

## YORKSHIRE EVENING POST 1890 to 1900

### 1 3 December 1890

An inquest was held yesterday on the body of **Sarah Jackson**, 37, the wife of a canal boatman. Deceased had only arrived in Salford with her husband, when she went ashore with him. On returning to the flat some little time before him, the deceased, it is believed, missed her footing in the darkness and fell into the canal at Oldfield Road. Search was made for the body, which was found near the shore side. A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

### 2 26 December 1890

CHRISTMASTIDE IN LEEDS Of all the holidays in the year, Christmastide is perhaps looked forward to with the most interest, inasmuch as to many people it means their annual visit to the best and oldest friends they have got, and to a reuniting of old ties. Then, of all times in the year, is it that the family circle is met together, old differences are healed, and the occasion is made one of festivity. This Christmas has been no exception to the rule, in the latter respect, at any rate ; but, unfortunately, the weather has not been so auspicious as it might have been. In the early part of the week, it appeared probable that we should have a real old fashioned Christmas, with real frost and snow. A thaw, however, set in on Wednesday, and on Christmas Eve, the streets of the town were in A VERY DISAGREEABLE CONDITION

rendering "sight seeing" and "shopping" less popular than they would have been. On the same night, and early on Christmas morning too, it is said that the principal streets from time to time were the scene of rowdyism of the most disgraceful kind. Free fights were taking place with remarkable frequency in Briggate, Boar Lane and Upperhead Row, and respectable people had difficulty in getting through the streets unmolested. The policemen on duty seemed to regard the proceedings with something approaching to indifference. On Christmas Eve, Charles McGuinness (26) of Graham's Court, Brick Street, Leeds, cloth finisher, fell off the causeway and fractured his leg. He was conveyed to the Infirmary. A similar accident occurred to **George Sutherland** (27), of 4 Water Lane, Leeds, boatman, and he was taken to the same institution.

### 3 27 January 1891

A HUNSLET LAD'S SUICIDE  
OUT OF WORK AND DEPRESSED

A SAD CASE This afternoon, Mr J C Malcolm, the Leeds Borough Coroner, held an inquest at the Bridge Inn, Kirkstall, upon the body of Herbert Leary aged 19 years, son of a late warehouseman, of 55 Mario Street, Hunslet.

Police-sergeant Smith deposed that at 11.45 am yesterday, **James Webster**, a boatman residing at 18 Bridge Street, Windhill, Shipley, reported at the Kirkstall police station that he had seen a body of a boy floating in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near the Kirkstall Forge Locks. He secured the body, and left it in charge of the lock-keeper. A hat and jacket were found lying on the bank about 60 yards from the place where the body was seen.

Ernest Leary, the brother of the deceased, identified the body, and said the deceased left home yesterday morning at 9.20. There was no quarrel before he left. His father was dead. The paper produced was in deceased's writing. It read, "Good bye, mother, brothers and sister ; I leave all. Good bye".

Witness, continuing, said he found the paper on the table after the deceased left home. The latter had been out of work for five years, and was unable to get a situation. Seven years ago, he had fallen on his head, and had never been right since. In consequence of getting no work, he had been very dejected, but was trying to save up money to buy a pony and cart for hawking.

The jury found a verdict of "Suicide during temporary insanity".

### 4 30 January 1891

HE WANTED HIS SHILLING At the Leeds Borough Police Court today, Mr Bruce, the

stipendiary magistrate, had before him **Edward Dyson**, a labourer, who was charged with having assaulted a canal boatman named **Tom (?Vettridge)** of Grape Street, Hunslet. It appeared that on Thursday, the men were working upon a canal boat at the new basin, Crown Point Bridge. The prisoner, who was drunk, went to the complainant and asked him for payment of 1s which was owing to him. At the same time, he took up a piece of coal and struck complainant upon the face with it, inflicting injuries on the lip and eyebrow. He was sentenced to six weeks imprisonment.

## 5 2 February 1891

**A FATAL ACCIDENT IN LEEDS** A man went into a grocer's shop in Water Lane on Saturday night, and fell down a staircase. He seemed to be badly hurt, and was removed to the Infirmary, where it was found that he had sustained serious scalp wounds and concussion of the brain, from which injuries he died yesterday afternoon. The deceased is evidently about 35 years of age, and 5ft 7in in height. He was wearing a brown check coat and corduroy trousers, and his general appearance suggested to the police that he might be a boatman.

**THE INQUEST** was held at the Town Hall this afternoon, before Mr J C Malcolm, Borough Coroner.

Mr Moynihan, the resident medical officer, said that when the deceased was received at the General Infirmary he was unconscious. The cause of death was fracture of the skull, which might have resulted from a fall. He was prematurely grey, and probably about 35 years of age. His breath smelt strongly of alcohol.

“Accidental death” was the verdict.

## 6 3 February 1891

The man who fell down a staircase in Water Lane, Leeds, on Saturday, and upon whose body an inquest was held yesterday, has now been identified as **Richard Seed**, a boatman aged 38 years, whose home is in Skipton.

## 7 3 February 1891

**IT WENT OFF ACCIDENTALLY** A young man named **Abner Corkwell**, 24 years of age, described as a boatman of 154 Ashcroft Street, Grimsby, was admitted to the Leeds Infirmary last night suffering from a severe gunshot wound on his right hand. From statements which he has made, it seems that he was on his boat and was reaching a gun out of the cabin, when the trigger accidentally caught against a projection and went off, inflicting the injury from which he is suffering.

## 8 11 February 1891

**LIFE ON A CANAL BOAT**

**A PERILOUS VOYAGE - “MAN OVERBOARD”**

(BY AN ANCIENT MARINER), SOMEWHERE IN YORKSHIRE, TUESDAY 4 AM

The darkness at this present time of writing is so dense as to give rise to the belief that one might make bricks out of it. I suppose someone on board this boat knows where we are. I don't. I lost my reckoning after Mr Buckley of the Carrying Department had stepped ashore at the first lock. The Captain and the Crew were too busy to take any notice of me, and so I sat disconsolate on the quarter deck whilst the little steamer pulled four boats through the inky waves. The first boat was made fast to the steamer by a stout rope, the second boat was similarly attached to the first, and so on. Fly boat 13, in the cabin of which I am writing these despatches, is the last in the procession. I had never believed it possible that the country to the east of Leeds through which the canal wends its way could put on an aspect of picturesqueness. But Night, like some cunning magician, had concealed whatever was mean and sordid in the landscape, and the lurid flames from the forges on either bank leaping athwart the lowering sky gave a weirdness to the scene in harmony with the eerie sounds of the ripples gurgling past as the boat slipped away, obedient to the pull of the steamer, which was invisible in the gloom. It was the Captain's watch on deck, and he did duty

from seven in the evening till one o'clock this morning ; that is to say, he stood at the stern and grasping the long tiller, kept the boat's head in a line with the towing steamer. Not that he could see the steamer by any chance – he could hear the moaning sound she made from time to time, but that did not help the Captain to keep his boat in line. He steered by the bank, he told me ; he knows every bend and twist of the shore on either hand ; even in the deepest darkness, he seems to *feel* rather than to see when a touch of the tiller is needed. Steering a canal boat is a species of acquired knowledge which eventually becomes an instinct. I was anxious to show what I could do in the way of steering, but the Captain courteously declined to give me a chance, and the crew, who was filling his pipe near the fore hatch, chortled to himself in scorn. The Captain was good enough to explain that he wished to get to Goole, and was not anxious to have the stern of his boat crashing into a bridge by the way. The Crew, who is also Chief Mate, Boatman and several other things, went below into his own cabin in the fore part of the vessel ; and when he had shot through the lock at Knostrop, the Captain suggested that it would be conducive to my comfort, and in accordance with his wishes, if I went below. I went with some reluctance, for I was anxious to develop some theories of mine about canal navigation, and to discuss the same with the Captain, but the demeanour of that officer was not encouraging. He reminded me that I ought not to speak to the man at the wheel, and so I left him standing statuesque on the quarter deck.

The way into the after cabin is down a ladder, the bottom step of which is missing. I only became aware of that circumstance by falling wholesale on the cabin floor, and when I scrambled to my feet I knocked my head against the beams in the ceiling, from all of which details it may be inferred that the cabin is not so spacious as one might desire. But it is a marvellous place this cabin, albeit somewhat straitened in the matter of space. It is of triangular form, with a stove in the middle and a wooden bench which goes all the way round. In the sides of the vessel are neat little cupboards where kitchen utensils are stored, and in the after part of the cabin, a sliding door conceals a box provided with blankets, and elevated to the dignity of a bed. Over the fireplace, on an iron ledge, are two earthenware dogs guarding an equestrian figure, which is either Lady Godiva or Queen Elizabeth. A flat board, which slides out from under the bed, makes a table, and an oil lamp with a villainous odour sheds a soft light upon the cabin floor, and sparkles on the chimney ornaments. The Captain of the vessel does not take his family with him, he informs me. I should like very much to know where he would stow them away if they did elect to go a voyaging. I made several furious attempts to sleep in this cabin, but the hardness of the wooden bench and the plashing of the water at the vessel's timbers, the hollow tramp of the Captain's big boots overhead, and the confusion which ensued when we swept through a lock, all contributed to a condition of irritable wakefulness. And so I went on deck in mutinous defiance of the Captain. We were nearing Kippax, at which place there is a “lock”, the operation of which I besought the Captain to explain. It appears that the whole country from Leeds to the east has a decided inclination towards the Humber, so that the level between Leeds and Knostrop, for example, is above that of the section between Knostrop and Kippax. In order that the boats may make the descent from a higher level to a lower, gates are provided which enclose a longitudinal water space into which the boat glides and reaches the next level without any perceptible disturbance. While the Captain was telling me all this, there rose up out of the darkness the glimmer of a red light, and a loud shriek from the steamer warned the lockmen to be ready for us. The gates swung open, and we entered the lock. One could only distinguish the waters of the canal from the land by the quivering of the lock light upon the glassy surface alongside. The captain of the boat next ahead of us leaped ashore, and running quickly back, closed the gates. We saw his shadowy figure on the side of the lock as he returned, and the next instant there was a loud splash, and a shout of “Man overboard!” Our Captain ran forward, and grasping a long boat hook, thrust it down into the water where the seething bubbles revealed the whereabouts of the unlucky man. He came to the surface for a moment, and then sank again. Once more he rose, striking out wildly, but this time his fingers struck the friendly boat hook, and he was safe. We hauled him aboard, and in a few minutes he was able to return to his own boat and change his clothing. How much of the canal he got into his system I cannot say, but the quantity must have been considerable. This incident was not without its element of danger, for a

man can be as conclusively drowned in this canal as he could be in the South Atlantic. The Captain told me of a chum of his who invited a foreign seaman to fight him by the canal side on just such a night as this. The men fought for a few minutes, and then both of them fell into the water. Neither of them came to the surface again alive. The drags brought up the body of the foreigner on the following morning, but the body of the captain's friend remained fast in the slime until one morning, eighteen weeks later, it came to the surface within six yards of the boat to which he had belonged. My own impression is that a man is in much more danger of being poisoned than drowned in the noisome waters of this navigable ditch.

I find the Captain much more genial when his spell of duty is over. The Crew is at the helm now, whistling "Hold the Fort" and beating time with his boots, for the Crew, like the Captain, "got religion" a few years ago, and views all merely secular songs with disfavour. The Captain's conversion, that officer assured me, was accompanied with much trouble to himself. He found that his habit of chewing tobacco was held to be heretical and the mark of a man of sin by the sect which he had joined. It was a sore trial to the flesh, this giving up the mastication of the solacing weed. But the Captain is a man of determination. He conquered the enemy by first taking to chewing cotton thread as a substitute for the banned tobacco, and then, after a season of great trial, he gave up the thread, and emerged from the struggle victorious. He is a man who has seen a deal of life on this waterway and will tell you of devastating storms and narrow escapes on sea and land. He is a pleasant man in his hours of leisure, but he is slightly deficient in the sense of humour. I have been striving to amuse him since half past two this morning (it is now a quarter to four) by singing to him a ballad of canal life with fifty three verses. One verse of this thrilling composition runs thus :-

Clap on all sail, the captain cried,  
By pirates we're surely prest!  
But the engineer shouted from the bank  
"Sure, the horses are doing their best!"

The captain never smiled. He crawled into his box, and drew the blanket over his head, and so to rest.

## 9 11 February 1891

### A LEAP INTO THE CANAL

A LEEDS MAN'S FATAL WAGER – HE THOUGHT HE COULD SWIM George Fenton, 27 years of age, a forgerman living at No7 Moor Street, Holbeck, was seen to plunge into the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near the Victoria Bridge, shortly before one o'clock this afternoon. An attempt was made to rescue him, as it was thought to be a case of attempted suicide, but life was extinct before the body could be reached.

Fuller particulars tend to show that the man lost his life by a foolish wager. It appears that at twenty minutes past twelve o'clock, John Hudson of 53 Hall Street, Newtown, saw the deceased with two other men make their way towards the side of the canal wharf, Water Hall. They began divesting themselves of their clothes, with the apparent intention of bathing in the muddy stream. He ordered them away, telling them they had no right to bathe there, and they desisted. About ten minutes later, however, Hudson saw the deceased partly strip himself on the bank and jump into the canal. Hudson procured a boat hook, but could not reach the man, who was unable to swim, and being carried away from the shore, was drowned in the sight of several people. The body was eventually recovered by **James Abbott**, boatman of 15 Canal Wharf, and was placed in the Aire and Calder Warehouse. The police of the Meadow Road station were communicated with, and Police-constable Hainstock procured the ambulance and removed the body to the Millgarth Street Mortuary, where it was identified by Mary Fenton as that of her husband. She could give no explanation of the occurrence, but from information supplied to us, it would seem that the deceased made a wager with his companions that he was able to swim, and jumped into the canal in order to win his bet. As the result proved, he was unable to swim, and paid the penalty with his life. It is said that the bet was only for twopence!

### 10 23 February 1891

THE DANGERS OF CANAL BOATMEN This morning it was reported to the Huddersfield police that **Francis Hirst**, aged 74 years, a canal boatman of 30 Quay Street, Huddersfield, had died yesterday afternoon from the effects of an accident. On the 11<sup>th</sup> inst, he was steering his boat on the canal at Aspley, and the handle of the rudder, which was not secured by a pin in the usual way, slipped out of its socket, and Hirst was thrown heavily against a hand rail, and six of his ribs on the right side were fractured. He died from the effects of the injury to the ribs, and from bronchitis.

### 11 26 February 1891

ANOTHER FATALITY FROM THE FOG AT SHIPLEY The fog has found another victim at Shipley. This morning the dead body of Ellen Hoyle, single woman of Jane Hills, Shipley, was taken out of the canal close to Shipley Bridge. A singular circumstance in connection with the fatality is that it is the same woman who was at the spot when a man was drowned on Monday night, and yesterday she was the principal witness at the inquest. She was last seen alive at the Royal Oak Hotel, where the inquest has been held. She left there about seven pm, being quite sober, and was not again seen until her body was found by a boatman named **McCormick**. It is surmised that she was on her way home when she fell into the water. There was a dense fog at the time. Apparently she had struggled a good deal in the water.

### 12 2 March 1891

FOUND DROWNED This afternoon, it has been reported to the Leeds Borough Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) that the body of a man has been taken from the River Aire at the end of Goodman Street, Hunslet. The body was seen in the river by a boatman named **Arthur Lee** of the boat *Pygmalion* of Leeds, who took it out and removed it to the Wellington Inn, Low Road, Hunslet, where it awaits the Coroner's inquest. The body was found in the same place where so many accidents have occurred within the last year or two. It is supposed to be that of George Watson, 45 years of age, of Crampton's Buildings, Hunslet.

### 13 4 March 1891

A LEEDS DROWNING CASE An inquiry relative to the death of John Henry Whittaker (59), labourer of 9 John Edward Street, New Wortley, was held by the Leeds Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) at the Town Hall this afternoon. From the evidence, it appeared that the deceased had been out of work for about a week. He was not in good health, and had been under medical treatment for his illness. He left home on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February, and nothing more was heard of him till yesterday morning, when his body was seen floating in the Leeds dam of the Aire and Calder Navigation, near East Street. The body was recovered by a boatman named **Thomas Stoker**, and was subsequently removed to the mortuary in Millgarth Street. A son of the deceased stated that his father's watch was missing. The deceased was a bit queer on account of his illness, but they never entertained any suspicion that he would commit suicide. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

### 14 10 April 1891

A BOATMAN FOLLOWED TO LEEDS Today at the Wakefield West Riding Court, **William Thompson**, a boatman, was summoned by John Farrar, a labourer of Methley, who claimed the sum of 21s for work done. Complainant said that he, along with a man named Robert Newton, also a labourer, was employed by defendant to discharge a boat containing 70 tons of dross at 7s a day each. After unloading the boat, which occupied them three days, they left the place for a short while, and on returning the boat had disappeared. They followed defendant to Leeds, where Newton obtained 13s from him. Defendant said he engaged Farrar only to get the work done for 13s. The Bench ordered him to pay complainant 14s and 19s 6d costs.

### 15 4 May 1891

FOUND IN NEW DOCK BASIN At 6.30 this morning, a boatman named **John Green**, who lives

on board the “*Ann*”, now lying in the river near Crown Point Bridge, Leeds, found a body of a man floating in the New Dock Basin, Clarence Road. Police-constable Carr took the body to the Millgarth Street Mortuary. In the clothing was found one of Mr Alf Cook's tickets, and other evidence showed he was William Bailey of Bradford, who has been for the last few months employed at the Hunslet Road Works and lodged at 5 Cross Mario Street. His father in law says he has been missing from home about a week.

The inquest on William Bailey, aged 36, was held this afternoon at the Leeds Town Hall, before Mr J C Malcolm, the Borough Coroner. Evidence of identification was given by Annie Bailey, and by a clerk at Mr Alf Cooke's works, who said that the deceased was a painter, living at Bradford, who had worked at Mr Cooke's. John Green deposed to finding the body. The jury returned an open verdict of “Found drowned”.

#### **16 11 May 1891**

**A LEEDS SOLICITOR AND HIS PEACOCK** Today, at the Wakefield Court House, **William Fieldhouse**, boat captain, **John Turpin**, a boatman, and **Benjamin Pease**, a horse driver, were charged with stealing a peacock, value 30s, the property of Mr Clifford Dunn, solicitor, Leeds, and who resides at Methley. On the date named, three little girls, who were walking on the canal side at Methley, saw the defendant Turpin carrying the bird, and Pease had hold of its tail. Next day, Police-constable Jarvis went to Leeds, and received the peacock from a man named Benjamin Clough, the owner of the hauling horses, who said that the boys on the boat brought it. Mr Dunn gave evidence identifying the peacock in question, and said that no one else in Methley had a peacock. Mr Dunn said he did not wish to press the case hardly against the defendants, and they were fined 21s each, or one months imprisonment.

#### **17 19 May 1891**

##### **FOUND DROWNED**

**A HUNSLET MYSTERY** Mr J S Brooke, the Deputy Coroner for Leeds, held an inquest at the Town Hall this day, upon the body of a boatman named **Gregory McGourk** (15) of 2 East Street, Leeds, which was found in the river Aire near Crown Point Bridge, Hunslet, yesterday afternoon. A canal boatman named **Christopher Davey** took the body out of the water. John Wilkinson, a stonemason, said the deceased was a fellow lodger, whom he last saw on Tuesday last. He was then suffering from the effects of a fall, and his head was bandaged. He was sober at the time. The jury returned an open verdict of “Found drowned”.

#### **18 24 July 1891**

**BOY DROWNED AT HUNSLET** A boy named **Harding Spence**, seven years of age, son of **William Spence**, boatman, 37 Black Bull Street, Hunslet, was drowned today. While playing near the reservoir at Messrs Marshall's mill, Cudbear Street, the deceased accidentally fell into the water. When the body was recovered, life was extinct.

#### **19 12 August 1891**

**A BOATMAN'S DISCOVERY AT LEEDS** Shortly after half past five o'clock this morning, a boatman named **William Landale**, who resides at 16 Canning Street, Dewsbury, noticed the body of a man in the Leeds lock of the Aire and Calder Canal in Clarence Road. He at once gave information to Police-constable Dunn, who was on duty in the district, and he had the body taken from the water and removed to the Mortuary in Millgarth Street, where it awaits identification. It is that of a man apparently between 50 and 55 years of age, about 5ft 7in in height, with grey beard and hair turning grey. Among other articles found in his pockets was a piece of paper, on which was written the name “G Cox”. A billycock hat was also found on the bank, in the leather lining of which, in two places, was written the same name, which is assumed to be that of the deceased man.

## 20 17 September 1891

### ASSAULT ON A WINDHILL MANUFACTURER

SEQUEL TO A GALLANT RESCUE At the Bradford West Riding Court this afternoon, **Edward Kendal**, boatman of Shipley, was charged with having assaulted Mr Hy Thornton, manufacturer, Junction Mill, Windhill. Mr Thornton resides close to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Windhill. On Tuesday night about ten o'clock, he heard at some distance away the screams of a woman, and he went to the place whence the sound proceeded. He found that the commotion was on a boat, and thinking the woman was being murdered, he jumped on to the boat. He discovered that the prisoner had a young woman at the bottom of the boat. She was screaming loudly, and the prosecutor got hold of the prisoner's coat collar and pulled him away. Then the prisoner began a murderous attack on prosecutor. He got him on to the ground and "let into him" with his fists and feet. Prosecutor produced a felt hat, which the prisoner had converted into a rag, and he also showed a wound on the jaw which he said was done by the prisoner's shoe. In prosecutor's opinion, if some young men had not come to his assistance, there would have been an inquest now instead of a magisterial inquiry, so violent was the prisoner's conduct. He said he was drunk at the time, and did not recollect what happened. He was not assaulting the girl, who was there of her free will. The magistrate complimented Mr Thornton on his humanity in going to the rescue of the girl. The circumstances, however, were peculiar, and the prisoner would be let off with a fine of 20s and costs, or 14 days imprisonment.

## 21 21 September 1891

THREE LEEDS POLICEMEN ASSAULTED This morning, Mr W Middleton and Dr Eagland, sitting in the first court of the Leeds Town Hall, had before them a boatman named **Edward Dyson** (33) on four charges. He was charged with having been drunk and disorderly and with having assaulted Police-constables Lowe, Sapidge and Bennett.

On Saturday night, the prisoner was in Marsh Lane kicking a woman. This cruelty was witnessed by Police officer Lowe, and the prisoner was taken into custody. He became very violent, threw the officer down and kicked him. Lowe blew his whistle, and Sapidge and Bennett went to his assistance. These two officers were also kicked by the prisoner, and Sapidge was bitten on the wrist and legs.

The prisoner, in defence, pleaded that he had been a soldier in the East and West Indies, and that when he took drink it got into his head. For being drunk and disorderly, the prisoner was fined 16s and costs, or seven days, and for the assaults was sentenced to two months imprisonment.

## 22 26 September 1891

### LIFE ON A CANAL BOAT

#### TORTURING A BOY

"AN INOFFENSIVE YOUNG MAN" Yesterday, at a special sitting of the Bicester Petty Sessions, **Henry Hodson** (20), a powerful looking young fellow described as a boatman of Longford near Coventry, was charged with cruelly ill treating and beating John Brown, aged 6 years, by striking him and also by throwing him into the canal on several occasions, between August 16 and September 1.

Thomas Brown, aged 13, stated that his mother was a widow and lived at Longford. For about five weeks, witness had been working for the prisoner on a canal boat running between Longford and Somerton. The prosecutor was witness's brother, and on August 16, Hodson said he would take the lad for a trip to Oxford if his mother would allow him to go. As it was holiday at the school, their mother gave her consent, and they all left Longford early the following morning. The first day they went as far as Atherstone Quarries, where the boat was loaded with stone, and they then proceeded down the canal. Hodson made witness's brother drive the horse, and because he did not drive quick enough he beat him with a hand brush, and then ducked him in the canal. Witness said, "Don't beat Jack, beat me", and Hodson then turned upon witness and gave him a good thrashing. On the 20<sup>th</sup> ult, they were at Fazeley, and witness was sent on ahead to pay the canal tolls, and on his return to

the boat his brother was crying bitterly. Witness asked him what was the matter, and he said that Hodson had been thrashing him. His hand was bleeding. A few days later, they were at Somerton, and while there Hodson beat the boy very severely, striking him over the head and body with a whipstock and blacking one of his eyes. The eye swelled very much, and Hodson wanted witness to cut the swelling with a pocket knife to reduce the swelling, but this witness refused to do. On Sunday August 25, while still in the vicinity of Somerton, Hodson tied a rope round his brother's waist, and threw him into the canal. The boy kept sinking under water, but every time he did so Hodson pulled him up again with the rope. This treatment was continued for some time, and on being pulled out of the water the lad could hardly stand, so Hodson took him to a stable on the bank till he came round. The lad was a day or two recovering from this treatment.

A coal merchant of Longford stated that he had known the prisoner from childhood, and had always found him a quiet inoffensive young man.

The magistrates retired, and on returning into court, the chairman said that taking into consideration his previous good character, and the fact that the prisoner had already been ten days in gaol, they had decided to treat him leniently. The sentence of the Court was that he would go to prison for 21 days.

### **23 19 October 1891**

#### **WEST RIDING QUARTER SESSIONS**

**John Stead** (25), boatman, was indicted for unlawfully and maliciously wounding **John Hirst**, another boatman, at Hook near Goole, on September 16. The men quarrelled over a shilling, and prisoner, it was alleged, pulled out his clasp knife and stabbed Hirst in the wrist. Prisoner was committed for nine months hard labour.

### **24 21 October 1891**

**A HULL BOATMAN DROWNED AT LEEDS** Last night, **George Clarke** (34) of Hull, the captain of the boat (?Lewis?), trading between that place and Leeds, was drowned in the New Basin at Crown Point, Leeds. The boat was lying in the basin, and according to the statement which has been made by the mate of the boat, the deceased was "prizing" off a deal plank with a heavy crowbar when it slipped and he fell overboard. The mate, whose name is **John William Lambert**, states that, in his opinion, the crowbar fell on the deceased after he fell overboard. Lambert got the body out of the water with the assistance of a man named **Edward Thackerah**, who is in the employ of the Airedale Tug Company, and who was on the tugboat, which was also in the basin, and a police-constable was sent for, and the body was removed to the mortuary in Millgarth Street, where it awaits the coroner's inquest. The deceased leaves a wife and two children, who are living on the boat.

### **25 1 December 1891**

#### **THE CHARGE OF ATTEMPTED MURDER AT LEEDS**

**PRISONER BEFORE THE STIPENDIARY** This afternoon, the woman Maria Wilkinson was brought before Mr Bruce, charged with having attempted to kill and murder herself, by jumping into the canal, and also with having attempted to kill and murder the younger of her two children. She was wretchedly clad in a tattered dress, and wore an old and very thin shawl over her head, presenting a miserable appearance.

Mr James watched the case on behalf of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Mr Heals, surgeon, informed Mr Bruce that he had made an investigation of the prisoner's mental condition, and was satisfied that she was now in a fit state to understand the charge.

**James Abbott**, boatman, 15 Canal Wharf, Leeds, said he was last night, about six o'clock, standing on the bridge near the dues offices of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. He saw prisoner go down the steps at the lock and jump in the canal before he could get to her. She had a child in her arms and a little girl walking along with her, but the latter slipped away before she got near the water. The child she was carrying was wrapped up in her arms, and she stuck well to it, witness being unable to

get it from her. Witness, after prisoner had jumped into the water, sent the man who was with him for a boathook, while he got hold of the child by the hair of its head, and by this means he drew both mother and child to the side. Then he got hold of the child's arm and the woman's, and told her to let go, but she did not do so, nor did she make any reply. With assistance, he succeeded in getting both out of the water, and it was not till then that he could get the little boy from prisoner. After she had been out of the water some time, witness induced the prisoner to walk with him to his house. When she was there, she said to witness she wished he had let them stop in, and started to tell him then about the "nasty little girl", and asked her if she did not make her say her prayers before jumping into the water, and the little girl said, "Yes". Witness asked prisoner why she did not leave go when he got hold of the child in the water. She replied that she did not want the child to go, and that she was sorry he had not let her drown. Witness thought she seemed a little intoxicated. The eldest child – the girl who got away – seemed about six years old ; the boy was two years and eight months old.

John Edmondson, 28 Butcher Street, who was in company with the last witness, said that he saw the prisoner trying to pull the other child into the water.

Police-constable Wall said that last night he went to Abbott's house, and there found the prisoner. He asked her name and address and also the names of her children, who were then present. She gave the name "Maria Whitley", and said as to the children that Sarah Ann was aged seven and Benjamin two. Before he said anything, she said, "I did it ; I intended the children dying with me. There is no credit to anyone for saving us". On the way to the police station, she said, "I have been living with a man named John Stringer, in Pottery Fields, who threatened to turn me out, and I determined to drown myself and children". She added that she had worked for Mr Proctor of New Wortley, from whom she could get a character. The witness then formally charged the prisoner, who made no reply. When the charge was taken, she gave the name of "Wilkinson".

In reply to the several charges this afternoon, prisoner stated that she had nothing to say, except that she had been turned out and was destitute.

Mr Bruce, in committing the prisoner for trial at the ensuing Assizes, said the man Abbott showed great good sense in acting as he did, and though the poor woman might say that he deserved no credit for saving her life, he was of opinion that both Abbott and Edmondson, in what they did, displayed a great deal of good sense and humanity. But for the fact that the Assizes were close at hand, and that the woman was likely to be better looked after where she was going to, he would have been inclined to grant bail.

## 26 23 December 1891

DROWNED DURING THE FOG IN LEEDS A drowning case – primarily due to the dense fog which prevailed in Leeds yesterday – was investigated by the Leeds Borough Coroner today at the Town Hall. In the first case, that of **William Lund**, aged 28, a boatman belonging to Windhill. From the evidence, it seemed that the deceased had accidentally walked into the basin of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, the body being subsequently recovered by **James Abbott**, a boatman. The jury came to the conclusion that the deceased had been accidentally drowned.

## 27 24 December 1891

A GOOLE MAN DROWNED AT KNOSTROP A Goole boatman, employed on one of the fly boats which ply between Leeds and Goole, was drowned last night at Knostrop. The deceased was captain of boat No 109, and was passing through Knostrop lock with his vessel when he fell overboard and was drowned. The body was quickly recovered by **John William Barker**, captain of fly boat No 20, and **John Oddy**, mate on the deceased's boat. As the body was not taken ashore at Knostrop, the inquest will not be held there, but at Goole, to which place the deceased was taken.

## 28 27 January 1892

A YOUNG WOMAN MISSING FROM MIRFIELD Since twenty minutes past six on Saturday morning, **Elizabeth Ann North**, aged 18, cotton reeler, daughter of **George Jagger North**,

boatman, Battyeford, has been missing. She left home at the time stated to go to her work at Clive Mills, Mirfield, but did not get there, and has not been heard of since. It is feared she has committed suicide, as she was heard to say on the night on the 22<sup>nd</sup> inst that she would drown herself if her mother complained to her about not having had enough money. It is alleged that **Louisa North**, the mother, did thrash her daughter on the 22<sup>nd</sup> inst. When last seen, she was wearing a grey and white striped shawl, a large harden apron, a black dress, and low shoes. The affair is much talked of in the district.

### **29 26 February 1892**

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE IN LEEDS Last night, a woman named Elizabeth Rider, 29 years of age, lodging with James Gregory of 10 Organ Yard, Low Road, Hunslet, jumped into the river Aire at about 6.30 near Esholt Wharf, Old Mill Lane, Hunslet, with the intention of committing suicide. She was fortunately seen by **Charles Fordham**, a boatman of Deal near Ferrybridge, whose boat was lying at the Wharf, and he rescued her. He handed her over to the care of the bystanders, by whom she was taken home, and communicated with the police. Investigation showed that she had been a patient at the Leeds Infirmary, and Dr Nicholson, who was called in, said that she must be closely watched, and would have to be taken either to the Workhouse or asylum. The police did not, therefore, take her into custody.

### **30 2 March 1892**

SUPPOSED SUICIDE NEAR HUDDERSFIELD Our Huddersfield correspondent telegraphs :- Today, **Arthur Barker**, boatman, while taking a boat along the canal near Colne Bridge, saw an object on the bank. It was discovered to be the body of George Drake, collier, Colne Bridge. He left his uncle's house last night to go to Dewsbury, and was last seen alive at six this morning in Leeds Road. His watch had stopped at 6.15. He is supposed to have committed suicide. He had just come out of prison.

### **31 10 March 1892**

Another inquest was held concerning the death of **Charles Wilson**, canal boatman of Horbury Bridge who, while collecting river sand on the Calder, was accidentally drowned by the upsetting of a boat.

### **32 26 April 1892**

A BOATMAN'S CHILD DROWNED IN LEEDS At noon today, a little lad named **John Rhodes**, aged two years and son of a boatman, was accidentally drowned in the river Aire at Hunslet. The child, it seems, was playing on the deck of a boat when he slipped overboard, being drowned before assistance could be obtained.

### **33 3 May 1892**

#### THE GRIEVANCES OF CANAL BOATMEN

LEEDS EVIDENCE BEFORE THE LABOUR COMMISSION After an adjournment of five weeks of the Royal Commission on Labour, Group B met today at Westminster Hall, Lord Derby presiding.

Mr Noble, president of the Watermen and Riverside Labourers' Union, whose headquarters are in Leeds, said, in reply to the Chairman, that the Union had 120 members who worked on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and on the Aire and Calder. They had had strikes. One was for an advance of 1/2d and 1d per ton for the different stages. In the first instance the demand was refused, but at the end of a fortnight the masters agreed to make the concession. There was no trouble or disturbance during the dispute. He complained of the action of many of his members leaving the union when they had obtained an advance.

The Chairman : Have you any complaint to make against employers? None.

Witness went on to say that he should like something to be done to improve the social position and

education of many of the men and their families. He did not think they had fifteen men in their society who could read, or even write their own name. Before a strike took place, he added, the men gave 14 days notice. The matter would be referred to the District Trade and Labour Council, who would have power to bring it before the Board of Conciliation.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach : Are you satisfied with that arrangement by which you refer these matters to the Labour Council? Yes, we are.

By Mr Jesse Collings : Does your society take any steps to enforce the attendance of children at school? No. We have never interfered yet. The Board School officers complain of the difficulty they have on account of the nature of the occupation of the parents.

Do the members of your society allow their children to run wild? Not the members of our society.

By Mr Bolton MP : He would prohibit women and children from living on the boats, and would compel every boatman to have a separate home.

The Chairman : Do you think that living in houses instead of boats would be a better guarantee of their being married?

Witness said that if the people lived in society it would be a better guarantee.

### 34 5 May 1892

#### LEEDS WOMEN ATTEMPT SUICIDE

THE RESULT OF TROUBLE Today at the Leeds Police Court, before the following magistrates – Mr B Goodman, Mr James Walker, and Mr C Coghlan – two cases of attempted suicide by women were heard.

The first case was against Annie Emmett, a tailoress of 5 Storey's Yard, who was yesterday afternoon very much the worse for drink. She was seen to go down to the river Aire at the East Street Coal Wharf, and there she deliberately jumped into the water. When she was got out, she said she was in trouble and wanted to drown herself.

Prisoner's sister, who gave evidence in a rather excited fashion, stated that prisoner allowed a man to live with her who was no good. When they got some money, both of them got mad drunk. She told how prisoner came to her yesterday morning, and declared that “she had a good mind to jump into the river”. Witness was not inclined to regard that expression of opinion seriously, and so she replied, “Ay, do ; only pick a clean 'un”. (Laughter) Prisoner, who had been living apart from her husband for seven years, was committed for trial.

**Harriet Oldfield** was the name of the second prisoner. She was the wife of a canal boatman, who was present in court to say something in her behalf. She was charged with being drunk, and also with having attempted to commit suicide.

She was taken into custody in Victoria Road yesterday on account of the disturbance she had created, and last night, when Police-constable Hancock visited the cell which she occupied at Meadow Road Police Station, he found her lying on her back with her apron over her face, the string at one end being tied round the heating pipe, the other end being fastened round her throat. The woman was insensible when he found her, and it was 20 minutes before she regained consciousness. When she had recovered, she asked, “Why didn't you let me do it?”

Prisoner now explained that owing to a couple of deaths in the family, she had had a good deal of trouble lately, while her husband mentioned that she was stabbed in the forehead about seven years ago, and when she got a glass or two, she was upset.

Prisoner was ordered to pay a fine of 10s and costs, or to be imprisoned for 14 days. It transpired that she owed that sum on a previous conviction.

### 35 9 May 1892

A SKIPTON MAN DROWNED AT METHLEY A sad drowning fatality, resulting in the death of a Skipton boatman named **Thomas Scott**, has occurred at Methley. It seems that on Saturday the deceased was walking along the river side to his boat, which was moored in the Savile “Basin”, when he fell into the water. A man named Thomas Clarke, a carrier, was near the spot, and succeeded in rescuing Scott, who appeared to recover somewhat. Yesterday, however, just before

noon, he became worse and expired before medical attendance could be obtained.

### **36 24 May 1892**

#### **SUICIDE OF A MIRFIELD GIRL**

**MISSING FOR FOUR MONTHS** Yesterday Mr R P Maitland held an inquest at the New Inn, Crigglestone, on the body of **Elizabeth Ann North**, aged 18 years, the daughter of **George Jagger North**, boatman of Stocksbank, Mirfield. It appeared that the deceased left her home on Saturday January 23, after quarrelling with her mother the previous night as to the amount of wages she brought home from Mr Moorhouse's Clythe Mill, where she had been employed as a cotton reeler.

Mrs North stated that Mr Moorhouse had told her that the girl was idle and earned less wage than she might have done. On the Friday night, 22<sup>nd</sup> January, she brought home only 6s 7 1/2d, when she could have earned as much again, and witness hit her in the back with her open hand twice. On the Saturday morning, she left the house at 25 minutes past six, saying, "Good morning", but she did not go to the mill, and one of the hands, Mary Robinson, had since said that deceased said to her, on Friday night, that if witness said anything to her, she would drown herself. Deceased had not been seen since, but on Saturday her body, which was very much decomposed, was discovered on the footpath on the side of the river Calder at Thornes, the clothes having caught on a willow tree which was overhanging the water.

Verdict : "Drowned herself in the River Calder, at Mirfield, while of unsound mind".

### **37 4 July 1892**

#### **A LEEDS DIVORCE CASE**

**A BARGEMAN SECURES DECREE** In the Divorce Division today, Sir Francis Jeune had before him the case of Jackson v Jackson and Coulson. The petition was that of the husband, **George Jackson**, a bargeman of Leeds, for a divorce by reason of his wife's adultery with the co-respondent, James Coulson. The marriage took place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1887 at Christ Church, Leeds. Mr and Mrs Jackson afterwards lived together at Leeds, when differences arose between them owing to her drunken habits. On the 20<sup>th</sup> May 1891, she left, and did not return till the following day. He remonstrated with her, and then she packed up her boxes and left the house. Since then he had seen her in the company of men. The Guardians wrote to him in reference to the support of his wife, and he saw the clerk and told them how she was going on, and they had never bothered him since. It appeared that she made the acquaintance of the co-respondent, whose father, a fish dealer, gave evidence as to seeing his son with Mrs Jackson in the same room. Owing to that matter, he sold up his house and separated from his wife, but they had now come together. A decree nisi with costs was granted.

### **38 12 July 1892**

**CHILD'S BODY FOUND IN THE BRADFORD CANAL** The dead body of a female child was found in the Bradford Canal near Bolton Bridge yesterday morning, by **Mr James Gault**, boatman, residing at Windhill. Gault observed a parcel floating in the water, and he got it out. When he had opened the parcel and saw what it contained, he called Police-constable Wheatley, and the officer conveyed the body, which appears to be that of a newly born child, to the mortuary. Nothing is known as to who put it into the water. The parcel also contained a piece of iron, and had evidently been in the water a considerable time. Mr S Lodge, police surgeon, made a post mortem examination of the body last night.

### **39 22 July 1892**

**AN ELECTION DAY INCIDENT AT WAKEFIELD** **John Matthewman**, a Horbury boatman, on election day (July 11) visited the Star Inn, Netherton, near Wakefield. He was refused liquor there, but commenced to fight with another man, and on being ordered out by the landlady (Mrs Walker), struck her savagely with his elbow and nearly knocked her down. On being charged at Wakefield Court House this morning with refusing to quit and assault, John admitted he was a bit "beerified",

but complained that he was held down in the house whilst another man hit him all over the face, causing him to “bleed like a pig stuck”, and giving him two black eyes. There were 15 previous convictions, and defendant was mulcted in all to the extent of £2 12s 6d.

#### **40 18 August 1892**

**CHAFFING THE BOATMAN** Some young men were chaffing a boatman last night at Polesworth, near Tamworth, as his boat passed underneath a bridge, when **Johnson** picked up a gun and fired among them, wounding one of them named Joseph Harding in the arm. Johnson is in custody.

#### **41 22 August 1892**

**A BOATMAN DROWNED AT CASTLEFORD**

**SUPPOSED TO BE A NATIVE OF HUDDERSFIELD** Major Arundel, the coroner for the Honour of Pontefract, held an inquest on Saturday at Allerton-Bywater, on the body of a man named **Joseph Kay**, a boatman, supposed to be about 38 years of age and to belong to Huddersfield. It was shown that deceased had been drinking at Castleford, and it was supposed that in going to his boat, he fell into the Aire and Calder Canal, where his body was afterwards found. The whereabouts of his relatives are unknown. A verdict of “Accidental death” was returned. The following is a description of the man :- 5ft 8in in height, stout build, brown hair, no whiskers, thick brown moustache and brown cord suit.

#### **42 23 September 1892**

**ELOPEMENT OF A BOATMAN'S WIFE**

**THE MAGISTRATE THINKS THE WOMAN TO BLAME** At the Manchester Police Court yesterday, **Mary Wardle** and Henry Osborne were charged with stealing a large quantity of clothing, the property of **John Wardle**, a boatman of Monton.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> inst, the prosecutor went with his boat to Liverpool, and on his return found that his clothing was gone, and also his wife. Inquiries elicited the fact that the male prisoner, who was lodging next door, had decamped with his wife. Subsequently it was found that they were both at Castleford living together. The police went over and arrested the prisoners, and from their statements, the property was found at the Exchange Station, packed up for consignment to Leeds.

From the evidence it appeared that at Eccles Wakes the male prisoner formed an acquaintance with Mrs Wardle, and they afterwards went on the “spree”.

Both prisoners admitted the offence.

The Stipendiary Magistrate thought that the male prisoner, who is considerably younger than Mrs Wardle, had been induced to elope, and he would be sentenced to one day's imprisonment. The female prisoner who, it was stated, had previously left her husband – was sentenced to two months imprisonment.

#### **43 6 October 1892**

**SHOCKING ACCIDENT TO A SHIPLEY MAN** This afternoon, a boatman known as Velveteen Jack was, it is supposed, feeding his horse in a stable at Calverley Bridge, when the horse kicked him on the temple, forcing part of his skull on to his brain. He was seen by a medical gentleman, who anticipated an early fatal result. The unfortunate man was employed by Messrs William Fife and Co, Shipley. (**Carradus**)

#### **44 10 October 1892**

**FATALLY KICKED BY A HORSE** **John Carradus** of 11 Raglan Street, Shipley, a boatman, who was kicked by a horse at Calverley Bridge on Thursday last, died this morning in the Leeds Infirmary.

#### 45 11 October 1892

THE DEATH OF A SHIPLEY BOATMAN At the Leeds Town Hall this afternoon, Mr J C Malcolm, borough coroner, held an inquest touching the death of **John Carradus** (55), boatman, Raglan Street, Shipley, who died in the Leeds Infirmary on Saturday night. Deceased was found in a stable at Calverley suffering from a fracture of the skull, evidently the result of a kick from the horse. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

#### 46 10 November 1892

A LEEDS WOMAN FOUND DROWNED – SUICIDE OR SLEEP WALKING?

SOMETHING ON HER MIND A Goole boatman named **John William Addinall** made a startling discovery in the river Aire shortly after six o'clock this morning. When near the suspension bridge at the bottom of Goodman Street, Hunslet, he came across the body of a woman floating in the river. The police were immediately communicated with, and the body, which was clad in a night dress only, was conveyed by means of the hand ambulance to the mortuary in Millgarth Street. Inquiries were instituted with a view to identifying the deceased, with the result that Michael O'Brien, 88 Marsh Lane, informed the police that the body was that of his wife, whose age was 45. She retired to rest as usual last evening, and he could not account for her disappearance. He missed her during the night, and had been endeavouring to trace her whereabouts. It is surmised that she must have risen and left the house while in a fit of somnambulism. The inquest will be held tomorrow.

Later inquiries in the neighbourhood by an *Evening Post* reporter tend rather to show that the deceased committed suicide rather than she met her death by sleep walking. The neighbours say that she was not subject to somnambulism, but they are at the same time unable to afford any clue as to a possible motive. It is said that she had suffered slightly from illness, but this is not considered a sufficient reason to have prompted her to take her life. "She had something on her mind", our representative was told this afternoon, but nothing further was known as to the nature of her trouble. It may be added that both deceased and her husband are spoken of in very kindly terms by those who have known them, and there is not the slightest hint at any quarrelling or disagreement between them. The husband is said to be a steady working man, and is employed by the Leeds Corporation. There is one child – a little boy.

#### 47 11 November 1892

SUICIDE PREFERRED TO PRISON

A BRADFORD WOMAN'S SAD DEATH An inquest was held at Bradford today, touching the death of Hannah Newsome (58), housekeeper of Midland Terrace, Bradford, who was found drowned in the canal yesterday.

Mary Elizabeth Newsome, 3 Bates Street, Horton, daughter of the deceased, said that her mother was engaged as housekeeper by a Mr Marshall of Midland Terrace. Witness saw the deceased a fortnight ago, and the following day she ascertained that she had left Mr Marshall's, and could not be found.

Police-constable Mold, the coroner's officer, said that the deceased had left Mr Marshall's under very unfortunate circumstances, and the police had wanted her for felony.

**James Patchett**, boatman of Bolton Woods Bottom, testified to finding the body of the deceased floating in the canal near Midland Terrace, Bolton, yesterday afternoon.

Answering questions by the Coroner, Police-constable Mold said the deceased had not been back, so far as he was aware, to her situation since she saw her daughter. The police had "wanted" her for three weeks past.

Police-constable Greenwood said the deceased was accused of stealing some clothes &c from Mr Marshall's, and he and others had been on the look out for her for three weeks past.

The Coroner : Is there a warrant out against her?

Police-constable Mold : We don't require one for that.

Police-constable Greenwood added that he was called to the canal when the body was found. He

searched the body, and found upon it 15 pawn tickets. Two of the pawn tickets referred to property she was suspected of having stolen.  
The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

#### **48 17 November 1892**

**A YORK BOATMAN DROWNED NEAR WAKEFIELD** A verdict of "Accidentally drowned by falling into the river Calder whilst going to his vessel at night" was returned at an inquest held before Mr P P Maitland, coroner, at the Ferry Boat Inn, Bottomboat, on the body of **Henry Thomas**, a boatman formerly living at 12, Garden Place, Hungate, York, and employed on a canal boat belonging to John Wray of York. Deceased came with his boat to Messrs Charlesworth's colliery staith one day last week. On Saturday he went to Leeds, and at 11.30 pm was seen to go through Bottomboat towards the place where his boat was moored. He seems to have fallen in the water in the dark, for on the river being dragged on Monday, his body was found 20 yards from his boat by his cousin, George Thomas of Selby.

#### **49 17 November 1892**

**MAN DROWNED AT SOWERBY BRIDGE** Yesterday afternoon, **Henry Mebourne**, a boatman of Runcorn, found the body of Bright Lumb, 28 years of age, a monumental mason of Sowerby, in the canal at Sowerby Bridge near Longbottom Bridge. Deceased was last seen alive by his brother Fred on Tuesday morning, when he left home. There was nothing unusual in his appearance at the time.

#### **50 17 November 1892**

##### **THE FOG IN LEEDS**

**NARROW ESCAPE FROM DROWNING** A fog of great density has prevailed over Leeds and the district during the whole of the day. Street traffic has been greatly interfered with, although the lamps have been kept alight during the greater part of the day, and outdoor work has been practically suspended. The tramcars and omnibuses are running very irregularly and with great caution, and cabs are at a premium. The omnibus service to the New Leeds and Roundhay Road districts has had to be entirely suspended. Railway passengers have also suffered great inconvenience from the delays occasioned by the fog. A boatman named **Wright** and his son had a narrow escape from drowning at the Leeds Locks, near the Parish Church football ground, this morning. They were crossing the locks when both fell into the water, and were in imminent peril of losing their lives. The son shouted for help, and fortunately was heard by **Mr Hutchinson**, the lock-keeper, who was in his office at the time. Mr Hutchinson ran to the assistance of the pair, and finding that he could not get them out, he called to some other men, who came to the spot and rescued them. As night approached, the fog became denser, and was largely charged with carbon, causing irritation of the organs of breathing. At the time of writing, there is no indication of the fog lifting.

#### **51 24 November 1892**

##### **A GRIMSBY YOUTH DROWNED NEAR WAKEFIELD**

**THE BODY NOT IDENTIFIED** A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" has been returned at an inquest before Mr P P Maitland at Bottomboat near Wakefield, on the body of a boatman named "John". Deceased, who was employed on the keel *The City*, belonging to Henry Mellor of Thorne Lane, Wakefield, was drowned in the fog at the end of last week, whilst returning to his boat. His body has not been identified and his surname is unknown, but he is said to have told a friend that he has a brother living in Grimsby. His description is as follows :- Black hair and very slight moustache, pale and sallow complexion, black eyebrows, thick lips and blue eyes ; medium height, 5ft 6in, and about 18 years of age ; dressed in a pair of brown corduroy trousers and new blue check linen shirt, black woollen stockings, old black waistcoat, old blue serge round coat. He had in his pockets a small cabin key, an old blue cotton handkerchief and part of a pair of broken braces.

**52 26 November 1892**

**SUICIDE AT KIRKSTALL**

**A NEW WORTLEY WOMAN DROWNED** At the Bridge Inn, Kirkstall, today, Mr J C Malcolm (Borough Coroner) held an inquest touching the death of Annie Elizabeth Hayward, a middle aged woman, wife of a waggon builder living in Highfield Place, New Wortley, who was found drowned yesterday in the canal between Kirkstall and Leeds.

William Lawrence Hayward, son of the deceased, said she had been low spirited for some time on account of the condition of her husband, who for about six years past has been bedridden.

Mrs Martha Ann Clark of Bradford, sister in law of the deceased, said the latter went out yesterday morning with the intention of seeing a doctor. She did not see her afterwards. Deceased was not seen to throw herself into the water, but her shawl was found on the canal bank just after she had been seen by a boatman named **Kenrick**.

The jury found that deceased committed "Suicide whilst of unsound mind".

**53 28 November 1892**

**AN UNKNOWN MAN FOUND DROWNED IN THE CALDER** On Saturday afternoon, shortly after half past four, **William Henry Norminton**, a boatman of Mirfield, discovered the body of a man floating down the Calder near to Shepley Bridge. He got assistance, and got the body to the bank, when it was found to be in a far state of decomposition, as it had been in the water, to all appearances, for several months. No identification has yet taken place. The man appears to be about 40 years of age, stout build, 5ft 6in in height, and has dark hair and moustache. He was dressed in a black twilled worsted coat, black trousers, grey shirt, red flannel undershirt, stockings and boots, fairly well worn. He had nothing in his pockets but an old clay pipe.

**54 20 January 1893**

**A PLUNGE INTO THE CALDER**

**SUICIDE AT WAKEFIELD** This morning, a man was seen to deliberately jump into the river Calder, near Portobello House, Wakefield. He sank before help could arrive, and the body has not been recovered yet. On the banks of the river was found a coat containing papers bearing the name of **David Hall**, boatman, Calder Street, Thornes Lane.

**55 21 January 1893**

**A WAKEFIELD BOATMAN'S SUICIDE** Major Taylor, coroner, held an inquest at the New Inn, Thornes Lane, Wakefield, last night, on the body of **David Hall** (45), a boatman living in Calder Street, Thornes Lane. From the evidence, it appeared that on Thursday night deceased returned from a voyage to Hull in low spirits. Early yesterday he left his home before breakfast, saying he was "going to the office". About ten o'clock, he was seen by a lamplighter named George Henry Milsom to jump from the hauling path near Portobello Mill into the Calder. Milsom could render no assistance, being on the opposite side of the river. Deceased came to the surface once, held his hand up, and then sank. It was stated that Hall had been off work for some time, and had been very depressed. The jury returned a verdict of "Committed suicide whilst temporarily insane".

**56 24 January 1893**

**LAURA YEADON'S DEATH**

**THE LAST OF A PAINFUL TRAGEDY** Mr W Barstow, Coroner, held an inquest this afternoon relative to the death of Laura Yeadon, the 10 months old child of Laura Silverwood Yeadon, late of 50 Titus Street, Saltaire, who drowned herself in the canal on the 21<sup>st</sup> December, and whose body was recovered on the 31<sup>st</sup> December, a short distance from where the child's body was found yesterday.

The Coroner said it would not be necessary to go again into the circumstances which were detailed at the former inquest, but as the grandmother of the child was to be called, he would read over her evidence to her.

Alice Yeadon, grandmother of the child, said that she believed the deceased would be about ten months old when it was taken away by its mother. She had seen the body and identified it as the child of her late daughter. She last saw the deceased alive at 5.20 on the afternoon of December 21<sup>st</sup>, when she left her and her mother in the house. Witness's daughter had fretted very much, and seemed to waste away after she came home from Burton with her child, and several times said she would drown herself.

The Coroner : Has she ever said that she would drown herself and the baby? No, but she always said that wherever she went the baby would have to go.

What did she mean by that ; drowning do you think? She and all of us made a great pet of the baby. In answer to the Coroner, the witness adhered to her former evidence.

**William Holmes**, boatman of the boat *Sarah*, of Windhill, deposed to the finding of the body ; and Martha Fell to laying it out, and to there being no marks of violence on it.

The Coroner, in a short summing up, said there was no positive evidence that the mother put the child into the water, and it was a question of probability. As the mother was dead, it was not important, and they might avoid the use of the word murder.

The jury then returned a verdict that the deceased was "Found drowned, without marks of violence, and that probably she was drowned by her mother, Laura Silverwood Yeadon, on the 21<sup>st</sup> December, whilst the latter was in a state of temporary insanity".

## **57 11 February 1893**

### DRUNK ON LICENSED PREMISES

CHARGE AGAINST A BRIGHOUSE LANDLORD At the Halifax West Riding Court today, Francis Job, landlord of the Anchor Inn, Brighouse, was summoned for permitting drunkenness on the 4<sup>th</sup> inst.

Police-constable Greenwood stated that he visited the house last Saturday night. A man named **Samuel Lee** was drunk in the taproom, and Uriah Ratcliffe, cotton spinner, was drunk in another room.

The defendant, through Mr Boocock, denied that the men were drunk. Ratcliffe stated that he had been teetotal for eleven years, and he broke about a month ago. He drank only two glasses of beer on the day in question, and it was "a caution" if that quantity made him drunk. He was sober at the time.

The defendant was fined 24s, including costs.

Samuel Lee, boatman, and Uriah Ratcliffe, the two men referred to, were summoned for being drunk on licensed premises. Lee, who was convicted a fortnight ago for a similar offence, was fined 15s and costs. The other defendant was ordered to pay 5s and the costs.

## **58 7 March 1893**

### FOUND DROWNED

SUPPOSED SUICIDE OF A PEDLAR AT ELLAND An inquest was held at the Royal Hotel, Elland, this morning, by Mr Barstow (district coroner), on the body of an unknown man who was found in the canal at Elland on Sunday morning.

**Jonathan Wood**, boatman, Hull, gave evidence as to the finding of the body, which he said was sent to the top by the boiling up of the water consequent on the drawing off of the lock called Leather Bucket Lock, Woodside, Elland.

Police-constable Hart stated that he examined the body, and found the man's hands crossed, appearances pointing that he had tied them himself, having tied the last knot by the aid of his teeth. He had on him four small packets of needles and an old knife. The body had been in the water nine or ten days, a pedlar's certificate having been found about that time. The certificate bore the name Lewis Cooper (65), Mansfield, Notts, and the description on it corresponded with that given by the Elland police. The Mansfield police had telegraphed that inquiries had been made, but although the certificate was granted there in December last, nothing was known of him.

A verdict that deceased had probably drowned himself was returned.

**59 11 April 1893**

**TWENTY YEARS DRUNK** An inquest was held yesterday at Liverpool on the body of **John Bond**, a river boatman aged 51 years, who died on Saturday morning last. **Betsy Bond**, wife of the deceased, said she had been married to deceased twenty years, and during the whole of that period he had never been sober one day. He died from lung disease, accelerated by drinking habits.

**60 17 April 1893**

**FATAL LEAP INTO THE AIRE AT LEEDS** Shortly before seven o'clock this morning, Mr James Varley, drysalter of East Street Mills, Leeds, saw a woman leap from the opposite bank into the river. Dragging operations were commenced, with the result that at half past ten **James Kershaw**, boatman of Battersea Place, Thwaite Gate, recovered the body by means of a boat hook. It was removed to the mortuary in Millgarth Street to await identification. The deceased appears to have been between 30 and 35 years of age, and is about 5ft 4in in height, of stout build, with full face and dark hair. She was dressed in a brown stuff skirt trimmed with velvet, black stuff waist, white and pink striped apron, black stockings and old laced boots.

**61 18 April 1893**

“I'M GOING MOTHER”

**SUICIDE OF A HUNSLET YOUNG WOMAN** Elizabeth Braithwaite, 23 years of age, who lived with her mother at 23 Sardinia Street, Hunslet, startled her mother yesterday morning by coming to her bedroom about six o'clock, and saying, “I'm going, mother”, a thing she had never done before. She had been out of work some time. Later in the day, it was ascertained that the unfortunate young woman had drowned herself, her body being found in the river Aire near Varley's Mill, East Street. It was got out of the water by **James Kershaw**, a boatman. An inquiry was held this afternoon before the Leeds City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm), when a verdict of “Suicide whilst temporarily insane” was returned.

**62 6 June 1893**

**ASSISTING A KEIGHLEY POLICEMAN** At the Keighley Police Court today, a powerful looking fellow named **Harry Haslam**, described as a boatman, and residing in Westgate, Keighley, was charged with assaulting Police-constable Wigglesworth and a civilian named George Greenwood. The officer said he saw prisoner strike a woman with whom he cohabited, and on his interfering and requesting prisoner to leave the street, prisoner seized him by the throat and threw him violently to the ground, his head coming in contact with the kerbstone. Witness called the assistance of a Mr Greenwood, and together they succeeded in apprehending prisoner. On the way to the police station, prisoner kicked Mr Greenwood severely about the legs.

For being drunk and disorderly, prisoner was fined 5s and costs ; for the assault on the officer, he was committed to gaol for 14 days ; and for the assault on Mr Greenwood, he was committed for one month.

At the close of the case, the Mayor complimented Mr Greenwood for the assistance he had rendered the officer.

**63 3 July 1893**

**A SATURDAY NIGHT ROW IN LEEDS** **William Clough**, a boatman residing in Bowman Lane, Leeds, got into trouble at an early hour on Sunday morning, which led to his appearance before Mr Bruce at the Leeds Town Hall today, on a charge of drunkenness and on four charges of assault. The evidence showed that at the time named Police-constable Rudd was called to Bowman Lane, and found the prisoner there drunk. He was fighting, and several women in the crowd complained that he had assaulted them. Prisoner said he was only getting his wife away from the crowd of women who were assaulting her, when he was attacked by them. He called several witnesses in support of his statement. There was a bad record against him, and he was sent to prison for one month for drunkenness, and fined 40s, including costs, or one months imprisonment for one of the

assaults. The other charges of assault were not inquired into.

#### **64 21 July 1893**

##### A BARNESLEY GENTLEMAN ASSAULTED

CHARGE AGAINST A GOOLE BOATMAN At Barnsley today, a strong looking fellow named **George Edward Hirst** (32), boatman of Goole, was remanded in custody on a charge of unlawfully wounding Mr Arthur Swift of the Grange, Monckton, secretary of the Monckton Coal Company.

On Thursday night, prisoner, whose boat was lying at Monckton, was seen pulling turnips in a field near Haver Croft Lane by Mr Swift. The latter remonstrated with the prisoner, who came out of the field and went to Mr Smith and, it is alleged, struck him, knocking him over the hedge into the field. He struck him again several times in the face with his fist and, it is believed, beat him on the head with a thick hedgestake, which was found near the place. A man who is as yet unknown rushed up to Mr Swift's assistance, and the prisoner also assaulted him. Mr Swift was ultimately got home, but was in a semi conscious state, his head being badly injured. Prisoner was apprehended last night.

Dr Eskrigge, Roystone, attended Mr Swift, who is confined to his bed, and certified that he is severely injured, and will be unable to leave the house for several days.

Mr Swift, who is well known throughout the district, is not able yet to give a complete account of the outrage.

#### **65 28 July 1893**

##### A GOOLE BOATMAN

SENT TO GAOL FOR TWO MONTHS Today at Barnsley, **George Edward Hirst**, a strongly built young man described as a boatman belonging to Goole, was brought up, after being in custody for a week, charged with having assaulted Mr Arthur Swift of The Grange, Monckton. The circumstances of the assault, which were of a rather violent character, have already been reported. Prosecutor was knocked down and beaten by prisoner because he remonstrated with him for pulling turnips out of a field. He was confined to bed for 10 days. Prisoner got away, but was since apprehended.

Prisoner was sent to gaol for two months.

#### **66 3 August 1893**

##### MOTHER AND DAUGHTER

A PAINFUL STORY FROM SHIPLEY This morning, at the West Riding Court, Bradford, a shocking story was told in connection with a case brought by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children against **Emma Stead**, the wife of **Tom Stead**, boatman of Bradford Arms, Shipley, who was charged with having assaulted her 14 year old daughter.

Police-constable Day said there were two daughters, one 16 years of age and the other 14. On the morning of Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> ult, at 1.30, he found that the girls had been turned out of the house and were on the street. He knocked the parents up, but they had both been drinking, and the woman threatened that she would murder the girls if he left them there. He therefore found them a bed in a neighbour's house. On the following Sunday, he was again in the neighbourhood and found the daughters outside again. Inspector Taylor spoke of having visited the house, and of the younger girl having three large bruises on the back of the head.

The Bench decided to issue a warrant for the apprehension of the mother.

#### **67 10 August 1893**

##### THE MOTHER OF THIRTEEN

PAINFUL STORY FROM SHIPLEY **Emma Stead**, wife of **Tom Stead**, boatman, Shipley, was brought up on a warrant today at Bradford, charged by the Cruelty to Children Society with having assaulted her 14 year old daughter, **Harriet Stead**. Mr Scott prosecuted.

The girl gave evidence that on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June, on going from work to her tea, she found her mother

drunk. Immediately she attacked witness, and beat her about the face and body with her fist until she thought she was going to be killed. She turned both of her daughters away, and said she would murder them if they came there again. They stayed out until midnight, when the girls got into the house through the cellar grating and slept behind the bedroom door. They went out early next day, and had nothing to eat all day. In the evening, the mother again refused them admittance, and threatened them.

The defendant denied the allegation, and informed the Bench that she had 13 children.

Mr Taylor : Yes, and none of them attend school. These girls here can neither read nor write.

The defendant was fined 20s and the costs, or one month.

## **68 23 August 1893**

### THE MISSING HORSFORTH WOMAN

FOUND DROWNED AT NEWLAY As already reported, Mrs Sarah Lavinia Exley, wife of a traveller living at Feather Bank, Horsforth, has been missing from home for some days. She left her house on the morning of the 19th instant to do some shopping, and nothing further was seen or heard of her till late yesterday afternoon, when her body was found in the River Aire at Newlay. It was first seen by a man named John Mirfield of Newlay Bridge, and was removed from the water by a boatman named **Burnett Dolan**. It was taken to her house, where it lies awaiting the holding of the coroner's inquest.

Our Horsforth correspondent writes :- The dead body of Mrs Lavinia Exley, wife of James Exley, Hopewell Terrace, Horsforth, was found in the goit of the river Aire at Newlay, yesterday afternoon. It is supposed that deceased committed suicide. She has been very depressed for some time past. Her hat and cloak were found near the railway bridge higher up the river. She left her home shortly before eleven o'clock on Saturday evening, and was not seen alive afterwards. She was about 30 years of age, and leaves four young children.

## **69 20 October 1893**

### THE LEEDS TRAGEDY

GRAINGE THOMPSON WITH THE DEAD – HIS CORPSE FOUND IN THE CANAL – A TRIPLE INQUEST – THE MURDERER AND THE MURDERED Great excitement was caused in the Kirkstall Road district of Leeds when it became known, at an early hour this morning, that the body of Grainge Thompson, who has been missing for just over a week, had been found, and that the mystery surrounding the double murder in that locality was thus satisfactorily cleared up. It seems that shortly before six o'clock this morning, **Fred Ward**, a boatman in the employ of the Aire and Calder Navigation Company, was taking his boat – Flyboat 41 – through what are known as the Green Bridge Locks on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. The locks in question are within five minutes walk of the home of the Thompsons, and can be reached either by the way of the new bridge and road which leads from Kirkstall Road to Botany Bay, Armley, or from the old wooden bridge known in the locality as Green Bridge, which crosses the river Aire. When Ward had got his boat through the locks and was closing the gates, he felt some obstruction, and on making an investigation found in the water the body of a man. He called the attention of another boatman named **William Barker** to the fact, and from what could be seen in the early morning semi darkness, they came to the conclusion that it was the body of Grainge Thompson.

Barker at once proceeded to the Kirkstall Road Police Station and gave information to the officer in charge, the result being that in a very short time Police-sergeant Meldrum was on his way to the spot with the hand ambulance. He was met on the way by Police-sergeant Loveday, and they, with the assistance of the two boatmen whose names have been mentioned, removed the body from the water and placed it on the ambulance. The cursory examination which the officers made at this point left no doubt as to the identity of the body, which was taken down towards Kirkstall Road Police Station. In order to do so, they had to pass the scene of the murder, and it was just at this point that Mrs Dickenson, wife of Isaac Dickenson, newsagent of 6 Florist Street, Kirkstall Road, met the officers. She asked them to let her see the body, and knowing that she was well acquainted

with the man Thompson, they removed the covering from his face. She said, "Oh, it's him all right", and this was corroborated by her husband, Isaac Dickenson.

The body was subsequently taken to the Mortuary at Millgarth Street Police Station, and full information respecting the discovery was sent to the Chief Constable at the Leeds Town Hall, and to the City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm). An examination of the body showed that the clothing was the same as that the man was supposed to be wearing when he left home. An extraordinary feature of the case was the fact that amongst other property in the pockets was a quantity of stones, evidently placed there by the man to preclude the possibility of him rising to the surface. He had also placed large stones, some weighing as much as four or five pounds in weight, inside his trousers. The face was very much swollen and bloated – a common effect of immersion in the water – and on one side of it was somewhat discoloured, though it is impossible at present to say whether this is the result of an injury sustained before or after death. There are also some bruises on the head, but these may have been caused by the boats which have passed along the side of the canal since he committed suicide. There is very little trace of blood stains on the clothing such as might have been expected under ordinary conditions, but this is explained by the long immersion in the water.

The only other articles found in the possession of the deceased were 9s in silver, a latch key, and a white pocket handkerchief. The latter article is rather a singular commentary on some of the statements which have been made. The witness Campey, who saw him on the morning the murder was discovered, says that he then wiped his face with a red handkerchief. The body lay at Millgarth Street Police Station this morning, awaiting the inspection by the coroner's jury. It was seen during the forenoon by several of the police officials and by one or two members of the Corporation. Mr Arthur Mellor, moulder of Rose Bank, Burley Fields, Leeds, who married Thompson's sister, also called and identified the remains.

**THE DATE OF THE SUICIDE** The discovery is, of course, the great and absorbing topic of conversation today in Leeds, and the prevailing feeling is one of relief that the shocking affair should have been so satisfactorily cleared up. It is thought that Thompson, by committing suicide, had simply accepted the inevitable, though the determination he showed by loading his clothing with stones, so that he might the more readily sink to the bottom of the canal, surprises those who knew him best. Discussing the affair with a reporter, an old companion of Thompson's suggested that probably a row occurred on Wednesday night when Thompson went home the worse for liquor, and that he went to bed, and that only on awaking next morning realised the fearful consequences of his conduct on the previous night. He said that Thompson must have given his father a cowardly blow, rendering him insensible, or "he would have thrashed him as he had done many a time before". The date of the suicide is also discussed in the district, because the theory that he went straight from the house and took away his own life does not correspond with the evidence which has been got together.

**"HIS LAST PINT"** The evidence of the man Campey, for instance, is that when he saw him on Thursday morning about seven o'clock, he was walking towards Leeds, and in the opposite direction to the locks where his body was found. Another witness says he saw him in the neighbourhood of Grace Street the same morning, and it now appears likely. It is thought in some quarters that he was in hiding somewhere a day or two before he decided to drown himself. The story of the appearance of a strange man at the Viaduct Inn in Kirkstall Road last Saturday evening, as reported in last night's *Evening Post*, is also being largely discussed, and admitting the possibility that he could elude the vigilance of the police for nearly three days would correspond with the main known facts. It is stated, it will be remembered, that the man in question asked for a pint of beer, and then turning to another customer said, "That's the last pint I'll have on this earth". The landlady's representative was so struck with the likeness between the man and the description of the man Thompson which she had read, that she went to get a paper. When she returned, however, the man had disappeared.

**HIS FAREWELL VISIT TO THE MOOR** It is rather singular that this matter was thought to be of such importance that the police were communicated with, and in ten minutes were scouring the district, but without result. If that man were Thompson, he must have gone straight away across the

“Green Bridge” already referred to, and which is close to the public house mentioned, and thrown himself into the water. The road he would cover in going that way would be quite deserted at that time of night, pedestrians as a rule preferring to make use of the new road and bridge, which is better lighted. Of course there has to be placed against this theory the fact that the body appears to have been in the water a week, but on the other hand it is almost impossible to draw a hard and fast line in judging of *post mortem* appearance. As bearing on this theory, it may be mentioned that the police at the Woodhouse Moor Police Station received on Thursday morning last positive information that Thompson was on the moor, and they conducted a thorough and fruitless search. Is it not possible, it is asked, that Thompson eluded the police from Thursday morning until Saturday evening, and then, driven to desperation by the lack of food and shelter, determined to have a last pint of beer and then end his life?

**OFFICIAL REPORT** The following official report of the circumstances has been made to the Chief Constable (Mr F T Webb) :- At 6.5 am this morning, William Barker, boatman, 31 Middle Row, Camp Field, Leeds, gave information at this station (Kirkstall Road) that at 5.20 Fred Ward, of 20 Clyde Terrace, James Street, Hull, employed on the Aire and Calder Company's flyboat No 41, found the dead body of a man in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near the Leeds Forge. Police-constable Meldrum took the ambulance, and was met on the way by Police-sergeant Loveday, and they assisted the above two men to take the body out of the water. It proved to be that of Grainge Thompson, suspected of the Kirkstall Road murder. The body appears to have been in the water a week or more. In the pockets were found 9s in silver, a latch key, a white handkerchief and some cigarette papers. All the pockets and the trouser legs were filled with stones. The body was removed to the mortuary, Millgarth Street, where it was identified by the brother-in-law, Arthur Mellor, as being that of Grainge Thompson.

**THE INQUEST** The discovery of the dead body of Grainge Thompson on the morning of the day on which was to be resumed the inquiry into the death of his murdered parents, enabled the Leeds Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) and the jury to include the three deaths within the scope of the inquiry. There was only a very small attendance in the West Riding Court at the Leeds Town Hall when the inquiry was resumed at two o'clock this afternoon, touching the deaths of James Thompson (70) and Martha Thompson (73), his wife, who lived at the Joppa Tannery, Kirkstall Road, and who were murdered between Wednesday night and Thursday morning last week.

Inspector Dalton was present on behalf of the police.

After the jury had viewed the body of Grainge Thompson, evidence was called.

The first witness was Samuel William Boucher, leather and grindery dealer, 70 Kirkstall Road, who said : I knew the late James Thompson, and have known him for some years. Some years ago, I sold him, among other articles, a Sheffield shoe hammer. (The hammer, stained with blood, was produced and identified by the witness).

John Guest, water inspector in the employ of the Leeds Corporation, gave evidence as to the cutting off and turning on of the water supply at the Joppa Tannery.

Robert Mellor, fishmonger, Kirkstall Road, said he knew the Thompson family well. The last time he saw Grainge Thompson was 20 minutes past 12 on Wednesday morning the 11<sup>th</sup>. He was then going towards home, and was only three or four minutes' walk from the house.

By the Jury : He seemed quite in his usual manner.

Horace Briggs, landlord of the New Inn, Kirkstall Road, said he also knew Grainge Thompson well. He had known him for six or seven years. On Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup> inst, while driving from Pool Bank to Headingley, he met Thompson near the Headingley Police Station. That was about 20 minutes past three in the afternoon. He was walking leisurely along. Witness did not speak to him.

Arthur Ford, weighman and timekeeper at Messrs Fairbairn, Naylor and Co, said he was at the door of the works from about ten minutes past seven to twenty minutes past on the Thursday morning. He knew Grainge Thompson, and saw him pass about 15 minutes past seven. He was standing opposite the West Street doorway. He came across from the Wellington Street side and passed by the door going towards Wellington Bridge.

The Coroner : Did you speak to him?

I moved to him. He had his hat back, and a handkerchief in his hand, just as though he was wiping his face.

William Wilson, labourer, residing at 10 Benedict Row, said he remembered Thursday morning the 12<sup>th</sup> October. He saw Grainge Thompson at the end of Carlisle Street. He bade him "Good morning", but was not sure whether deceased nodded or not.

John Woodhouse, compositor, Caroline Street, said that on Thursday morning he saw a man whom he took to be Grainge Thompson. He was then halfway up Grace Street.

William Raper, dairyman, Grace Street, said he was at his shop door early on Thursday morning, when he saw a man whom he took to be Grainge Thompson.

Francis Murgatroyd, currier, 86 Denison Street, Burley Road, said : I formerly worked at the Joppa Works, and I knew Grainge Thompson well. I have known him about 16 years. I have been on intimate terms with him.

The Coroner : Have you met him and had walks together?

Witness : Occasionally.

The Coroner : Has he told you he has had words with his father?

Yes : he told me they had had a row, and that his father deprived him of a shilling.

When was that?

He was coming out of the Free Library Reading Room and he met me.

Did he say there had been any disagreement about betting? - No, sir.

The Coroner : I don't know that there is much in it, but have you heard him complain about his father backing wrong horses, or say that he could bet better? - He said on one occasion that he could spot the winners better than his father. He never mentioned anything else about racing.

THE LEEDS TRAGEDY – GRAINGE AND HIS FATHER – QUARRELS ABOUT MONEY MATTERS - "WILFUL MURDER" AND "FELO DE SE" Mrs Mellor, daughter of the deceased couple, was next called.

The Coroner (addressing her) said : I believe you wish to correct some statement you made? What is it?

Superintendent Dalton here explained that he understood that about 16 months ago her father did buy some tools for shoe repairing. These might have included the hammer.

The Coroner (to witness) : Is that so?

Witness : I remember seeing a box containing some articles but do not remember what was in it. I believe, however, that my father did begin to do shoe repairing about 16 months ago. For six months past her brother seems to have been short tempered. He lost his temper very quickly. We have heard that there was some disagreements between him and his father.

How did he get on with his mother?

Sometimes they had sharp words.

But you said before that you never heard him threaten them?

No, I never heard him use any threat.

A Juryman : Can you give us any reason why your father and he had words?

Witness : I don't know ; except perhaps he thought my father had money and was doing as he liked with it.

Arthur Mellor, iron moulder, husband of the previous witness, said he had been married 17 years last February.

The Coroner, at this point, said : We may take it at this point, according to the will, you are left a legacy of £50 ; the same amount is left to your wife ; and the remainder was to be divided equally between your wife and Grainge Thompson. So that he isn't shut out in any way? - Yes.

Witness, continuing, said he had an idea that his father had got too much possession of the money, that it was too accessible to him, and that he was spending the money on horse racing. He had an idea too that his mother was not qualified to manage her own affairs, and that it ought to be taken out of her hands and put into the hands of the executors. I did not (said witness) agree with that, and said that if his mother was not qualified to manage her own affairs, the next best person was her husband, and therefore the matter dropped.

Generally speaking, he showed distrust of his father in regard to the money? - Yes.

Did he say anything lately about his father and betting transactions?

He complained he was spending a lot of money in racing, and was backing nothing but "wrong 'uns". He had an idea what he backed by seeing his newspaper marked.

He told you so, did he? - Yes.

Did he know where the money and bank books were?

He said "he knew where the bit wor", and he could tell how it was going.

Did he say anything about the losses that were going on?

He said he had reckoned up for a month what his father was doing, and it came to £5 a week. That was about a month before the occurrence.

From the way in which he spoke about his father did you gather there was any feeling between them? - Yes, sir.

Had anything arisen lately at home about his not working?

His father constantly complained about his not working.

What did Grainge say to that?

We persuaded him to get a job, but he said that he was unable to work, and that if he did get work, he could not stand for a day together on account of weakness.

Did he attend race meetings? - I have known him to attend such races as Doncaster and Pontefract, but I do not know that he attended races regularly.

Has anything passed between them to your knowledge that has led almost to violence? - I have only heard it from Grainge himself, who said his father had "put his fist in his face" and threatened him.

Did Grainge say anything to you? - He said he could "double him up", but we advised him not to do anything in the way of violence, and he said he would not.

Was he under a wrong impression with regard to the money? - Yes, we have found out since. There was £50 drawn out of one account, and that he thought had been "done in", as he called it. We have since found out that this was not so ; that £45 was invested in the Yorkshire Penny Bank, but the entry was made in an old book, which Grainge would know nothing about, and therefore he thought it had been "done in".

When was he last at your house? - About three weeks or a month ago.

And at that last interview, was he still harping on these money matters? - Yes.

Had he got an impression that he was going to lose the money? - Yes. He seemed to think that his father was going to destroy the will, and that he would lose his share of the money. I tried to convince him that there was no reason to fear anything of the kind, and that even if the will was destroyed it would not make any difference to him. He, however, lost his temper on that occasion about the money and about my differing with him. He seemed to have been worse tempered for the last three or four months than he had ever been before. He would get up in a violent temper in a moment ; then shortly afterwards, he would be just the reverse.

Witness added that he had seen the body at the Mortuary, and identified it as that of Grainge Thompson. He was born in 1856 ; was by trade a glue cutter, but when the Joppa Tannery ceased, he took up the calling of a billiard marker.

Superintendent Dalton said he had since found 15s in a box in the old man's room.

**Fred Ward**, waterman, Aire and Calder flyboat No 41, Clyde Street, Jane Street, Hull, said he was on his boat this morning in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, near Kirkstall, going towards Shipley, when he found that he could not shut the lock gates. By means of a boat hook he ascertained that a body was in the water, and witness kept the body there until the police came. There would be about 4 1/2 feet of water at the spot. It was half past five when the body was found in the Spring Garden single lock.

Police-sergeant Loveday deposed to receiving the body of Grainge Thompson into his possession. The weight of stones in the deceased's pockets would be about two and a half stones. He found 9s in the left hand pocket of the trousers ; in one of the waistcoat pockets a latch key and a cigarette book. There was no red handkerchief.

Mr Ward, police surgeon, testified to having examined the body at the Mortuary. The indications were consistent with death by drowning, and the body must have been in the water more than a week – quite a week, at least.

The Coroner, summing up the evidence, said that independent of the suicide of Grainge Thompson, the conclusion as to the death of the aged couple was pretty clear. There was no doubt that a brutal murder had been committed, and the fact that the murder was not accompanied by a robbery was strong evidence that it had been done by the son. Commenting on the point whether or not Grainge Thompson was in a sound state of mind when he committed suicide, the Coroner remarked that the question of sanity and suicide was being brought a good deal to the front at the present time. Personally, he had always held to the view that if juries took a firmer view of these subjects, and allowed less sympathy to enter into their verdicts, there would be less suicides than there were.

The jury, after a brief retirement, found that John and Martha Thompson had been wilfully murdered by their son, Grainge Thompson, with regard to whom they returned a verdict of *felo de se*.

### **70 8 November 1893**

#### FOUND IN THE AIRE

**SUPPOSED CASE OF CHILD MURDER** Yesterday afternoon, a boatman named **Harry Dyson** of 25 Canvas Street, Holbeck, Leeds, noticed the body of a child floating on the surface of the water at Spring Garden Lock near Armley. He obtained a boat hook and removed the body, placing it on the bank, where he left it in charge of Kendrick, the lock-keeper, whilst he proceeded to the Kirkstall Road Police Station, and gave information to the police. Police-constable Elcock proceeded to the spot, and found that the body was that of a male child very much decomposed, and covered only by a linen cloth wrapped about the head and face, and tied around the neck with a piece of twine. Dyson said that in removing the body a piece of brown stuff, evidently a portion of an old dress skirt, fell into the water. The body was taken to the mortuary at Millgarth Street Police Station to await the coroner's inquest, which will be held tomorrow.

### **71 9 October 1893**

#### FOUND IN THE CANAL

**A VERDICT OF WILFUL MURDER** The discovery of the body of a newly born child in the canal at Armley on Tuesday afternoon formed the subject of inquiry at the hands of the City Coroner and a jury sitting at the Leeds Town Hall this afternoon.

A boatman named **Harry Dyson**, living at 25 Canvas Street, Holbeck, spoke to finding the body at the Spring Garden Lock, and handing it to the police.

Police-constable George Handcock said the body was wrapped in a piece of skirt.

Mr Ward, police surgeon, stated that the body was that of a male child, but was in an advanced state of decomposition. Round the neck a piece of linen and some twine had been twisted as in a deliberate attempt to cause strangulation. It could not, however, be definitely ascertained that the child was born alive. The body had been in the water for two or three weeks.

The jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against some person or persons unknown.

### **72 10 November 1893**

At Halifax today, Sarah Ann Gallagher, a good looking young woman who, up to recently, has resided at Bradford, was committed for one month upon a charge of stealing £1 11s from **John Harker**, boatman, Hull, on the 8<sup>th</sup> inst.

### **73 13 November 1893**

“Drowned by misadventure” was the verdict returned at an inquest held on the body of **Albert James West**, boatman, supposed to be a native of Sheffield, who was drowned in the canal between Gargrave and Skipton.

#### 74 1 December 1893

##### PRAYING BY THE RIVER AIRE

A LEEDS WOMAN ATTEMPTS SUICIDE A sensational attempt to commit suicide took place last night at the Warehouse Hill Dock, Call Lane, Leeds. About a quarter to eleven o'clock, Police-constable Brown was on duty in the neighbourhood, when his attention was attracted by a struggle which was proceeding between a man and woman on the dock side. He found a married woman named Maria Bennett, 41 years of age, of Bedford Terrace, Sheepscar Street, being restrained from jumping into the river Aire by **John William Sarvant**, boatman of the keel "*Energy*", which was lying in the dock. The latter said he was in his cabin when he heard some shouting, and on going ashore he found the woman lying at the water side with her hat and shawl by her side. When he spoke to her, she went down on her knees and began to pray. She then said, "From there (pointing to the water) I was bred and born, and it is there I'll end my life". The boatman had considerable difficulty in keeping her from jumping into the water. When the policeman arrived, she was given into custody.

Today, at the City Police Court, before Mr Ingham and Alderman Galston, the woman was brought up on the charge of attempting to commit suicide.

The boatman said when he found the prisoner she was praying to her father and mother, and saying that she meant to end her life.

Prisoner (who appeared greatly distressed and wept freely) said : I am sorry sir. If you will let me off this time, I won't do it again, but I have had a great deal of trouble lately.

Mr Ingham : You are a married woman, aren't you?

Prisoner : Yes sir. My husband is a billposter. I have no children living. She added after a pause : I'll get a situation and leave him.

The Magistrates' Clerk said prisoner was brought up on a similar charge in July 1888.

The Bench inquired if prisoner's husband was in court and, being informed that he was not, remanded prisoner for a week.

#### 75 21 December 1893

DROWNED AT SHIPLEY This morning at Shipley, **William Fyles**, 17, boatman of Blackburn, was drowned in the canal at Shipley. He was employed on the Leeds and Liverpool flyboat "*Duck*", which arrived from Liverpool yesterday with a cargo.

#### 76 12 January 1894

A LEEDS MYSTERY SOLVED Last evening, a Leeds boatman named **William Andrews** of 1 Camp Lane, Leeds, found the body of John Bastow Gatenby (27), painter of 3 Tennant Place, Roundhay Road, in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near the Leeds Forge. Deceased had been missing since December 11. On the morning of that day he went to his work at the Leeds Forge at six o'clock, and about an hour later disappeared. His cap was found floating in the canal by a fellow workman, but although the police dragged the waterway for several days, their efforts were fruitless. The body was taken to the Bay Horse Hotel, where an inquest will be held.

#### 77 29 January 1894

A HULL BOATMAN DROWNED **Walter Hirst** (30), boatman of Day Street, Clayton Terrace, Hull, was found drowned this morning at Water Hall, Water Lane, Leeds. He was on the boat 108, along with his father, and last night left the vessel to make arrangements for its being hauled to Messrs Watson & Son's soap works. He was not seen alive again, and is supposed to have fallen into the water.

#### 78 22 February 1894

##### MOTHER AND CHILD – A NEW WORTLEY MYSTERY

THE FATE OF LITTLE AMY For three weeks past, Mrs Webster, wife of John Wade Webster, 18 Thirteenth Avenue, New Wortley, along with her eight year old daughter Amy, has been missing

from home. The dead body of the little girl was found yesterday in the river Aire at Thwaite Gate, Hunslet, by **James Stoker**, boatman, who was dredging at the time. Police-constable Lyden conveyed the remains to the Mortuary in Millgarth Street, It is feared that the mother may have met the same fate as her daughter. When she was last seen alive by a relative, she said she was taking her daughter to see her grandfather, Mr Pollard. She complained of pains in her head and, as advised by her sister, said she would see a medical man. She then appears to have gone up Oldfield Lane towards the house where Mr Pollard lives, but she did not get there. The investigations of the police have not served to throw further light on this distressing occurrence.

An inquest on the body of the deceased girl was held at the Mortuary, Millgarth Street, Leeds, this afternoon, before the City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm).

John Wade Webster, a carriage sweeper in the employ of the North Eastern Railway Company, said he resided at 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Leeds. He last saw deceased, who was his daughter, on February 8<sup>th</sup>. She was with his wife when he went to work about five o'clock that morning.

The Coroner : What passed between you? Witness : The last words I said was to bid her good morning.

Yes, but what conversation had you with her? Why do you hesitate? Had there been any difference between you? - I asked her if she was any better. She had complained of headache and sleeplessness, and I had advised her a week before to see the doctor.

Was that all the conversation you had with her? - Yes.

You had no idea she was going to leave home? - Not the slightest.

Then you went to work. There had been no quarrel between you? - No.

Continuing, witness said there was another child 11 years of age as well as the deceased in the same room. When he went home at night, he found his wife and the deceased had left home. The other child was at her grandfather's house. Everything in the house was in proper order, and he did not find any letter from her. She had never threatened to do herself any injury. He afterwards described the result of inquiries which he made as to the subsequent movements of his wife. She was last seen in Oldfield Lane, near the recreation ground, and he was then informed that the deceased was with her. There had been no further trace found of his wife, who was still missing.

**Thomas Stokes** (*sic*), captain of one of the dredgers of the Aire and Calder Navigation Company, said that yesterday the body of the deceased was brought up in Knostrop Locks, and handed over to the police.

At this stage, the Coroner, addressing the jury, said they would see there was a difficulty in this case owing to the mother and child having disappeared together. The child's body was found in the water, but the mother had not yet been discovered. They could not, under the circumstances, assume that she was dead ; in fact she might be alive and account for the death of the deceased. He thought, therefore, it would be only right that they should adjourn the inquiry. In the meantime a medical examination would be made of the body. It was his impression that it had not been in the water during the whole time it had been missing, but expert guidance would be forthcoming on that point.

The inquest was accordingly adjourned for a week, unless the jury are called together in the meantime owing to the discovery of the body of Mrs Webster.

## **79**      **26 February 1894**

A CHRISTMAS EVE INCIDENT AT SHIPLEY This morning at the West Riding Police Court, Bradford, **John William Townsley**, a boatman of Shipley, was charged in custody with being drunk and disorderly and with assaulting the police on Christmas Eve, since when prisoner had absconded. The Bench ordered him to be imprisoned for one month, with hard labour, for the assault, and fined him 12s, including costs, with the alternative of seven days imprisonment, for the other offence.

## **80**      **19 March 1894**

HARD LABOUR FOR OUT OF WORKS John William Coulton (22), umbrella maker, of no fixed residence, and **Joseph Capsell** (22), boatman, Stalybridge, were this morning ordered by the

Huddersfield magistrates to be imprisoned with hard labour for a month, for stealing two pairs of trousers, value 10s, belonging to **Henry and John Greaves** of Ravensthorpe, by forcing open the cabin door of the boat *Five Brothers* at Aspley Basin, Huddersfield, on Saturday. Prisoners said they had been out of work some time.

### **81 4 April 1894**

#### A BINGLEY MYSTERY

**SUPPOSED MURDER OF A CHILD** At one o'clock this afternoon, the dead body of a newly born male child was found floating in one of the three locks on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Bingley. A Skipton boatman named **Varley**, when passing through, made the discovery. The body was quickly recovered and taken to the Bingley Police Station. It was quite naked, and round its neck was tied part of an apron string. An examination of the body by Dr Crocker shows that the child was fully developed and had been in the water some little time. It had received no attention at birth, but the doctor could not decide whether death was due to strangulation or drowning without making a *post mortem*. The child's feet had apparently been crushed by the lock gates. As yet there is no clue how the body came to be in the water.

### **82 5 April 1894**

**FOUND IN THE CANAL** Superintendent Pickard has received information that yesterday morning the body of a youth, about 19 years of age, had been found in the Calder and Hebble Canal at Battye Mill by **William Dutton**, boatman, Elland. The body, which has not yet been identified, is judged by appearances to be that of a hurrier, as the hair was worn off the top of the head apparently by pushing corves, and there was a scar on the back such as hurriers have by a rope being fastened to them to pull corves. There is also the mark of a coal cut on the forehead. He was of fair complexion, and had light brown hair.

### **83 6 April 1894**

#### THE BINGLEY MYSTERY

**A VERDICT OF "WILFUL MURDER"** Today, an inquest was held at the King's Head Inn, Bingley, by Mr W Barstow, on the body of the unknown infant which was recovered on Wednesday afternoon from the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Bingley. Evidence of finding the body was given by **Abraham Varley**, boatman, Belmont Bridge, Skipton, who said it was entirely naked, but round its neck was tied a piece of string, which seemed to have had secured to it a stone at one time. The body appeared to have been in the water three or four weeks.

Dr James Crocker of Bingley said that he made an examination of the body at the police station. He arrived at the conclusion that the child was born alive, and had breathed with some amount of vigour. There were no indications that it had been fed after birth. Death was due to strangulation, and the body was probably put into the water when in a dying state.

The jury returned a verdict of "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown".

### **84 26 April 1894**

**FOUND DROWNED** At about twenty minutes to five this morning, a boatman named **John Davis** of Kendall Street, Leeds, found the dead body of a woman, who has not yet been identified, floating in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near Bolton Lane Bridge, Bradford. The body was removed to the public mortuary by a police officer, to await an inquest. A penny and the photograph of a soldier were found on the body.

### **85 4 May 1894**

**A WILD MAN OF GOOLE** This morning, **Thomas Windle**, a Goole boatman, drew attention to his destitution by throwing bricks through the quarter inch plate glass windows at the Mexboro' Arms, Whitwood, near Normanton, of which Mr Webster is the tenant, damage to the amount of £5 being done. The man was perfectly sober, and when arrested merely remarked he was tired of being

out of employment.

## **86 4 May 1894**

SENTENCES AT LEEDS ASSIZES The Yorkshire Spring Assizes (Gaol Delivery) was resumed this morning at the Leeds Town Hall before Mr Baron Pollock.

Dennis Kirwin (43), labourer, and **Albert Turner** (25), boatman, were indicted for the robbery with violence from Owen Dolan of a purse containing £1 19s 2d at Leeds, on April 29<sup>th</sup> last. Mr Vincent Thompson prosecuted, and from his opening statement it appeared that on the day in question, the prisoners knocked Dolan down as he was leaving the Brougham Arms, Kirkgate, and that Kirwin robbed him of his money whilst Turner held him. The jury found Kirwin guilty, but acquitted Turner. Kirwin was committed to gaol for 18 months with hard labour, the other prisoner being discharged.

## **87 5 May 1894**

THE PAINFUL CASE FROM SHIPLEY – A BABY'S BIRTH AND DEATH

MURDER TRIAL AT LEEDS ASSIZES

DISTRESSING SCENES IN COURT At Leeds Assizes today – before Baron Pollock in the Crown Court – Ruth Ann Hoddy (28), millhand, Shipley, and Martha Middleton Newall (48), charwoman, also of Shipley, were indicted for the wilful murder of a male child at Shipley on March 20 last. In his charge to the Grand Jury, at the opening of the Assizes, his Lordship drew special attention to the case as one of exceptional character, inasmuch as there was more than the usual amount of evidence pointing to an intent to take the child's life.

Mr Waugh and Mr Edmondson appeared for the prosecution ; the prisoner Hoddy was defended by Mr J J Wright while Mr Walter Beverley defended Newall.

Both prisoners, when asked to plead, replied in perfectly audible tones, “Not Guilty”. The elder woman seemed much distressed, but the younger prisoner, to all appearances was, at all events during the early part of the proceedings, seemingly indifferent. Later on, however, she evidently realised the grave position in which she was placed, and soon after Mr Waugh's opening, both women wept freely. They were accommodated with seats in the dock.

Mr Waugh, in opening the case for the Crown, said the prisoner Hoddy was a married woman, who appeared to have lived an unhappy married life. For the past three years she had been separated from her husband who, as a matter of fact, had left her and gone to America. About twelve months ago she made the acquaintance of a young man named Lund, who frequently visited her at the house where she lived – a cellar dwelling in Murgatroyd Street, Shipley. The dwelling was not a cellar dwelling of the ordinary kind. It was on the ground floor, there being a separate tenement above. The house consisted of simply one room, in which there were a table and a bed, and a passage led from the house to the coal cellar. An intimacy sprang up between them, and Hoddy eventually became *enceinte*. At seven o'clock on the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup> of March, Annie Danes, who had been in the habit of going to the prisoner's house, received a message from Newall asking her to visit Hoddy's house. She went, and on getting there she found Newall in the house, kneeling down by the side of the bed. Newall said she had sent for her because she was afraid to be in the house alone. Shortly afterwards the woman Hoddy gave birth to a male child. Newall wrapped the child in a piece of blanket, and placed it in a clothes basket and took it to the coal hole. The child began to cry, and the prisoner Hoddy said, “I can't do with it there ; it will have to go away”. What was meant by “It will have to go away” the jury would perhaps be afterwards able to infer. Newall said she could not do anything with it, and Hoddy said, “Bring it here, and I'll do it”. The child was then put on the bed. It was crying and struggling, and Hoddy pushed some of the clothes into its mouth. Newall said, “Don't do that, Ruth Ann”. The young woman Danes said, “Let it live ; if you don't you will get picked out”. Hoddy replied, “I don't care, it will have to go away from here”. Danes then left the house. The prisoner had, Mr Waugh mentioned, four children, boys whose ages ranged from four to 11. She had two of them living with relatives, and two – the youngest and the eldest – at home. She was in straitened circumstances, having for some time been in receipt of

parish relief to the amount of 5s per week. One of her boys – Herbert – came to the house shortly after the young woman Danes had left. He looked through the window and he saw Mrs Newall sitting by the fire, with a baby on her knee, wrapped in a piece of blanket. About half past eight the same evening, Danes met Fred Newall, son of the prisoner Newall, and they were joined by Newall and afterwards they went to the house. Lund said, “What is it?” and Hoddy replied, “It’s a boy”. “Where is it?” asked Lund, and Hoddy replied, “It’s dead ; it’s ta’en its hook ; I could not keep it on 5s a week”. The last time the child was seen alive was when the boy Hoddy saw it on Mrs Newall’s knee. The theory of the prosecution therefore was that between the time that Danes left the house and the time when she returned, a tape which had been fastened round the child’s neck was pulled tight, and that the child in consequence lost its life, and that at eight o’clock when Danes and the others returned the child was dead, and had been deposited in the coal place. Whose hand it was that took the child’s life was only known to the two prisoners themselves. They were, however, together, and they acted presumably in concert. At this point the prisoner Hoddy broke into a violent fit of crying, but presently became more composed. Mr Waugh then mentioned that the boy, Henry Herbert Hoddy, came home about ten o’clock, and went to bed. Next morning he got up early and, striking a match, went into the coal hole, where in one of the recesses he saw a bundle, which was afterwards found to contain the body of the baby. The jury would further learn that the prisoner Newall afterwards booked from Shipley to Keighley, and that on reaching the latter place she walked on the canal side to Bingley, where she threw the body of the child into the water. The *post mortem* examination showed that death had resulted from strangulation. Some days afterwards, Newall told Hoddy that she had been to Bingley to “hear her Polly tried”, and that while there she had heard that the baby had been found in the canal. The girl Danes was present, and Hoddy said, “I am frightened ; I wonder if they will enquire down here. Don’t tell anyone I have had a child”. A fortnight afterwards Hoddy told a Mrs Freer that a child had been found in the canal, and she said, “I hope they won’t pick me out”. A statement had been made by Mrs Newall, which was corroborated by the evidence of other witnesses, and substantially, he thought, they would take it to be a true account of what took place. Hoddy said, “I never tied the string round its neck”. Newall said she saw Hoddy put the string round and try to strangle it. She gave Newall a shilling to take the body of the child and throw it in the canal. When she came back and told Hoddy, she said, “You have done right ; I could not keep it”. Mr Waugh concluded by reminding the jury that if the two prisoners acted in concert, or if one stood by and permitted the other to take the life of the child – it was immaterial which – they were both in law equally guilty. After all the evidence had been given, he would ask the jury to draw certain inferences therefrom.

Mr Bentley Asquith, Low Moor, surveyor, produced a plan of the dwelling house of the prisoner Hoddy, the mother of the child, and in whose house the alleged murder was supposed to have taken place.

Arthur Irving Lund, Hargreaves Square, Shipley, engine cleaner, said he had known the prisoner Hoddy, the mother of the child, about twelve months. He had been in the habit of visiting the house up to the time she was apprehended. Shortly before the birth of the child he visited the house, and on finding Hoddy in bed, asked what she was doing there. Hoddy replied, “You know”. He asked what it was, and she replied, “It’s a lad”. He asked where it was, and she answered, “It’s gone ; it has taken its hook”. He visited the house two or three subsequent nights, but had not heard the cries of any child.

Cross-examined : On learning that the child was dead, he did not display any anxiety as to its whereabouts. He took no interest in it.

By his Lordship : He had visited the house as he liked, but had not stayed there.

Annie Danes, 23, single woman, Shipley, said that on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March she received a message from a boy, about seven o’clock in the evening, in consequence of which she went to the house of Mrs Hoddy. On going there, she found the two prisoners. Mrs Newall said she was afraid of being by herself, so she had sent for her. Mrs Hoddy was kneeling by the side of the bed. Shortly afterwards, Mrs Hoddy gave birth to a child.

His Lordship : How long were you there before the birth took place?

Witness : Two or three minutes.

Mr Waugh : Who attended to the child?

Witness : Mrs Newall. She put it into a basket. I heard them say it was a boy. The child, on being put into the basket, was carried into a back place. It then began to cry. On its crying, Mrs Hoddy exclaimed, "I cannot do with that ; it will have to go away". Mrs Newall then said, "Well, I can't do anything with it". The mother then said, "Bring it here, and I'll do it". Mrs Newall then brought the child in the basket and placed it besides its mother, who proceeded to stuff the child's mouth with clothing. I heard the child choking. Mrs Newall said, "Don't, Ruth Ann". Mrs Newall at that time was standing by the bed. On hearing the child choke, I said, "Let it live, you will get picked out". Mrs Hoddy said, "I don't care, it will have to go away from me". I afterwards left the house. So far as I know, the child still had the clothing in its mouth when I left the house. It was about half past six, and light, when I left the house. I afterwards returned to the house with Fred Newall about half an hour afterwards. Arthur Lund, the last witness, also came to the house shortly afterwards. Lund went to the bedside, and asked her where it was. She replied, "It has taken its hook". At this time, the child was not in bed with Mrs Hoddy. At a later date I again called at the house, and Mrs Newall and Mrs Hoddy were there. Mrs Newall said that she had been to Bingley, and while there they had brought the child in, and she had heard them say that it had string around its neck. Mrs Hoddy then said, "I am frightened ; I wonder if they will inquire down here". Turning to me, she said, "Don't tell anybody that I have had a child". She afterwards said she hoped she would not get picked out. The string produced with which the child had apparently been strangled was like that worn by Mrs Hoddy at the mill.

Cross-examined by Mr Wright : I am engaged to a son of Mrs Newall. The tape was of a peculiar colour. I could not bear to see the child choked, so I went out.

Did Mrs Hoddy do everything and Mrs Newall nothing?

Mrs Newall did nothing whilst I was there.

But surely Mrs Hoddy was in a very weakly state, was she not?

She was able to sit up in bed "doing that".

Cross-examined by Mr Beverley : The prisoner, Mrs Newall, did not pretend to be a midwife, and it was by accident that she happened to be present at the birth. Mrs Newall was agitated, and seemed afraid of being by herself.

Mr Beverley : Mrs Newall only removed the child in the basket to one side until she had cleaned up – did she not?

Witness : Yes, it was only away a few minutes, and she then brought it back.

Mr Beverley : Mrs Hoddy is a poor woman, and did you not understand that what she meant when she said she could not do with the child there, was that she could not afford to keep it, and that it would have to go somewhere else to be kept?

Witness : Yes.

Mr Beverley : And when Mrs Newall said, "Well, I cannot do anything with it", did you understand that what she meant was that she could not afford to keep it?

Witness : Yes.

Henry Herbert Hoddy, 11 years of age, son of the prisoner Hoddy, was the next witness. He spoke to seeing something wrapped up in a piece of flannel in the back hole in the house as he was going for coals. On the following day he met Mrs Newall near the Junction Hotel, Shipley, going in the direction of Saltaire, with the same kind of parcel with her.

Denison Rawnsley, porter at Saltaire station, gave evidence as to issuing a ticket from Saltaire to Bingley to the prisoner Newall.

**Edwin Varley**, boatman, Skipton, spoke to finding the body in the canal at Bingley on April 4. He handed it over to the police.

Police-constable Wright, stationed at Bingley, stated that he received the body of the child from the last witness. There was a string tied round the child's neck in two knots.

Mr James Crocker, surgeon, Bingley, who had examined the body, stated that in his opinion the child's death had been caused through being strangled. It had lived, and was apparently dead before

being thrown into the canal.

Cross-examined : In his opinion death had not been caused through neglect at birth or by drowning. Police-constable Bates, stationed at Windhill, apprehended Hoddy who, on being arrested, said she was charged with something she had never done. He afterwards arrested Newall. Hoddy replied, "I never tied the string around its neck ; I never threw it into the canal ; Mrs Newall tied the string around its neck." Newall said, "I say Mrs Hoddy did put the string round its neck, and she tried to strangle it before that, but she said she had not strength". She afterwards stated that she had, at the request of Mrs Hoddy, thrown the child into the canal. After doing so, she saw Mrs Hoddy, who told her she had done quite right, as she (Mrs Hoddy) could not afford to keep it.

This concluded the case for the Crown.

Counsel for the prisoners intimated that they called no witnesses.

### **88 23 June 1894**

**£5 FOR A BROKEN LEG** Today, at the Pontefract West Riding Court, **Edward Roebuck**, boatman, Knottingley, was fined £5 for assaulting Henry Shay, cartman, Knottingley, and breaking his ankle. On Good Friday, the defendant went behind complainant and struck him on the ear and knocked him down. Whilst down, he continued the assault savagely. Complainant's ankle was broken in the affray, and he had to be carried home. He had been out of work 13 weeks in consequence, and his doctor's bill came to £5. The Bench told defendant that had he not had some slight provocation, he would have gone to prison without the option of a fine.

### **89 3 July 1894**

**BOAT OWNER AND BOATMAN**

**A CHARGE DISMISSED AT HUDDERSFIELD** **Tom Watson**, boatman, Kirkheaton, was charged before the county magistrates at Huddersfield, this morning, with embezzling £1 18s 2d and 13s, the moneys of **Charles Whitfield**, boat owner, Aspley, Huddersfield, on March 18 and 22 respectively.

Mr R Welsh was for the prosecution, and Mr F A Reed (Learoyd and Co) for the prisoner.

The prosecutor's case was that the prisoner had been in his employ to go journeys on the canal with a boat. Prosecutor gave the prisoner £7 10s to pay the expenses of journeys. He accounted for £5 11s 10d, but not for the balance, and he had not paid it over. It was afterwards found that the prisoner had not paid a man his wages out of the sum he had accounted for, and prosecutor was sued by the man in the County Court, and judgement was given against him. At Castleford, the prisoner was paid 13s by a person for the use of the prosecutor's horse in hauling, but prisoner had not paid that over to the prosecutor.

The defence was that the case was purely one of accounts, and that there was really a balance due to the defendant, who had been to the prosecutor long before proceedings were taken to have a reckoning, but the prosecutor refused to settle up unless the defendant produced vouchers. Prosecutor admitted that for several items of expenditure, the defendant would have no receipts given him.

The magistrates dismissed the case.

### **90 4 July 1894**

Today at the West Riding Court, Wakefield, **John Foulston**, a boat hauler of Walton, was remanded in custody charged with embezzling the sum of £1 1s 6d, the money of **Joseph Wainwright**, also a boatman of Walton.

### **91 13 July 1894**

**ATTEMPTED SUICIDE AT HUNSLET** This morning, **George Noble** (42), boatman, 2 Marshall Terrace, Black Bull Street, Hunslet, attempted to commit suicide by hanging himself by a piece of hauling cord to the stairs bannisters. He was cut down by a neighbour, and Dr Smith was summoned, who advised his removal to the Infirmary. He was taken there in a cab, but the medical

men at that institution did not consider that it was a case calling for their attention, and he was discharged. He has been in poor health for about three weeks, and this has led to depression of spirits.

## 92 1 August 1894

**SHOCKING DEATH AT WOODLESFORD** Major Taylor held an inquest at Woodlesford, yesterday, touching the death of Samuel Hirst, aged 62, coal loader and late coal miner, of Princess Street, Woodlesford. Deceased, who is said to have been depressed in mind of late, left home at half past four on Saturday morning. Nothing more was seen of him until about 7.30 am on Monday, when his body was taken out of the canal at Woodlesford. The head and left leg were then missing, but were recovered from the water yesterday morning by a boatman named **Francis Crawshaw**. It is supposed that the body had been mutilated by a tug.

## 93 24 August 1894

**A BAD NIGHT FOR THE RABBITS**

**ALLEGED POACHING ON THE CARLTON TOWERS ESTATE** This morning, Police-sergeant McNeil of the West Riding Constabulary, stationed at Carlton near Selby, took possession of 239 rabbits, of which 186 were dead and 53 alive, from a cart being driven by Thomas Whiteley, fish dealer of Church Lane, Pontefract, who was accompanied by **Joseph Wray**, boatman of Knottingley, the seizure being made under the Poaching Prevention Act.

In making an application before Mr Liversidge at the Selby Court House this morning, for a written order to dispose of the rabbits, Mr Superintendent Stott, having quoted from the Poaching Prevention Act the grounds under which the application was made, said that last night or this morning a number of poachers were observed setting nets in the neighbourhood of the park at Carlton Towers, and assistance was obtained by the officer. On returning, however, the poachers had gone. Later in the morning, two men were seen in the same neighbourhood on the highway with a cart. The cart was found to contain a very large quantity of rabbits, and the wheel marks having been traced right up to the hedge side, where it is supposed the rabbits were thrown in, the police-sergeant took possession of them, and brought the rabbits to Selby. There were 239 rabbits, 53 of which were still alive, and he now asked for an order for their disposal.

Mr Liversidge retired for consultation with the Assistant Magistrates' Clerk, and on returning into court, the two men, who were present, gave their consent to the rabbits being sold, and were informed that in the event of no conviction being recorded in the proceedings which would arise on the informations laid against them by the police, the money would be returned to them.

The application was thereupon granted.

Summonses were subsequently served upon the men to appear and answer a charge against them under the Act above referred to at the ordinary Petty Sessions on Monday next.

## 94 27 August 1894

**POACHING NEAR SELBY** At the Selby Petty Sessions this morning – before Mr William Liversidge (chairman) and other justices – Thomas Whiteley, chip potato and fish dealer of Pontefract, and **Joseph Wray**, boatman of Knottingley, were charged under the Poaching Prevention Act with having a cart in their possession containing 239 rabbits unlawfully obtained from land in the occupation of Lady Beaumont of Carlton Towers. Whiteley denied the charge, but Wray failed to put in an appearance. On the application of Superintendent Stott, who conducted the case on behalf of the prosecution, a warrant for Wray's arrest was granted.

The facts have already been reported in *The Evening Post*. After hearing the case, the Bench fined defendant £5 and costs £1 12s 6d, or in default three months imprisonment with hard labour.

Superintendent Stott said that the rabbits were sold by order of the magistrates on the previous Friday and realised £7 7s 9d. He asked that the amount be forfeited.

The Chairman : Most certainly.

### 95 20 September 1894

A JUMP INTO THE WATER Last night about 11 o'clock, Alfred Copley (25), a fireman in the employ of Messrs Hodgson and Simpson, soap manufacturers, Wakefield, jumped into the canal near his employers' works. He was seen to do so by a boatman named **William Dyson** who, with the assistance of Charles Turner, succeeded in extricating him, and handed him over to Police-constable Fox.

### 96 10 October 1894

IN THE CANAL The Leeds City Coroner held an inquest at Kirkstall this afternoon, on the body of Elizabeth Ellis, aged 53 years, mill hand, residing with her father at Fountain Terrace, Kirkstall. The deceased woman had her arm crushed a short time ago while following her employment at Messrs Briggs' Mill, Milford Place, Kirkstall Road, Leeds. Since that time, she has been in a depressed state of mind. Yesterday morning she left her home about five o'clock to go to her work, but did not do so, and later in the forenoon, she was seen in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near Thompson's Bridge, Armley, by a boatman, **Henry Draper** of the barge "*Crook of Wigan*". He succeeded in rescuing her, and finding she was still alive, sent his wife to the Kirkstall Police Station for assistance. Police-constable Winton at once went to the place with the hand ambulance, quickly followed by Police-constable Spink. They removed the woman to her home, and Dr West, of Church Street, was called in. He found that she was still alive but was unconscious, and though he remained with her until five o'clock in the evening, she never regained consciousness.

### 97 17 October 1894

Today at Wakefield, **Joe Barratt**, boat hauler, Elland, was remanded for a week on a charge of stealing a horse, the property of **William Wadsworth**, boatman, Wakefield.

### 98 29 November 1894

ANOTHER TRAGEDY AT WAKEFIELD

YOUNG WOMAN FOUND DROWNED

INQUEST AND VERDICT THIS AFTERNOON Following upon several recent cases of suicide in the city of Wakefield, the recovery last night of a body of another young woman from the river has caused considerable excitement. It is only a week today since an inquest was held relative to the death of a single young woman named Mary Ann Copley, who in consequence of being deserted by her lover, flung herself into the Barnsley Canal, whilst a few weeks ago another disappointed young lady ended her career near to the same place. The latest victim is a young woman 21 years of age named Sarah Ann Wallshaw, residing with her parents at 22 Pincheon Street, Wakefield. The father, a most respectable man, has been for several years in the employ of Messrs I Briggs & Son of Rutland Mills, and the family are highly esteemed by all who know them. The deceased disappeared in a singular manner. She has always been of a quiet and retiring nature, although of nervous temperament, and on Monday night she went to a meeting at the St John Congregational Chapel, which she had been in the habit of attending. On coming out shortly after nine o'clock, she went with a friend named Miss Mary Jane Lodge in the direction of the latter's home at Clarion Street, Belle Vue. She was then quite cheerful and spoke in her usual manner about passing events, and she parted with Miss Lodge near to the Alexandra Hotel, Belle Vue, bidding her "Good night" in her usual way. About half past nine, another young lady friend named Miss Julia Caswell passed the deceased at Kirkgate Bridge. Miss Wallshaw was then walking towards her home, and in passing Miss Caswell also bade her "Good night".

So far as ascertained up to the time of writing, the deceased was not afterwards seen alive, and on failing to return home her parents became greatly alarmed. The next trace ascertained of her was when a boatman named **Stephen Rogerson**, in going through Navigation Yard which adjoins the river Calder and a "goit" connected with Messrs Reynolds and Haslegrave's mill, picked up an umbrella with a glove attached. He at once gave information to the police, when the articles named were identified as belonging to the missing young woman. Subsequently the goit was dragged, and

the body was recovered last night and conveyed to the home in Pincheon Street.

No adequate reason has so far been given for the disappearance of the deceased. She is described as having been a religious minded girl, and has taken an active part in work connected with John Street Chapel, being a member of the choir. For the last day or two, however, it was noticed that she was very quiet and unsettled in her manner. No importance was attached to this, however, as she went about her ordinary duties, and there was not the slightest appearance of any suicidal tendencies. She has left no letter at home, and the only articles found upon her were a purse containing a penny and three small keys. So far as her parents are aware, she has never kept company with any young man.

**THE INQUEST** Major Taylor held an inquest on the body at the Fountain Inn, Pincheon Street, Wakefield, this afternoon. The first witness called was John Snell Wallshaw, father of the deceased, a labourer employed at the works of Sir Edward Green and Son. He said the deceased was 21 years of age last birthday. She had kept house for him since the death of his wife three years ago last July, and had worked at Mr C Brown's sweet preserving works. She had always had good health and never suffered from any serious illness. She had been cheerful as a rule until the last week or two, when she appeared to be depressed and conversed very little, simply answering when spoken to. She was strong, and had continued to do her work all right. So far as he knew, she had had no disappointment or trouble of any sort. He last saw her alive at a quarter to eight on Monday night last, when he left the house. Deceased was then getting ready to go to a meeting at John Street Congregational Chapel

Witness said no paper or letter belonging to deceased had been found in the house. No one had any ill will to her that he knew of.

Mary Jane Lodge of Belle Vue stated that on Monday evening she and deceased attended a Christian Endeavour Meeting at John Street Chapel, and after service deceased walked part of the way home with her. They talked about the meeting, and deceased remarked that it had been a good one. She appeared to be in good spirits, and not depressed in any way, and on parting said "Good night" as usual, and set off towards home. Deceased had never complained to her of having too much work, and had always been cheerful.

Stephen Rogerson spoke to recovering the body from the water.

A verdict was returned of "Found drowned, but there was no evidence to show how she got into the water"..

## **99 21 December 1894**

**A CANAL BOATMAN DROWNED** At noon today, the body of **James Jones** (50), a boatman of no fixed residence, was taken out of the canal at Luddendenfoot. He was last seen alive at ten o'clock last night, and was then going to his boat.

## **100 15 January 1895**

**"WANTED TO GO ALOFT"**

**PLUCKY RESCUE BY A LEEDS BOATMAN** At the Leeds City Police Court today – before the Stipendiary Magistrate (Mr C M Atkinson) – a disreputable looking man named Edward Lindley, who lodges at Bennett's Lodging House, Harper Street, Leeds, was brought up on a charge of attempting to commit suicide.

**Harry Hemingway**, boatman, stated that yesterday morning he was engaged in Atkinson's coal yard, Aire Street, on the banks of the river Aire, when he saw prisoner jump into the water. With the assistance of his son he rescued him, and then informed the police. When prisoner was taken from the water, he said, "I want to go aloft".

The Stipendiary : You behaved very well indeed, and the prisoner is greatly indebted to you and your son for saving his life.

Police-constable Townend said he was called to Messrs Atkinson's coal yard yesterday, where he found the prisoner in the engine house. When he asked him why he had tried to commit such an act, he said, "Well, I had it to do, and I might as well get it done with".

A witness who had known the prisoner for 16 years said he had noticed a peculiarity in his manner on Friday for the first time. He was chopping wood for a Mr Barker when the prisoner came into the house and commenced to put large blocks of wood on the fire. Witness stopped him, and he then said, "I think we will have it out, and the fire that's upstairs as well". After walking about in a strange manner, prisoner said, "You had better fetch me some brandy". Witness asked what he wanted the brandy for, and he replied, "I don't know, what do you think about it?" Subsequently, witness informed Mr Barker, and he had prisoner examined by Mr Cole.

Dr Ward, the police surgeon, said he had examined the prisoner, who was strange in his manner, and ought to be kept under control for some time.

The Stipendiary made an order for the committal of the prisoner to an asylum. He expressed the opinion that some extra allowance should be made to the witness Hemingway, who had so promptly rescued the prisoner, and he would make an order for 5s.

## **101 7 February 1895**

### **POISONED BY GAS**

#### **A HUDDERSFIELD MAN'S DEATH**

**DANGER IN THE BEDROOM BRACKET** This afternoon, an inquest was held at the Black Bull Inn, Hillhouse, on the body of Friend Matthewman (38), whitesmith of 26 Halifax Old Road, who was poisoned under circumstances already reported in *The Evening Post*.

Evidence of identification was given by John Matthewman, father of the deceased, and he stated that on Monday his son, having nothing to do, went with **Lewis Woodhead** to Brighouse, and he was then quite well.

**Lewis Woodhead**, boatman, said on Monday morning he and deceased walked to Brighouse, and they returned in a cab in the evening, leaving there at eleven o'clock, and reached his sister's house about a quarter to twelve. When they got out of the cab, Matthewman said he had a good mind to go with him, as his mother was so poorly, and he did not want to disturb her at that late hour. Witness told him he must please himself. So they went to witness's sister's house. Witness slept on the far side next to the window, and he got into bed first, and after Matthewman had done so, witness sat up in bed and turned the light out. Witness remembered nothing more until on Tuesday forenoon he was wakened up. He was in bed when he came to himself, but he could not tell who was in the room at the time. He had slept in the room scores of times, and put the light out when sitting up in bed, but he had never put the bedroom door to. He recollected that Matthewman closed the bedroom door of his own accord. Witness used to leave the door open about six inches. There was no fireplace in the room. The gas tap is one which stops half way, and witness could not account for the tap being on. Witness was sober.

Ellen Wilkinson, widow, Ark Hill, gave evidence as to letting her brother in, and said that about half past eight on Tuesday morning, she went upstairs to waken the two men. She found the room door closed and latched. She knocked very hard on the door, but did not receive any answer. She opened the door and found Matthewman laid on the floor with some of the bedclothes on him. He was on his left side, and his face was covered with the clothes, and he was close to the bed, looking as if he had fallen out of bed. Her brother was laid on his back on his own side of the bed. Both men were unconscious. She tried to rouse them. When she opened the bedroom door, there was a very strong smell of gas in the bedroom. She did not notice it when she got up in the morning. She found the gas tap turned on nearly the half way, and she turned it off as gas was escaping from it.

Francis Turner Frost, surgeon, said he was called soon after nine o'clock on Tuesday to Mrs Wilkinson's. Both men were on the bed, and there was no smell of gas then perceivable. Matthewman showed no signs of life, but Woodhead was unconscious but easily roused, so he was left, and all attention bestowed for a time on Matthewman. Witness tried artificial respiration, and Dr Hardy came and joined him, and they made him breathe for two hours without any signs of returning life. Cases of poisoning by gas were attended by severe convulsions, and he thought that the deceased, being a strong man, was convulsed, and would no doubt fall on the floor and die in convulsions. His opinion was that the cause of death was "Suffocation by coal gas".

By the Jury : The only means of ventilation was a small hole in one of the windows.  
Dr Hirst said that the deceased was poisoned by inhaling the gas.  
A verdict was returned in accordance with the medical evidence.

## 102 6 March 1895

### THE STRANGE CASE OF EMMA LINDLEY ATTEMPTED SUICIDE NEAR BRIGHOUSE

THE GIRL RESTORED TO HER PARENTS A singular case of attempted suicide took place at Elland yesterday. Emma Lindley, a girl barely 15 years of age, was seen floating in the canal below the locks in Park Road in the direction of Brighouse. A Hull boatman named **Harry King** happened to be near at the time, and with a boat hook pulled her out of the water. From a letter found in her possession, it was clear that she had made up her mind to take her life. Police-sergeant Gould was fetched, and he had the girl removed to the Rawson's Arms, a public house situated on the boundaries of Elland and Southowram. A change of clothing was obtained for her, and as she appeared little the worse for her immersion, she was ultimately removed to the West Riding Police Station and lodged in the cells. The girl is the daughter of John Lindley, a farmer of the Ainleys, Elland and, though only young, she has already had experiences which fall to the lot of few people. Some months ago, it was reported to the police that she had disappeared from home. It transpired that she had taken offence at some slight matter, and as she was a girl of a peculiar disposition, fears were entertained that she might have committed suicide. Search was made for her in the district, and several sheets of water were dragged. No trace could be found of her, however, and at the end of six weeks, when people were beginning to think she had disappeared for good, she was discovered in a somewhat singular manner. It appears that she had wandered to Dewsbury, and eventually got into the workhouse there by stating that she was an orphan. Although she tried to conceal her identity, suspicions were aroused that she was the girl who was reported to be missing from Elland.

The matter was settled beyond all doubt when her relatives visited the workhouse, and she was taken back to Elland. She did not, however, go home, but went to reside with a married sister at Ainley Top. The portion of the canal in which she was found is at the eastern extremity of Elland, and some three miles from Lindley. The spot which she had selected for self destruction is very secluded, and very few people are seen about there at any time. She must have left her home early in the morning, for it was only eight o'clock when she was found. She had been in the employ of an Elland firm as rag sorter, but she did not go to her work yesterday morning.

Prisoner was brought before the Halifax West Riding magistrates this morning and charged with attempting to commit suicide.

Superintendent Varley stated that the girl was a rag sorter, and for some time had resided with a sister at Ainley Top, near Elland. Yesterday morning, she jumped into the canal at Park Wood, between Elland and Brighouse. A boatman named Harry King fished her out of the water with a boat hook. From inquiries which had been made, it appeared that prisoner and another person, with whom she worked, had had certain differences, and prisoner had been frightened. The father and the sister of the girl were in court, and they had promised to look better after her in future.

Thomas Lindley, the father of the girl, stated, in answer to a question by the Chairman, that he was prepared to take the girl under his care.

The Chairman : Have you had any trouble with her before? The father : Yes, a little. She has been a bit queer during the last three months.

Do you know any reason why she has been queer? No.

Has she had any bother or anything of that kind? Not that I know of.

Is her mother alive? She has a step mother.

Superintendent Varley handed to the Bench a letter, which had been written by the prisoner. He said it was found floating in the water. Mr Varley stated that three or four months ago the girl left home, and for some weeks the police were put to considerable trouble in searching for her. Mill dams were dragged, but eventually she was found in the Dewsbury workhouse. She had gained

admission to that institution by stating that she was an orphan. Her relatives took her back to Elland, and she had since resided with a sister at Ainley Top.

The letter, which was found in the water, set forth that certain insinuations had been made about her. She stated that she was broken hearted and tired of life.

Sergeant Gould said he had seen the person referred to in the letter, and she denied having upbraided the prisoner for having been in the workhouse. Some complaints had been made about the prisoner's work, and that was all which had transpired.

The father stated that if his daughter were handed over to him, she would probably conduct herself better in the future.

The Chairman : Show as much kindness as you can to the girl. Do not be hard upon her. As she grows older she may get all right again. Take her back home with you.

The Father : Thank you.

The prisoner began to weep copiously, then left the court, accompanied by her father and other relatives.

It appears that the boatman who saw the girl floating in the water was about 150 yards away from her at the time. He ran to the spot and pulled her out with a boat hook. Her clothing had kept her up, and her face did not appear to have been under water.

An *Evening Post* reporter who has been investigating the circumstances of Emma Lindley's escapade, says that she had chosen for her leap into the water the quietest place on the river within reasonable reach. There is a large wood close by, and the odds are that in nine cases out of ten a person would not be detected in a similar action in time to prevent it. With regard to the girl's remark that she had been driven to do away with herself because of what was said to her by the girl with whom she had worked as a rag sorter for Messrs Holstead Brothers, our representative saw the latter today. She was somewhat dumbfounded at the allegation. The other girl worked under her, and all that happened was that on Monday she spoke to her as to doing her work better. They had the customary "few words" and that was all. She naturally felt astonished that such a trifling occurrence could be magnified into a reason for her companion's attempted suicide. She appears likewise to have acted a very friendly part to the girl Lindley. Her companion at work, who spoke with evident truthfulness, said she had never said anything to hurt her feelings but, on the contrary, had always been kind to her.

### **103 22 March 1895**

#### **TRAGEDY NEAR BIRMINGHAM**

**SUPPOSED MURDER AND SUICIDE** A sensation has been caused at Knowle, a village about ten miles from Birmingham, by a supposed murder and suicide which has occurred there. On Thursday, Bridget Gavin, a servant employed by Joseph Greaves, farmer, took out her master's two year old daughter Violet for a walk, and subsequently the dead body of the child was found in the Birmingham and Warwick Canal by a boatman named **Sydney Harris**, in the employ of the Birmingham Corporation. It was at once feared that Gavin had murdered the child and then committed suicide, for it is alleged that she told a young son of her master that neither of them would come back again. The canal was therefore dragged by the police, and after three hours search this morning, they found Gavin's body near where the child was discovered.

### **104 3 April 1895**

**SAD END OF A BARNSLEY GENTLEMAN** This morning, the body of George Taylor, bookkeeper, Dodworth Road, Barnsley, 53, was found in Barnsley Canal, a mile and a half from the town, by a boatman named **Mason**. Deceased was well known, having been cashier for Messrs Pigott, linen manufacturers, for many years. He was Past Master of the Wharnccliffe Lodge of Freemasons at Penistone, and was much respected. He has been out of employment for some time. He was fully dressed when found. He leaves a widow and family.

**105 18 April 1895**

**ILL FOR FOUR YEARS** A sad case of drowning occurred at Roystone near Barnsley yesterday. The deceased is Walter Harrison, aged 23 years, miner of Hanby's Buildings, Senior Lane, Roystone, and his body was found in the Aire and Calder Canal at that place. The deceased had been ill for about four years, and this appears to have affected his mind. During the afternoon, a boatman named **Job Tanton** of Leeds noticed a cap and jacket on the towing-path, and dragging the canal, recovered the body.

**106 31 January 1896**

Today the body of a man was taken from the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near to Thwaite Gate Lock, Hunslet, by the lock-keeper, **George Lake**, and afterwards identified as that of a boatman named **George Stead** of Hull, who was blown off from his boat a couple of months ago near the end of Goodman Street.

**107 1 February 1896**

**AFTER MANY DAYS** Today the Leeds City Coroner held an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of a boatman named **George Stead** (47), Hull, whose body was yesterday taken from the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. The evidence showed that during the severe weather on November 16<sup>th</sup> last, deceased fell from his barge near Knostrop, and though a rope was thrown to him, he failed to grasp it and sank. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

**108 23 March 1896**

This morning, the body of **Mr Rhodes**, boatman, Castleford, and the father of J Rhodes, the International football player, was found floating in the river Aire. He is supposed to have accidentally fallen into the river.

**109 25 March 1896**

**DROWNED DURING THE FOG** The inquest on **Mr John Rhodes**, boatman and father of the international football player, was held at Castleford this afternoon. It was ascertained that deceased was busy at the wharf at Water Lane during the morning he was drowned, when it was very foggy. A verdict in accordance was returned.

**110 9 April 1896**

**A VICTIM OF ILL HEALTH**

**ANOTHER SUICIDE IN LEEDS** At the Leeds Town Hall this afternoon, the City Coroner held an inquest on the body of John Hennessey, mechanic, 50 years of age, of 39 Hill Street, Newtown, Leeds, that had been found in the river Aire at Thwaite Gate, Hunslet, this morning, by a boatman named **Joseph Richardson**.

The evidence showed that the deceased had been in very low spirits for some time, and was suffering from an incurable disease. He had been unable to work for some time past. He appeared to be in his usual health last night, and retired to rest at about eight o'clock. This morning his son and daughter found that he had left the house at an early hour, and subsequently the body was found in the river. His coat was on the river bank, and in his pocket was discovered a piece of paper on which he had written his name and address. A verdict of "Suicide whilst of unsound mind" was returned.

**111 17 June 1896**

At Huddersfield today, **Dan Muffett** (36), boatman, Bradley, was sent to gaol for a month for stealing a fowl valued at 4s.

**112 1 July 1896**

**BLOWN INTO THE CANAL** A report has been furnished to the police of the rescue from

drowning in the canal at Leeds, yesterday, of a little boy eight years old, whose name has not transpired. A boatman named **Frank Butterfield** was unloading his boat at the canal wharf, Armley, when he saw the boy struggling in the water. He rescued him after some difficulty. The boy was unable to say how he got into the water, unless the wind, which was rather high, had blown him in.

### **113 19 August 1896**

#### AN UNLUCKY FAMILY

TWO SUICIDES AT MIRFIELD This morning, **George Jagger North**, aged 45, a boatman who resides at Low Fold, Battieford, Mirfield, was found hanging by a rope in his own house. When cut down, he was quite dead. He was a widower, his wife having died recently, and left two children. Some time ago, a daughter was found drowned in Mirfield.

### **114 21 August 1896**

THE SUICIDE AT MIRFIELD Major Taylor held an inquest at the Wilson's Arms, Mirfield, yesterday afternoon, on the body of **George Jagger North**, aged 45, a boatman who resided at Low Fold, Battieford, and who committed suicide on Wednesday morning by hanging himself with a clothes line in his own house.

**John William North**, son of the deceased, said his father had never been the same man since his (the witness's) mother died eleven weeks ago. Last Saturday and Sunday, he stopped in the house all day crying and fretting.

A verdict that deceased had hung himself while temporarily insane was returned.

### **115 26 August 1896**

#### FOUND DROWNED IN THE AIRE

THE END OF "LITTLE JACK" The Leeds City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) this afternoon conducted an inquiry into the circumstances attending the death of **John Shaw** (55), of no fixed abode, whose body was found in the river Aire this morning.

Deceased had formerly been a pit sinker, but latterly he had worked at unloading boats. He was taken out of the water near Turton's Wharf, and there was no mark of violence or suspicion of foul play.

A lodging house keeper in Marsh Lane deposed that she had known Shaw a considerable period, but had lost sight of him during the last two years. The boatman who found the body said it was that of a man whom he had known as "Little Jack". Witness understood the deceased had been in the habit of sleeping on the boats at night, and probably he had fallen overboard in the dark. The last time the boatman saw Shaw was on Friday last.

The Coroner pointed out that there was only a presumption this was an accident. At the same time, no suspicion attached to anyone. He also mentioned that two sisters of the deceased were supposed to be living at Paddock near Huddersfield, but could not be found.

The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

### **116 20 October 1896**

#### A SELBY ASSAULT CASE

CRITICAL CONDITION OF THE VICTIM Our Selby correspondent writes :- At Selby Police Court this morning, George Simpson, labourer of Selby, was charged with inflicting grievous bodily harm to **John Wray**, boatman of York. Superintendent Stott, in asking for a remand in consequence of Wray's serious condition, said that on Saturday night the defendant was dragging Wray down Ousegate against the latter's inclination, and when near the railway subway, it was alleged that defendant struck him. A conversation ensued as to fighting, which Wray declined to do, and it was further alleged that when near the Denison Arms the defendant, without the slightest provocation, again struck Wray, knocking him on to the causeway, and then ran away.

Two witnesses, who had seen the whole affair, picked Wray up and took him on board his boat, and

he was then quite conscious. Next morning, the captain of the vessel found Wray in his locker in the fore-castle vomiting and quite unconscious. He was subsequently removed to the Workhouse Hospital, where he lies in a serious condition, having never regained consciousness.

Dr Kenny, who was unable to be present, had this morning given a certificate that Wray was suffering from concussion of the brain, and was in a dangerous state.

Formal evidence having been given by **Walter Grace**, a boatman who had witnessed the assault, defendant was remanded. It is not expected that Wray will recover.

### **117 16 November 1896**

#### A MYSTERY OF THE CANAL

**DISCOVERY OF AN "UNKNOWN" AT KIRKSTALL** On Sunday morning, a boatman named **John William Umpleby** of Mountain Street, Wood End, Windhill near Shipley, found the body of a man, between 20 and 30 years of age, floating in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal about 200 yards on the Kirkstall side of the Red Cote Bridge. The body was at once removed to the Star and Garter Hotel, Kirkstall, where it had not been identified up to this morning, when the Leeds City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) held an inquest. The police description of the body is that of a man well built, about six feet high, full face, flat nose, rather dark complexion, red hair, slightly red moustache, and clean shaven. In the pockets of the deceased were found an empty revolver of six chambers, and an old leather purse containing 1s 8 1/2d.

There was an ugly wound at the back of the man's head which served to deepen the mystery surrounding his death, until an explanation was given by the doctor.

The first witness at the inquest was Police-constable Spink, who spoke to receiving the body from the boatman, who was now not available as a witness.

Dr Charles Robert Lyall expressed the opinion that the body had been in the water for some weeks. It was very much decomposed, and there was a wound two inches long behind the right ear, not quite down to the bone, and a slight fracture of the skull above the right ear. He should say that those injuries were caused by a passing boat after death.

The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

### **118 29 December 1896**

#### A LEEDS MYSTERY

#### MAN FOUND IN THE CANAL

**A GASH IN THE DEAD MAN'S THROAT** The Leeds City Coroner will be engaged tomorrow investigating the details of another tragedy of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, the body of a man having been recovered from the water shortly before noon today. Should the body be identified, the inquiry will no doubt be interesting, for the appearances point to either murder or a very determined suicide. The latter theory seems the more feasible at present, money and several trifling articles being found in the pockets of the deceased.

The body was found by a boatman named **James Abbott** of 21 Canal Wharf, who was pursuing his usual avocation near Water Hall, Leeds. Abbott took the body out of the water and sent for the police. He then noticed that there was a terrible gash in the man's throat, the wound extending fully four inches, and being a couple of inches deep, while the left side of the face was much swollen and discoloured. The body appeared to have been in the water about a fortnight.

On the arrival of the police, the body was removed in the hand ambulance to the mortuary in Millgarth Street, to await identification and the inquest.

Apparently the man was about 28 years of age. He was of medium build, and his height was about 5ft 4in. He had a light brown moustache, but no beard. He was attired in a blue serge suit, white collar and front, and laced boots. The only articles in his pockets were a knife, three studs, a white cotton handkerchief, cutting from some paper containing a recipe for a cold, and 2s 3d in cash.

#### **Later**

The body was identified shortly before five o'clock as that of Marshall Howson (29), a mechanic of 9 Robinson's Yard, Smith Street, New Wortley. Howson, who is a married man, has been missing

since the 8<sup>th</sup> inst.

### **119 30 December 1896**

#### THE LEEDS CANAL MYSTERY

**A NEW WORTLEY MECHANIC'S SUICIDE** The circumstances surrounding the death of Marshall Howson, aged 29, a mechanic of 9 Robinson's Yard, Smith Street, New Wortley, who was found with his throat cut, floating in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near Water Hall, Leeds, were investigated by the City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) at the Leeds Town Hall this afternoon.

Mary Ellen Howson, the widow, said that on the 8<sup>th</sup> inst, her husband got up at one o'clock in the morning and went out. Nothing had happened between his going to bed and getting up at one o'clock. Witness went to the door, but her husband disappeared. Replying to the Coroner, witness said that her husband had not been right since his mother died in February. He had spoken in a desponding way, and had at times threatened to injure himself.

A stepbrother of the deceased said that a young man who worked with Howson had heard him say, "I would blow my brains out if I had a pistol".

Evidence having been given by **James Abbott**, the boatman who found the body, Dr Ward, the police surgeon, said the only external injury was a wound in the throat four inches long, passing downwards from left to right, and having the appearance of a suicide, the wound having evidently been done by two strokes of a knife. The doctor also stated that he found a small fracture on the bony side of the spine exactly opposite the wound. That wound might have been caused by a barge during the immersion of the body in the water. The man must have bled nearly to death before he got into the water. The cause of death, in his opinion, was a combination of haemorrhage and drowning, though the wound itself was quite sufficient to have had a fatal result. The body had apparently been in the water some time, though the doctor would not have thought so long as three weeks.

Police-constable Dimbleby, who took charge of the body when it was recovered from the water, produced a penknife, which was found closed in the pocket of the deceased. This had apparently bloodstains upon it, though they were now almost indistinguishable.

Recalled, the widow said her husband had not taken any knife away from the house. The one found in his possession he had had for a long time.

A verdict of "Suicide during temporary insanity" was returned.

### **120 14 January 1897**

**THE LONG PIPE CLUB** An inquest was held yesterday at the Moulders' Arms, Toll End, Tipton, relative to the death of **William George Smith**, boatman, whose body was found in the canal at Ocker Hill. Fanny Willis, Leabrook, said she saw deceased at the Bush Inn on Sunday evening. A "Long Pipe Club" was held at the public house, and members of the club met together on Sunday evenings. The Coroner : And they all smoke long pipes, I suppose? Witness : Yes. The Coroner : Will they have a man there who smokes a short pipe? Witness : No, not in the club room. The Coroner : I suppose they have long jugs as well as long pipes? (Laughter) Well, I do not know, sir. A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

### **121 19 February 1897**

#### A MIRFIELD BOY KILLED

**FALL OF FIFTY FEET FROM A BRIDGE** Yesterday afternoon, a shocking accident befell John Taylor, aged 14, son of Joseph Taylor, Lower Hopton, Mirfield, his injuries having proved fatal. The lad was employed as a riveters' labourer by the Cleveland Bridge Iron Company of Darlington, who are engaged erecting a massive iron bridge across the river Calder, at Battyeford, for the London and North Western Railway Company's new line from Heaton Lodge to Wortley, and had been thus employed since January 15 last.

Yesterday he was in the act of taking a bolt to one of the riveters, when he slipped and fell a distance of fifty feet into the river. In his fall, he struck his head against some timber. He was taken

out of the water in an unconscious state by a boatman named **Tom Walker** of Battyeford, and conveyed to the Mirfield Memorial Hospital. It was here found by Dr Milne, who had been called to the accident, that he had sustained a fracture of the skull, and he succumbed to his injuries this morning.

**122 24 February 1897**

**YOUNG MAN DROWNED AT SLAITHWAITE**

**HIS BODY FOUND IN THE CANAL** A mysterious drowning case is reported from Slaithwaite. At half past five o'clock last night, the body of a man was taken out of No 29 lock of the London and North Western Railway Company's canal at Slaithwaite by **John Hellowell Brierley**, boatman of that place, and **John Gibson**, boatman of Huddersfield. The body was jammed by the head between the lock gates and, after an alarm had been given and investigations made, it proved to be that of Jarvis Winterbottom, 23 years of age, a cotton piecer, whose home was at 13 Mark Street, Chatterton, near Oldham, but who for some time had been employed by Henry Turner, cotton spinner, Crimble, Golcar, by whom he was last seen alive on Wednesday the 17<sup>th</sup> inst, at half past five o'clock in the evening.

The deceased was one of a number of men imported into the district to take the places of the men who have been on strike at the Slaithwaite Cotton Spinning Company's works since June last year. Deceased had been very strange in his manner for some time. There was nothing found in the pockets of the deceased's clothing except a pocket knife.

**123 15 June 1897**

This morning, **William Oates**, aged 56, a boatman residing at Shepley Bridge, Mirfield, was found hanged in the hold of one of his boats.

**124 1 January 1898**

**ONE GIRL AFTER ANOTHER**

**INQUEST ON THE LATEST HALIFAX SUICIDE**

**SHE WANTED TO KEEP LATER HOURS** Mr J E Hill, Deputy Coroner, held an inquest at Halifax last night on Martha Eleanor Carter, 21 years of age, whose body was recovered from the canal at Lower Shaw Hill on Thursday morning.

Kate Ethel Carter, a sister of deceased, who resides with her father at Salterhebble, stated that Martha had for about nine months lived with Mr and Mrs John Ackroyd at 109 Oxford Lane, Siddal. Deceased, when seen by witness about a fortnight ago, was cheerful and lively, and, talking about the approaching Christmas, said she intended paying a visit to her brother at Castleford. Witness said her sister left home because she thought she would be better in lodgings, and have more of her own way. Since then she and her father had not spoken to each other. Witness believed, however, they had not seen each other since. Her father was strict with deceased in this sense, that he required her to be at home not later than half past 10 on Saturday nights, and before 10 on Sunday evenings. She never went out on other nights unless she had an errand to go.

The Deputy Coroner : You believe that she left home because she did not like to be in at regular hours? Yes.

Did she ever stay out late? No.

Then it would have been no hardship for her to come in at regular hours? She thought it was too soon.

The Deputy Coroner : It was late enough for any respectable girl to be out.

Had she a sweetheart? No. She used to "reckon" to go with a young man. They walked out together, but I don't think she has spoken to him for some months.

You think that it had been given up? Yes. She told a neighbour about a fortnight ago that she was not going to speak to him any more.

Why? I don't know.

John Thomas Ackroyd, dyer's labourer, 109 Oxford Lane, Siddal, deposed that the deceased had

lodged with him and his wife for about eight months.

The Deputy Coroner : Do you know that she had a sweetheart? Yes.

Did he ever come to the house? No. Two months ago, she said she was not keeping company with anyone.

Latterly she denied having a sweetheart? Yes.

Do you know what she had on her mind? No.

Witness stated that deceased dressed herself up after tea on Tuesday evening, and went out, but never returned. She did not say where she was going.

Constable W Robinson and **James Hackett**, boatman, gave evidence as to the recovery of the body. The hat and jacket of deceased were found on the towing-path of the canal on Wednesday evening, and the water was dragged for four hours, but the body could not be found. Next morning, it was recovered from that portion of the canal known as the Long Pool. Tied in one corner of her handkerchief was 1s 2 1/2d in money, and she had in her possession a silver watch and chain. The watch was stopped at seven minutes to five.

Mrs Arthur Holdsworth, sister to Mrs Ackroyd, said she was not aware that deceased went to any place of worship. Witness stated that deceased read very little, whereupon the Deputy Coroner remarked that some people read too much, while others read too little.

Witness added that during the time she had stayed at her sister's house, it was very difficult to induce deceased to answer any question. Deceased scarcely ever said anything, and she never told them what was troubling her.

The Deputy Coroner said it was lamentable that one young woman after another should commit suicide in such dirty water. He could not tell what the world was coming to.

The verdict was to the effect that deceased had been found drowned, but there was no evidence to show how she got into the water.

### **125 3 January 1898**

**Thomas England**, aged 36, boatman of Silsden, has been admitted to Sir Titus Salt's Hospital, Saltaire, suffering from wounds inflicted by a horse.

### **126 21 January 1898**

**A FERRYBRIDGE BOATMAN MISSING** A boatman who has had charge of one of the coal barges belonging to Messrs Poulson Bros, West Riding Pottery, Ferrybridge, has been missing since Tuesday night. His name is **George Wild**, and he is 70 years of age. He was last seen on Tuesday night at a small shop, where he purchased some paraffin oil, and it is supposed on returning to his boat, which was moored near the pottery, he fell into the water and was drowned, the night being very dark. Men have been employed dragging the river, but up to this afternoon the body had not been recovered.

### **127 24 January 1898**

Yesterday afternoon, the body of **George Wild**, a boatman, Knottingley, was recovered from the Aire and Calder Canal at Knottingley.

### **128 22 March 1898**

At an early hour this morning, the body of a man named **John Grayson**, aged 42 years, mate on board the keel *Polly*, who has been missing since Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup> February, was recovered from the river Ouse at Selby.

### **129 23 April 1898**

**MIRFIELD WIDOW'S SUICIDE** The body of a woman was found floating in the river Calder at Mirfield yesterday by **Arthur Robinson**, boatman, South Woodbine Street, Dewsbury. He got the body to the bank with all speed, but it was found that life was extinct. The deceased proved to be Ellen Farrance, the widow of Joseph Farrance, blacksmith of Mirfield. Since her husband's death

six weeks ago, the deceased had been much depressed in mind.

**130 16 May 1898**

**THE LATEST GIRL SUICIDE**

**NO KNOWN MOTIVE IN THIS CASE AT SOWERBY BRIDGE** Mr W Barstow held an inquest at the Wharf Inn, Sowerby Bridge, today, on the body of Elizabeth Hitchen, 20 years of age, millhand of Lower Fold, Norland. Deceased, who is the daughter of John Hitchen, plasterer, was found drowned in the canal near Sterne Mills, on Friday morning.

Mary Hannah Hitchen, sister, stated that deceased was 20 years of age on Primrose Day, and for several years had been employed as a twister at Copley Mills. Witness last saw her alive about half past five on Friday morning, when she left home to go to her work. Deceased then seemed in her usual health and spirits. There had been no unpleasantness at the mill. Her sister had kept company with a young man, but the engagement was broken off at Easter.

A Juror : Had it bothered her at all? No.

The Coroner : Have you no idea why she did this sad thing? No.

Did she break off the engagement herself? Yes.

There has been no unpleasantness either at home or at the mill? No.

The Coroner : There must have been something. People don't end their lives without cause.

Witness, replying to other questions, said her sister usually walked to her work through North Dean Wood, and not by Sterne Mills. If deceased had been troubled by the breaking off of the engagement, she had never shown it. Her sister and the young man in question had kept company only four months prior to Easter when the engagement was terminated. Witness added that the health of her sister had always been good.

Evidence was given by other witnesses to the effect that on Friday morning about half an hour after deceased left home, her shawl and an handkerchief containing her breakfast and dinner, were found on the towing-path of the canal near Sterne Mills. Her body was subsequently recovered by **Joe Wood**, a boatman, from under the bridge, near the place where her shawl had been found.

John Hitchen, the father of the deceased, who was called, could not account for his daughter acting as she had done.

The verdict was that deceased had drowned herself, but there was no evidence to show the state of her mind at the time.

**131 24 May 1898**

**A BRIGHOUSE YOUTH FOUND DROWNED** This morning, **Henry Hirst**, boatman of Hull, whilst proceeding along the Calder and Hebble Canal with his boat, found the dead body of Frederick George Bentley, 15 years of age, a cabinetmaker's apprentice, son of George Bentley, millhand of Thornhill Briggs, Brighouse, floating in the water near the lock at Cromwell Bottom, Southowram. The lad has been missing since yesterday week ; he left home at noon as if returning to work. He was last seen the same afternoon on the Elland Road, which leads to the place where the body was found. It is supposed he has committed suicide, but the motive for such a rash act is not accountable.

**132 2 August 1898**

**BLOWN INTO THE CANAL** **Tom Morley**, aged 42, a boatman in the employ of the Aire and Calder Navigation Company, was drowned yesterday afternoon in the canal at Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury. He had closed the gate of the Double Locks and was crossing over again, when a gust of wind blew him into the water.

### 133 2 August 1898

#### A CANAL BOAT TRAGEDY – MURDEROUS AFFRAY AT SHIPLEY WINDHILL QUARRYMAN DONE TO DEATH

#### A BOATMAN AND HIS PARAMOUR ARRESTED

A SQUALID STORY OF DRINK AND DEPRAVITY The sole topic of conversation in Shipley today is the tragic occurrence brought to light late yesterday afternoon. The first intimation of the affair was conveyed to the police by two boys named respectively George Edward Bedford, of the Albion Inn, Meadow Lane, Leeds, and John Thompson, of 101 Mulberry Place, Hunslet. These boys had been in the vicinity of the Bull Hotel, Low Well, Shipley, yesterday afternoon, and whilst there had heard a disturbance in one of the many boats moored on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, in the immediate rear of the Bull Hotel, the canal bank adjoining the hotel yard.

The place where these boats are moored is closely adjacent to the Shipley Gas Works, and also to Gallows Bridge, a footway connecting the Bradford Arms district with Briggate, one of the most important of the Shipley thoroughfares.

Police-constable Mashell, formerly of the Metropolitan Force, now stationed at Windhill, was the first officer who received information of an affray having occurred on one of the boats. He proceeded through the Bull Hotel Yard to the place where the boats are moored, expecting that he would simply have to quell another of the disturbances which so often call for the intervention of the police.

When he arrived on the canal bank, however, he quickly perceived that the affray had been of a more serious character than he had anticipated. There was a crowd of people there, and attention was centred on an empty boat named the *Surprise*, belonging to Mr James Glover of Bingley. Some of the bystanders, who had boarded the boat and raised the cabin door, turned away with expressions which clearly indicated the horrible nature of the spectacle within.

Police-constable Ross now arrived upon the scene, and he and Mashell descended into the cabin which, to use their own words, “looked like nothing but a slaughter house”. The apartment was only a small one, and it was bespattered with blood all over. The officers found no living occupant of the cabin, but lying on the floor in a pool of blood was the body of a man. At first sight it was apparent that the dead man had met a violent – extremely violent – death. His head was one mass of cuts and bruises from which, as could easily be seen, blood had flowed profusely. There was not the slightest sign of life, but before removing the body Dr Ainsworth was called in. The doctor perceived at a glance that death had taken place some time previously, although the body was still warm. Several police officers had by this time – about five o'clock – reached the spot, and under the direction of Inspector Turton the body was removed to the public mortuary adjoining the District Council Offices.

From inquiries made on the spot, the police learned that a boatman and the woman with whom he cohabited had recently left the boat, and police officers were at once told off to search for them. Police-constable Ross visited the Fox and Hounds Hotel, which is situated about a hundred and fifty yards from the scene of the tragedy. He there found the man he was in search of, and rapping him on the shoulder, told him that he was wanted. Without much ado, the man left the public house in company with the officer, and was marched to the police station, the route to which was lined with excited crowds, who were discussing the rumour that a murder had just been committed.

Shortly afterwards, Police-constable Fairbottom met the woman with whom the man apprehended cohabited on the *Surprise*, and she too was taken to the police station. She, it may here be mentioned, was the only eye witness of the tragedy in the cabin.

DETAILS OF THE PARTIES The name of the deceased is Joseph Croft, a quarryman about 50 years of age, who lived at Lane Bottom, Windhill. The male prisoner is **Peter Keeling**, a strong healthy looking young fellow of medium stature, who was engaged on board the *Surprise* as “mate”, while the female prisoner, his paramour, a woman of about 35 years of age, who gave her name as **Martha Schofield**, and said she was a native of the Isle of Man, but had spent the greater part of her life in Goole.

The details of the relationship of the parties point to a very loose manner of living. Croft, the victim

of the tragedy, was a married man, and his wife and children reside at No 18 Mary Street, Saltaire. It is seven years since he and the latter parted, however, owing to his drinking habits. Latterly he has been living with a woman near Windhill. During the whole period that they have been parted, his lawful wife has never received any alimony whatever, and has maintained herself and her children by her own hard work.

**A WIFE'S SUFFERINGS** The neighbours at Saltaire speak very highly of her, and she herself was quite overcome with grief when she heard last night of her husband's terrible end. "Oh, Joe", she frantically cried, "I had hoped to live to see the day when you would return to a respectable life. But you are the same to me now as you always were – my dear husband – and I pray Almighty God to forgive you for all you have done. Every night and morning have I prayed for you!"

With a voice broken by deep emotion, she went on to explain how she firmly believed that in his better and sober moments her husband upbraided himself for the low level he had sunk to. "He has been home many a time and told me so himself", she said, "and my firm belief is that if he could have conquered his craving for drink, he would have lived a respectable life with me and his family. A better and kinder husband, apart from the drink, could not be wished for and now he is dead, and Oh! What a death! If I could only have seen him on his bed of sickness, and seen him repent his past life! But that cannot be; but he is still my husband, and whatever I have to do to do it, I will bury him as such, and in death I freely forgive him – as I hope God will do – for all he has done".

With regard to the prisoner Keeling, he is a boatman who made his headquarters at Shipley, and he has several times been in the hands of the local police for various offences. With regard to the woman Schofield, she was well known among the boatmen as Keeling's paramour.

**WHAT CAUSED THE QUARREL?** It is said that Croft and the two prisoners are well acquainted with each other, and some of the boatmen state that the three were drinking together yesterday at the Bull Hotel, and also at the Fox and Hounds. Some time during the afternoon – probably about half past three o'clock – Schofield went to the boat, and was shortly afterwards followed by Croft, whose purpose, according to the woman's version, was of an improper character.

Subsequently – how long after Croft and Schofield had been together in the cabin cannot yet be definitely stated – Keeling made his appearance in the boat. Some people say that Keeling doubted his paramour's fidelity, and was in hiding close by keeping watch; whilst others say that he went to the boat in the ordinary way. There is no doubt that immediately Keeling went into the cabin, he at once set upon Croft.

Nearly every article in the place, including a poker, was bloodstained. There was a small tin pail containing a large quantity of blood. Keeling and Schofield left the boat together shortly after four o'clock, and to some boatmen who were in the Bull's Hotel yard, Keeling remarked, "I have done for the ----- now; he will have to be carried off this time". It was noticed – and of course the fact is now of some importance – that he washed his hands before leaving the canal. Keeling and Schofield proceeded to the Fox and Hounds, where the former, as previously stated, was arrested. Schofield had left the hotel and was walking down Briggate when she too was taken into custody. Blood stains were found in several places upon Keeling's clothing, and there was also blood on the strong hob nailed clogs he was wearing.

When told that Croft was dead, it is said that Keeling replied, "Well, if the ----- isn't he ought to be". The belief is generally entertained that Croft's injuries were not caused with a hand to hand fight.

**A HAMMER FOUND** A careful search of the boat was made by Detective Dunn. On the boat itself, however, no implement was found which was thought would account for the fearful injuries on Croft's face. Continuing his search however, Detective Dunn found a hammer in the water between the boat and the canal bank. Notwithstanding that the hammer had been in water, it was believed that blood marks could be detected, and the officer was apparently satisfied in his own mind that he had found the implement with which the alleged murder had been committed. The face of the hammer had been broken, and the sharp edge that remained would render it a deadly weapon. Both Keeling and Schofield have been charged with causing the death of Croft.

**William Slingsby** of Piccadilly, Shipley, the captain of the *Surprise*, states that Keeling had been engaged on the boat about 18 months ago. The woman Schofield also lived on the boat, and

Slingsby said there have been frequent quarrels between her and Keeling. He was absent from the boat when the tragedy was enacted, and therefore knows nothing of the circumstances.

On inquiry at Shipley Police Station this morning, we were informed that both prisoners had slept well, and even this morning, when they should have recovered from the effects of the drink they had yesterday, do not appear to realise the fearful charge which hangs over their heads.

**THE PRISONERS IN CUSTODY** In the hope of witnessing their removal to the police divisional headquarters at Bradford this morning, a large crowd assembled in the vicinity of the Police Station and remained there for several hours, notwithstanding the pouring rain. A prisoner charged with a minor offence, who was marched down to the station en route for Bradford, was the object of much curiosity, which he seemed at a loss to understand.

The prisoners, we understand, will not be removed to Bradford until after the inquest, which has not yet been fixed.

The woman Schofield is not known at Goole.

### **134 4 August 1898**

#### **THE SHIPLEY TRAGEDY – BOTH PRISONERS BEFORE THE MAGISTRATES**

##### **A CROWDED COURT**

##### **BOTH THE ACCUSED ASK QUESTIONS**

**THE EX HANGMAN APPLIES FOR A LICENCE** The two prisoners charged in connection with the Shipley murder were brought before the magistrates at the West Riding Police Court, Bradford, this morning. Long before the hour, the approaches to the court were crowded by an eager throng of sightseers, whilst every available seat was occupied in the court.

In the chair of the bench of magistrates was Sir Theo Peel, Bart. No one appeared for the defence of the prisoners.

The long dragging preliminary business was slowly gone through, the usual tale of drunks and disorderlies and petty misdemeanours being at length disposed of.

Prior to this, however, an extraordinary coincidence occurred. A neatly dressed dark man stepped into the witness box and asked for the transfer of the licence of a beerhouse at Tong to himself. Few in the court recognised him, and even when he gave his name curiosity was not even stirred. Yet it was James Berry, the ex hangman, and a charge of murder was to be heard shortly.

It was a few minutes to one o'clock before the two prisoners were placed in the dock amidst a hum of excitement. The male prisoner, **Peter Keeling**, is a swarthy thick set individual with a cast of countenance decidedly of the brutal type. He has short close cropped brown hair ; and short square and rugged underjaw ; low, but not receding, forehead and dark eyes set extremely close together. He was roughly dressed in a dark brown coarse suit, and wore the customary handkerchief in lieu of a collar.

The woman **Martha Schofield** looks much older than the male prisoner. She has, however, at some time been good looking, but is now merely a slatternly wreck of her former self. She wore a dress of faded blue. She is dark, and was evidently suffering from some asthmatical or bronchial affliction, as her voice was at all times scarcely audible.

Superintendent Crawshaw formally stated the charge, which was recorded on the police sheets as follows :- “Peter Keeling (30), boatman, Shipley, and Martha Schofield (31), of no fixed abode, causing the death of Joseph Croft”.

He proposed to give a little formal evidence, and then ask for a remand.

The circumstances, said the superintendent, were these. The two prisoners had been living together for the last six weeks. They had been employed on a boat, the *Surprise*, belonging to Mr Glover of Bingley, which plied between Shipley, Leeds and other places. The boat arrived at Shipley on Saturday. This being holiday time it was the intention of the prisoners to remain there until Wednesday. They were drinking together on Tuesday, and ultimately the prisoner went down into the cabin with the woman, whom he left there. Some time later Keeling left the boat, and at about a quarter to four Croft entered the cabin. Keeling returned shortly after, and a struggle took place, lasting some time. The two prisoners left the boat together at 4.30, and, immediately after, Croft

was found dead on the cabin floor, frightfully battered, and laying in a pool of his own blood. The prisoners were arrested shortly after.

Jane Whittingham, wife of John Whittingham, living at No 1 Canal House, Shipley, said she was at home last Tuesday. At three o'clock she was standing at the door and saw the woman Schofield sitting in the boat drunk. She also saw the other prisoner. They seemed to be quarrelling. The man was standing on the bank near the boat. Afterwards he went on board, and had to escort the woman into the cabin. He remained there a few minutes, and then returned. They put what they call the hatch over the cabin. Some time afterwards, from something said to her, she went to the door. That would be about three quarters of an hour after. She saw the hatch off. Whilst she was standing at the door, Keeling came along from the direction of the Bull Hotel. He jumped on to the boat and down into the cabin. All was quite quiet for a few minutes.

Now after that did you see or hear anything? - I saw Keeling put his head out of the cabin. He said, "Come out".

Was he doing anything at the time? - He seemed to have his hands resting on the hatchway. His feet were working as if he were kicking.

Did you hear a noise? - No.

What did he do after that? - He got on deck.

Did you hear anything then? - I heard him say, "Come out you -----". A man's voice replied, "I can't".

What happened then? - Keeling went down again.

Did you then hear anything? - The noise was horrible.

What was it like? - It was like thumps and the clash of fireirons. The language going on was shocking.

How long did it continue? - About five minutes.

Witness, continuing, said that Keeling then came on to the deck again. He shouted, "Come out, withee". The woman then got up and sat on the deck with her legs hanging down in the cabin. Keeling then jumped on to the bank and bent down, so that witness could only see his head. She heard him say to the woman, "Gies ta handkerchief".

Did she give him a handkerchief? - No.

What happened then? He went down below again and remained five minutes.

Prisoner : Annie, don't lie, tha've tell't enough on me.

Continuing, witness said that when prisoner returned he said to the woman, "Come along wi' tha, let's have time off". The pair then got on the bank, and on passing an adjoining boat, witness heard male prisoner say, "Ah've catched at last. Ah've done for him : ah've given him summat to go on wi' for three or four days". The two prisoners then walked off through the Bull Hotel yard.

Sir Theo Peel : Keeling, have you any questions to ask the witness.

Prisoner : Yes.

To Witness : Did you see me get off the boat the first time? Witness : No.

Did you see anyone else? - No.

Did you see me come back a second time?

The Magistrates' Clerk : She has told you that.

Keeling : She hasn't. How far was it from your door to the boat? - About 20 feet.

Keeling : That's bosh. A boat's 14 feet 2 inches across, and there's room for two to pass so it's 20 feet just water alone. Then there's all the width of the bank. You could not hear a word from there.

The Female Prisoner : Did you see the man coming, and hear me tell him to go away or I would send for a policeman? Witness : No.

Prisoners were remanded for a week.

### **135 5 September 1898**

#### **MAN FOUND IN THE CANAL**

**SEQUEL TO A SURGICAL OPERATION** At about half past five o'clock yesterday morning, a boatman named **George Hawksworth** of Bolton Woods, near Shipley, reported at the Armley

Police Station that when passing along the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near Armley Mills, he had found the body of a man in the water. He had removed it, and laid it on the bank. Police-sergeants Dalton and Hebditch proceeded to the place, and removed the body to the Bay Horse Hotel, Armley, to await the inquest. On the bank of the canal, they found the man's coat and cap, and on searching his clothing, a club card was discovered bearing the name Saynor. Later in the day, the body was identified by Mrs Elizabeth Saynor of 13 Meanwood Street, Leeds, as that of her husband, Jack Saynor, a shoeing smith. It appears that Saynor had not been well for some time, and that on Wednesday last he underwent a surgical operation. He was missed from home between two and three o'clock yesterday morning, and apparently went straight to Armley and threw himself in the canal.

The usual verdict was returned at the inquest this afternoon.

### **136 28 September 1898**

**ATTACKED BY A HORSE** **John Littlemore**, boatman in the employment of the Anderton Company, Preston, has just had an unpleasant experience, having been attacked by a horse. The animal knocked him down and trampled upon him. His hand was so mutilated that three fingers had to be amputated, and he was otherwise seriously injured.

### **137 10 November 1898**

**A WAKEFIELD WIDOW** The body of Sarah Thorpe, aged 50, a widow of Charles Street, Wakefield, was found in the canal at Wakefield yesterday. A shawl with a note pinned to it with the address of deceased written on it, was first seen by a boatman named **Charles Beck**, when walking on the footpath, and on looking into the water he found the body floating near the Navigation Bridge.

### **138 6 December 1898**

**THE SHIPLEY TRAGEDY** The Grand Jury at the Leeds Assizes, today, returned a true bill for manslaughter in the case of **Peter Keeling** (39), boatman, who is indicted for the murder of Joseph Croft in a canal barge at Shipley on August 2<sup>nd</sup> last. Keeling was committed to the Assizes for manslaughter on the Coroner's warrant.

### **139 13 December 1898**

**THE SHIPLEY TRAGEDY**

**KEELING'S TRIAL AT LEEDS ASSIZES**

**FOUND GUILTY – SENTENCED TO TEN YEARS PENAL SERVITUDE** This morning at the Leeds Assizes – before Mr Justice Channell, sitting in the Crown Court – **Peter Keeling** (30), boatman, was indicted for the manslaughter of Joseph Croft at Shipley on August 2 last. Mr Banks and Mr Edmondson prosecuted, and Mr Harold Newell defended. Prisoner pleaded not guilty very promptly when charged.

In opening the case, Mr Banks said that prisoner and a woman named **Martha Schofield** were at the time in question living together as man and wife on a canal boat at Shipley. On August 2, about four o'clock in the afternoon, the deceased man, Joseph Croft, was in the forecabin of the boat with the woman, and was there found by the prisoner. An affray took place between the men, in the centre of which the deceased received injuries from which he died. The man Croft was left in the cabin, where he was found dead in a pool of blood. After the occurrence the prisoner and the woman went off to a public house, and several witnesses would tell them that the man said he had given Croft enough to go on with for a day or two. After his arrest, he made similar remarks, and also asked if the man were dead, adding that if not he ought to be. The doctor would tell them that the dead man had on his head some 15 wounds, several of which alone would have been sufficient to have caused death. They appeared to have been inflicted with instruments, such as a poker and a hammer, both of which were usually kept in the cabin.

Anthony Dobson, 8 Saltaire Road, Shipley, photographer, and John Henry Woodhead, Wrose Hill,

Shipley, surveyor, gave evidence as to the particular locality and the vessel in which the tragedy took place.

Jane Whittingham, whose house is on the side of the canal at Shipley, stated that on the day in question she saw the woman Schofield and the prisoner from her house. Schofield was the worse for drink. The man was standing on the bank, and was assisting Schofield on to the boat. The woman went into the cabin, and the prisoner drew the hatch over with the remark, "Stay there a few minutes and I'll be back". He then went away. About a quarter to four, witness again looked out of her house. The hatch was then pushed off the cabin, and prisoner just at that moment jumped on to the boat and went down into the cabin. He was down about a minute, and then his head appeared above the hatch. He shouted, "Come out you ----". He then jumped back into the cabin, and said he would make him. For the next few minutes the noises were "something frightful to listen to". They were noises of fireirons and of cursing and swearing. In the end the prisoner came out of the cabin, and said to the woman, "Come out with tha". She got out and sat on the edge of the hatchway with her legs dangling below. The prisoner jumped off the boat, and appeared to be doing something in the water. He asked the woman for a handkerchief, and she rolled on to the deck. The prisoner again jumped down into the cabin and remained there for four or five minutes, everything being quiet during that time. He and the woman then went away up an adjacent yard.

Ada Whittingham corroborated.

William Higgins, labourer, Leeds Road, Windhill, deposed that on the afternoon of August 2 he saw the prisoner at the top of the Bull Hotel Yard. Prisoner was then walking in the direction of the canal, and as he passed witness he asked if he had seen his "missus". Witness replied that he had seen her half an hour ago. Prisoner then went down the yard with the remark, "I'll show you what I'll do for her when I get hold of her". Witness watched him get on to the boat and go down into the cabin. Soon after, he heard prisoner exclaim, "I'll do for tha, tha ----". Then there was some kicking for about five minutes. Keeling came out with his hands covered with blood, and washed them in the canal. After that he returned to the cabin and stayed for five minutes. Witness walked off the canal bank and prisoner and the woman followed him into the Bull Hotel Yard. Prisoner said to him, "Bill, has tha seen Joe", meaning Croft. He added that the man was in the boat if witness wanted to see him. Witness followed them until they disappeared in the Fox and Hounds public house.

**John William Wright**, boat labourer, 22 Piccadilly, Shipley, said he was engaged in unloading a boat on the day in question. He had occasion to take some barrows to the *Surprise*, on which the prisoner lived. The prisoner rose out of the cabin and asked, "Is my face mucky?" Witness said it was covered with blood, and prisoner asked him to wipe it off. He did so, and soon after heard a shout and saw people running to the boat. Witness then jumped on the boat, and looking into the cabin, saw Croft lying in a pool of blood.

Alice Wood of the Bull Hotel, Shipley, and William Rider, 5 Prince's Street, Windhill, a waiter at that establishment, also gave evidence.

Martha Schofield said she was a widow. She first met the prisoner on Primrose Day, in Leeds, and had since lived with him as his wife on the canal boat *Surprise*. On the day in question Croft came down into the cabin to her while she was in bed. He called out, "Hurry up", and on her looking out he said, "I've come in to tell you Pete's working". Croft came back at about twelve o'clock. She told him she was making dinner, and told him that if he did not get away Pete would think she was encouraging men about the boat. Croft just then exclaimed, "By G---, Pete's coming", and he jumped off and went away. Keeling followed him on to the next boat, and remonstrated with him for his conduct. There was no fighting. About a quarter to four, witness was again in bed when Croft returned to the cabin and behaved improperly. She exclaimed, "You haven't been long". Croft replied, "It's not Pete, it's me". Keeling dropped into the cabin at the same moment, and Croft exclaimed, "It's thee or me for it", and immediately struck Keeling in the face. There was a fight among the fire irons and in the corner. Witness got them to separate, and Croft then sat down upon a seat for a few minutes. He then asked for a drink of water, but witness told him to go home for it. She and Keeling then left the boat, leaving Croft still sitting. The hammer produced was usually

kept among the coal, and she did not see it used during the fight.

Cross-examined by Mr Banks : No fire irons were used, but the two men were bumped about all over the cabin.

Police-constable Ross spoke to arresting the prisoner and the woman Schofield. He subsequently went to the cabin of the *Surprise* and found Croft lying on the floor of the cabin in a pool of blood. The floor was covered with blood. When he charged the prisoner, the latter replied, "If the ----- is not dead he ought to be : he should have kept off our Martha". There was not a single mark on the prisoner.

Police-constable Hodge spoke to finding the hammer produced in the canal between the boat and the bank. There were stains upon it which appeared to be those of blood.

Dr Carter deposed to having made a *post mortem* examination of the body of the man Croft. He found 35 wounds on the head and face – (sensation) – but no marks of violence on the body. There were fifteen wounds on the right side of the face, ten on the left side, and ten on the back of the head. The skull was fractured in four places, and from those wounds death had resulted.

By his Lordship : The man could have sat up and talked after the whole of the injuries.

Inspector Turton produced the boots worn by the prisoner at the time, and the cabin pokers. He stated that on examining the prisoner's clothing, nearly all of it was covered with blood.

The prisoner elected to give evidence in his defence. He said that he and Schofield lived together as man and wife, and thought more about each other than many an actually wedded pair. They intended to be married, and had saved money for the purpose, but it all went in doctor's bills when Schofield was ill through falling off the boat into the canal. The man Croft and he had known each other all their lives. Croft was bigger and heavier than he was. At dinner time on August 2, he saw Croft get off the *Surprise*, and they had a few words about it. The matter ended, however, in them having drinks together. In the afternoon he and Schofield went to the feast ground at Shipley, and after returning to the boat he left her on board. On coming back again, he heard someone screaming in the cabin. He found Croft there misbehaving himself. They fought in the cabin, he (prisoner) having the advantage because he was used to the place. There was a knife on the locker, and Croft threatened to use it upon him if he could get hold of it. Prisoner continued to say that his head was "all bumps", and his nose and mouth bleeding. They fought for a long time until Croft sat down on a seat, after which he (prisoner) and Schofield left the boat.

Cross-examined by Mr Banks : He did not strike Croft. They were down on the floor a great many times.

The defence was that Croft received his injuries by coming into contact with the cabin fixtures during the struggle.

His Lordship summed up.

After a brief deliberation, the jury returned a verdict of guilty.

His Lordship passed a sentence of ten years penal servitude.

#### **140 27 December 1898**

**A TRAGEDY OF CHRISTMAS EVE** The body of a woman was seen floating in the canal near Water Lane, Leeds, on Christmas Eve, and was pulled out by a boatman named **Emmanuel Simpson**. It was removed to the mortuary in Millgarth Street, and was there identified on Sunday as the body of Alice Tillotson (56), who lived at 8 Crossland Street, Holbeck. It has been stated by the woman's husband that he left his wife in Briggate on Saturday night, and that as she then appeared to be all right, he is unable to offer any explanation as to her subsequent proceedings.

#### **141 12 January 1899**

##### **AN EXCITED PARENT**

**EJECTED BY THE WHITWOOD SCHOOL BOARD** Last night **William Scott**, boatman, appeared before the Whitwood School Board in an excited condition. He has two children, aged seven and nine years, who have "always lived aboard", never attended school, and are unable even to tell the letters of the alphabet. The teachers at the Whitwood Mere Board School were unable to

receive them, as their schools are full. He said he would compel the Board to take his children, and if they refused he would write to London. He then withdrew, but at a later stage reappeared and had to be ejected.

#### **142 13 January 1899**

##### **THE HORSE AND THE ELECTRIC BELL**

**TWO CHARGES AGAINST A LEEDS MAN AT HUDDERSFIELD** **William Hunt** (43), described as a boatman of Leeds, was at Huddersfield Borough Police Court this morning, placed in the dock on a charge of having had in his possession a horse of which he could not give a satisfactory account, and also with having damaged a window and an electric bell to the amount of 6s. The latter charge was interesting from the fact that it was the first brought against a prisoner for having misused the modern appliances of the new police office.

The Chief Constable said the prisoner was found dealing with a horse yesterday. He was endeavouring to effect a swap with a horse dealer for money, but the animal he offered was worth so much more than the dealer's horse that the dealer became suspicious and informed the police. It was suspected that the horse in the prisoner's possession belonged to somebody in Leeds, and he (the Chief Constable) proposed to deal now only with the charge of damage.

Inspector Hall stated that last night he heard a sound as of glass being broken in the cells at the Central Police Office, and found that a window had been broken and also the electric bell.

These bells, it may be mentioned, are provided in order that a prisoner, taken ill and needing assistance, may summon an attendant, but the Inspector informed the Bench that the prisoner had used it for no other purpose than to "make a fool" of the officer.

The prisoner strenuously denied the truth of the latter assertion, but pleaded guilty to having done the damage. He rang several times for ginger and water to cure an attack of spasms. He thought he was going to collapse, and failing to attract the officers by ringing and shouting, he broke the window. When the constables came, they did nothing but laugh at him, and he could hear them laughing and giggling when outside.

Prisoner was ordered to pay 17s 2d, in default 14 days imprisonment. He was bound over to appear a fortnight hence to answer the charge about the horse.

#### **143 24 January 1899**

**ALTOFTS MAN FOUND DROWNED** A Goole boatman named **George William Whitehead**, today discovered in the canal at Stanley Ferry, near Wakefield, a body, which was afterwards identified as that of Amos Child, aged 28, banksman, Altofts, who had been missing from home since January 7. There were two large cuts in the throat, and the only clothing on the body was a shirt and boots.

#### **144 13 February 1899**

##### **RELIGIOUS MANIA**

##### **A LADY'S COMPANION COMMITS SUICIDE**

**FOUND IN A HUDDERSFIELD MILL DAM** On Saturday afternoon, a further case of drowning was discovered at Huddersfield, and from the evidence adduced it seems probable that the deceased, Ellen Hutchinson (37), a single woman, committed suicide under the impulse of religious mania. She had acted in the capacity of companion to Miss Ann H Smith, a spinster of Moldgreen, and to her and other of her friends, she had for some time appeared to be depressed, and her conversation was chiefly of religious matters. Having left Miss Smith's house on the 25<sup>th</sup> of last month, nothing more was heard of her until Saturday last when, in consequence of a suspicion that she might have come to her end in an untimely manner, search was made for her in the waters of the neighbourhood of King's Mill, Huddersfield, with the result that her body was discovered in the mill dam.

At the Borough Police Station this morning, Mr J E Hill, deputy coroner, and a jury, inquired into the cause of the unfortunate woman's death.

Ann Hannah Smith of Storthes, Moldgreen, stated that the deceased had for several years at

different intervals acted as her companion. She last came to witness on Wednesday in Christmas week.

The Deputy Coroner : Was she then in ill health? Yes ; I did not think she was fit to come.

Bodily or mentally? Both.

What did she suffer from? Religious mania.

Continuing, witness said deceased left her house on Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup> of January, between five and six o'clock in the evening.

The Deputy Coroner : You have employed people to search for her? Yes, but I thought she might have wandered back home.

Caroline Smith, a teacher employed by the Huddersfield School Board, who said she resided at Penistone, stated that she knew the deceased.

The Deputy Coroner : Where did you see her last? In King's Mill Lane.

When? On Wednesday.

What Wednesday? The day on which she drowned herself.

How do you know she drowned herself? The witness made no answer.

The Foreman (to witness) : You mean on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January? Yes.

The Deputy Coroner : What did she say to you? She talked about religion.

What did she say about religion? She said she wonder whether she would be condemned, and talked about her future life in a very strange manner.

Did she threaten to make away with herself? No ; she never mentioned such a thing.

Witness said she left deceased in King's Mill Lane, and bade her goodnight.

**Tom Roscoe**, a boatman of Smithy Lane, who had been employed to search for the deceased, said he found the body with a boat hook in about the middle of King's Mill dam. His brother was with him at the time. The body was conveyed to the mortuary at the police station.

The Deputy Coroner : Did it seem as though it had been in the water some days? Yes.

Elizabeth Dawson, female searcher at the Borough Police Station, who had laid out the body, said there was no mark of violence upon it. In the pocket of deceased's dress were some letters and a text book.

The Deputy Coroner : Was there anything to throw light on this matter? The letters were from her friends.

The Deputy Coroner read the following letter, which he said the Chief Constable of Huddersfield (Mr John Barton) had received from Dr Rowley of Barnsley :-

Dear Sir – I have been asked by Mrs Smith of Low Mill, Silkstone, who is sister to Miss Helen Hutchinson (who has been missing under suspicious circumstances for some days) to write you regarding her mental condition. I was attending her from November 5 until December 18 last. She was then suffering from depression and religious mania, and gradually recovered so much that she was allowed to go out alone. I have no doubt from what I know of her case, and from what I have since heard, that if she has, as is presumed, committed suicide, it has been done when she was not accountable for her actions. Yours faithfully,

Oswald F Rowley

The Chief Constable, Huddersfield

This was the whole of the evidence, and the jury returned a verdict of “Found drowned”, adding that the deceased had probably drowned herself whilst of unsound mind.

### **145 3 March 1899**

#### **HER LAST NIGHT OUT**

**SERVANT GIRL FOUND DROWNED AT DONCASTER** This afternoon, the body of a young woman named Annie Pownall, aged 17, a domestic servant, was found in the canal at Doncaster. Deceased was in service, and left for her usual night out on Wednesday. She did not return, and her hat was found on the canal bank on Thursday morning. Dragging operations were carried out, and the body was recovered by a boatman named **Wilburn**. It is supposed that the deceased committed suicide. Her parents live at Barnby Dun.

**146 10 April 1899**

SENTENCES AT THE SESSIONS **Tom Grundy** (21), boatman, Walter Clough (20) carter, and James Newland (19), hawker, stealing a dozen sweeping brush heads, the property of Richard Pease, at Leeds on January 19 last. Grundy and Newland were sentenced to nine months imprisonment, and Clough to 15 months.

**147 5 June 1899**

WOMAN DROWNED IN THE CANAL AT HUNSLET

A BOATMAN'S GRUESOME DISCOVERY At noon yesterday, the body of a woman, who passed under the name of **Mary Ellen Varley** (40), was found in the Dock Basin, Chadwick Street, Hunslet. It transpired that she had cohabited with a boatman named **Edward Dyson**, of the *Progress*, now lying in the canal, Leeds. Dyson has stated to the police that he last saw the woman on board the *Clarence*, in the New Dock Basin, at two o'clock on the 28<sup>th</sup> ult, and that she was missing on his return the same day at 11 o'clock. He had not seen nor heard of her in the interval. **Sam Slater** of the *Thrifty* has reported that he saw the body in the water on the 1<sup>st</sup> inst, but thought it was the carcase of a dog. It was only when he turned it over with a boat hook yesterday morning that he discovered its real nature.

An open verdict was returned.

**148 15 September 1899**

At Brighouse today, **Edgar France**, boatman, and George France, coal merchant, of Brighouse, father and son, were charged with cruelty to a horse. The magistrates dismissed the case.

**149 22 November 1899**

At Halifax today, Rayworth Thornton, plasterer, and Hiram Holden, labourer, both of Wibsey, were fined £1 or 14 days on a charge of stealing a hen, the property of **Greenwood Clegg**, boatman of Brockfoot, Southowram.

**150 27 November 1899**

BURNED TO DEATH ON A SHIPLEY CANAL BOAT About half past four o'clock yesterday morning, the Shipley Fire Brigade were summoned to an outbreak of fire on the canal boat *Ruby*, at a point near Otley Road, Shipley. After the firemen had subdued the flames, the charred remains were found of a man, afterwards identified as **James Myers**, 34, boatman, of no fixed abode. Myers, who was not employed on the *Ruby*, had a narrow escape from drowning at 11.20 pm on Saturday night. He stepped into the water and was with some difficulty rescued. It is conjectured that he subsequently got on to the boat and put his clothes in front of the cabin stove to dry. His clothing may have become ignited. The *Ruby* is owned by Mr William Fyfe of Shipley.

**151 4 December 1899**

DETAINED ON A CANAL BOAT

THE EXPERIENCES OF A STANNINGLEY GIRL At Bingley this morning, **Richard Atkinson**, boatman of Skipton, **Thomas Varley** and **Daniel O'Connell**, boatmen of Skipton, were charged with various offences against a Stanningley girl named Sarah Ann Wilson (18), millhand of Vicker's Yard, Stanningley. Atkinson and Varley were charged with detaining the girl against her will on a canal boat ; Atkinson with committing a criminal assault upon her, and Varley with aiding and abetting him in the offence ; and O'Connell was charged with attempting a criminal assault upon Wilson, and Atkinson with aiding and abetting him.

On the case being called, Superintendent Grayson stated that a most important witness, upon whom a summons had been served on Saturday, had failed to appear, and without the witness it was impossible for him to proceed with the case. He should, therefore, have to ask that the prisoners should be remanded, and that a warrant be issued against the witness who had not appeared.

Mr M W Platts, who appeared on behalf of Varley and Atkinson, said he did not object to a remand,

but asked that bail should be allowed these prisoners.

Superintendent Grayson said he should object to bail being given. He could not say whether the witness had been tampered with, or what was the reason for her non appearance. He would place before the Bench sufficient evidence for the purposes of remand, and he assured them that he would not keep the prisoners in custody a day longer than was necessary, but would have them dealt with as soon as the missing witness was discovered.

Sarah Ann Wilson then gave evidence. She said that she lived with her mother in Vicker's Yard, Stanningley, and that on Monday morning, November 27, she – in company with another girl named Emily Reynard – went in search of work. Coming away from a mill at Rodley, it was necessary to go upon the canal bank, and there they saw Atkinson and Varley upon a boat, and the latter invited them to take a ride. In consequence of the invitation, they got on to the boat, and afterwards went into the cabin, and were kept there. On more than one occasion they asked to be released, but the men detained them in the cabin from the Monday morning until the Wednesday night, when they all left the boat and went to the theatre in Leeds. The boat arrived at Bingley on Friday, and she was kept in the cabin all day.

The prisoners were remanded, and a warrant was issued against the missing witness, Emily Reynard.

### **152 9 December 1899**

At Halifax today, **Kilala Milner**, a boatman of Brighouse, was committed for 14 days on a charge of larceny as a bailee. It was stated that he had spent money which had been entrusted to him by **Albert Wood**, canal carrier of Sowerby Bridge.

### **153 13 January 1900**

At Halifax, today, **Charles Hamer**, boatman, and James Eastwood, horsekeeper, Sowerby Bridge, were fined 5s and costs and 10s and costs respectively, on a charge of cruelty to a horse.

### **154 3 March 1900**

An inquest was held at the Hampton Hotel, Accommodation Road, Leeds, this morning, on the body of **Joseph Calvert** (49), a boatman, 17 Kippax Place, who died yesterday from acute bronchitis following an immersion in the canal dock at Castleford. He was walking on a plank to his boat on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February, when he lost his footing and fell into the water. He clutched a rope and held by it for half an hour, when he was rescued. A verdict of “Accidental death” was returned.

### **155 9 March 1900**

LEEDS DAIRYMAN FOUND DROWNED

SUFFERING FROM THE EFFECTS OF A DRINKING CAROUSE A Windhill boatman named **George Hawksworth** recovered the body of a man from the Leeds and Liverpool Canal between Thompson Bridge and Red Cote Bridge, Armley, yesterday afternoon. In the pockets were found a silver watch, still going, a gold chain, ninepence in copper, a small bottle containing whisky, a pawn ticket for a gold pin, and other articles. The body was taken to the Star and Garter Inn, Kirkstall, where it was identified as that of Arthur Bailey, 37 years of age, of 22 Metcalfe Street, Kirkstall Road, described as a dairyman.

Earlier in the day, Bailey was seen in a public house in the neighbourhood. He then complained of feeling ill from the effects of a drinking bout which had lasted a fortnight. He left the house at a quarter past one, and was seen on the canal bank shortly before three o'clock. His body was recovered at 3.20.

It is stated that Bailey was employed by his father up to February 25<sup>th</sup>, when a dispute occurred between them in reference to the purchase of a cow.

### **156 22 March 1900**

GRUESOME CHARGE OF THEFT AGAINST A CANAL BOATMAN At the Leeds Police Court

today, **Marmaduke Kaye**, a canal boatman, was charged with having stolen a pair of boots and a leather belt from the body of a dead man.

It was stated that on Monday the 19<sup>th</sup> inst, the body of a milk dealer named Samuel Grant, who had been missing for about three weeks, was recovered from the canal at Kirkstall by prisoner and another man. The police were informed, and while the other man was away, prisoner was seen by two park rangers searching Grant's pockets. It was further alleged that Kaye took the dead man's belt, and then proceeded to unlace his boots, substituting for them his own shoes.

Sergeant Gale arrested the prisoner at Bradford yesterday, and Kaye was then wearing the belt.

A remand until Monday was granted in order that the legal ownership of the property might be ascertained.

### **157 26 March 1900**

#### **THE DEAD MAN'S SHOES**

**A CURIOUS POINT OF LAW IN THE LEEDS POLICE COURT** A novel point as to the ownership of a dead man's property was mentioned in the Leeds City Police Court today, before Mr J R Bower (in the chair) and Mr H J Palmer. **Marmaduke Kaye**, a boatman of Shipley, was charged on remand with stealing a pair of boots and a leather belt.

The case was before the court a week ago, when it was alleged that the prisoner, finding the dead body of a dairyman residing in Kirkstall Road in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, exchanged boots with him, and also took from the body a leather belt. When arrested at Bradford by Detective Officer Gale, he was wearing the belt. Prisoner had been remanded in order that the legal ownership of the property might be ascertained, and it was now stated that, as the deceased man had died intestate, the legal ownership was vested in Sir Francis Jeune, President of the Probate Division of the High Court of Justice.

Prisoner, who now admitted the offence, was committed for trial at the Sessions. Mr J Thornton, from the office of the Town Clerk, prosecuted.

### **158 5 April 1900**

**FOUND DROWNED AT STOURTON** This morning, **Joseph Ellis**, canal boatman of 13 Prospect Street, Stourton, found the body of a man floating in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Stourton, near Leeds. With assistance he removed the body, which was that of a man apparently of the labouring class, to the Stourton Hotel, to await the inquest. The body has not yet been identified, but it is very much decomposed, and has evidently been in the water a considerable time.

### **159 22 June 1900**

**BOY DROWNED IN A LEEDS CANAL** A six year old lad named John Lawrence Senior, son of a plasterer's labourer, living in Bunt Street, off Meadow Road, Leeds, was missed from his home on Saturday last. On Tuesday, his cap was found floating in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and in consequence that waterway was dragged by the police, without result however.

Last evening, his body was found in the canal at Water Hall by a boatman named **Thomas Cox**, whose craft belongs to Wigan. Sergeant Batty had it removed home. It is supposed that the boy was fishing at the time of his falling into the water, as a small tin, presumably for his "catch" was found under his tightly buttoned jacket.