel Whiteley**, a boatman who was following his employment at the time he espied the body floating on the surface of the water. The verdict of the jury was "Found drowned, the deceased having probably fallen into the water on the evening of the 4<sup>th</sup> inst.

### **168 June 15 1876**

#### **Borough Police Court**

BOATMEN QUARRELLING **Thomas Fisher** was summoned for assaulting **Robert Dawson**, both watermen. Complainant stated that defendant refused to let him load his boat one morning, and because he (Dawson) got assistance, the defendant threatened to throw him into the canal, and taking complainant by the throat threatened to knock his eyes out. Defendant said that complainant removed his (Dawson's) boat, which was damaged, and would have to be docked to be repaired. A witness named Greenwood gave evidence showing that complainant had a right to remove the defendant's boat for the purpose of loading or unloading. Fisher said complainant turned his boat adrift. Defendant was fined 2s 6d and expenses 10s 6d.

**169 July 4 1874**

**Borough Police Court**

**A BOATMAN AND HIS HORSE Robert Dyson**, a boatman, Huddersfield, was charged with cruelly ill-treating a horse he was driving on the towing path on the Huddersfield Canal on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May. F Hengus, commercial traveller, Manchester, deposed that he was travelling on the railway from Huddersfield to Kirkburton, when he saw a boatman beating a horse with a stick. The horse was on the towing path of the canal, and was attached to a boat on the canal. The horse pulled the boat all right for two or three minutes, and yet the man continued to beat the animal severely, so that it pulled vigorously on the other side and fell into the canal. Witness could not swear that the defendant was that man, but another witness would be called for that. Wm Carter, from Sale, an officer of the Royal Humane Society, London, deposed that, in consequence of instructions from the society named, he came to Huddersfield to investigate a charge of cruelty to a horse which was made in a letter to one of the Huddersfield papers. He saw Detective Paxman and went with him to Mr Greenwood, canal engineer, and obtained information through which they ascertained the whereabouts of the defendant Dyson. They then saw Dyson, who said it was himself who hit the horse on the occasion in question, because it would not draw; there were two men, he said, on the boat, and he was driving the horse, which belonged to the Corporation; he hoped they would be as lenient with them as possible. Detective Paxman confirmed the statement of the last witness. The defendant himself explained that the horse would not stand severely beating, indeed did not require it, a switch would be quite sufficient to make it go, and he denied doing more than that to it. The Bench fined the defendant £1 and £1 16s expenses, total £2 16s, or in default two months imprisonment in Wakefield House of Correction.

**170 September 29 1876**

**DROWNED IN THE RIVER CALDER** Yesterday at the White Cross Inn, Bradley, an inquest was held by the Coroner, Mr Barstow, touching the death of **William Kilner** of Huddersfield, a boatman aged 24 years, who was drowned at Kirklees Lock, in the River Calder, on Monday last.

**James Hinchcliffe**, Huddersfield said : I am a boatman, and knew the deceased. We were in charge of a boat about Monday noon, at Kirklees Lock. I was driving the horse, and deceased was alone on the boat steering. I saw Kilner at the tiller just as the boat was entering the lock, and as soon as the boat got into the lock, I missed deceased. I felt sure he must have fallen into the water, as I could not find him. I then told the canal lock-keeper of the event. Deceased had had two or three pints of beer, but appeared quite able to do his work. I think he must have overbalanced himself.

Emma Richardson, Huddersfield, said : The deceased is my brother, and is 24 years of age. He generally lived in Huddersfield, and had been a boatman six years.

Police-constable W Green said : I was present when deceased was pulled out of the water, near Kirklees Lock, on the 26<sup>th</sup> inst.

John Dransfield said : I washed the body, and found no marks of violence.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

**171 September 29 1876**

**FOUND DEAD ON THE CANAL EMBANKMENT** An inquest was held yesterday in the house of Mr Thompson, Bull and Mouth Inn, before Mr Barstow, relative to the death of **Wright Brown**, a boatman aged 41 years, who was found in a dying state on the canal embankment at Folly Hall on Tuesday evening.

John Haigh, Slaithwaite, coal dealer, said : The deceased is my brother-in-law, Wright Brown, and was 41 years of age. Deceased was a canal boatman, and had no fixed residence. Deceased had never been married. I last saw him alive three weeks ago last Saturday. Deceased had suffered from asthma some years, he had been very bad this last 18 months, and had to go to the poorhouse on account of the complaint last winter. I have given him an allowance because he was unwell. He was going to a boat on the night of his death, and I suppose he began to cough, was choked, and fell down dead. For the last few weeks he had been going with his brother with Joshua Gibson's boat.

**Arthur Armitage**, canal officer, Chapel Hill, said : I knew the deceased, but was not aware of his

name. I last saw him alone about ten minutes to seven o'clock on Tuesday night. He was leaving the watch house, and went down the canal embankment. I spoke to him, and he did not seem perfectly right.

By a juryman : Did he appear sober?

Witness : Yes, he seemed sober, but not well in health. He was alone, and walked slowly. I have known deceased as a different man some years ago, when he was in good health.

Mark Hirst, watchman, Marsden, said : I found the deceased on the canal embankment, about a quarter to eight on Tuesday evening. He was lying on his back on the ground, not far from the Engine Bridge. He appeared to be dead. I went on my knees and listened for his breathing, but could not hear anything. I could not see any marks of violence, and his clothes were quite straight. I went for the police. Deceased was quite warm, and I thought he had only just died before my arrival at the place.

Police-constable Ford said : A little before eight o'clock on Tuesday evening, the last witness came to me and stated that there was a man on the canal embankment who was either drunk or dead, as he could not make anything of him. I went with him to the place, and we removed the deceased in a handcart to the police station, where Dr Irvine was called to attend him. There were no signs of life in the deceased when I saw him. There was not a quarter of an hour elapsed from the finding of the body to the time I had it at the police station. The doctor said the deceased was dead. There were no marks of violence or injury to account for the death of the deceased.

The jury returned a verdict of "Found dead on the canal embankment; that there was no marks of injury or violence on deceased's body, and that he died from natural causes".

## **172 March 9 1877**

**FOUND DROWNED IN THE CANAL – THE INQUEST** Yesterday forenoon an inquest was held at the Royal Hotel, Longroyd Bridge, before Mr Barstow, coroner, touching the death of Rachel Walker aged 12 years, who was found floating in the canal on Tuesday afternoon.

The first witness examined was Edmund Walker, fitter, Crimble, father of the deceased. He deposed that the child was not engaged in any employment, and was usually of a timid nature. He last saw her at half past six on Monday evening. He said that he was aware that a woman named Mrs Wood had charged deceased with taking some coppers from a drawer in her house. Witness asked deceased about it, but she denied having done so. Mrs Wood also told witness that she threatened to send for the police for the deceased. The witness could not assign any reason why the deceased should leave her house on that afternoon except being frightened by the thought of being given into the hands of the police.

Mary Wood, the woman in question, was then examined, and in reply to the coroner, she said that she went into the deceased's house on Tuesday morning to speak to her (deceased) about 2d which had been taken from a drawer in her house on the previous day. The deceased on that occasion was alone, and told the witness that she had bought oranges and marbles with the money, and appeared to be in fear lest her parents should come to hear about it. The witness then said to her that she would tell no one but the police.

A young woman named Martha Shaw, Hill Top, Paddock, on being examined, said she, in company with others, saw the deceased on the 6<sup>th</sup> inst about one pm, walking down the side of the canal opposite Britannia Mill. She at first walked slowly then fast, and occasionally turned round as if being conscious of being pursued by someone. This was about three miles from her residence.

**James Lawton**, Low Field, Longroyd-bridge, boatman, gave evidence showing that he found the deceased floating about eight yards below the lock.

This concluded the evidence, and the Coroner, in summing up, remarked upon the absence of any testimony to show that the act was deliberate on the part of the deceased, and that there would be nothing left for the jury but to return an open verdict.

The jury accordingly returned an open verdict, adding that there was no evidence to show how the deceased got drowned. They were also of opinion that the woman, Mary Wood, deserved to be severely censured for the way in which she intimidated the deceased, in telling her that she would

inform the police concerning the twopence.

**173 March 13 1877**

**EXPLOSION OF PETROLEUM AT MILNSBRIDGE  
ONE CHILD KILLED AND THREE OTHERS INJURED**

About 9.30 pm on Saturday night, an explosion took place in the house of a boatman named **Joseph Gee**, residing at Milnsbridge, and the circumstances which surround the case fully illustrate the carelessness with which people sometimes handle explosive matter. It appears that Gee's wife was, on the occasion we refer to, engaged in filling a petroleum lamp with oil, while at the same time her daughter Elizabeth, aged ten years, held a lighted candle close by. There were also four other children standing near the table. By some means at present unexplained, the lamp exploded with a loud noise, setting the house and the children on fire. So loud was the explosion that the neighbours were attracted to the scene, and were it not for their efforts in speedily extinguishing the flames, the consequences might have been something fearful. As it was, the girl Elizabeth was so fearfully burned that she died at six pm last night. The other children – Frederick, aged four years, Horace, aged eight years and Jane, aged six years - were severely burned, and of the first, no hopes are held out of his recovery. Dr Jones, Milnsbridge, was in attendance immediately, and did all that medical skill could devise to avert the fatal consequences we have already referred to. Mrs Gee was also burned about the hands and arms. On being questioned as to where she purchased her oil, she said she bought it at the shop of William Pearson, on the previous Saturday night.

**174 March 14 1877**

**THE EXPLOSION OF PETROLEUM AT MILNSBRIDGE** The sufferers by the explosion of petroleum in the house of **Joseph Gee**, boatman, Milnsbridge, on Saturday night were as follows :- Elizabeth, the girl who died on Sunday night; Fred, aged four years, who died on Monday afternoon at one o'clock; Mrs Gee, their mother, who still suffers severely from the burns on her hands and arms; Horace, a boy aged eight years, who is improving nicely; and Isaac, aged six years, who is nearly well again. This was the report given yesterday afternoon; today (Wednesday) the inquest will be held, when it is expected a searching enquiry will be made as to the purity or otherwise of the petroleum that exploded.

**175 March 15 1877**

**THE FATAL EXPLOSION AT MILNSBRIDGE** Last evening an inquest was held by Mr William Barstow, coroner, at the Armitage Arms, Milnsbridge, before a jury of whom Mr Richard Heaton was foreman, touching the deaths of Elizabeth Gee, aged ten years, and Fred Gee, aged four years, children of **Joseph Gee**, boatman, Milnsbridge, the former of whom died at six o'clock on Sunday evening, and the latter at one o'clock on Monday afternoon, from injuries sustained by the explosion of petroleum oil in a lamp on Saturday night at 9.30, whilst it was being filled by Ann Gee, the mother of the deceased, the children standing round, as recorded in Tuesday's *Daily Chronicle*.

**Ann Gee**, wife of Joseph Gee of Milnsbridge, Linthwaite, canal boatman, and mother of the deceased children, said she was at her sister's on Saturday night, and got home at nine. When she got in, she asked the eldest boy why the lamp was out, and he said the oil was done, and they had put it out. The lamp was burning when she went to her sister's. Witness then asked Elizabeth to light a candle, and she said there was none. Witness then said strike a match, and she struck it on the oven door. Witness went to the cellar head and got the tin bottle of lamp oil, and came with it to the table, where the lamp was, near the oven. Elizabeth came with the match to within nine inches of the lamp. Witness was then teeming the oil into the lamp, and would have poured about a gill in when it got ablaze. She threw the bottle on the floor, and the lamp exploded, making a loud report. Elizabeth was burnt worse. The flames flew on her clothes, and her face, ears and arms were burnt. Fred was also set on fire, she did not know how, she was so frightened. She had filled it before with a match near to it without any explosion. She had had the lamp four years without any previous accident. The Saturday before, witness filled the lamp by daylight. Witness had not been long

home from Huddersfield when she went 200 yards off to her sister's. It would be about eight o'clock. Witness bought the oil at William Pearson's of Milnsbridge, sending Horace for it, a week ago last Saturday. She had used that oil every night subsequently till last Saturday. By the Jury : She never allowed the children to put the oil in the lamp. She received no paper with the oil when she bought it. The children were near the hearth stone by the table. There were seven children of witness's and one of her brother's, making eight in the house at the time. Witness believed her burns were caused by trying to extinguish the flames on the children. Had she had warning, or a paper giving her a caution, like one produced by a juryman, she would not have put a light near it. She would have had gas in the house had it not been neglected to be put in by the landlord – but then landlords were all alike, they would do no more than they could help. She would not have put a light near it if she had known it would have exploded.

William George Brown said he was son of last witness, and was 14 years of age. He said his sister Elizabeth told him that she lighted the lamp. He went out, and when he came in the lamp was out. It had been out about a quarter of an hour when his mother came back. Elizabeth said she put it out because it was without lamp oil. Witness was afraid to put lamp oil in, as his mother said they were not to do. When his mother came in, she took her waist off, and asked Elizabeth to get the can of oil. Elizabeth got the can of oil from the cellar head and gave it to her mother. Elizabeth got a candle from the cellar stairs head, and lit it at the fire. She then held it for her mother to teem the oil in. When the lamp almost got full, the lamp got on flame, and went on Elizabeth and Fred and Horace. Then mother threw the can down. The lamp cracked and knocked a picture down and broke it.

By the Jury : Elizabeth did not strike a match, but took a candle and put it in the ribs of the fire and lit it. There was no light in when her mother came from Huddersfield, and none when she went to his grandmother's. He was sure there was no match; it was a candle that was lit.

The father of the witness interposed, saying the lad was being too hardly pressed, and was frightened.

The Coroner asked the witness if he was frightened, and he replied he was.

George Randerson said he lived about 12 yards off Gee, and heard the explosion. It would be about 8.30. He was in his own yard in front of Gee's house. Went into the house as soon as he could and all had run out. The girl Elizabeth ran out first. She and Fred and Horace were more or less burnt. Saw no lamps or candle on the table. The oil was ablaze when he was at the door, and went dark at once the oil was done. By the Jury : It was not a crack, it was a flash, as if some loose gunpowder had been lighted.

Police-sergeant Ramsden, Linthwaite, deposed that on Saturday night he went to the house of Joseph Gee, Milnsbridge, and found Mr Jones, surgeon, attending three children suffering from burns. Mrs Gee was present and gave him a can in which was some oil like that used. He produced the can. The oil he delivered to Mr Daniel Dawson.

Daniel Dawson, manufacturing chemist, Milnsbridge, deposed that he had received the petroleum from the can produced by Police-sergeant Ramsden, and had tested it in the presence of the jury, in accordance with the provisions of the Petroleum Act 1871 (34 and 35 Vic cap 105) and found that the flashing point of the oil was 68 degrees Fahrenheit, which showed that it was highly dangerous for use as a lamp oil, especially in the hands of persons ignorant of its properties. It would not make any difference whether a candle or a match was lighted and placed within the distance of the lamp oil deposed to, as the vapour given off would ignite at that distance and explode.

The Coroner summed up shortly, and the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death", and added "but we are of opinion that the petroleum was so inflammable as to render it unfit to use for lighting purposes, and we strongly condemn it for such purposes".

## **176    March 24 1877**

**THE EXPLOSION**    Since the unfortunate occurrence happened in the family of **Joseph Gee**, boatman, the particulars of which are pretty well known by this time to our readers, the neighbours and friends of the locality have generously shown their sympathy with him by raising a subscription

which would in some measure alleviate the distress caused by the death of his two children. The way in which they have spontaneously come forward in this respect is highly creditable to them, and makes it not the less incumbent on Gee's part to return them his sincere thanks.

**177 June 9 1877**

**Huddersfield Borough Police Court**

**INDECENT ASSAULT** **Fred Lee**, boatman, Longroyd Bridge, was brought up in custody, charged with indecently assaulting Mary Golden of Stockport, on the morning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst. Complainant said she was a spinner, and on Sunday morning, about one o'clock, she was at Marsh, and was returning from Marsh to her residence, when the prisoner accosted her. She told him to go about his business, but he refused, and then committed the assault complained of. Cross-examined : Had had nothing to drink with the prisoner, and had never seen him before the assault. John Liversedge said that, on Saturday night, he saw the parties together at the bottom of Luck Lane. They were together for three quarters of an hour, and it seemed as if he was pulling the woman about, and she seemed to be trying to get away from him. Police-constable Garside saw the prisoner, and afterwards the complainant. The latter was crying, and said that the man had used her shamefully, and witness then took him into custody. Prisoner denied having committed any assault whatever. The Bench had no doubt that the offence had been committed, and fined prisoner 40s and costs, or one month's imprisonment in default.

**178 August 10 1877**

**Rastrick**

**CHILD SCALDED AT WARING GREEN** On Tuesday morning a child, one year and nine months old, the offspring of **John Morton**, boatman, of Waring Green, Rastrick, was standing by the breakfast table upon which its mother had just put the teapot full of hot water when, taking hold of it, pulled the teapot over, pouring the contents into its bosom. The mother, who had just turned round towards the fire with the kettle, heard the child scream and, turning again, saw what it had done. Mr Farrar, surgeon, Brighouse, was sent for and pursued the usual treatment, but the poor little sufferer died on Wednesday morning from the severe scalding it had sustained.

**179 November 17 1877**

**County Police Court**

**GAMBLING** George Trotter, John Buckley, spinners, Kirkheaton; William Clapham, carrier, Bradley; Philip Thewlis, collier, Kirkheaton, were charged with gambling at Kirkheaton on Sunday October 28<sup>th</sup>. Police-constable Wardle said that on the day in question he happened to be looking out of his window, when he saw a number of men going along a footpath which ran across some fields leading from Colne-bridge to Battye Mill. He followed them and, hiding in a small plantation, he saw the four defendants tossing for coppers and betting on the turn up. They then left the plantation, going to a field further from the plantation, and there again, with the exception of Clapham, they tossed with coins. When witness left the place where he was concealed, all the defendants ran away. All the defendants said that they were not present, and most denied that they ever gambled in their lives. Clapham further said that he was at Ravensthorpe, three miles away. He called **Duke Carter** of Thongsbridge, boatman, who said that he and Clapham were away from Kirkburton at one o'clock until six, and were visiting a man named Watson, a farmer. He acknowledged, however, that they went across the field alluded to by the officer, and that that was about two o'clock. Albert Jessop, a companion of Carter and Clapham, deposed to the alleged visit to Ravensthorpe, but said that they did not leave Kirkburton until half past two. They were at Ravensthorpe about four. One of the defendants said that the witness was not there at all. The Bench thought the case fully proved and fined Clapham 10s and the other defendants 5s and costs each. Superintendent Sykes applied for a warrant against Carter for perjury, but the consideration of the application was left over until the close of the court. Colonel Brooke said there was no doubt there had been perjury.

**180 December 15 1877**

**Huddersfield Borough Police Court**

**A CANAL QUARREL** **Walter Charlesworth**, boatman, Bradley, was charged with assaulting

**Charles Whitfield**, Cooper Bridge, on the 26<sup>th</sup> November. The parties are in the employ of the Aire and Calder Navigation Company, complainant as horseman, and defendant as boatman. The story of the former was that it came to the knowledge of his master that defendant had created a disturbance with another boatman. The master then ordered witness to go and take defendant's horse from him. Complainant went to obey his orders, but defendant refused to allow the horse to be taken from his boat, and when witness seized the animal's head, defendant threw him upon the bank, which was the assault complained of. The defendant said that the affair took place at Cotton Mill Lock, near Colnebridge. The horse was given him to take his boat to Huddersfield, and it would be very inconvenient for him to have to stop his boat where it was. Moreover, complainant produced no written orders, and in the dispute as to the animal, complainant raised his foot as if to kick defendant, and in self defence he merely held him at arms length. Complainant acknowledged that he was not hurt by the assault, and the Bench thereupon dismissed the case.

**181 December 22 1877**

**Milnsbridge**

**EXPOSURE AND DEATH** On Saturday at midnight, Charles Milnes, private watchman to Messrs Armitage Brothers, whilst going his rounds, found a man laid in the road close to the mill. He raised the man up and, seeing he appeared ill, asked what was the matter with him. The poor fellow complained of a severe pain in his stomach. Milnes called the attention of John Kilburn, private watchman to Messrs E and G Dyson, to the man. They removed him to Kilburn's house, and Mrs Kilburn prepared and gave him some hot tea. Milnes in the meantime sent for Police-constable Stansfield, and he was met with, in company with Sergeant Ramsden, at 12.15. These officers visited the man, who was apparently 54 or 55 years of age, and elicited from him that his name was **John Swallow alias Flower**, also that he was a boatman from Mossley, but a native of Holmfirth, where he said he had some friends. The officers obtained a horse and cart and removed Swallow to the Union Workhouse at Crosland Moor, where he was admitted by the porter at 1 45 on Sunday morning. Mr G W Rhodes, union surgeon, saw the poor fellow at 3.30 the same morning, but he died at 9.45 on Sunday night.

**182 January 2 1878**

**MAN DROWNED AT PADDOCK FOOT** Yesterday morning an inquest was held at the Talbot Inn, before Mr William Barstow, coroner, on view of the body of Joseph Barrett, teeze setter, Huddersfield, aged 37 years, who was found drowned in the canal at Longroyd Bridge on Sunday last at noon. Mr E Moody was appointed foreman of the jury. The following is the gist of the evidence given :-

William Barrett, South Street, Huddersfield, wagon shunter, Huddersfield Railway Station, said the deceased Joseph Barrett, aged 37, was his brother, was a teeze setter, and resided at the Model Lodging house, Huddersfield. It was some weeks since witness saw his brother last alive.

David Waterhouse, Model Lodging house superintendent, said the deceased had lodged in the house for some 18 months past. He saw him alive last between half past four or five on Saturday afternoon, when he was leaving the Model Lodging house by himself. He did not say where he was going; he was quite sober, and seemed quite well and cheerful. There was nothing about the man to lead anyone to believe he would commit suicide.

**John Mellor**, Rashcliffe, boatman, said he found the body of the deceased about 12 o'clock at noon on Sunday last in the Huddersfield Canal in the 5<sup>th</sup> lock, at Paddock Foot. He was at the bottom of the water. Witness took deceased from the lock tail with a boat hook, being unable to open the lock doors, his body being jammed behind the gate. He was quite dead, cold and stiff, his clothes were all straight, but there was neither hat nor cap to be seen. Witness sent for the police and Police-constable Sedgwick came directly. Had seen deceased before about Longroyd Bridge, but not for several days. The deceased would be drawn to the paddle hole on their being raised, and witness believed the body would be lengthwise across the paddle hole and so could not get through.

Hannah Brook, Paddock Foot, said she helped to lay out the deceased. He had no marks of violence about his body, except one made under his arm by the hook to draw him out, and a slight graze on

his forehead.

Police-constable Sedgwick of the Huddersfield Borough Police Force, said he heard a cry for assistance on Sunday at noon, and went to No 5 lock, and found witness Mellor with the deceased on the end of a boat hook. The deceased was dead cold and stiff. By the white appearance of the hands, he had been in the water all night. He had nothing in his pockets but a pocket comb, a piece of cord, and a snuff box.

The jury, after a few remarks from the Coroner, returned a verdict "That the deceased was found drowned with no marks of violence about his body and no evidence to show how he was drowned".

### **183 April 12 1878**

**FOUND DROWNED AT BRIGHOUSE** Yesterday forenoon, the body of a man was found drowned in the Canal basin, Mill Lane, Brighouse. It was conveyed to the Royal Hotel where, in about an hour's time, it was identified as that of **Henry Wadsworth**, aged 24, labourer of no fixed abode, but formerly of Little Woodhouse, Rastrick. Fred Wadsworth, gas stoker, deceased's brother, who identified him, had not seen him to speak to him since last September, but heard he was travelling about with some canal boatmen. How deceased had got into the canal did not transpire, but it was supposed to have been quite an accident.

### **184 April 19 1878**

**WOMAN DROWNED AT BRIGHOUSE** On Wednesday morning an inquest was held at the Vine Hotel, Brighouse, before Mr J E Hill, deputy coroner, on view of the body of Maria Greenwood, alias Collins, aged 39 years, of Mellor's Buildings, Mill Lane, Brighouse. Wm Greenwood, operative cotton spinner, identified the body as that of his wife, whom he last saw alive at 4 pm on the 5<sup>th</sup> instant. She then seemed all right, but had been drinking more or less every day for some time previously. On the morning of that day, he gave her 5s, after she had said if he would give her 3s to redeem a pair of boots, she would leave Brighouse and try to reform. She had left him twice before. Evidence was given by Charlotte Charlesworth and Sarah Cheetham, from which it appeared that but for her drinking habits, deceased would have been a quiet, respectable woman; also that deceased was depressed in spirits on the 4<sup>th</sup> instant, and had said she intended to drown herself. **John Baker**, boatman, of Thornhill Lees, deposed to finding the deceased in the canal near Ganny lock on Tuesday morning, his boat rope having caught it. The police were sent for, and the body was taken out of the water. Hannah Ambler, who laid out the body, deposed to seeing three marks upon it, apparently caused by a boat or boat hook coming in contact with it in the water. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned", there being no evidence to show how the deceased got into the water.

### **185 April 26 1878**

#### **Slaithwaite**

**NARROW ESCAPE FROM DROWNING** On Wednesday night, **Henry Brown**, boatman in the employ of John Haigh, boatowner, was returning to his boat at Slaithwaite in a state of drunkenness, when he stepped into the canal, and would have been drowned but for the timely assistance of Dr Edward Dean, who pulled him out. The man was in a very exhausted state, and it was some time before there was any evidence of life. This is the third case of immersion in this pond within the month.

### **186 May 9 1878**

#### **Borough Police Court**

**THEFT OF COAL** Thomas Crowther, Oldfield Square, dyer, and **George Jaggard North**, boatman, Rashcliffe, were brought up in custody on a charge of stealing 3 cwt of coal, the property of David Richardson, boatowner, Aspley. Benjamin Cowgill said that on Monday evening, about half past seven, he went down with a barrow to Aspley Wharf to buy some coal. The two prisoners were there loading a waggon. Crowther said he could sell witness some coal and he then filled witness's bag. Witness paid 6d for the coal. North put no coal into the bag, but continued his loading. A police officer next morning came to witness's house, and to him the coal was handed over. The

prosecutor said the prisoners were employed by him, but they had no authority to sell coal. The coal produced by the officer was like that which witness had at the wharf. It was worth about a shilling, but he received no money for it from either prisoner. A man named Kitson corroborated the story of the first witness. Police-constable Tilsby said that he apprehended Crowther, who said he and North were in beer, and that North had some of the money. North, when apprehended, said he had nothing to do with it. Crowther pleaded now to their worships that he was in drink, or he should not have offended. The prisoner North was discharged by the Bench, thinking that there was no case; Crowther was sent to gaol for a month.

**187 May 24 1878**

**DEATH BY DROWNING AT RASTRICK** An inquest was held on Wednesday morning before Mr Barstow, coroner, at the Woodland Hotel, Raistrick, on view of the body of Sarah Ann Mitchell, dressmaker, aged 39 years, an unmarried daughter of Richard Mitchell, Castle Hill, Raistrick. From the evidence given, it appeared deceased resided with her father, and carried on her business in her house, and had been very busy of late, having a large amount of work in for Whitsuntide. She was last seen alive by her father on the previous Thursday night at a quarter to twelve o'clock, when she took up the lamp to go to bed. About seven o'clock in the morning (Friday), he went to the room of the deceased to awake her, but discovered she was not there. The house was searched, the outside door being unfastened, but nothing was missing except deceased's grey shawl. Mrs Aspinall, a neighbour, looked round to see if deceased had put her bonnet and other things on. Enquiry was made in the neighbourhood, but no one had seen anything of her for certain, though a figure had been seen a few minutes before two o'clock to go down the road near the house. There was nothing to account for the deceased leaving the house as she did. Her purse was found on her dressing case, and her watch under her bolster. On Tuesday morning, **Thomas Clough**, boatman of Mirfield was, along with **Harrison Bray**, commencing to take sand out of the river, above Anchor Pit, Raistrick, when he felt the body of the deceased at the bottom with a "stoor". He pulled her out with a boat hook, and gave information to the police. Mrs Mary Ann Sykes, who laid out the body, deposed that there were no marks upon it but a few small ones, which had arisen since being washed, on the forehead; also that the clothes were all straight and fastened. The jury returned an open verdict of "Found drowned".

**188 June 6 1878**

**SCHOOL BOARD CASES** The following were summoned and fined in the usual amount for not sending their children to school : **Ned Richardson**, boatman, Kirkgate.

**189 January 11 1879**

**Huddersfield Borough Police Court**

**NEGLECT OF FAMILY** **George Jaggar North**, boatman, Rashcliffe, brought up on a warrant charged with neglecting his wife and three children so that they became chargeable to the Huddersfield Union, to the extent of £3 9s, pleaded guilty, and was ordered to pay this amount and the expenses, in default to be committed to prison for three months; an opportunity being, however, allowed him of paying the sum by weekly instalments.

**190 January 21 1879**

**THE LATE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE FROM BATLEY** Yesterday morning, the body of Betsy, the wife of Mr A Wildsmith, newsagent and bookseller of Bradford Road, Shipley, was found in the River Calder near Shepley Bridge, Mirfield, by a boatman named **Henry Greaves**, who resides at Ravensthorpe. Our readers will remember that the deceased left her home suddenly on the night of Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup> of last December, and up to Monday, nothing was heard about her. The body was identified by her husband, and then removed to his residence.

**191 February 4 1879**

**MURDER OF A CHILD AT MIDDLETON** Yesterday afternoon an inquest was held at Middleton

Junction, before Mr J Molesworth, coroner, touching the death of a new born female child found in the Manchester and Rochdale Canal at Middleton Junction. **William Winfield**, a boatman, said that on Saturday he noticed a brown paper parcel floating in the water, and on picking it up and opening it, found that it enclosed a lady's satchel, which contained the body of a child. He gave it to the police. Dr Kershaw of Middleton, who had made a *post mortem* examination, stated that the child had, in his opinion, lived several hours after birth. It had either died from drowning or suffocation before being placed in the canal. It had been in the water above a fortnight. The jury returned a verdict of "Wilful murder" against some person or persons unknown.

### 192 February 8 1879

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS On Monday afternoon an inquest was held at Middleton Junction, before Mr J Molesworth, coroner, touching the death of a new born female child found in the Manchester and Rochdale Canal at Middleton Junction. **William Winfield**, a boatman, said that on Saturday he noticed a brown paper parcel floating in the water, and on picking it up and opening it, found that it enclosed a lady's satchel, which contained the body of a child. He gave it to the police. Dr Kershaw of Middleton, who had made a *post mortem* examination, stated that the child had, in his opinion, lived several hours after birth. It had either died from drowning or suffocation before being placed in the canal. It had been in the water above a fortnight. The jury returned a verdict of "Wilful murder" against some person or persons unknown.

### 193 April 10 1879

#### Borough Police Court

SCHOOL BOARD CASES The following were fined for not sending their children regularly to school : **Paul Bray**, boatman, Lowerhead Row.

### 194 May 31 1879

DANGERS OF DIRTY CANALS At Manchester Police Court on Wednesday, a boatman named **Speakman** was charged with knocking another man, named Thomas Kearney, into the canal during a fight. Kearney was not rescued for some moments, and then he was unconscious. The doctor who was called in certified that the dirty condition of the water had acted most injuriously on his lungs, and the man was in danger in consequence. The case was adjourned.

### 195 June 12 1879

A MISSING MAN FOUND DROWNED Yesterday forenoon, the body of **Hudson Tiffany**, aged 50 years, a boatman, who had been missing from his home, 8 Learoyd's Yard, Leeds Road, since Monday night, was found in the canal near Red Door Lock below Hillhouse Lane. It appears that deceased had been suffering sometime from depression of spirits, and was seen wandering to and fro on the canal bank about nine o'clock on Monday night. Not going home that night, nor during Tuesday, the wife of the deceased became alarmed, and went in the evening to the Borough Police Office and gave information, in consequence of which a search was made in the canal that night, but nothing was seen of the body. Yesterday morning, the cap of the deceased was seen lower down the canal bank than where the search was made the previous night. The police were informed of the fact, and another search was made, which resulted in the body being found and taken out of the canal dead, as before stated, near the Red Door Lock at 10.30 yesterday forenoon.

### 196 June 13 1879

THE MISSING MAN FOUND DROWNED – INSANITY AND SUICIDE An inquest was held yesterday afternoon at the Weaver's Arms Inn, Leeds Road, before Mr J E Hill, deputy coroner, touching the death of **Hudson Tiffany**, aged 50 years, boatman, Leeds Road, whose body was found drowned in the canal at Hillhouse on Wednesday last.

**Eliza Tiffany**, widow of the deceased, said she last saw him alive on Monday, about two o'clock in the afternoon, when he left the house. He had been in very low spirits in the forenoon, and told her that she wanted to get rid of him. She denied it, and asked him what made him think so. He gave

no reply. The deceased had been low in spirits for some months, and had been under the doctor's hands. He was taken to the Union Workhouse, as she understood, to be afterwards sent to the asylum, if necessary, the Union doctor saying they would try him a bit at the Workhouse first. The doctor did not discharge him from the Workhouse, but the Guardians let him out in the doctor's absence. The deceased was jealous of the witness. There was no cause for this; it was quite a delusion of his own mind. He came out of the Workhouse on Friday last at 9.30 am, and when he got home he was as bad as ever – so far as the delusion of his mind was concerned. Before being taken to the Workhouse, the doctor said the deceased was not right in his mind, and not many minutes before the doctor came in on that occasion, deceased himself said, “My brain has got turned some way”.

Jane Taylor, married woman, a neighbour, deposed to seeing the deceased walking about on the canal bank behind the Weavers' Arms Inn, at a quarter to eight on Monday night, but knowing him to be a boatman, supposed he was looking for a boat.

**Benjamin Tiffany**, son of the deceased, also a boatman, gave evidence of the police finding the body in his presence in the canal on Wednesday forenoon, about 150 yards below the Corporation manure depot. Witness, who was 19 years of age, confirmed his mother's evidence about his father being weak in his head, and being jealous of himself and his mother without any occasion, and saying they wished to get rid of him.

Elizabeth Ingham, a widow, who laid out the corpse of the deceased, spoke to their being no marks of violence upon the same.

Police-constable Worsnop made a statement to the effect that he had been informed by the Union doctor that, though he was absent from home when the deceased was allowed to leave the house, he had a medical assistant in charge of the patients, but the Guardians allowed the deceased to leave the workhouse without consulting him. If he (the doctor) was wanted at the inquest, he was ready to attend, but did not wish to be present, under the circumstances, unless required.

The jury, after some observations on the part of the deputy coroner, to the effect that they could have an adjourned inquest and take the evidence of the doctor if they wished, consulted, and found a verdict that “the deceased committed suicide by drowning himself whilst in an unsound state of mind”.

### **197 June 24 1879**

#### **Huddersfield Borough Police Court**

**A PROVOKED ASSAULT** **Joseph Rockett**, boatman, Aspley, was charged with assaulting **Annie Thompson**, wife of another boatman. Complainant said that on Thursday evening, her husband and another man began quarrelling. She went to part them, when the defendant came to her, knocked her down, and thumped her in the face. Defendant (who was corroborated by two witnesses) said that the complainant ran after the man her husband was fighting, and began hitting him with a stone. He then interfered, when she struck him on the head with a large stone. After that, he did assault her, but not to the extent complained of. Fined 2s 6d and 10s 6d costs.

### **198 July 12 1879**

**CURIOUS EPITAPHS AT RASTRICK** The following epitaph is from a tombstone in Rastrick Churchyard. On the tombstone of James, son of **Joseph Bray**, boatman, Rastrick, who died November 22 1831, aged 30 years, is the following inscription :-

Tho' Boreas' blasts and Neptune's waves  
Have tossed me to and fro  
In spite of both, by God's deserts  
I harbour here below;  
Where I do now at anchor lie  
With many of our fleet  
Yet once again I must set sail  
Our Saviour Christ to meet.

**199 July 15 1879**

**Borough Police Court**

SCHOOL BOARD CASES The following were summoned by Mr O G Abbott, clerk to the School Board, for neglecting the education of their children, and fined 6d and costs : **Paul Bray**, boatman, Lowerhead Row.

**200 July 25 1879**

TWO MEN DROWNED IN THE CANAL On Wednesday afternoon Charles Smith, labourer of Manchester Street, saw, in the canal basin behind the warehouse at Aspley Place, the body of a man who was subsequently identified as that of William Harrison, labourer, 59 years of age, of Kilner Bank. Yesterday morning, in about the same spot, another body was discovered – that of James Buckley, labourer, of Kaye Lane, Almondbury. Last evening an inquest was held upon both bodies at the Wharf Inn, Aspley, by Mr Coroner Barlow. It appeared from the evidence of Richard Halles that he and deceased had been drinking together on Saturday night. The latter was a little the worse for beer, and they were walking down the street with the intention of going to the Farmer's Boy, but a band from the demonstration happened to pass them at the top of King Street, and the two got separated. Since then, no one could speak to seeing the deceased, until he was discovered by Smith, who saw his head in the water. It was stated that Harrison was a little near sighted. Sergeant Standish and Police-constable Harrison, on being informed of the circumstances, went to the spot, and found the body had been taken out by **Fred Lee**, a boatman. A verdict of "Found drowned, without any marks of violence" was returned. In the case of Buckley, it appeared from the evidence of his mother that he left his house at six o'clock on Saturday morning in search of work, he having previously been engaged on a job on the railway between Honley and Holmfirth. He had taken food with him, and nothing more was known of him until his dead body was found as stated, with his food in his pocket. He had told his mother he should be home again in the evening. On the body being found by Charles Haigh, Police-constable Londesborough assisted in taking it out. The jury returned an open verdict, and appended a recommendation to the canal company that the space between Mr Law Dyson's warehouse and the old canal warehouse should be fenced off. Mr W H Poppleton, butcher, was foreman of the jury.

**201 August 6 1879**

ACCIDENT TO A BRIGHOUSE BOATMAN On Monday afternoon, whilst proceeding with his boat on the Rochdale Canal, on the other side of Littleborough, **John Pitcher**, aged 24, a boatman from Brighouse, sprung out of the boat to jump upon the towing path. His foot, however, caught against the canal wall, and he fell upon the pathway. He felt little inconvenience at the time, and proceeded to Blue Pits. On his arrival at the latter place, he experienced great pain, and Mr Widdop, surgeon, was consulted. The result was that he found the young man's ankle sprained and his instep dislocated. He bandaged the limb, and directed Pitcher to be taken home to Brighouse. This was done. When, however, he arrived home, he was persuaded that his case would be better treated in the Huddersfield Infirmary, and was sent there accordingly, where he was admitted yesterday.

**202 August 9 1879**

**Borough Police Court**

NEGLECT OF FAMILY The following persons, summoned for neglect of family, were dealt with as annexed : **George Wood**, boatman, Longroyd Bridge, was ordered to pay £2 12s for arrears of payment of 26 weeks' maintenance of his wife, and 12s costs of proceedings.

**203 August 12 1879**

MURDEROUS ASSAULT IN THE POTTERIES At the Stipendiary's Court, Hanley, yesterday morning, three boatmen named **Moses Hollinshead**, **Jenkins Hollinshead** and **William Smith** were charged with feloniously assaulting William Locker. The prisoners met Locker on the canal side at Tunstall on Saturday night, and without provocation, assaulted him so frightfully that he was

picked up some time afterwards insensible, and has not yet recovered consciousness. It is expected that he will not recover. The prisoners were remanded.

**204 September 2 1879**

**Borough Police Court**

**NEGLECT OF FAMILY** **George Jaggard North**, boatman, Rashcliffe, was charged with this offence. Mr E J Sykes said the defendant had a wife and three children, and could earn good wages. Thirteen weeks ago he left them, and during that time had sent them no money, or gone near them. In consequence, the Guardians had to give them relief, and £2 11s 6d had been thus given them. The costs amounted to 10s. The prisoner had been before the Bench on a previous occasion for the same offence, and on January 19<sup>th</sup> last, he was ordered to pay £3 18s 6d, or be committed for three months. Defendant had 15s upon him then and that was seized in part payment, but when he got his liberty, he only paid one half crown, and two which his wife gave him he spent in drink. Mr Sykes asked that the prisoner should be committed for three months. Committed as requested.

**205 November 29 1879**

**MAN DROWNED AT ASPLEY** Mr Barstow held an inquest on Monday at the Rising Sun Inn, Castlegate, upon the body of Richard Henry Senior, public house manager, who was found drowned on Sunday afternoon in the canal at Aspley. The following evidence was taken :-

Ann Senior, mother of the deceased, said she last saw her son alive about half past nine on the evening of Sunday week. She was told that he went out with William Poppleton. Had no reason to think her son had committed suicide, nor did she think anyone would do him any harm. He was not drunk when he left the house, and had been rather steadier during the last fortnight before his disappearance.

William Henry Poppleton, butcher, King Street, said he had passed a portion of Sunday week and all the evening with deceased. They left the Unicorn at half past nine, when they went to the Clothiers' Arms, and stayed till 10. Then they went to witness's house, and at midnight deceased left, saying he would go home. Deceased had had a couple of glasses of beer with witness, and when he left to go home he appeared to be quite capable of taking care of himself. He walked up King Street.

Ann Ratagan of Rosemary Lane, said she last saw deceased alive at a quarter past five on Monday evening week. He was standing in the vault door of the Unicorn Inn. He was quite drunk, and his arm round Grace Haigh's shoulders, his head resting on hers. Witness was sure it was deceased, because she thought it was a "good cheek" of the woman to be so near to Mrs Senior's premises, and turned back to look again, in order that she might be certain it was Richard Senior.

The deceased's mother said that at the time the last witness was speaking of, her little girl Rachel came into the bar, and said that Grace Haigh wanted two pennyworth of gin. She, however, told the little girl not to serve her, and Grace Haigh then went away. Just then, deceased's son came up from his work, and she heard him scuffle and swear outside. When he came in he said, "What do you think, grandmother, that Grace Haigh has just been for two pennyworth of port wine, and I should have poisoned her only she ran away".

Dennis Mullen Lardner of 12 Rosemary Lane said that he last saw the deceased alive, to the best of his belief, about four o'clock on Monday week in King Street. He passed close to witness, walking down from Cross Church Street towards Castlegate, and witness believed he nodded to him. Deceased appeared to be quite sober.

Emma Jackson, servant at the Dog Inn, Kirkgate, said she last saw deceased alive between one and two o'clock last Tuesday afternoon. She met him coming up Kirkgate by the Clothiers' Arms. He appeared to be drunk. Witness knew it was Tuesday, because she was going to the confectioner's in Market Walk. A man in corduroy trousers, tight around the ankles, spoke to the deceased.

Superintendent Townend said the police had tried to find this man, but could not.

Grace Haigh, of Clay's Buildings, Northgate, said that she last saw the deceased alive a week since last Sunday evening about a quarter to six. He then left witness's house, where he had been since eleven o'clock on Saturday night. He slept all night in the rocking chair. Witness had only one

room, and she and her son slept there. She did not see him on Monday night between four and five o'clock. She went to the Unicorn for some port wine between eight and nine o'clock, but deceased was not there, nor did any man stand at the door of the dramshop with her. She was not with the deceased at Aspley, either on Saturday, Sunday or Monday nights, nor at any time. Deceased was not sober when he came to her house on Saturday night. When she went for the port wine, deceased's son was in, and threatened to kick her out. Deceased pretended to court her, and that was why his son would not serve her with the port wine. She went for two pennyworth of gin previous to going for the port wine, and that was about seven o'clock. She did not see deceased's son then. She went there to see for deceased, whom she was told was missing. She was with the deceased in the dramshop doorway at half past ten on Saturday night.

**David Richardson**, boatman, deposed to finding the body of the deceased in the canal, near Mr Law Dyson's warehouse. Many a one had been picked out at the spot, and there was nothing to prevent people walking in. Witness thought a gate should be placed to prevent people walking down the road. He thought deceased looked as if he had been in the canal for a few days.

Police-constable Burns searched the clothing of the deceased, and found upon it a silver watch, gold albert, 15s 3d in money, and other articles. There was nothing whatever suspicious about the appearance of the body or clothing. Many persons had been drowned at this place, and more would be yet if the canal was not fenced off.

The Coroner said that he had forwarded a recommendation to the London and North Western Co to place a fence there, in accordance with the recommendation of a former jury. He had received an answer from the company promising to place a fence.

The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned without any marks of violence", and recommended that the Coroner should again write to the company, asking them to put up the fence, at the same time pointing out that another man had been drowned and that his death would probably have been prevented if the fence had been put up.

#### **206 December 4 1879**

#### **Borough Police Court**

NEGLECT OF FAMILY **William Lee**, boatman, Huddersfield, was summoned for neglecting to maintain his wife. Mr Broadhead proved the woman's chargeability, saying that she was living with her mother, and the Guardians paid her and her child 7s 6d per week. The defendant (who did not appear) earned 30s per week, and the Guardians asked for an order for 10s, the amount which the defendant had himself arranged to pay his wife weekly, but had failed to keep his promises. Order made for 10s per week.

#### **207 January 1 1880**

#### **Borough Police Court**

DRUNK ON LICENSED PREMISES, ASSAULT ON THE LANDLORD AND DAMAGE TO THE WINDOWS **Tom Lodge**, boatman, Bradley, was charged with being drunk on the licensed premises, the White Cross Inn, Bradley, and refusing to quit when requested, with assaulting Allen Clayton Stott, the landlord, and with breaking the window panes and inside window screen of the house in question, on the night of December 26<sup>th</sup>. The prisoner pleaded not guilty. Mr Stott gave evidence fully bearing out the charge and showing that considerable violence was used, and this evidence was borne out by other testimony independent of the police, who added to it a general character for turbulence, of which the defendant had previously been guilty in that neighbourhood. The Bench for the first offence fined defendant 10s, 7s expenses, or 14 days imprisonment; for the second offence £1 12s 6d expenses, or one months imprisonment; and for the third offence, the amount of damage claimed £1 12s, a fine of 1s and 8s expenses, or two months imprisonment.

#### **208 January 8 1880**

A BOATMAN DROWNED On Tuesday night about 5.30, **William Alfred Hepworth**, a captain boatman, resident at Mill Lane, Brighouse, and in the employment of Messrs Wm Jackson and Sons, carriers, 4 Dale Street, Manchester, was with his wife proceeding down the river, at Cooper Bridge, to get into the Huddersfield Canal, when, whilst "setting" through the bridge, the boatstaff,

which he was pushing against the wall of the bridge, slipped off, and he fell into the water. He called out for help as he fell, but as he did not come to the surface again, no one was able to render him any assistance. The occurrence was reported to Police-constable Alexander Callaghan at six o'clock, and he procured assistance and, getting a boat, had the river dragged. The body was found about half past seven o'clock, within twelve yards of the spot where the deceased fell in. The body was removed to the White Cross Inn, Bradley, there to await an inquest.

**209 February 18 1880**

**CRUELTY TO ANIMALS** **Henry Clay**, a boatman of Park Street, Brighouse, was summoned for cruelly ill-treating a horse by working the same in an unfit state on the canal banks at Brighouse. Inspector Wills said that on Tuesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> last, he visited the canal banks between Halifax and Brighouse, and when near the latter place, he saw defendant working an aged grey mare attached to a boat. The animal was in a very low condition, and was suffering from a deep wound on the near shoulder, which was about three inches in length and of long standing. The collar had not been raised, but was saturated with blood and matter, and pressing into the sore, causing the animal great pain. A fine of £1 4s was inflicted, the chairman speaking in strong terms respecting the conduct of different boatmen in that district. He said the Bench were very glad Inspector Wills had come among them, as they had often seen cruelty on the canal banks of a most disgusting character.

**210 March 18 1880**

**Borough Police Court**

**SCHOOL BOARD PROSECUTIONS** The following persons were summoned under the Elementary Education Act for neglecting to send the children under their charge, as parents or guardians, to school regularly : **John Richardson**, boatman, Firth Street.

**211 May 5 1880**

**CRUELTY TO A HORSE AT BRIGHOUSE** On Saturday at the West Riding Police Court, Halifax, **Jonathan Bower**, boatman, Bradford, was charged with cruelly treating a horse by working it while in an unfit condition on the 28<sup>th</sup> ult. The defendant was in charge of a horse and a boat, and on arriving at Brighouse, coming from Hull to Sowerby Bridge, Mr Campbell, manufacturer of Brighouse and Inspector Hey examined the horse which they described as being in a very weakly condition, and altogether unfit for work. The defendant had afterwards sold the horse for 15s. The defendant pleaded guilty and said that he did not know much about horses, and had been a member of the Royal Naval Reserve. A fine of £1 and 8s 6d costs was imposed.

**212 July 17 1880**

**Borough Police Court**

**ASSAULTING A POLICEMAN** **Charles Wood**, boatman, Aspley, was charged with, on July 9<sup>th</sup>, first refusing to quit the Wharf Inn, Aspley, when requested and second, with assaulting Police-constable Wilks on being taken into custody on the first charge. Evidence was given that the prisoner had had too much liquor, and when refused to be served with more, created a disturbance. When he was requested to leave the house he refused. Police-constable Wilks had to be called in, and forcibly to remove the prisoner who, as he was being taken to the lock-up, struck the officer several times in the face. The prisoner when asked for his defence said he had nothing to say. He was fined 5s and expenses, 14s 4d or seven days imprisonment for the first offence, and for the second 10s and expenses 15s 6d or 14 days imprisonment.

**213 July 24 1880**

**Rastrick**

**INQUEST** On Wednesday evening an inquest was held before Mr Wm Barstow, coroner, at the Anchor Pit Inn in Rastrick on the body of **Joshua Sykes**, boatman, who was accidentally drowned while engaged in steering a boat into the short canal, at Cooper Bridge, on the previous Monday. The following gentlemen composed the jury : Mr Preston Hepworth (foreman), Mr Jno Crossley, Frank Murgatroyd, Josh France, Abm Brewer, James Brook, James Brooke, Thos Womersley, Thos Rayner, Thos Bottomley, James Beaumont, and Wm Edwards. After the jury had viewed the body,

the first witness called was Harriet Kilburn, who said that she was the wife of John Kilburn, the landlord of the house, and that the deceased was her son. He was 24 years of age. She last saw him alive about two o'clock on the Monday afternoon, when he left home to go to his boat. He was quite well and cheerful at the time. Deceased could not swim. **Lewis Woodhead** of Brighouse, boatman, was then called, and stated that a little after four pm, Sykes was steering the boat at the entrance of a short canal at Cooper Bridge, when the boat gave a twist, and owing to the sudden jerk, the tiller went over towards the deceased and knocked him over the rail. Witness did not see the tiller actually strike the deceased, but saw him fall overboard. He had been to the deceased's house to inform them of what had occurred, and when he got back they were taking the body out. Sykes was quite sober at the time they left his home. Thomas Clough, West Mills, Mirfield, said he assisted to recover the body out of the River Calder at Cooper Bridge. The body was found among the stones about the length of the boat from where he fell in, the water being six or seven feet deep. The deceased was drawn out of the water about six pm, he being quite dead. Mary Ann Sykes, Birds Royd, Rastrick, assisted to lay out the body, and saw no marks of injury except in the palm of his right hand. A verdict of "Accidentally drowned by being thrown into the water by the jerk of the tiller of the boat he was steering".

**214 July 29 1880**

**Borough Police Court**

A BOATMAN'S WIFE **George Wood**, boatman between Mirfield and Hull, was summoned for allowing his wife **Keziah Wood**, aged 57 years, to become chargeable to the Huddersfield Union for relief given at the rate of 4s 6d a week to her in the Deanhouse Workhouse, from the 17<sup>th</sup> June last. Mr Hall, clerk to the guardians, put in proof of the marriage of Wood and his wife at Huddersfield on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1871, and of the admission of Mrs Wood to the workhouse on her own application as a destitute woman; also, of the defendant's wife having lived apart from him for many years past. Mr Burton of Wakefield, for the defence, urged that the defendant's wife left her husband of her own accord, and wrote to him to say that she had gone to live with a young man, and the defendant would see her no more. Upon that, the husband left the house for a time open for his wife to return, but as she did not, he broke up his home, and that though he subsequently lived in his boat with another woman, it really resulted from her conduct but before she went away, she being in the habit of getting drunk and throwing the pots about the house and at him. These latter allegations were denied by the defendant's wife, who said that it was defendant's bad conduct that drove her from home, he giving her a couple of black eyes; and as for her going with a young man, or writing a letter to the defendant to that effect, it was totally untrue. Mr Burton argued that there was no excuse for the wife to leave the defendant when she did, whatever had occurred since; but if the Bench thought that there was now, he would advise his client to agree to the future maintenance of his wife, and suggested that the order might be made prospective. The magistrates' clerk pointed out that the defendant was at the time the relief was given living with another woman, and his wife was therefore justified in not returning to live with him, and he was clearly liable for her maintenance away from him, and the Guardians were entitled to the order applied for up to the present time. The Bench asked defendant's wife if she was willing to live with her husband if he would find her a home. The wife replied that she would in a house but not in a boat. The defendant said he was willing to send the other woman away and live with his wife in the boat, but he would never furnish another house for her. The Bench made the order at present applied for.

**215 September 14 1880**

**Borough Police Court**

ATTEMPTING TO DROWN A WOMAN **George Hellawell**, boatman, South Street, was charged with attempting to drown Ellen Harney, woollen piecer of Leeds Road. The complainant said that a little after 11 o'clock on Friday night last, she was passing the Lion Inn, Castlegate, with Sarah Hirst, when they met prisoner, who addressing witness said it was a long time since he had seen her, and if it was not after 11 he would pay for a glass of beer for her – he had 5 1/2d in coppers, and that was all he had. He said if they would go down to the boat with him they could have plenty to eat and drink; and also that he had £7 to draw on Saturday. They went with him to the basin, and

when they got to the basin prisoner said to witness, "You must go back – me and Sarah is going to stop together tonight". Witness said she should not go without her companion, for they lived together, and he then caught hold of her and pushed her into a basin. When she rose the first time, she would not scream on account of the water running into her mouth. On rising the second time, she heard Hirst scream and tell prisoner that if he did not save witness she would swear his life away. Witness was able to tell them where she was, and prisoner then caught her by the hair and pushed her back again into the water. Hirst told her to swim, and she managed to keep her head above the water. Hirst then pulled her onto the bank, she was then insensible, and when she recovered, the prisoner had run away. Witness was shown the prisoner on the following morning, and was able to identify him. She had never seen him in her life before that evening. Sarah Hirst corroborated the prosecutrix. She stated that after prisoner had pushed Harney into the water the second time, he caught her by the hair. Witness caught Harney's hands, and prisoner then ran away, without waiting to see if the girl was got out or not. Detective Casson said that he found the prisoner in a boat at Turnbridge – not in his own boat, which was the basin at Aspley – at a little after three on Saturday morning. He took him to the police office and confronted him with Harney, who said, "That's him who pushed me into the water". Prisoner said he was not within 20 yards of her at the time. Prisoner was then cautioned by the clerk in charge, and was charged with attempting to drown the prosecutrix. Prisoner again repeated that he was not within 20 yards of her at the time; but he did not say what he meant by "at the time". Prisoner was perfectly sober. On being charged by Mr Mills, prisoner said he did not shove the girl into the water – he was not with her more than ten minutes from the Lion corner. She was in and out of the water in less than ten minutes. They came to him on Friday night and said, "Well, Boaty, are you going to pay for a glass for me?" He said it was too late then. Hirst said, "Let us go to the boat", and he said, "You can please yourself". Harney said, "Give us a shilling, and I will fetch you some rum", and he replied, "I have not a shilling, I have only 5 1/2d". She then said, "Let us go down to the boat and have something to eat with you". They then went together. He opened the gate for them, and Harney said, "You go first and show us the road". He did go first, with Harney next, and Hirst last. When they got to the basin corner, there were some deals piled up. He went round them, but instead of following him, Harney walked off the end into the water. Hirst said, "She's in the water", and he then went back, got hold of her hand, and pulled her out on to the side. Her head did not go under the water at all. He swore at her, and asked her what she was doing there, and she said she could not see, it was so dark. They then went out by the steps together, and he followed them out. He then went round the basin, and to a boat at Turnbridge belonging to Johnny Lodge. He saw no more of Harney until he was apprehended. The Bench committed the prisoner for trial at the assizes.

### **216 September 28 1880**

**MAN DROWNED AT MIRFIELD** On Sunday afternoon at 12.15, Police-constable Alexander Callaghan of the Huddersfield Borough Police, stationed at Bradley, was informed by George Cardwell of Mirfield that a man had fallen into the canal at Colne Bridge Mills. On proceeding to the spot (which is on the border of the two townships of Bradley in the borough and Mirfield in the county), he found that the man had been got out dead on the Mirfield side of the boundary, and he gave information to Police-constable Chapman, a county police-constable. The deceased, it appears, is **Robert Oates**, aged 33 years, a boatman residing at Snake Hill, Battyeford, Mirfield, and in the employment of Messrs J F and J Crowther, maltsters, Mirfield. He was removed to his home by his friends. It appears that after the boat with which the deceased was connected had got through the lock opposite the mills, he made an effort to step upon the boat, fell into the water, and was drowned before his uncle, who was captain of the boat, or the driver of the horse, were in a position to rescue him.

### **217 October 8 1880**

**ELECTION COMMISSION – CHESTER** At this Commission yesterday morning, which opened at Chester, Mr Samuel Smith, the Deputy Town Clerk of Chester, stated that, acting for the

Conservatives, he paid the railway expenses of thirty two boatmen in the employ of the Shropshire Union Canal Company, who were brought from one of the districts on duty. If he did wrong it was by an error of law. He got the boatmen to go to Ellesmere Port, Birkenhead and Liverpool to collect the men and pay them their expenses. After the election, the man said he had spent more than witness gave him. He gave him a sovereign to pay some of the men's fares back again. He had a personal interview with the Shropshire Union Company's manager at Chester, and he permitted the men to leave their work in order to vote. The Court adjourned.

**218 November 9 1880**

**Crown Court**

**DETERMINED ATTEMPT TO DROWN A WOMAN AT HUDDERSFIELD** **George Helliwell**, 23, boatman, was indicted for feloniously attempting to drown Ellen Harney with intent to murder her at Huddersfield on the 10<sup>th</sup> September. Mr Vernon Blackburn prosecuted, but the prisoner was not defended by counsel. It appeared that about eleven o'clock on the night in question, the prisoner met the prosecutrix and a woman named Hirst, and they went for a walk together along the canal bank. When near the Lion and Unicorn Inn, Castlegate, the prisoner asked Hirst to accompany him on to a barge, but she refused to do so unless Harney went with them. The prisoner did not wish for the company of the prosecutrix, and he accordingly pushed her into the canal. When she rose to the surface he again pushed her down, but on her rising a second time he, in consequence of the remonstrances of Hirst, tried to get her out. Before succeeding, however, the prisoner ran away, and Hirst was left to get Harney out in the best way she could. Information was given to the police, and prisoner was shortly after apprehended on board his own barge. The prisoner, in defence, contended that the woman fell into the water accidentally. The jury, after a moment's deliberation, returned a verdict of not guilty, and the prisoner was acquitted.

**219 December 2 1880**

**Borough Police Court**

**NEGLECT OF FAMILY** **George Wood**, boatman, Marsden, was ordered to pay £2 12s and costs, arrears upon an order made upon him to contribute to the maintenance of his wife.

**220 December 30 1880**

**A CANAL BOAT BESIEGED** At the Wolverhampton Police Court yesterday, **Edward Evans**, a Welsh boatman, was sent to gaol for six months on no less than nine charges – five of them being assaults, three on policemen and two on civilians. On Tuesday night he was mad drunk in a public house, and the police were called in to eject him. He violently assaulted them, and made his escape to the canal where, getting into his boat he, with the assistance of other boatmen, effectually kept the police at bay for a considerable time. The police, finding themselves overmatched, obtained the assistance of some civilians and got the prisoner to the police station. Another boatman named **Howell**, who had assisted Evans in resisting the police, was sentenced to four months hard labour.