

YORKSHIRE EVENING POST 1901 to 1920

1 13 March 1901

A TOWING PATH TRAGEDY A strange accident occurred on the canal at Selly Oak, Birmingham, yesterday. A horse which was towing a coal barge took fright and bolted. The rope snapped, and the loose end twisted round the neck of a young boatman named **Ricketts**. He could not free himself, and was dragged into the water and drowned before the horse was pulled up half a mile away.

2 16 March 1901

AN EXCITABLE ARMLEY GIRL

ATTEMPTS SUICIDE AFTER A LOVERS' QUARREL At the Leeds Police Court today, before Mr Fred R Spark, Mr J Hepper and Mr J Kirk, Emily Marshall (20), who lives with her mother at 9 Albany Street, Whingate, Armley, was charged with having attempted to commit suicide.

Late last night, the girl jumped into the river Aire near Leeds Bridge. A boatman named **Stead** heard her screaming, and dragged her out of the water with a boat hook. She was very excited, and told Police-constable O'Beirne that she had had a falling out with her young man, who refused to speak to her. She further said she would "do it again".

The girl was taken to the Infirmary, still in an excitable state. Mr Hartley, of the Infirmary staff, said prisoner ought to be under supervision. She evidently firmly intended to attempt suicide again if she got the chance.

The girl's mother said her daughter's young man came to her house last night before this affair occurred, and said he had seen Emily, but did not say anything further. The girl was at times very excitable.

Prisoner was sent to the Workhouse for fourteen days.

3 9 September 1901

At Brighouse today, an old man named **Reuben Holroyd**, a retired canal boatman residing in Elland Road, Brighouse, was brought up in custody charged with assaulting three little girls, of ages ranging from six to nine years, all residing in Elland Road. The prisoner, who has hitherto borne a most respectable character, was remanded until Friday.

4 9 September 1901

THREE DROWNING CASES IN LEEDS The body of a man named **Tom Dobson** (45), engineer on the boat *Mabel*, which is now lying off Fearn's Island, East Street, was found in the river Aire, near that spot, early this morning. Dobson resided in Willer Avenue, Stoney Rock, and had been missing from his home. His comrades on the boat were informed of this fact, whereupon two of them, **Tom Wood** and **Robert Holmes**, dragged the river and recovered the body after a lapse of 2 1/2 hours.

Mrs Dobson has stated to the police that her husband left home on the night of the 7th inst, and promised to meet her at the Junction Inn, Dewsbury Road. He failed to keep the appointment, but was with his brother at the Wellington Inn, Meadow Lane. The two parted shortly before 11 o'clock, the dead man being then sober, and apparently in good spirits. The inquest will be held tonight.

On Saturday afternoon, the body of Robert Dooley (29), labourer, who resided at 35 Front Walk, Camp Field, was taken out of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Water Hall by **George Barraclough** of the boat *Ruby* of Leeds. The woman with whom Dooley cohabited has stated that he left home about six o'clock on Wednesday night last. He was then very drunk. She did not see him alive again. The inquest is fixed for tonight.

This morning, shortly before six o'clock, **William Metcalfe**, boatman of Goole, found the dead body of a woman floating in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near to Monk Bridge. He took it from the water, and it was subsequently taken to the Millgarth Street Mortuary. The official description

is :- Age about 40 years ; height 5ft 2in ; stout build, dark hair, grey eyes, wearing blue and white striped blouse, black skirt, brown petticoat, black stockings and laced boots, red shawl and small gold earrings. In case the body is identified, the inquest will be held tonight.

5 13 September 1901

The Brighouse magistrates have today committed an old retired canal boatman for trial at the Assizes for indecently assaulting three little girls.

6 14 October 1901

FOUND UNCONSCIOUS AT BRIGHOUSE At half past six o'clock this morning, when a man named Hardcastle, in the employ of the Low Moor Coal and Iron Company, went to the coal staith near the canal in Mill Lane, Brighouse, he found a boatman named **Tim Wakefield**, of the boat *Harold* of Brighouse, lying in an unconscious condition at the bottom of one of the coal shoots. The man was last seen on Saturday night, the worse for liquor, and it is supposed that in the darkness, whilst going to his boat, he fell down one of the deep shoots. The man was suffering from injuries to the head, and he was removed, still unconscious, to the Workhouse Hospital at Halifax.

7 6 December 1901

TRIALS AND SENTENCES AT LEEDS ASSIZES TODAY **Reuben Holroyd** (64), a boatman, pleaded guilty to an indictment charging him with indecently assaulting three little girls at Brighouse on August 27. Mr G E Raine was for the prosecution, and Mr P Middleton addressed the court in mitigation of punishment. Taking into consideration the fact the prisoner had been in gaol for some time awaiting trial, the Judge ordered him to undergo six calendar months hard labour.

8 24 December 1901

LOST IN THE FOG

A METHLEY BOATMAN MISSING A boatman named **Edward Buck**, aged 32 years, is missing from Methley, and is supposed to have been drowned. He was engaged on the boat *Alexandra*, which is moored in the river Aire between Kippax Lock and Bower's iron bridge, for the purpose of getting sand from the bed of the river.

On Saturday afternoon, he and two other men named **Slater** and **Smith** went to the Caroline Inn beerhouse, about half a mile away across fields, and remained until 10.50 pm. In the meantime, a thick fog had come on, and Slater and Smith refused to go back to the boat. They tried to persuade Buck – who was perfectly sober – to go with them to a cabin in Bower's Yard, where there was a fire, but he said he would go to the boat, and went off in that direction. He has not been heard of since, and it is supposed that he fell into the river.

He was 5ft 7in high, of dark complexion, with dark brown curly hair, and wore a brown cloth jacket, cord vest and trousers, red neckerchief, blue shirt and strong lace up boots.

9 14 January 1902

THE BINGLEY BOATMAN AND THE LOCK

THE MATE OF THE AGNES AT WOODLESFORD **Walter Bramham**, a Bingley boatman, appeared before the West Riding Magistrates at the Leeds Town Hall today, in answer to a summons for unlawfully drawing a lock clough. Mr W Warren (Messrs Ford and Warren) was for the complainants – the Aire and Calder Canal Co – and in opening the case said defendant had rendered himself liable to a penalty not exceeding £5, he having, against the regulations, drawn the lock clough before the lower gate was closed.

Defendant was the mate on the boat *Agnes*, and the offence, according to the evidence of **Joseph Henry Metcalfe**, the lock-keeper at Woodlesford, was committed on December 11. The gate was open, and witness called out to the defendant to put it down. This Bramham did not do, and nobody attempted to put it down. The gate, in consequence of the neglect, was damaged to the extent of

10s, and two panes of glass in the lock-keeper's house were smashed. The Bench imposed a fine of 20s and costs, or 14 days imprisonment.

10 17 March 1902

THE CASTLEFORD SENSATIONS

THE SECOND GIRL'S BODY RECOVERED FROM THE RIVER Yesterday afternoon, a boatman named **Haley**, whilst near to the "Dandy" bridge, Whitwood Mere, recovered from the river Calder the body of Miss Janet (Jessie) Appleyard (23), daughter of Mr James Appleyard, glass hand, Wilson Street, Castleford, who had been missing since Sunday night, February 23 last.

It will be remembered that this was the second case of mysterious disappearance at Castleford. The first young lady's body (Miss Beatrice Taylor) was recovered a week last Thursday, after being in the water six weeks, and an open verdict was returned.

Miss Appleyard was last seen outside the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Bradley Street, Castleford. She had been talking to a young lady named Phipps, who left her on the approach of a young man with whom deceased desired to speak. Miss Phipps expected she would follow her shortly afterwards into the service, which, however, she did not do. She seems to have walked away from the chapel, and was not seen again. Her gloves and neck fur were found the following morning near to Methley Bridge, and it was surmised that her body was in the river Calder.

11 28 April 1902

THE ARMLEY DROWNING MYSTERY UNSOLVED

BODY CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED The Leeds City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) held an inquest at the Bay Horse, Canal Road, Armley, this morning, touching the death of an unknown man, whose body was found in the canal at Armley on Friday evening.

The body was discovered floating in the water between Burley Wharf and Armley Bridge by a Windhill boatman named **Walter Mountain**, of the barge *Ida*. It was stated to be that of a man about 30 years of age. An old militia belt was round the waist, and a bicycle spindle in one of the pockets. There were no marks of violence on the body.

As it had been in the water about a fortnight, it was too much decomposed, the Coroner stated, either for photographing or medical examination.

A lady who was in attendance, the police announced, informed that that she had someone missing from home, but that she was unable to identify the body.

A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

12 28 May 1902

CASTLEFORD BOY DROWNED AT HALIFAX A drowning accident occurred in the neighbourhood of the Canal Wharf at Halifax, yesterday afternoon. The victim was a boy named Robert Edward Boycroft, eight years of age, the son of Edward Boycroft, collier of Castleford. He had gone on an outing in one of the canal boats with the boatman, **Charles Farrar**, and his wife. On the canal being dragged, his body was discovered.

13 30 May 1902

A LEEDS SHOEMAKER'S DEATH This morning, the body of Matthew Machan (52), shoemaker, late of Hunslet Road, was found in the New Dock Basin, Chadwick Street, Leeds, by **John Buckley**, boatman. There was a wound in the throat two inches long and an inch and a half deep. Machan is stated to have been drinking heavily of late, and the supposition is that he committed suicide. The body was identified by his brother at the Mortuary.

14 4 July 1902

BOY DROWNED IN THE CANAL AT STOURTON A schoolboy named William Bedford, son of Walter Bedford, Bower Road, Hunslet, labourer, was playing, with other boys, on the side of the canal at Stourton yesterday evening, when he overbalanced himself and fell into the water.

At the end of about twenty minutes, the body was recovered by a boatman named **John Crabtree**, and removed to the Stourton Hotel, where it lies awaiting the inquest, which Mr Maitland has fixed for 4.30 o'clock this afternoon.

15 6 August 1902

AN ESSAY IN FICTION A Bingley boatman named **James Taylor** obtained drink during closed hours the other Sunday by stating that he had slept at Keighley the night before. A police officer came into the house, recognised Taylor and, inquiring into his story, found it to be untrue. The cost to Taylor of this little essay in fiction was 20s and expenses, this being the decision of the Bingley magistrates today.

16 4 November 1902

DROWNED IN THE RIVER AIRE

A JUROR'S TWENTY YEAR OLD RECOMMENDATION The Leeds Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) held an inquest at the Wellington Inn, Low Road, Hunslet, today, on the body of Matthew Kilburn (61), banksman, of West View Cottage, Osmondthorpe, whose body was recovered from the river Aire yesterday.

Kilburn left home on Saturday the 25th October to attend the funeral of a relative. About 9.30 the same night, he parted from his companions, and proceeded on his way home down Goodman Street, Hunslet. At the bottom of the street there is said to be a danger, on dark nights, of pedestrians walking into the river, and this was presumably the fate which befel Kilburn, as the night was foggy. His body was recovered yesterday near the old mill dam by a boatman named **John Elliott**. There was a funeral card in his possession, and his watch had stopped at 12.44.

A juryman said he suggested 20 years ago that a rail should be put up at the point in question.

The Coroner : Yes, it would be better, though they say it would interfere with the navigation.

The jury came to the conclusion that Kilburn's death was an accidental occurrence.

17 4 March 1903

A LEEDS MOTHER'S DESPAIR

CHILDREN AT HOME STARVING

JUMPED WITH HER BABY INTO THE AIRE A sad case of attempted suicide, coupled with a graver charge of attempted murder, came before Mr T Harland, Mr Fred Spark and Mr W Marston, at the Leeds Police Court today. It was that of a young married woman named Emma Dixon, of Boynton Street, Quarry Hill, who, in a fit of despair, threw herself and baby into the river Aire last evening near the Leeds Bridge. The woman presented a pitiable sight as she was assisted into the dock. She was quivering from head to foot, and her face was ghastly pale.

It was a simple story that Mr Dalton, the Deputy Chief Constable, unfolded. About 8.30 last night, the woman was seen with a baby in her bosom near the end of Pitfall Street, Leeds, adjoining the river side. Suddenly she jumped into the water. An Aire and Calder boatman named **Henry Wilson**, whose vessel was moored near, was quickly to the rescue, and he and another man named Edward Morris succeeded in getting both her and her baby out of the river. Both were in an exhausted state, but on being taken to the Infirmary, they were brought round. The Deputy Chief Constable asked for a remand.

The boatman Wilson graphically narrated how the woman walked down the wharf and jumped into the river. As soon as he heard the splash he shouted to Morris, "Hurry up, Ted ; there's a woman overboard". "Nay", was his reply, "There's two ; she's a babby with her". They succeeded in getting her out. The child, which was at the breast whilst she was in the water, was taken to an adjoining public house, while the boatman stopped with the accused until the police arrived.

Replying to the Bench, Wilson said the woman never spoke.

The Chairman warmly commended Wilson for the promptitude he had displayed. He had undoubtedly saved two lives. "It's a very great credit to you", Mr Harland commented.

The poor woman, who was seated on a chair in the dock, was asked if she had anything to say, but

she made no answer. She was remanded for a week.

According to information in the hands of the police, the woman's husband is out of work. When asked why she had attempted suicide, she said she had several children at home starving. "I did it out of desperation", she added pathetically.

18 4 March 1903

At Wakefield this morning, **Sarah Elizabeth Cowman**, wife of a boatman, was remanded till Friday, on a charge of stealing £4 5s, the property of her husband. She was arrested at Bingley. Bail was allowed.

19 17 March 1903

GOOLE SHOOTING CASE **James Pearson** (36), boatman, was indicted at the Leeds Assizes this afternoon for shooting at George William Whitehead with intent to disable him, at Goole on February 4th.

Prisoner was found guilty and sentenced to six months hard labour.

20 17 March 1903

HOOLIGANISM IN LEEDS

STIFF SENTENCES IMPOSED TODAY In the Crown Court at Leeds Assizes this morning, the Commissioner, Mr A T Lawrence, had before him a case of hooliganism in Leeds. Edward Dean (28), labourer, Waite Light (24), glass blower, and **Walter Clough** (28), boatman, were indicted for robbing John Dean of a cap, pocket knife and 4d. Mr Richard Watson prosecuted.

It was stated by Mr Watson that the prosecutor was crossing Crown Point towards Hunslet when he was met by the three prisoners and another man not in custody. Clough and Light pushed and hustled him, and they struggled together. He was thrown to the ground and his pockets were rifled. The prosecutor followed the prisoners and had them arrested as they were leaving the Spinners' Arms.

All the prisoners were found guilty.

In the second case, the prosecutor was William Garforth, a cart driver of Kirkstall Road. On February 17th he was passing along the Calls when he was hustled and assaulted by four men, two of whom he recognised in the two prisoners. Clough, he said, gave him "a bat on the jaw", and then all four of the men rifled his pockets, taking 11d in money and a brass chain. He followed them for some distance, but they threatened him that if he followed them, they would give him "a bit o' boot toe".

On this charge also the prisoners were found guilty.

Addressing Dean, the Commissioner said it was apparent that he had been leading a thoroughly discreditable life, engaged in assaults and robberies and larcenies. In these cases, however, he appeared not to have been guilty of so much violence as the others, and the sentence upon him would be three years penal servitude.

Light's previous record was worse than Dean's, and he was sentenced to five years penal servitude.

To Clough, the Commissioner said, "Your conduct throughout has been most violent and most criminal, and the record against you is as bad as anything I have ever seen. You will be sent to penal servitude for seven years".

21 23 March 1903

JUMPED INTO THE CANAL

A WAKEFIELD BRICKLAYER'S DRUNKEN FREAK Thomas Langton, bricklayer of Wakefield, nearly lost his life on Saturday. He was seen by **Walter Hallas**, boatman, to jump into the canal at Heath. Hallas pulled him out, and afterwards it transpired that Langton had no intention of taking his life, but was in a very drunken condition. At the City Police Court today, Langton was fined 19s and costs, or seven days, for having been drunk. He expressed his gratitude to Hallas for saving his life.

22 30 March 1903

A FATAL SLIP

SKIPTON CANAL BOATMAN DROWNED IN LEEDS **Fred Edwick**, aged 36, canal boatman of Commercial Street, Skipton, was accidentally drowned in Leeds this morning. He was propelling his boat in the Canal Basin at Crown Point, when he accidentally slipped and fell into the water. His mate, **Thomas Emmott**, who was standing on the canal bank, made every effort to rescue him. He procured a boat hook, but owing to the distance between the water and the top of the basin wall, he was unable to draw Edwick out.

Two youths held Edwick clear of the water until the arrival of a police-constable, who had been called by Emmott, but the boatman was dead when hauled to the wall.

The body lies at the Millgarth Street Mortuary awaiting an inquest.

23 18 April 1903

CRUSHED BETWEEN THE BOAT AND THE LOCK WALL

CASTLEFORD BOATMAN'S FATAL SLIP A Castleford boat hauler named **William Walsh** met with a shocking death at Methley last night. He was in charge of the horse attached to a boat, near to Lemonroyd Locks, and whilst gathering up the slack line on the lock side, he slipped into the water. Before the captain of the boat, **John Bycroft**, could stop the vessel, it crushed deceased against the lock wall side. Assistance was obtained, but when Walsh was taken out of the water he was dead.

24 13 June 1903

At Halifax today, **Joseph Tunnicliffe**, boatman, Battyeford, was fined 19s 6d and costs for travelling on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway from Elland to Cooper Bridge without a ticket.

25 18 June 1903

A LEEDS HERO **Mr James Abbott** of Leeds, whose name is to be proposed by Mr H J Johnson as the first on the Yorkshire Amateur Swimming Association's roll of honour, has saved no fewer than 50 lives during his career. For a long time he was in the service of one of the canal companies in Leeds, and fetched dozens of people out of the water who would otherwise have drowned. For the last 20 years he has been boatman at Roundhay Park, and of late has been the driver of the electric launch. About three years ago, he rescued two women from the big lake, and on three or four occasions prior to that he has made successful attempts at life saving in the Park. Abbott does not yet possess a Royal Humane Society's medal. The Yorkshire Swimming Association feel they cannot allow his brave deeds to remain any longer unrecognised, and whilst their funds will not allow them to make any money present, yet they believe that the presentation of a certificate to Abbott on the occasion of the Hospital Gala will awaken public interest in the matter, and possibly result in a handsome public testimonial.

26 24 June 1903

A BOATMAN'S OFFENCES

FINED AT LEEDS POLICE COURT TODAY At Leeds today, **Robert Carey**, boatman, was summoned for a breach of the Aire and Calder bye laws by not closing a turn bridge of the canal at the new dock basin in Leeds. He was also summoned for assaulting **Samuel Link**, captain of one of the fly boats of the Aire and Calder Navigation Company.

The assault consisted of having thrown pieces of coal at Link, and in having hit him with them.

The offences were not denied by the defendant, but on his behalf it was contended that he left the turn bridge open because another boat was approaching, and that he did not know there was a bye law requiring the bridge to be closed.

For the breach of the bye law, he was fined 20s and costs, or 14 days imprisonment ; and for the assault, he was fined 40s and costs, or one months imprisonment.

27 26 September 1903

CHARGE OF ATTEMPTED MURDER

KNOTTINGLEY BOATMAN COMMITTED FOR TRIAL At Pontefract this afternoon, **William Henry Wilkinson** (20), boatman, Knottingley, was charged on remand with the attempted murder of Annie Shaw, aged 15, his cousin.

The prosecutrix said the prisoner stopped her when going to work at six o'clock on the morning of the 9th ult, and exclaimed, "You're the ----- I want. You'll not live on this earth five ----- minutes".

He then shot her in the right arm.

Prisoner was committed for trial.

28 28 October 1903

BOATMAN DROWNED IN LEEDS

SUPPOSED TO HAVE WALKED INTO A LOCK BY ACCIDENT A boatman named **George Skinner**, aged 50, was accidentally drowned last night in the Leeds Lock on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, near Clarence Road, Hunslet.

Skinner was employed on the boat *Blessing* of Beverley and, according to the statement of a man named Butterworth, was seen to leave the boat to go ashore. Soon afterwards a shout for help was heard, and Butterworth and another man rushed to the spot, where they saw Skinner struggling in the water. They got him out with the aid of a boat hook, and tried to restore him by artificial respiration till the ambulance arrived. He was taken to the Infirmary, but on arriving there was found to be dead.

It is supposed that Skinner mistook the water, which was very high, for the dry land, and walked into the lock in the dark.

29 29 October 1903

The Leeds Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) conducted an inquiry at the Town Hall, this afternoon, into the death of **George Skinner** (55), boatman, who accidentally fell into the Leeds and Liverpool Canal while crossing a lock at Hunslet on Tuesday night. He was pulled out by two men, but life was extinct. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

30 5 November 1903

BOATMAN DROWNED NEAR ELLAND **James Bennett Allen**, 58 years of age, a boatman of Canal Road, Sowerby Bridge, was drowned in the canal near Elland Flour Mills yesterday evening. It was supposed that he fell into the water while crossing a lock, through which his boat had to pass.

31 7 November 1903

BOATMAN DROWNED AT ROTHWELL A boatman named **Benjamin Keighley** was drowned last night in the Aire and Calder Canal at Rothwell Haigh last night. He had left the boat in order to find his horse, which was stabled on the opposite side of the canal to which the barge was moored, and as he was returning over the bridge, he fell into the water, which owing to the fog was barely distinguishable. The bridge keeper saw him disappear, and with the assistance of another man, recovered the body shortly afterwards.

32 9 November 1903

CASTLEFORD ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

FOUND IN THE CANAL BY A BOATMAN Today at Wakefield, a young man named Herbert Atkinson, labourer, Castleford, was charged with attempted suicide.

He was found in the canal at Methley early on Saturday morning by a boathauler named **Cromack**. He was up to his waist in the water, and on being got out made an attempt to get back again.

Superintendent Crow said he was a married man with a wife and two children, and had been somewhat weak minded in times gone by – in fact, he had been confined in the Asylum twice. Dr Hermon, however, this morning certified that he was in his right mind.

Prisoner's brother appeared, and said the former had been staying with him at Methley during the week. He had complained of pains in his head, and had not been to work for three days. On the brother promising to look carefully after him, he was discharged.

33 10 November 1903

WOULD NOT ATTEND THE INQUEST

A NETHERTON LOCK-KEEPER'S REASON FOR SUICIDE A singular case of suicide is reported from Horbury.

On Sunday, the body of a woman named **Mary Wilks** was found in the Calder and Hebble Canal at Horbury Junction. The inquest will be held tomorrow, and **Samuel Mountain**, aged 62 years, lock-keeper at the Top Broad Cut Lock, Netherton, with whom Wilks lived for a time, was told that he would have to attend the inquest.

He yesterday stated to Mary L Senior, a widow, that he should not go to the inquest. He then crossed the lock and jumped into the canal, and was drowned. The body was afterwards recovered by **John Matthewman**, boatman, Horbury Bridge. A note was found in deceased's cabin, as follows :-

“Dear brother, all there is here is yours, so goodbye and God bless you. I can't stand it longer”.

34 11 November 1903

A LEEDS MYSTERY SOLVED

A PROBABLE FIT AND FELL INTO THE RIVER The mutilated body of a man named **Samuel Slater**, aged 28, a boatman of 6 Back Leakley Square, Holbeck, was taken from the river Aire near the Suspension Bridge, Hunslet, shortly before 11 o'clock this morning. Slater had been missing from his home since the 28th ult. He had been subject to fits, and it is supposed that he fell into the water during one of these seizures.

Mrs Slater, the unfortunate man's widow, states that a fortnight ago – October 28th – he left home shortly before nine o'clock am with the intention of seeking work. He had been out of regular employment for some little time. He was then quite cheerful, though two days before he had been seized with an apoplectic fit. He had made no remark which would give rise to the idea that he had any intention of taking his life, and for that reason Mrs Slater thinks her husband had had another seizure whilst walking on the riverside, and fell into the water.

35 11 November 1903

NETHERTON LOCK-KEEPER'S SUICIDE

RATHER THAN ATTEND AN INQUEST AS WITNESS The inquests were held at Horbury Junction today on the bodies of **Mary Wilks**, widow, and **Samuel Mountain**, lock-keeper of Top Broad Cut Lock, Netherton.

The inquest on Wilks was held first. Her body was recovered from the canal on Sunday morning. She was last seen alive on Saturday, proceeding towards the Top Broad Cut Lock House, where she had recently lived with Mountain. A verdict to the effect “that she had accidentally fallen into the canal during the fog” was returned.

Mountain's death had a peculiar connection with the above case. As reported in yesterday's *Evening Post*, he appeared to be upset when told he would have to attend the inquest on Wilks, and is reported to have told a neighbour that he would not face the inquest. Shortly afterwards, he jumped into the canal and was drowned. A verdict of “Suicide whilst temporarily insane” was returned.

36 2 December 1903

THE BOATMAN AND THE BOAT

UNUSUAL CHARGE PREFERRED AT HALIFAX Today at Halifax, **Dan Musgrave**, boatman, Hull, was charged with larceny as bailee, the prosecutor being Albert Wood, general carrier, Sowerby Bridge.

Mr S Hoyle, solicitor, stated the case on behalf of the prosecutor, and the chief witness was Mr Fred Helm.

On the 3rd November, accused was placed in charge of a boat containing a valuable cargo for shipment to Hull, and he was also entrusted with a sum of £2 for towing and other expenses. The boat left Sowerby Bridge on the Tuesday morning, and arrived at Elland in the afternoon. Two days afterwards, the prosecutor received a telephone message, stating that the boat had been left without anyone in charge. This proved to be the case, and no trace could be found of prisoner. The boat was afterwards made safe, and the cargo was subsequently taken on to Hull in time for shipment.

Accused told the Bench that he went off the boat at Elland and got drunk. He remained on the boat on the Tuesday and Wednesday nights, but did not do so on the Thursday night. On one of the occasions when he was returning to the boat, he fell into the water and, though a good swimmer, it was with much difficulty that he got out.

A fine of £1 1s, with the alternative of one month, was imposed.

Accused expressed his willingness to work off the £2 which he owed to the prosecutor.

37 11 December 1903

HORSE MAIMING CASE NEAR BINGLEY

CANAL BOATMAN SURRENDERS

ALLEGED TO HAVE SHOT THE MARE THAT TOWED HIS BOAT At Bingley this morning, a boatman named **John Robert Thornton** of Brown's Court, Skipton, was brought up on a charge of unlawfully wounding a mare, the property of Messrs Fyfe, Kemp and Company, coal and lime merchants of Shipley, on the banks of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near Bingley, on a certain date.

Inspector Kemshell stated that on November 6th, the prisoner was entrusted with a horse by the firm to haul a boat from Shipley to Knapton. The animal, a mare, was known to be a little bit "wicked", and the prisoner was told of this, or knew about it. Anyhow, the foreman of the firm went to see the start made on the journey, and the animal started all right. Certain remarks were made to the prisoner as he was moving off, and then he produced from one of his pockets a cartridge, and holding it up in his fingers, said, "If she does not go all right, I shall give her this". When the boat arrived at the Dowley Gap lock near Bingley, the prisoner was seen to stand on the cabin of his boat and deliberately to fire at the horse on the towing-path. The animal jumped, the shot taking effect, and it lost a considerable amount of blood from the injuries which were inflicted. The affair was seen by the lock-keeper, and also by one or two others. The occurrence was reported to Messrs Fife, Kemp and Company, and next morning they took out a warrant against the prisoner who, however, absconded, and was not seen in the district again until last night, when he gave himself up to the police.

As the evidence in the case was not complete, the Inspector applied that the prisoner should be remanded to Armley Gaol until next week.

The Bench granted the remand.

38 16 December 1903

This morning at Bingley, **John Robert Thornton**, boatman of Skipton, was again remanded on the charge of wounding a horse, the property of Messrs Fyfe, Kemp and Co (of Shipley), at Bingley on November 6th.

39 17 December 1903

FOUND IN THE CANAL AT KIRKSTALL

THE FATE OF AN INMATE OF BRAMLEY WORKHOUSE Whilst walking on the bank of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal yesterday, **John Williams**, boatman, who resides at 21 Cook Street, Blackburn, saw the body of a man floating in the water near to Kirkstall Bridge, Kirkstall. He summoned police assistance, and the body was taken to the Kirkstall mortuary, where it was afterwards identified as that of William Chapman (66), an inmate of the Bramley Union Workhouse.

Alfred Hemingway of 1 Wyther Place, Bramley, states that he saw Chapman coming from the direction of Bradford Road from the canal bank at Wyther Bridge. His clothing was dripping with water. It was also found that the wall near the centre of the bridge was wet and muddy, as if someone had fallen over into the water.

Mr John Moffitt, the master of the Bramley Workhouse, states that Chapman had been missing from the institution since 6.40 am yesterday. He had been an inmate for some years, and until about four months ago had enjoyed fairly good health. Since then, however, he had been in the Workhouse Infirmary suffering from an internal complaint, which caused him great pain, and at times prevented him from obtaining any sleep. Occasionally, he had appeared to be greatly depressed as a consequence.

40 23 December 1903

A HORSE WHICH WAS "A BIT QUEER"

THE MAIMING CHARGE FROM BINGLEY

ACCUSED COMMITTED FOR TRIAL At Bingley today, **John Robert Thornton**, boatman of Brown's Court, Skipton, was charged with wounding a horse at Bingley on November 6th, belonging to Messrs Fyfe, Kemp and Co, coal and lime merchants of Shipley.

Alfred Waller, manager for the prosecuting firm, said that Thornton had been in their employment for nine or ten months. On Friday November 6th, he gave the prisoner instructions to take a horse to Skipton and back, hauling a boat loaded with coal. This particular animal, a bay mare, was a little bit queer at times, and as witness returned down the yard, Thornton said, "If she does not work, I will pop this into her", producing and holding up a cartridge from one of his pockets, but witness looked upon the remark as a joke at the moment. Knowing that the horse was not a true worker, witness saw the man start on the journey, and watched him for a distance of 300 or 400 yards, and the horse went off all right. On the evening of the same day, soon after five o'clock, the prisoner came into the firm's office, and being back unexpectedly, soon witness asked him why it was. He replied, "The horse will do no way". Witness went to see the horse, and found that she had been injured, one flank and one hip being covered with blood. Outside the prisoner observed to him, "Do you know what it was done with?" and he replied, "No". The man then said, "I was firing with the gun at her legs, and she turned round and I hit her in the side", and asked witness not to tell Mr Kemp, saying he would stop and help to attend to the animal, and the pellets would come out, and the horse would be all right in the morning.

Cross-examined by Mr Naylor : This mare is a bad one? Witness : She is not a good one.

Has she ever hauled a boat before this occasion? Yes.

Did you ask him if she did not work properly to thrash her? Yes, I might have said that. I told him to take her and make her work.

By the Chairman : How came there to be a gun on this boat? Witness : I don't know. You can find guns on most boats.

Is it customary to carry guns? I believe it is.

What do they carry them for? I have an idea that it is to drop "owt" there is on the way.

Mr Naylor explained that boatmen who were in the habit of going to the Goole and Selby district carried guns on their boats in order to shoot at the wild fowl.

The Witness : It is not an uncommon thing to find a gun on a boat.

The Chairman : They would be better without them.

John Birch, lock-keeper at the Dowley Gap locks, near Bingley, said that when the prisoner arrived at the locks, owing to the state of the water at the time, it was necessary that the boat should have an extra pull. The horse, however, refused to pull, and witness then heard a shot fired, and saw the horse jump and turn round, and that it was bleeding. He told the prisoner, "You'll be sent to Wakefield for this".

Samuel John Bradley, veterinary surgeon of Shipley, described the appearance of the injured horse when he was called in to see it. It was, he said, trembling violently, breathing quickly, and in a state of fright. On the near flank there were two very large swellings, covered with small wounds, and

with the hair clotted with blood. There were also about 20 small swellings on the near hind buttock. The injury was a bad one, and the horse was in danger for several days. He attended it for a fortnight.

Inspector Kemshell gave evidence that the prisoner gave himself up on December 10th, and replied to the charge on the warrant, "I did".

The prisoner gave evidence on his own behalf. He denied using the threat mentioned or producing the cartridge, and said his intention only was to fire the gun to frighten the horse. It missed fire at first, and then, whilst examining the cartridge, it discharged, and the horse accidentally received the discharge.

After Mr Naylor had addressed the Bench, prisoner was committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions, and was allowed bail – himself in £20 and three sureties of £20 each – subject to the sureties being satisfactory.

41 28 December 1903

HUNSLET MAN DROWNED The Leeds City Coroner held an inquest today at the Wellington Inn, Low Road, Hunslet, relative to the death of Edward Worth (71) who lived in Spring Close Road, Bank. He left home on Christmas morning to visit some friends at Stourton. His dead body was found in the river on Saturday morning by **John Elliott**, boatman. It is supposed that deceased was walking by the river side on his way homeward.

A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

42 2 January 1904

A BOATMAN'S DOLEFUL STORIES

CHARGED WITH STEALING FOUR PIGEONS AND A CHEQUE **Christopher Finney alias Walter Wilson** (22) was charged with stealing four pigeons, the property of Mr Carter, York Road, and a cheque for £3 10s, the property of Mr Appleby, sand merchant, Water Lane.

It appeared from a statement made by Detective Officer Kitchen, who apprehended the prisoner, that there were other charges against him. A good deal of his time was spent on canal boats, and at other times he had called at houses telling a doleful story to the effect that his father had committed suicide and his mother was in an asylum. Out of sympathy for him, some persons had lodged him for the night.

The prisoner was remanded till Friday.

43 5 January 1904

PELLETS IN A MARE

BOATMAN CHARGED AT LEEDS WITH MALICIOUS WOUNDING Today at the West Riding Quarter Sessions at the Leeds Town Hall, before Sir Theo Peel and other magistrates, **John Robert Thornton** (24), boatman, was charged with having maliciously wounded a mare belonging to Messrs Fyfe, Kemp and Co on November 6th at Dowley Gap.

Mr W G Stansfield prosecuted, and Mr Watson defended.

It was alleged that on the day in question the prisoner said to the manager of the firm, "If she (the mare) doesn't work, I will put this (showing a cartridge) into her". When the mare was brought back, the manager noticed that something was wrong with her. A veterinary surgeon examined her and found a number of pellets in her body, which he extracted.

According to the prisoner, the animal refused to work, and he "tried to fire" over her head. The gun exploded and knocked him down. He afterwards went to Manchester, but returned to meet the charge on hearing that there was a warrant out against him.

The prisoner was found "Not guilty", and was discharged.

44 7 January 1904

STOURTON YOUNG MAN DROWNED A case of drowning is reported from Rothwell Haigh, the body of Henry Chappell, a single young man, who resided in Wakefield Road, Stourton, being

taken from the Aire and Calder Canal at that place yesterday.

At about ten o'clock yesterday morning, a boatman named **George White** saw Chappell struggling in the water, and informed his captain, **Richard Gosney**. The last named took the man from the water with the aid of a boat hook, but life was found to be extinct.

Information was given to the police, and the body was taken to the village, where it awaits an inquest.

45 4 April 1904

FATAL SEQUEL TO A SELBY WEDDING

DEATH OF TWO MEN A remarkable fatality occurred on Saturday night in connection with a wedding celebration at Selby. Two men named **John Hodgson**, aged 32, boatman of Junction Tavern Yard, and **Harry Hall**, aged 30, another boatman of Selby, had attended the wedding of **Tom Turner**, captain of the *Kathleen*, to **Mary Ellen Littlewood**, who is a sister of Hall. There was plenty of drink, and during the festivities matters became so lively that a bottle of spirits was hidden. Hodgson and Hall searched for the bottle and, finding one containing liquid, they hastily divided its contents, and drank. Shortly afterwards, Hall complained that his throat was burning, and Hodgson also became unwell. Upon the remaining contents of the bottle being examined, it was discovered that the two men had drunk carbolic acid, which had been kept for disinfecting purposes.

Medical aid was quickly summoned, but Hall died some fifteen minutes after he had drunk the poison. Hodgson, who is a married man, also died yesterday morning, after suffering great agony.

The festivities were brought to a hurried conclusion, and the sad incident caused considerable sensation throughout the town.

46 10 June 1904

A CANAL MYSTERY AT ARMLEY The body of an unknown man was taken from the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near Armley Mills, yesterday. **Fred Padgett**, a boatman of 13 Farren Street, Bingley, found the body floating on the water. It is that of a man apparently about 55 years of age, 5ft 7in in height, with grey whiskers, moustache and hair. He was dressed in a brown serge jacket, and blue serge vest and trousers. On the body was found a pocket book which contained the following names and addresses :- Crampton J C, Peel Street, City Street, Hulme, Manchester ; Moses Kershaw, 92 Devon Street, Bury, Lancashire ; and Albert Kershaw, 92 Devon Street, Bury, Lancashire.

47 1 September 1904

A STRUGGLE IN THE CANAL

RESCUE OF A BINGLEY WOMAN FROM DROWNING The Bingley police are engaged in investigating the circumstances attending what seems to be an attempt at suicide by a married woman living in Hill Street, Bingley, whereby not only was the life of the woman endangered, but also that of a little girl, two years and two months old.

Last night, Police-constable Spencer was on duty near Dabb Bridge, which spans the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Bingley, when he heard a scream, followed by a splash in the water, and running down upon the towing-path he found a woman with a child struggling in the water. **James Tempest**, boatman of Ferrand Street, Bingley, was in the water trying to hold her above the surface, and the constable at once jumped in also, and the two men then succeeded in bringing her to the edge of the towing-path, and the people standing there lifted the mother and child out of the water. They were at once attended to, and were soon afterwards removed in a cab to their home. The name of the woman is Martha Fort, 43 years of age, and she is the wife of John William Fort, a club steward. When she was being lifted out of the water, she said, "Why have you brought me out when I wanted to die".

The woman has not yet sufficiently recovered to be able to leave her bed, or to be taken away.

48 15 December 1904

“Accidental death” was the verdict returned at an inquest held at the Leeds Mortuary this afternoon on the body of **Richard Fritchcroft**, a Sowerby Bridge boatman, who fell into the Aire and Calder Canal near Crown Point Bridge, Leeds, and was drowned.

49 4 January 1905

BETTING “SCHOOL” SURPRISED NEAR HUDDERSFIELD

A DEFENDANT AND HIS THREE HALF SOVEREIGNS At Huddersfield today, ten men of Brighouse and Mirfield were summoned for having gambled with coins in the Bradley district on the 4th and 11th December. Their names were J E Broadley and Fred Smith, delvers, Charles Mannell, labourer, John Whittles, teamster, James Nolan, John Gray and Edward Wainwright, labourers, Jabel Kitchen, delver, **Ben Wood**, boatman and Fred Hamer, labourer.

Broadley, the only man who attended, said the policeman, when the raid was made on the 11th, picked up three half sovereigns of his.

The Clerk (Mr Mills) ; Well, you'll get your money back. It will help you to pay your fine.

Broadley was ordered to pay £1 18s 9d fine and costs, and was allowed a week to find the money. The rest were fined 10s each and the costs, and distraint orders were issued, and terms of imprisonment in default.

Three “crows” or scouts – Martin Rattigan, newsman, Huddersfield, Harry Broadley, labourer, Brighouse and Jesse Cockroft, labourer, Brighouse – were fined 5s each and costs.

50 30 January 1905

PLAYING ON THE CANAL BANKS While playing on the banks of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near Spinkwell Bridge, Bradford, on Saturday, two boys, four years old, fell into the water. They were both unconscious when rescued by a boatman named **Henry Bradley**, but Police-constable Fox succeeded in restoring animation to one of the lads, named Morris. The other, however, Henry Uglow, son of Neptune Uglow, labourer of Wapping Street, was dead.

51 31 January 1905

A BRADFORD BOY DROWNED

TIMELY ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATION SAVES ANOTHER At Bradford today, an inquest was held concerning the death of Henry Uglow, the six year old son of Neptune Uglow, glass and china riveter, 61 Wapping Road.

It was stated that he went out to play on Saturday morning with a boy named Moss. About one o'clock, a boatman named **Benjamin Bradley** of Goole was standing on the canal bank near Spinkwell Bridge, when he saw the boy Moss floating in the canal. He pulled him out with the help of another boatman and, after trying artificial respiration for 30 minutes, the boy showed signs of life. He then noticed the body of the deceased boy, Uglow, floating about 14 feet from the side. He got a boat hook and dragged him on to the bank. Artificial respiration was tried, but the boy was found to be dead. The boatman said it was a regular thing for boys to play on the canal side at this place.

A verdict of “Accidentally drowned” was returned, and the jury complimented Bradley on the way in which he had rendered assistance to the boy who was saved.

52 5 April 1905

DRUNK IN THE SMOKE ROOM – A POLICE INSPECTOR'S VISIT TO A LEEDS HOTEL

SECRETARY OF THE ROYAL HOTEL COMPANY FINED Today, at the Leeds City Police Court before the Stipendiary Magistrate (Mr C M Atkinson), Joseph James Mosley, secretary of the Royal Hotel Company, was summoned in connection with an alleged permitting of drunkenness case at the Royal Hotel, Briggate. Mr Atter (from the Town Clerk's department) prosecuted, and Mr Willey defended.

Inspector Bulmer stated that he visited the house on the evening of Wednesday March 22, and found in the smoke room a man named Wood, who was very drunk. There was no doubt about his condition, and though the witness knew him to be a Leeds man, he gave several London addresses. Next to Wood was a glass three parts full of beer, which appeared to have been freshly drawn. There was some gin on the counter also, and when the witness asked Wood if it belonged to him, the manager said, "No, it's mine". Wood staggered on rising to his feet, and the witness and a constable took him to Millgarth Station.

This evidence was corroborated by Police-constable Cobby.

Ernest Shoroch, the manager of the Royal Hotel Company, gave evidence, and was followed by William Porritt, the barman. The latter stated that he did not see Wood enter. The beer was supplied by witness to a man who was out of the room at the time the police came on the scene.

The Stipendiary Magistrate (to Porritt) : Is the manager in the habit of drinking with customers?

The Witness : The manager is not allowed to drink with any customer in the place ; neither is the barman. Both have the privilege of drinking anything in moderation. One or two glasses in the evening or day are quite sufficient.

The Stipendiary Magistrate (to Shoroch) : Do you agree you are not allowed to drink with a customer?

Shoroch : That is the fact, sir.

The Stipendiary Magistrate : And you never do?

Shoroch : I never do ; it is as much as my place is worth.

Mr Willey (to Porritt) : You were formerly in the police force, I believe? Porritt : Yes.

And you held a publican's licence yourself at one time? Yes.

Herbert Jackson, butcher, Dewsbury Road, stated that he was in the hotel at the time in question. He was of the opinion that Wood was drunk, but that the beer was served to a man who had left the room.

Matthew Turner, boatman, Meadow Lane, said he was in the (?low) bar of the hotel on the night of the 22nd, when he saw a man enter the smoke room "a bit boozy", and next saw him come out with the police.

A fine of 40s and costs, or 14 days imprisonment was imposed.

53 26 April 1905

LATEST EUPHEMISM FOR PRISON At Bingley today, a Shipley boatman named **Joseph Rennard**, who was charged with being drunk and disorderly, explained his condition by saying that he had met some friends who pressed him to drink. He did not know that he wished to drink, but they said they would throw it over him if he did not take it.

The Chairman : Almost better have let them throw it upon you.

Defendant : It would be silly to lose good beer (Laughter).

The Bench gave him the option either to sign the pledge or be fined 5s and costs, with the alternative of seven days in prison. He instantly made known his choice by saying, "I will go to the farm, then", Superintendent Tebbutt explaining to the Bench that this term meant going to prison.

54 13 May 1905

FRACTURED THIGH CAUSED BY A KICK FROM A HORSE **Samuel Stead**, aged 20 years, boatman, employed by Messrs Abraham Kendall and Co of Shipley, and residing in Raglan Street, Shipley, was kicked by a horse on the towing path of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Kirkstall Lock yesterday, and was taken to the Leeds Infirmary suffering from a compound fracture of the thigh. He is stated today to be progressing favourably.

55 5 June 1905

A BARNSLEY ROBBERY

TWO ARRESTS ON SUSPICION AT HUDDERSFIELD This morning at Barnsley Borough Police Court, **John Smith**, boatman belonging to Ashton-under-Lyne, and Mary Wilson, a mill

hand, were charged with stealing with violence from the person of Robert Johnson of Pogmoor Road, Barnsley, a gold albert and seal, together with a silver watch and 18s in money, valued at £9 5s, at Barnsley on the 29th ult.

After the robbery had been committed, the prisoners were found attempting to dispose of the property at Huddersfield, and were apprehended.

The Chief Constable (Mr Butler), after stating the facts, asked for a remand till Thursday next in order to enable him to make further inquiries. The remand was granted.

56 5 October 1905

A NELSON CANAL MYSTERY

BODY OF A SUPPOSED LEEDS BOATMAN FOUND IN THE WATER The body of a man, supposed to be a boatman from Leeds, was found in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Nelson this morning. The body had apparently been in the water several days, and is that of a man about 30 years of age. Last Friday a Leeds boatman found a coat near the place, with a letter stating that the owner of the coat intended drowning himself.

57 5 October 1905

SLIPPED INTO THE DOCK

THE DROWNING OF A KNOTTINGLEY BOATMAN IN LEEDS At the Wellington Hotel, Low Road, Hunslet, this afternoon, the Leeds City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) held an inquiry with reference to the death of **John Buckley**, aged 61 years, a boatman who belonged to Knottingley.

From the evidence, it appeared that on Tuesday evening Buckley was walking along the path at the side of the new dock basin at Goodman Street, when he fell into the water. Two men named **Fletcher** and **Varley**, who were at work on a boat, heard a shout, and succeeded in getting Buckley out of the water, but he could not speak or breathe.

Police-constable Scarlett, who was called to the spot, tried to revive him, but was unsuccessful.

Varley stated that he did not think the accident would have occurred if Buckley had not been in drink. He had been about boats all his life.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

58 3 January 1907

SUPPOSED SUICIDE AT RAVENSTHORPE A case of supposed suicide is reported from Ravensthorpe today.

While **George Burns**, boatman, was on the towing-path, he saw a young woman jump from the wall and plunge into the canal. He rendered every assistance, but when the body was recovered, life was extinct.

It was afterwards discovered that the deceased was a native of Normanton, named Agnes Emily Fletcher. She was a domestic servant, and had been in service at the Bull's Head Hotel, Ravensthorpe.

59 16 January 1907

MISS RILEY'S BODY FOUND IN THE CANAL – MISSING SINCE DECEMBER 20TH

DECEASED SAID TO HAVE SUFFERED FROM INSOMNIA The mystery surrounding the disappearance of Miss Mary Riley, 24 years of age, of Myrtle Grove, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury, was solved this morning by the discovery of the body in the canal in Brewery Lane, Thornhill Lees, within a short distance of where she resided.

Miss Riley left her home about six o'clock on Thursday morning, December 20th, to go to her work at Messrs Wormald and Walker's, blanket and rug manufacturers, and she was last seen alive near the White Hart Inn, which is close to the mill where she was employed.

She was then in good spirits, and told an acquaintance that she would not keep her talking longer than was necessary, as she was anxious to be in time for her work.

What became of her after that had been a mystery up to this morning. A diligent search was made

by the West Riding Police, and the fullest inquiries amongst relatives and friends, but these failed to reveal her whereabouts.

Miss Riley's body was first seen this morning by a boatman, **John Martin**, near the Brewery Lane Bridge. The body was very much decomposed, and to all appearances must have been in the water several weeks. The clothes were the same as she was wearing when she left home.

The body was conveyed to the Victoria Hotel, where an inquest will be held, probably tomorrow. There was nothing found in deceased's pockets likely to throw any light on the tragedy.

Although deceased enjoyed fairly good health, she had complained that she could not sleep, and on one occasion, some twelve months ago, she is said to have got up in the middle of the night, and was found wandering in the village by a policeman.

She was a good worker, and was fond of her parents and her home.

60 11 February 1907

PRISONER'S PROTEST FROM THE DOCK AT SELBY At the Selby Petty Sessions today, **Joseph Andrews**, a boatman of Knottingley, was charged with an offence under the Poaching Prevention Act, at Haddlesey on the 25th January last.

Defendant denied that he had been poaching.

Superintendent Firth said there were 23 previous convictions against the defendant.

Defendant : I can prove that I am not that Joseph Andrews. I was not committed for trespass at Escrick, and I have never been convicted for night poaching in my life.

A fine of 20s and costs was imposed.

61 3 July 1907

SENTENCES AT THE LEEDS QUARTER SESSIONS

ACQUITTED James Mullaghan (23), boatman, acquitted on the charge of being in possession of housebreaking implements.

62 3 September 1907

SUICIDE OF A HUNSLET WOMAN IN OLD MILL LANE

ILLNESS SAID TO BE THE CAUSE Another case of drowning has to be added to the many which have occurred in Leeds within the last few weeks.

The victim is a woman named Mary Hawkins, aged 48, of the George IV Inn, Church Street, Hunslet, and she was found drowned in the river Aire near Elliott's Wharf, Old Mill Lane.

About half past nine last night, a boatman named **Joseph Gardner**, whose boat *Valeria* was lying moored to Elliott's Wharf, noticed the woman walking along the bank of the river. In a few minutes, he saw her jump into the water near to the ferry. He at once got a boat hook and hurried to the spot, but the woman did not rise to the surface again, but after dragging the river he succeeded in pulling the body out of the water.

He tried artificial respiration, but his efforts were not successful. The police were informed of the occurrence, and they removed the body to the mortuary in Old Mill Lane.

Mrs Hawkins, it appears, left home by the back door about twenty minutes past nine, so that she must have gone straight to the water's edge. She is said to have been unwell for about a fortnight.

The City Coroner will hold an inquiry into the tragedy tomorrow morning at the schoolroom in Waterloo Road, Hunslet.

63 19 September 1907

A WIFE'S MENTAL DEPRESSION

HUNSLET HUSBAND WHO BROKE OUT OF HIS HOME Three cases of suicide were investigated by the Leeds City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) today.

The first inquiry, held at the schoolroom in Waterloo Road, Hunslet, had reference to the death of Silvester Higgins of New Church Place, off Mabgate, whose body was recovered from the river Aire yesterday.

Mrs Munroe, who has been attending Mrs Higgins during a severe illness, told the Coroner that the deceased had been suffering from pains in the head for some time, and many times during the last six months he had "walked up and down the floor not knowing where to put himself".

He left home about nine o'clock on Wednesday morning, and before going out placed his watch and keys on the mantelpiece.

The Coroner : Had he ever shown any suicidal tendency?

Witness : No, never, sir.

John Bolling, a boatman, said he found the body of Higgins floating in the river, about 200 yards from the Suspension Bridge.

A slip of paper found on the body was produced by Police-constable Clarke, and the Coroner explained to the jury that it was a claim upon Higgins for 14s, as a surety to a loan society.

Dr Clarke, who had made a *post mortem* examination, stated that Higgins had been suffering from fatty degeneration of the heart, and must have been in very ill health for a considerable time.

"Suicide whilst of unsound mind" was the verdict.

64 21 September 1907

FOUND IN THE RIVER AIRE – MAN AND WOMAN DROWNED AT HUNSLET IN CHARGE OF A BOAT FROM HULL

THE WOMAN NOT IDENTIFIED The river Aire at Hunslet has claimed five victims within the last fortnight. Two more bodies were taken from the water this morning, those of a man and a woman.

The man has been identified as **Arthur (or Albert) Robinson**, a boatman employed by Messrs E Hall and Co, Hull. The boat, of which he appears to have been in charge, now lies at the Leeds Lock, Crown Point and, so far as can be ascertained, no one is at present looking after it. The woman still remains unidentified.

The boat is named *The Only Daughter*. From inquiries made by a *Yorkshire Evening Post* representative this morning, it seems that it plies between Hull and Leeds, and this morning was laden with wood. It is stated that it arrived in Leeds on Tuesday last, and Robinson was in charge of it. He was not seen alive again after Tuesday night, when he appeared to be all right. Robinson was well known at the Leeds Locks, and is spoken of as a very cheerful man.

About half past seven this morning, a man named Murphy, who is employed at Messrs Illingworth and Ingham's woodyard, was working on the river side when he noticed the body of a man floating in the water. He informed the police after it had been got out with a boat hook.

About three quarters of an hour later, Charles Whittaker, who is a coal heaver employed at the Clarence Forge, saw the body of the woman floating in the water near the Suspension Bridge, which is a couple of hundred yards lower down the river. He also got the body out with a boat hook, and both were placed in charge of Police-constable Lake.

Nothing is known concerning the identity of the woman, nor as to how the bodies came to be in the water. The woman does not seem to have been known to anyone in the district. She was apparently about 45 years of age. She had brown hair and eyes, and was dressed in a grey cloth three quarter size jacket, brown skirt and a muslin blouse. When taken from the water, she had a piece of black chiffon round her neck. She also wore short laced shoes and black stockings. Both the bodies appeared to have been in the water several days.

Immediately after being taken from the river, the bodies were removed to the mortuary in Old Mill Lane, Hunslet. The Leeds City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) is to hold an inquiry into the case at the schoolroom in Waterloo Road on Monday morning.

Inquiries in Hull show that Robinson was 42 years of age and resided at Church Row, Cleveland Street. Mrs Robinson usually accompanied her husband, but did not make this trip. She left for Leeds this afternoon to see if she could identify the body. Robinson had no troubles known to his wife.

65 23 September 1907

RESCUES BY A YORK BOATMAN A boatman named **William Laycock** effected a gallant rescue at York yesterday. Two young woman named Nellie Dennett and Frances Chapman of Poulter's Buildings, Walmgate, fell into the river Foss, but both were saved by Laycock, whose boat was lying in Castle Mills Basin. Dennett suffered more from the immersion than her companion, and did not come round until artificial respiration had been tried for 20 minutes. Both women are now progressing favourably.

66 3 October 1907

NOT THE RIGHT MAN

A LEEDS PROSECUTOR'S CHANGE OF MIND

CHARGE OF ROBBERY DISMISSED AT THE SESSIONS An extraordinary turn was given to a case at the Leeds Sessions today, owing to the prosecutor, **Hugh Kershaw**, a boatman, declaring he had been mistaken in swearing before the magistrates that Peter Jackson (36), baker, was one of the two men who were concerned in robbing him of £1 2s 6d on July 23. The prosecutor had been taken by the men to the Harewood Arms, and it was alleged that the money had been got from him by a trick.

Detective Officer Milburn had followed the prosecutor and the two men down Vicar Lane, and saw them enter the Harewood Arms. The prisoner was one of the men. Later in the afternoon he saw the prosecutor, who was complaining to a constable in George Street that he had been robbed. The detective then took him to three or four public houses in the neighbourhood, and in the Grantham Arms, the prisoner was found drinking.

The prosecutor at once identified him as one of the men who had been with him at the Harewood Arms. On the way to the Town Hall, the prisoner offered the officer money to set him free, and attempted to run away.

Before the magistrates, the prosecutor was positive the prisoner was one of the men, but he now as positively affirmed the contrary.

The Recorder told the jury that though the case was one of strong suspicion, it would not be safe to convict after the statement now made by the prosecutor.

A verdict of "Not Guilty" was accordingly returned, and the prisoner was discharged.

67 7 January 1908

A GOOLE SENSATION

CHILD'S NAKED BODY FOUND IN THE DOCK

VERDICT OF WILFUL MURDER RETURNED AT THE INQUEST An inquest was held at Goole today on the body of a newly born male child found yesterday in Germany Dock, Goole.

Frederick Strauss, boatman, who found the body, stated that it was naked, but had a thin hemp rope fastened twice round the neck, and across the chest were knotted loops, which pointed to the fact that something had been attached.

Dr Blair stated that the body was that of a well developed and fully matured male child. It had had a separate existence from the mother, but he could not say as to how many hours it had existed after birth. It had not lived 24 hours. He was sure death was not due to strangulation, but he was of opinion that it was drowned.

The police were unable to offer evidence of identification, and the jury returned a verdict of "Wilful murder" against some person unknown.

68 12 February 1908

LEEDS GIRL'S SAD DEATH

BODY FOUND ON THE RIVER BANK AT STOURTON The dead body of Edith McGrath, aged four years and eleven months, of Lobby's Yard, Mill Street, Leeds, has been discovered on the bank of the river Aire at Stourton.

The little girl had been missing since January 17. On that day, it is stated, she was playing with

three other girls of about her own age at what is known as the Steanders, East Street. She climbed upon some railings and fell. She caught her forehead and rolled into a stream which flows near. Information was given to the police, but though dragging operations were immediately commenced, the body was not found. A "fresh" was on at the time, and it is surmised that the body was carried down the stream into the river Aire, finally being deposited on the river bank at Stourton. The body was discovered by **John Elliott**, boatman, at Balcon Place, Low Road, Hunslet.

69 **2 May 1908**

**MOTHER'S STRANGE CONDUCT – CHARGE OF ATTEMPTING TO MURDER HER CHILD
A POLICE-CONSTABLE'S TIMELY RESCUE WORK** At Halifax today, Harriet Ellis, married woman, Southowram, was charged with attempting to murder her infant child, Maud Ellis, aged six months, by trying to drown it in the Calder and Hebble Canal near Elland on Thursday.

Joseph Dutton, an Elland boatman, stated that he saw the defendant standing in the water up to the waist. She was about four feet from the embankment, and witness and another man, William Batty, were able to reach her. She was holding the baby in her arms under the water, and they pulled the mother and child out of the water together. They placed the child on the embankment, and it showed no signs of life, and they thought it was dead. Witness exclaimed to her, "Why have you done this?" and she replied, "What am I to do?"

Police-constable Stone was sent for. The woman and child had meanwhile been taken to the lock house.

Police-constable Stone said the woman's clothing was wet up to the waist, and she was detained in a hut. Witness tried artificial respiration on the baby for three quarters of an hour, and then perceived signs of life. When the child began to breathe again, a neighbour took charge of it. Defendant, for whom a change of clothing was obtained, when afterwards charged with attempting to drown the baby, replied, "Yes, my husband drove me to it. He is such a bad 'un to me". Witness also said it was her intention to drown herself as well as the child.

William Henry Ellis, iron turner, Hill Top, Southowram, the husband of defendant, said there was a family of six children, the eldest being 16 years old, and the baby in question the youngest. He knew of no reason why his wife left home with the child.

The Bench remanded accused until next Saturday.

70 **15 August 1908**

LEEDS CHILD ON THE ROOF

A VENTURESOME THREE YEAR OLD A three year old boy, **John William Appleby**, son of a boatman living in Leith Street, Burmantofts, Leeds, appears to have been unusually venturesome. Yesterday afternoon he climbed on to the roof of a stable in Saville Green.

He had no sooner reached the top, however, than he lost his footing and fell to the ground, a distance of about ten feet. He was removed to the General Infirmary, where he was found to be suffering from concussion of the brain. Today he was reported to be a little better.

71 **3 October 1908**

HUNSLET POSTMAN DROWNED

A MESSAGE TELLING HIS WIFE NOT TO BE UNEASY

LARGE WOUND ON THE FOREHEAD The mysterious disappearance of a Leeds man has been partially explained by the finding of his body in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal between Wellington Bridge and Monk Bridge.

Yesterday, Mrs Senior of Autumn Grove, Burley Fields, reported to the police that her husband, Ernest Senior, had not been home since Wednesday last, when he went out in the morning as usual to go to his employment. He was engaged as an auxiliary postman at the Hunslet sub-office, and on Wednesday afternoon, Mrs Senior received a telegram from him, handed in at Hunslet, stating that she was "not to be uneasy" as he would be home about eight o'clock that night. He did not return, and at first not much notice was taken of his absence, it being thought that he had gone to another

town to do some hawking, with which he filled in his spare time at Leeds. A week passed without anything being heard of him, and then the matter was reported to the police.

The discovery of the man's body was made by **Tom Rowbottom**, a boatman of Knottingley, while proceeding on his boat to Bradford. The police, on examining the body, found that it had apparently been in the water a few days. On the forehead was a large wound, which may possibly have been caused by the screw of a passing boat.

The body was removed to the mortuary to await the inquest, which will be held at the Town Hall on Monday.

72 21 October 1908

AFTER THE DANCE – SHOCKING ASSAULT ON A BINGLEY GIRL PRISONER PLEADS GUILTY

STORY OF A DESPERATE STRUGGLE The extraordinary case in which a Bingley young woman, named Faith Yorker (18), millhand, of 28 Lime Street, Bingley, was stopped and assaulted last Saturday night, assumed a more serious aspect today, when her alleged assailant was brought before the Bingley magistrates and charged with rape. His name is **William Henry Neale**, a boatman, who has been living in a lodging house in George Street, Bingley.

Superintendent Tebbutt, in outlining the case, said that on Saturday night the young woman had attended a dance in connection with the St John Ambulance Association at the Victoria Hall, Bingley, and she left that place alone at 11.45 to go home. As she was crossing Main Street to Park Road, she noticed in front a little man wearing heavy clogs and dirty in appearance, and she thought he was a tramp and felt rather nervous and afraid of him. The man turned down Park Road and went along the right side of the road. She walked on the left side of the road, keeping a short distance behind him. When she reached the slope leading from the road to the canal bank, the man ran across the road to her, and before she realised what was going to happen, he seized her by the throat. She screamed, but he still held her by the throat and pressed one hand over her mouth. She struggled to get away, but unavailingly, and the man dragged her down the slope to the canal bank and underneath the road bridge. In this struggle they fell, and her umbrella was broken.

On the canal bank the struggle was continued, but the man said she would have to go with him. She said she would give him anything if he would let her go, but he refused and dragged her along the bank towards the Three Rise Locks and, it is alleged, improperly assaulted her on the way. She again struggled with him, and he threatened to throw her into the canal. At this point, feeling that she was helpless, she conceived the notion of talking pleasantly to him with a view to getting an opportunity to escape, and they walked together over the bridge at the Three Rise Locks to a footpath leading to Bramley Road. On the way she told him she lived in Lime Street, and he said he had a sister living in Lancashire and he had received a postcard from her. On this footpath the man seized her, and after a struggle threw her down on the grass. She eventually got free and ran away and screamed, but he followed and caught hold of her again, but as they were struggling a young man named W T D Grundy came near, and she got away and ran to him. Whilst telling him what was the matter, her assailant ran away.

EVIDENCE AGAINST THE PRISONER Turning to the question of identity, Superintendent Tebbutt said it was dark when the offence was alleged to have taken place, and beyond describing the man the young woman could not swear without doubt to any particular man, but the description she gave of his clothing was so correct that there was no doubt the man was the prisoner. It could be proved that the prisoner was in the neighbourhood of Park Road just before the time when the assault occurred. It would also be proved that when arrested on the following day a postcard from his sister, previously referred to, was found in his possession. The witness, Mr Grundy, also could not positively swear to the man.

Continuing, Superintendent Tebbutt said that when the complainant arrived home she was in a very distressed condition, and her clothing was disarranged and dirty. She told her mother what had happened, and her father went into the street to find a policeman, but not finding one, he went to the police station and informed Inspector Robertson on Sunday morning. The officer arrested the man

in a lodging house, and brought him to the police station.

PICKED OUT THE PRISONER FROM FIVE MEN The complainant gave evidence in support of this statement, and added that she picked out the prisoner from five men at the police station on Sunday afternoon.

Dr Crocker of Bingley gave medical testimony in support of the charge.

William T D Grundy, railway clerk, son of the Bingley stationmaster, said he was attracted to the scene from Bromley Road by hearing a woman's screams from the direction of the canal. He saw two persons struggling when he got nearer, one of them being the complainant, who succeeded in getting away. She rushed at witness, and exclaimed, "You won't allow him to take me away again, will you?" When she was telling him what had occurred, the man bolted. The complainant was in a very distressed and hysterical state. The prisoner resembled the man very strongly.

Other evidence was given by the girl's mother and by Inspector Robertson and Police-sergeant Duffield.

The prisoner who, when charged on arrest, had denied being present, saying he was on a boat at the time, now admitted assaulting the girl, and said he was under the influence of drink at the time.

COMMITTED FOR TRIAL He was committed to the Assizes for trial, bail being refused.

73 19 April 1909

CHARGE OF ATTEMPTED SUICIDE AT YORK Herbert Wigley (39), a fitter of Gladstone Street, Acomb, was charged at York, this morning, with attempting to commit suicide on Saturday.

William Thompson, RAMC reserve, saw the man jump from the parapet on Ouse Bridge into the river on Saturday afternoon, Witness and a boatman named **William Wray** rescued the man and took him to the police station. He told the police that he had had a great deal of trouble lately. He had recently lost his wife, and shortly after that his child died, and he jumped into the river in a fit of momentary depression.

Wigley was remanded until tomorrow.

74 21 September 1909

**A BRADFORD HERO'S DEATH – DROWNED WHILST TRYING TO SAVE A BOY
PATHETIC STORY AT A DOUBLE INQUEST**

"I CAN'T SWIM, BUT I'LL TRY" The sad double drowning fatality in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near Manningham Station on Sunday afternoon was the subject of an inquiry by the Bradford City Coroner (Mr J G Hutchinson) today.

A lad named Martin Diamond (13), half timer, of 31 Dyson Street, got into difficulties whilst bathing, and George Humberstone (27), stone Sawyer, of 152 Priestman Street, went to his rescue, but both were drowned.

The death of Diamond was first inquired into, the deceased's father stating that he did not know his son was in the habit of going bathing, for he could not swim.

Arthur Brearton of Dyson Street, one of the lad's companions, said that he met the deceased, with three other boys, in Manningham Lane about four o'clock on Sunday. They first decided to go gathering blackberries, and on returning saw some boys bathing near Manningham Station. Diamond, without saying anything, commenced to undress, and then remarked, "I am going to walk across the canal". When he was some two yards out, they shouted to him to come out, but he replied, "Capital N O". He reached the other side, and they told him to get dressed, but he tried to return through the water. Whilst crossing, he commenced to struggle as though in difficulties, and a lad named Redfearn got hold of him, and was pulling him out when he slipped back.

THE CRY FOR HELP They called for assistance, and a man (Humberstone) came from an adjoining stone yard. He said, "I can't swim, boys, but I'll try my best". He took his coat off, and when he had gone about half a yard into the water his foot seemed to slip from under him, and he disappeared. They saw nothing more of either of them.

They then ran on Canal Road, and met a man in a trap, but he would not stop, so they told a boatman at the locks. Then they all went home, being frightened.

Fred Redfearn, aged 13, of Dyson Street, described his attempt at rescue. He said that when deceased appeared to lose his footing, he commenced to undress and went in. "I got hold of his hand", he proceeded, "and pulled him a yard and a half, but his hand slipped and he went back. He then disappeared, and I did not go back again".

Diamond, he continued, had been about three times before to that particular place, and witness had seen him walk through the canal.

An employee on a canal boat, named **William Aspinnall**, spoke to getting the bodies out of the water. He mentioned that about a week ago, the canal at that particular place was dredged, and it would now be about eight feet deep, whereas before it would be about five feet.

Police-constable McLintock said artificial respiration was tried on the body of the man for some time, but with no result.

THE BREADWINNER GONE In the case of Geo Humberstone, the widow stated that her husband was employed as a watchman during the day at the stone sawing mills in Canal Road. They had one child, two years of age, and the deceased brought in the sole means of livelihood.

The evidence given in Diamond's case was again sworn to by the different witnesses.

The Coroner said that as regards Humberstone, he thought that they must all recognise that it was a very sad case indeed for a man to go in the way he did to try and save the boy, knowing he was putting himself in danger, and then to lose his life. He noticed that the Lord Mayor was being approached with regard to getting some assistance for the widow. It was his (the Coroner's) intention to do something on her behalf, but seeing that matter had been taken up by the Lord Mayor, there was a better chance of his Lordship getting greater assistance.

Verdicts of "Accidental death" were returned.

75 22 October 1909

HALIFAX SENSATION – WOMAN FOUND MURDERED ON A REFUSE TIP
MAN'S CONFESSION TO THE POLICE

PRISONER BROUGHT BEFORE THE MAGISTRATES AND REMANDED A sensational tragedy is reported from Halifax today. About five o'clock this morning, Livingstone Thwaite, 26 years of age, a journeyman painter of 15 Fairfield Terrace, Shroggs Road, Ovendon, walked into the Halifax Borough Police Office, and entered into conversation with Police-sergeant Walker, the night clerk. At the time the visitor's name was not known to the sergeant, and he did not get to know it until later.

Thwaite, who seemed to be suffering from the effects of drink, said he was almost parched with thirst, and asked for a drink of water. The sergeant supplied him with some water, and the man, who was strange in his manner, was asked to take a seat. Thwaite did so, and in the course of further conversation, he made the startling statement that he had killed a woman and said her body would be found at Shroggs tip.

Thwaite was detained at the police office, and upon Sergeant Whitaker going to the place indicated, he found ample confirmation of Thwaite's story. In the Wheatley Valley, near Messrs Royston's wire mills, thousands of tons of ashes etc have been tipped during the last few years, and a wide roadway has been formed which connects the Pallon and Ovenden sides of the valley. At the foot of the slope on the east side, a woman was found lying on the ground in a pool of blood. Upon her neck was a nasty gash, which had apparently been inflicted with some sharp instrument, and she appeared to have been dead several hours. At the top of the slope, some twenty yards higher up, there were footmarks, and traces of a struggle, but there was no blood upon the ground.

It is supposed that after the wound was inflicted, the woman either fell down or was pushed down the slope. The body was removed to the mortuary, and several hours later the deceased was identified as **Beatrice Cooke**, wife of a canal boatman with whom, it is stated, she had not been living lately. In July this year, she took out a summons against her husband for assault, but neither the woman nor her husband attended the Police Court on the day on which it was made returnable. When the summons was taken out, Mrs Cooke lived at Shroggs, close to the home of Thwaite.

Thwaite was brought before the Halifax Borough Magistrates today on a charge of having caused

the death of the woman. Accused, who was dressed in his working clothes, was pale and haggard, and he leaned on the dock rail when he was brought into Court.

Superintendent Raw said the prisoner was charged with having caused the death of Beatrice Cooke, a married woman and a native of the town. The accused came to the police office early that morning, and in consequence of a statement which he made, Police-sergeant Whitaker went to the tip at Shroggs, and at the foot of the slope he found the deceased lying dead on the ground in a pool of blood. The body was removed to the mortuary, and an inquest would be held this evening. Mr Raw applied for a remand until Thursday next.

Police-sergeant Whitaker corroborated Mr Raw's statement.

The Magistrates' Clerk : Have you anything to say why you should not be remanded?

Accused : No.

A remand until next Thursday was granted, and the prisoner was removed below.

Accused for about six or seven months has lived at Shroggs, the house which he occupied being within sight of the tip. Some months ago, when he lived with his wife in Mount Pleasant, Thwaite provided a sensation one night by running about the street scantily clad, and threatening to jump into a quarry.

76 26 November 1909

THWAITES PLEADS NOT GUILTY AT LEEDS ASSIZES – STORY OF THE CRIME FAREWELL LETTER TO HIS WIFE READ IN COURT

DEAD WOMAN'S RINGS AS GIFTS The Crown Court at the Leeds Assizes, before Mr Justice Walton, opened this morning with the trial of Livingstone Thwaites (28), painter, who was indicted for the wilful murder of **Beatrice Cook** at Halifax on the 22nd October.

Mr C M Lowenthal and Mr F Y Stanger appeared for the prosecution ; and Mr Fleming defended.

The prisoner, who pleaded not guilty, was accommodated with a seat in the dock. He exhibited considerable nervousness during the proceedings. He gazed round the court repeatedly, and drank copiously from a tin mug, and wiped his hands and the back of his head frequently.

Mr Lowenthal, in his opening statement, said the evidence against the prisoner was purely circumstantial, but he did not think there was one among the jury who would entertain the slightest doubt that the man did commit the act for which he stood charged with murder. It might be that there was a subsequent question which they would have to consider. The prisoner was a married man, and was living at the time at 15 Fairfield Terrace, Shroggs Road, Halifax. Beatrice Wood, the woman who was murdered, was the wife of a canal boatman named **Arthur Cook**. She was 31 years of age, and she was also known by the name of Beatrice Smith. On the 9th October last, she left her husband and went to live with her brother-in-law at 20 Fairfield Terrace, a few doors away from the prisoner's house.

During the evening of the 21st October, the prisoner and the woman visited several public houses, where they had some drink. About ten minutes to eleven, they (.....) the Royal Hotel, where the deceased ordered a glass of beer and a glass of stout, which she paid for with half a crown. She received 2s 3d in change, and afterwards she bought a packet of cigarettes. The prisoner and the deceased then appeared to be on good terms with one another. Shortly after eleven, a man named Ratcliffe saw a woman and a man at the bottom of Angel Road. He heard the woman say, "I am going down Stannery Lane". The man replied, "No, you are going across the ---- tip with me". The woman tried to drag herself away, but the man refused to let her go, and Ratcliffe afterwards saw them going up Angel Road in the direction of the tip.

At twenty minutes to twelve o'clock, a man named Bowers, living at Fairfield Terrace, Leeds, heard a knocking at his door, and a shout, "George, I've done it!" On looking out, he saw the prisoner and asked what was the matter, and the prisoner again said, "I've done it. I've killed a woman and left her on the tip, and if you will get up I will take you to where she is."

"I HAVE KILLED BEATTIE" Bowers, who did not credit the statement, advised the prisoner to go to bed. Prisoner begged him to go with him, but on his still refusing, the prisoner asked him to come down and shake hands and say "Goodbye", as he was going to give himself up to the police.

A Mrs Whiteley heard the prisoner say, "I have killed Beattie, the only girl in the world I loved". Prisoner appeared to walk as if he had had something to drink. Prisoner asked Bowers to look after his cat, to which he was especially partial, and this Bowers promised to do. As the prisoner approached Bowers's house, he had the cat upon his shoulder. About one o'clock, Thomas Jagger, the step father of the prisoner's wife, living at Westfield Court, was awakened by the prisoner knocking. Prisoner pulled out of his pocket two of the deceased woman's rings, which he handed to Jagger, and said he would give them to Jagger as a keepsake. Jagger asked him where he had got them from, and he replied, "Off Beattie's fingers". He also produced a knife, and said, "It is the knife I've done the job with".

RINGS AS A KEEPSAKE At two o'clock, he knocked at the house of his brother John, and said, "I have killed a woman", and he gave her name as "Beattie". John Thwaites asked him what he was talking about. Mrs Thwaites came downstairs, and prisoner gave her the third of deceased's rings. He said, "I have killed Beattie", and he afterwards asked for a drink of tea. Mrs Thwaites again said, "What are you talking about?" Prisoner replied that he had done it and if they did not believe him, he would bring the woman on his back. About three o'clock, the prisoner called at his brother Walter's house, where he made a similar statement. He appeared to be in a dazed condition, and as he and his wife thought the prisoner to be strange in his manner, they followed him to his house. Prisoner afterwards took them to the tip and, looking down the slope, said, "She's there", and they saw the body of a woman. On the way back, prisoner said, "She wanted me to do it for her". They left the prisoner at the bottom of the slope leading to his house.

SURRENDERED TO THE POLICE At five o'clock in the morning he called at the police station, and asked for a drink of water. Upon the sergeant remarking that he looked sleepy, prisoner repeated the statement that he had killed a woman and wanted to give himself up. At the time, prisoner not only looked sleepy, but dazed, and smelled of drink. Prisoner added, "It's all right. I have killed a woman ; I have throttled her and thrown her down the tip". In reply to a question by the sergeant, he said it was "Beattie Smith". The woman was afterwards found, fully dressed, quite dead, lying at the bottom of the tip in a quantity of blood, and there were signs of a struggle having taken place.

The *post mortem* examination disclosed that the body had several bruises and a wound on the right side of the neck severing the jugular vein. The wound was such a wound as would have been caused by a pocket knife.

PRISONER'S LETTER TO HIS WIFE A search was made in the prisoner's house, and a letter was found in his handwriting addressed to his wife, and written probably before going to the police station. The prisoner wrote :-

Dear wife – I have just realised what I have done ; forgive me, I ask of you. You see the dirty game I have played, but she asked me to do it, and I did, but I was canned up when I did. Comfort dear mother ; tell her I shan't fear nothing but will face it like a man. I have put your lives in misery, I know, but don't forget I am suffering now more than you can tell.

I hope, Madge, when you find another partner in life, he will be a gentleman ; that is what you deserve. But I was a fool, and I can see when it is too late. So cheer up, from the man that did love you.

LIVY THWAITES

77 9 December 1909

THE DONCASTER FIGHT – MANSLAUGHTER CHARGE AT THE ASSIZES

JUDGE'S ADVICE TO PRISONERS

HIS LORDSHIP IMPOSES A NOMINAL SENTENCE The fatal fight at Doncaster on September 5 had its sequel at the Leeds Assizes today, when Nelson Stead (22), carter ; Edwin Pounder (31), labourer ; and **Harry Roberts** (22), boatman, were indicted, the former for the manslaughter of Isaac Tetley, who lived in the same part of Doncaster as the prisoners, and the two latter with aiding and abetting.

Mr Yarborough prosecuted, but the prisoners were undefended. It was stated by Mr Yarborough

that the fight, which had been arranged a month beforehand, was a perfectly fair one. It took place in the presence of a large number of people in a field at Bentley, on the outskirts of Doncaster. During the fight, a blow from Stead, over or near the heart, caused Tetley to collapse, and his death followed shortly afterwards. The medical examination showed that Tetley died from paralysis of the heart, as a result of the blow. The prisoners Pounder and Roberts were acting as seconds of the combatants.

Mr Justice Bicknill advised Pounder and Roberts to plead guilty to having acted as seconds, but they declined to do so.

Richard Sowerby, hawker, spoke to having witnessed the fight. Roberts, he said, was with Stead, and Pounder with Tetley.

His Lordship : How should you describe them in that position?

The Witness : I should describe them as seconds.

They were close to the people who were fighting, as seconds are? - Yes.

Mr Yarborough : No gloves were used? The Witness : No, they fought with bare fists.

Who struck the first blow? - Tetley.

His Lordship : Do you mean he fainted first, or got in first? The Witness (smiling) : He got in first.

Then what happened? - Stead hit Tetley under the heart, and he fell on his right side.

It was a fair fight? - Yes.

Mr Yarborough : And then the doctor came? - Yes.

His Lordship (addressing Pounder and Roberts) : You two men had better leave yourselves to me. Do you, Pounder, mean to say you were not a second? If you were there acting as seconds, the law says you were acting together in an unlawful manner. Of course, the law does not allow fighting of this description, and if the other man was killed by a blow given by Stead, Stead would be technically guilty of manslaughter, because he would have brought about the man's death by an illegal act, although during the fight everything was fair and manly. Nevertheless, the law is the law. If you men, Pounder and Roberts, still say you were not seconds, fight it out, but I cannot see that it will do you any good.

Pounder : Of course we were seconds in that manner.

His Lordship : Well, take my advice, and plead guilty all round.

The men were understood to consent to the course.

His Lordship (to the jury) : These men, gentlemen, say they were clearly acting in an illegal manner. But the punishment is quite a different thing. Will you be good enough to consider your verdict. I cannot quite ask you to find them guilty.

The accused formally withdrew their plea of not guilty, and his Lordship, interrupting the jury in their deliberations, said that he could relieve them of any further trouble in the matter.

JUDGE'S ADVICE ON FIGHTING Addressing the prisoners, his Lordship said : I am not going to send you to prison. It was a perfectly fair fight. But it is a lamentable thing, and I hope, Stead, you will remember that you have sent a man to his long rest. There is no blame attaching to you, except that the law says you were doing an illegal act. Both men may agree to go out and fight, and no bad blood between them either, but the law does not allow it ; it does not allow fighting without gloves. And that is the illegal act. But, as I have said, I am not going to send you to prison. I am entirely responsible for the sentence. All you wanted to see was who was the better man. Therefore, on you, Stead, I pass a nominal sentence of a week's imprisonment, to date from the beginning of the Assizes, but as the Assizes have been in progress for over a week, you are free to go now. The same applies to Pounder and Roberts.

If you two men had been looking on from the lane, it would have been different. But you were there doing something more than looking on ; you were taking part in that which was going on, so you yourselves are what we call principals in the second degree, and are equally liable to be punished as the man who struck the blow. Therefore, don't be seconds again. It is a sad accident.

THE PRISONERS SET FREE Mr Yarborough here intimated to his Lordship that all the prisoners were bailed on committal.

His Lordship then stated that he would change the sentences from one week to one day. All he

desired, he explained, was to inflict a nominal sentence.

The accused then left the dock, after Stead had been told by his Lordship that it was “no smiling matter”.

78 21 February 1910

A MOAN FROM THE CANAL

SUPPOSED SUICIDE OF A BAILDON WOMAN Shortly after eight o'clock on Saturday night, **Henry Spencer**, a Liverpool boatman, was proceeding in his boat along the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, from the direction of Leeds towards Bradford, and when near Buck Wood, he heard a moan from some object in the water. Thomas Harris of Ford Cottage, who was walking on the towing-path by the boat, heard it also, and on investigation they found it was a woman. They pulled her out. Spencer went at once for a doctor, and the woman was conveyed to Buck Wood Cottage, Thackley, close by.

Harris, who had a knowledge of ambulance methods, persevered with artificial respiration for an hour and a half, but with no avail. When the doctor arrived, he could only pronounce life extinct, the woman having died about an hour after being taken out of the water.

The woman was subsequently identified as Emma W Knighton, a single woman living with her step father, William Wilkinson, a gardener of 8 Binswell Fold, Baildon.

At the inquest at the Bradford Town Hall today, the evidence showed that deceased had been in ill health for some time past.

The jury returned a verdict of “Suicide whilst of unsound mind”, and complimented the witness Harris for his endeavours to save the woman's life.

79 24 February 1910

FLOATING DOWN THE RIVER AIRE An open verdict was returned at an inquest held at Leeds today on the body of a newly born female child, which was recovered from the river Aire on Tuesday.

Harry Coe, a boatman, said he saw the body floating down the river opposite Bowers coal wharf, Water Lane. He recovered it, and notified the police.

The medical evidence showed that there had been a separate existence, death being presumably due to lack of attention at birth.

80 5 March 1910

A HALIFAX TRAGEDY – INSURANCE AGENT FOUND DROWNED

REMARK TO HIS SWEETHEART – “LET US END OUR DAYS TOGETHER”

A BOATMAN'S PROTEST AGAINST JURYMEN'S FEES Mr E H Hill held an inquest at Halifax today on Ernest Gordon Stewart Darbyshire, 24 years of age, insurance agent, of 11 Summer Street, Fenton Road, Halifax, who was found drowned in the canal near Copley, Halifax, yesterday morning.

Alfred Henry Cooper, 9 Norman Street, Fenton Road, carter, stated that deceased was his half brother, and was employed as an insurance agent. Witness said that on the 10th February deceased left home at 8.45 in the morning. Before leaving, he told his mother that he was going to Bradford to see a lady on insurance business. Witness said the deceased did not go to Bradford, but during the afternoon he went to Leeds with his sweetheart.

Annie Smith, a young woman who lives at Belmont Street, Willow Park, Sowerby Bridge, stated that for years she had been engaged to deceased. Latterly he had been strange in his manner, and had been rather quiet, as though something was troubling him. No quarrel had taken place between them. They had seen each other twice a week, and also at weekends. On Wednesday the 9th February, he paid a visit to her home at Sowerby Bridge, and she arranged to go to his home on the following morning. On her way to Halifax, she met him at King Cross.

The Coroner : Had you arranged to have a day off together? - Witness : No.

Witness, continuing her evidence, said that during the morning they went down to her home at

Sowerby Bridge, and during the afternoon they went to Leeds. Deceased was very quiet all day. In the evening they went to the pantomime. Afterwards they returned by train to Sowerby Bridge, arriving there about midnight. He accompanied her to her home, and after staying about a quarter of an hour, he left her in the ordinary way, and said he was going straight home.

TALKS OF MARRIAGE The Coroner : Did he say anything peculiar to you that evening? - No.

Has he ever said anything to you about ending your lives together? - On the Wednesday, he suggested that we should go away together.

Is that all he said? - Yes.

Didn't he say to you, "Let us go and end our lives together"? - No. Not in that way.

What did you think he meant? - To go away and live together.

Had you talked about being married soon, or wasn't he in a position to marry you yet? - He talked about going away, and then being married.

You never heard him say anything which made you think that he would commit suicide? - No.

Can you give any reason for this? - I cannot.

SEEMED VERY QUIET When he left you, he was very quiet, but said he would go straight home? - Yes. I said to him, "You will go straight home, won't you?" and he replied, "Yes".

Had he made any arrangement to see you again? - Yes, on the Saturday.

In going from your house to his home it would not be necessary for him to go near the canal. - No.

A Juror : Has he ever complained about missing sleep? - He said a few weeks ago that on certain nights he had not slept well. But if you questioned him, you could not get anything out of him.

Another Juror : Was he sober on the day you last saw him? - Yes, he was a staunch teetotaller.

Was he all right in his business? - Yes, he always told me he was doing pretty well in his business.

The Coroner said he understood that deceased was doing well in his business and that his accounts were straight.

Mr J E Bowen, insurance superintendent, said the statement of the Coroner was correct. Mr Bowen added, "He was a very good agent".

THE BOATMAN'S VIEWS **Charles Swindells**, boatman, Sowerby Bridge, gave evidence as to the finding of the body in the canal near Copley. He said it seemed to have been in the water some days. Witness, upon receiving the ordinary witness allowance for his attendance, said he should be out of pocket, as he had paid a certain sum to a person who was doing his work for him today.

The Coroner said the fee which witness had received was what was allowed by the County authorities, and he could not increase it.

Witness said there was no encouragement for anyone to look "for such things". He stated that he had found bodies on previous occasions.

The Coroner said it was curious how many bodies witness had found in the canal.

Witness said that it was not desirable that bodies should be left in the water. In this case, he took the body out of the water, and then went in search of a policeman, and this took up a deal of his time.

The Coroner said he could not increase the fee, and witness left the court.

A WITNESS RECALLED Alfred Henry Cooper was recalled.

The Coroner : Did Miss Smith mention something about deceased having suggested to her on the Thursday that they should end their lives together? Witness : I understood her to say that when they met in the morning at King Cross, deceased suggested that they should go on the Moor and talk things over. I think it was on the Moor when he uttered those words.

The Coroner : Were the words used, "Let us end our days, or end our lives, together". Miss Smith says the words used were that they would end their days together, which is a very different thing from ending their lives. Witness : I don't know in what sense the words were used, whether he meant by marriage or in another way.

The Coroner remarked that it was rather an ambiguous sentence. Witness, replying to a juror, said the disappearance of deceased from home had not been reported to the police. The mother of deceased thought he had gone abroad and would come back. They did not think he would entertain the idea of drowning himself because he had a comfortable home and was well cared for.

Other evidence showed that when the body was taken out of the water, the things found in the pockets included a watch and over £9 in money.

THE VERDICT The jury returned a verdict of “Found drowned”, and considered there was not sufficient evidence to show how deceased got into the water.

81 23 March 1910

A BINGLEY LANDLORD FINED

SEQUEL TO THE DROWNING OF A BOATMAN At Bingley today, Aaron Northrop, the licensee of the Midland Hotel, Bingley, was summoned for permitting drunkenness on February 18th.

The case arose out of the drowning of a Bingley boatman named **Samuel Perigo**, whose body was recovered from the canal at Bingley on February 19th.

At the inquest, allegations were made that Perigo had been drinking at the Midland Hotel on February 18th, and that he left that house at night in a drunken condition, this being the last time the man was seen alive. It is supposed he fell into the canal as he was making his way home.

For the defence, it was contended there was nothing in the man's condition to show he was under the influence of drink up to shortly before the time when he was advised by the waiter to leave the house, and he did so. He submitted the Bench would not have been troubled with this case but for the death of the unfortunate man.

The Bench decided that drunkenness had been permitted, and fined the defendant £2 and costs.

A second summons for permitting drunkenness against Northrop was heard, the date of this alleged offence being March 8th. In this case, the police saw a man named Heaton ejected from the inn in a drunken condition.

In this instance the Bench again convicted, and imposed a fine of 10s and costs.

82 29 April 1910

KNOCKED INTO THE OUSE

A HULL BOATMAN LOST AT SELBY Last night, shortly after nine o'clock, **Wallace Webster**, a Hull boatman, met with his death at Selby in a somewhat singular manner. He was sitting on his vessel, which was moored in the river Ouse, and at flood tide, it is said, the tiller suddenly swung round, knocking Webster violently into the river. He must have been badly stunned by the blow, for he was drowned, and his body had not this morning been recovered. The deceased belonged to Hull.

83 1 June 1910

GAVE HIS WIFE A WEEK'S NOTICE “My husband gave me a week's notice in writing that he was going to leave me”, a woman stated at the Acton Police Court.

84 13 September 1910

PLAYING NEAR THE AIRE Another Leeds boy, Robert Henderson, aged nine years, of Marshall Terrace, Black Bull Street, Hunslet, has been drowned whilst playing near the river Aire. He was with some other lads on a raft close to one of the coal barges in the lower basin of the river Aire, when he fell into the water.

There was no one at hand to effect a rescue, but the lad's companions told a boatman named **Chapman** of the accident, and he eventually recovered the body with a boat hook.

85 15 November 1910

FOUND IN THE CANAL – A LEEDS GIRL'S MYSTERIOUS DEATH

CLOTHES FOUND ON THE TOP OF A WALL A case of drowning, which up to the present remains a mystery, has been reported to the Leeds Police.

William Clegg, a boatman of Windhill, Shipley, was travelling with his boat on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and when about 300 yards on the Armley side of Wyther Bridge at Kirkstall, he

noticed some clothes lying on the top of a wall. A closer examination showed them to consist of a black jacket, a green rinking cap, a pair of gloves and a white knitted scarf. He reported the matter to the police, and dragging operations were at once commenced.

After about an hour's work, the body of a young woman, apparently about 17 or 18 years of age, was recovered, but there was nothing in her possession to lead to her identity. According to the information supplied by the police, the girl was about 4ft 10in in height, with brown eyes and hair and a fresh complexion. She was wearing a white blouse, navy blue dress skirt, mauve coloured underskirt with white spots, black stockings and black buttoned boots.

This afternoon, the body was identified as that of Nellie Akid, aged 15 years and 11 months, who lived at 5 Dawlish Mount, York Road, Leeds.

86 17 February 1911

BRIGHOUSE MAN'S WINDFALL

BOATMAN RECEIVES A SHARE OF A FORTUNE OF £50,000 The Brighouse boatman, **Arthur Green**, who about fifteen months ago was reported to have come into a share of a fortune of £50,000, has at last realised his anticipations. His brother, Mr Albert Green, who had prospered in America, left the money, and in addition to the Brighouse man, six other relatives resident in England have benefited. It is understood that at the least Mr Arthur Green will receive £4000. Part of this has been handed over to him, while the other has been invested. The interest of the latter will provide a comfortable yearly income.

Albert Green was a native of Mirfield, and was brought up as a mason. He emigrated to the United States, where he worked up a highly successful candy factory.

87 23 March 1911

WOMAN'S BODY TAKEN OUT OF THE CANAL AT LEEDS Shortly before noon today, a boatman, **Richard Reed**, was on his boat lying in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Globe Road, Leeds, when he noticed the body of a woman in the water. He got it out, and with others tried artificial respiration. Their efforts not being successful, the woman was taken to the Infirmary, where it was found that life was extinct.

The woman, who was apparently about 46 years of age, has not yet been identified.

88 11 April 1911

"WET THROUGH AGAIN" After jumping into Port Talbot Dock with his clothes on, and making his fourteenth rescue from drowning, **William Lloyd**, a boatman, went home and remarked, "I'm wet through again".

89 8 May 1911

THE CHEVET PARK MYSTERY – TWO MINERS ARRESTED NEAR BARNESLEY

POLICE COURT PROCEEDINGS – A CANAL BOATMAN'S STORY OF A MORNING RIDE

PRISONERS REMANDED TO WAKEFIELD A new and interesting development has occurred in connection with the Chevet Park Estate murder mystery, by the arrest of two men on suspicion of having been connected with the affair.

The facts will be quite fresh in the public mind. Harry Joyce, Sir Thomas Pilkington's second keeper, was discovered lying dead in the Roystone field, near Dowson's farm, Chevet, on Thursday evening last about 6.30. He had been shot in the body, near the hip, and had evidently been dead since early morning. He had also been struck a violent blow on the head, and there was every indication that the unfortunate man had been the victim of foul play. It will be remembered too that a fragment of the stock of a gun was found close to the body, as though it had been broken off in a struggle or in the infliction of a blow.

Ever since the discovery of the body, the West Riding police, under Major Archerley, the Chief Constable, and Superintendents Lawson (Wakefield) and MacDonald (Barnsley), have been indefatigable in their search for any clue which might aid them in the discovery of the culprit or

culprits. It was generally believed from the first that the crime was the work of poachers from some of the adjacent mining villages, and the attentions of the police officers were directed with this theory in mind.

Early yesterday morning, Major Archerley, Mr Quest (the Deputy Chief Constable) and the two superintendents already mentioned motored over to the little mining hamlet of Shafton-Two-Gates, which is a mile or two beyond Royston and some four miles to the north east of Barnsley, and there arrested two men for complicity in the murder. The men are Horace Wood (32) and Charles Edward Wright (29), both miners employed at the Grimethorpe Colliery, and both residents of Shafton-Two-Gates. The police are peculiarly reticent as to the evidence before them which has led to the arrest of these two men, but inquiries in the district today tend to show that both Wood and Wright were absent from work last Thursday, that they were abroad before it was even daylight, and were seen and recognised near Sir Thomas Pilkington's land, and also coming away from that direction.

AN EYE WITNESS OF THE STRUGGLE Diligent search by police officers in the vicinity and along the route to Shafton, and also at the suspected men's homes, has failed to bring to light the gun from which the fragment alluded to could have come.

The police have, however, made one very important discovery in locating a man who was an actual eye witness to the struggle between Joyce and his assailants. He also heard a shot, which it cannot be doubted was the one which proved fatal, and he saw the gamekeeper fall to the ground. This man, who, of course, will be a most important witness both at the adjourned inquest on Thursday and at the subsequent police court proceedings against the two accused, is a canal boatman.

SAW THE GAMEKEEPER FALL On Thursday morning early, he was riding his horse attached to his boat along the canal side from (?Outbrigg) at Wakefield towards Monckton, when he declares he saw the gamekeeper climb on to the canal bank at Walton (Joyce's home) and walk in front of him to Chevet. He saw him stop at a gate leading to the Royston Field. The boatman's story is that he continued his journey down the lane, taking a turn to the right towards Royston. Joyce then (as was given in evidence at the inquest) went from the gateway towards the rabbit warren at the (?Slang), conversing there with two farm labourers. Riding on his horse, the boatman had proceeded some six or seven hundred yards when he reached the bend of the road, and from here he had a view of the field where the body was found. From this point, it is said, he saw the gamekeeper engaged in a struggle with two men. The road dips down just afterwards, and just as his horse reached the decline, he heard a shot and saw the gamekeeper fall. The last view the witness had of the affair was seeing two men leaning over the prostrate man and examining him.

WAS IT AN ACCIDENT? It is now pretty well established that no one saw precisely how the gamekeeper was killed – whether deliberately or accidentally. It will be remembered that his gun was found perhaps a couple of hundred yards from the spot on a small mound, from whence it is thought he at first watched the poachers. Apparently he then left it there and confronted them. It may well be that in attempting to disarm the men, the gun held by one of them may have gone off accidentally, but against that possibility is to be set the fact of the very ugly gash which was found on the top of the dead man's head.

THE MISSING GUN The most important piece of evidence now, of course, is the gun from which the splinter or fragment came, and the police have searched high and low all day long ever since the crime, to find it. Up to the present their efforts have been in vain, but they do not despair of success, and a vigilant search is still being kept up. There is, it may be added, much woodland and several big plantations quite close at hand to the Royston Field where a gun might be hidden in such a way as would baffle almost any but a purely accidental discovery.

Both the accused men were in bed yesterday morning when the police called at their homes to arrest them. They offered no resistance, and were taken by motor to Barnsley, where they were locked up.

ACCUSED IN THE POLICE COURT The prisoners were brought up in custody before the West Riding Bench at Barnsley this morning.

Wood is a sandy complexioned somewhat delicate looking man. His age is given as 32 but he looks older, possibly because he is slightly bald. Wright is 29 and is a slighter figure and rather taller. He has a cast in his right eye. Both men are of medium height, and in appearance are typical miners.

Immediately they were brought into court, Superintendent Macdonald gave evidence of arrest. He asked for a remand to await an escort from the Wakefield division, as the crime took place there.

Mr Henry Pigott (the presiding magistrate) : You are both remanded to await an escort from Wakefield.

Wood : Thank you.

Prisoners were then hurried from the court.

They were conveyed to Wakefield this afternoon, and will be brought before the court there, probably tomorrow. They will then probably be remanded until after the conclusion of the coroner's inquiry.

90 21 July 1911

CHEVET PARK TRAGEDY

DISAPPEARANCE OF THE CHIEF WITNESS – MURDER TRIAL POSTPONED

NO TRACE OF THE CANAL MAN WHO SAW THE STRUGGLE WITH GAMEKEEPER

In the Crown Court at the West Riding Assizes, in the Leeds Town Hall today, before Mr Justice Scrutton, Charles Edward Wright (27), miner, and Horace Wood (32), miner, were placed in the dock charged with the murder of Henry Charles Joyce, gamekeeper at Chevet Park, on the estate of Sir Thomas Pilkington Bart, the High Sheriff.

Mr C F Lowenthal and Mr F Newbolt appeared to prosecute, and Mr C Mellor and Mr Felix Palmer were for the accused.

Mr Mellor, for the prisoners, said counsel for the defence had carefully considered certain information conveyed to them by the prosecution, that one of the witnesses for the Crown, **James Barker**, the canal boatman who saw the scuffle with the gamekeeper in the field, had absconded, and they felt that it would be impossible to adequately defend the accused without the presence of such a material witness. His application, therefore, was that the trial should be postponed to the next Assizes, or to some other time. There was, he understood, no chance of the man being found, and he should not like to take the responsibility of defending the men in the absence of the only man who saw the affray.

Mr Lowenthal said so far as the prosecution were concerned, they did not consider the disappearance of the witness would prejudice the defence. As Mr Mellor seriously applied for an adjournment on that ground, he would hardly say much either in favour or against the application.

His Lordship asked if there was any possibility of the witness being traced during the sittings of the Assize.

EXHAUSTIVE INQUIRY IN VAIN Mr Lowenthal replied in the negative, saying that he had made extensive inquiry in vain. They were prepared to take steps to make further inquiry, and inasmuch as it was thought that the witness had not left the country, it was probable that he could be found, but in that case the prisoners could not be tried for four months.

His Lordship was inclined to share the opinion of the prosecution, that the witness was not one of great materiality ; but if counsel for the defence said his absence would prejudice the prisoners, and there was the merest chance of getting him, it would possibly be his duty to postpone the trial to the next Assizes.

BAIL ASKED FOR PRISONERS The Judge decided to postpone the trial ; and Mr Mellor then said that if it were not the fault of the prisoners that the witness had absconded, and that they had been in prison since May 4, he respectfully asked that his Lordship should allow such bail as was commensurate with the position of the accused. It was unfortunate that the additional effort to be made to discover the witness had not been taken before. Until that morning, the defence did not know that the witness would not turn up.

These men had wives and children depending upon them. They were prepared to give assurances to the country that they would not go away, and he thought, in the circumstances, they should have reasonable bail. He did not think there would be the slightest doubt about the accused coming forward for trial. He had seen their relatives, and they were anxious to produce such reasonable security as the position of miners afforded.

ATTITUDE OF THE PROSECUTION Mr Lowenthal said he could not either agree to or oppose the application. The trial was being adjourned at the request of the prisoners in the absence of a certain witness. The prosecution did not think the presence of the witness would assist the prisoners on a charge of murder, and he had never known prisoners on a charge of murder being granted bail. It was admitted that really substantial bail could not be produced ; but if his Lordship thought it right in such circumstances to allow the prisoners out on bail, he could not in any sense support such an application.

CONTENTION FOR THE DEFENCE Mr Mellor said what they had to consider was whether there was a fair prospect of the prisoners coming to trial, and it might be that the charge against them would fail – that the affair might be brought in as an accident. Anyhow, it was extremely unlikely that the accused could escape. He quoted legal opinion to show that it was unusual to grant bail in a murder case – except the trial was adjourned. In this case he held that he was justified in applying for bail now the trial had been adjourned, and especially as it had been adjourned through no fault of the prisoners.

The Judge, in giving his decision, said that the prisoners were charged with wilful murder, and it was not unusual in such a charge to grant bail. The accused had been in prison, and a true bill had been found by the Grand Jury. It was very unusual to grant bail after a true bill had been found. It appeared that a witness for the prosecution could not be found, and counsel for the prosecution took the view that the absence of the witness would not prejudice the prisoners, and that they were ready to proceed without him.

ADJOURNED TO THE NEXT ASSIZES After reading the depositions, he shared that view, but counsel for the prisoners thought differently, and had applied for the postponement of the trial on the ground that the defence would be seriously prejudiced if the missing witness was not available for cross-examination. He had, therefore, granted the adjournment to the next Assizes. Counsel for the accused had also applied for bail. It was very exceptional to grant bail in such circumstances. One prisoner had not given a true account of his movements on the night of the murder. The other prisoner also made statements probably untrue. Consequently, he did not feel justified in making such an exceptional order, and the prisoners must remain in custody.

The men were then removed from the dock.

91 28 September 1911

MORE RAIN NEEDED – LEEDS CANAL TRAFFIC STILL HELD UP

BOATS CANNOT PASS BINGLEY

POSITION SAID TO BE WORSE THAN FOR VERY MANY YEARS The continued scarcity of water in the Cheshire canals has resulted in the closing of some of them. Loaded boats are stated to be lying on mud banks, and the position of affairs generally is such as has never been known before. Inquiries at the head office of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in Leeds today elicited the information that the Company's boats have not been running through to Liverpool since the beginning of August.

During the first weeks of that month, the canal was open to Skipton. Soon afterwards it was found impossible to get the boats any further than Bingley, a distance from Leeds of 15 1/2 miles. Then Shipley became the stopping point, and thus it continued until the rains of the past few days. Now the canal has been opened up to Bingley again.

The Leeds and Liverpool Canal joins the river Aire at Water Lane, the actual junction being known as the river lock. Here, today, were to be seen numbers of laden boats moored in the basin awaiting the rising of the canal. Some of the craft, with huge piles of coal showing above their decks, were stated to be drawing about ten inches more water than would allow them to reach Shipley, or possibly Bingley, which only boats drawing about three feet are at present able to reach.

At the lock was another coal laden barge which, in the normal state of the canal, would have been able to take at least 22 tons more than she was now able to carry. She would thus have to make two journeys for one ordinary freight. It is, naturally, not a very happy or profitable time for the boatmen, who have to hang about waiting for the depth of water to increase.

NO NEED FOR SOUNDINGS One of them remarked to a "*Yorkshire Evening Post*" representative this morning :-"There's lots o' Yorkshiresmen lackin'", while another interposed, "Aye, and lots of Lancashiremen too".

The latter, who ventured the information that he had been "up and down the canal for a long while", added, "Them as has got home, has stopped at home, t' Bingle' boats among 'em". A young boatman in the group of "held ups" divertingly described how the water above Bingley got shallower and shallower every day, until they were pushed back to Shipley. "We didn't bother about any soundings. There was nothing to sound. We knew when we couldn't get any further by the boat touching the bottom, and then we backed off and turned her head round home again. Sometimes we lay to for a bit if it looked like rain, in the hope that we should have sufficient water to go forward. And sometimes the rain came – and brought the canal up a beggarly half inch, so there was nothing for it but to return".

STILL HOPING FOR RAIN The chief concern of one of the older boatmen was as to the probability of more rain within the next few days. "What I want to know is this – is it going to rain?" he asked, with some show of impatience.

"All that can be said on that point", answered our representative, "is that the weather is changeable just now".

"Aye", retorted the inconsolable bargeman, "But will it change to make it better for the likes of us?" On that point our representative could only say that he hoped it would.

THE WATER ANKLE DEEP One of this man's comrades stated that at Armley he could have jumped out of his boat with a boat hook and "touched dry". Above Bingley, the water had been "not more than ankle deep". His idea of the whole situation was that rain must come or the canal traffic be stopped altogether. The men considered the water to be the lowest they had ever known, lower even, they said, than it was in 1887. Some ten or eleven years ago, however, they could get only as far as Apperley Bridge, though the canal did not seem so low as at present. When asked how, if the water was lower now, they could then get to Shipley or Bingley, they said they thought it must be due to the loading and consequently the smaller draught of the boats.

92 5 October 1911

KNOTTINGLEY BOATMAN DROWNED AT GOOLE An extraordinary fatality occurred at Goole early this morning. **James Ambler** (24), a Knottingley boatman, with his wife and child, were sleeping on board his keel *Grace* in the Goole ship dock, and about 5,30 am were awakened by water pouring into the cabin. Ambler went on deck and shouted to the man on the keel *Pearl*, lying alongside, and he at once came on board, and Mrs Ambler and the young child were rescued from the cabin and taken on to the *Pearl*. Before Ambler could get away, however, the *Grace* heeled over and he was drowned.

Search was made for the body, but no trace of it could be seen.

93 10 October 1911

FELL AGAINST HEATING APPARATUS

MISHAP RESULTS IN LEEDS SCHOOLBOY'S DEATH A seven year old boy, **George Chadwick**, attending St Matthew's School, Holbeck, has met with a strange and fatal accident, as described at an inquest today, at a school in Domestic Street, before the Leeds City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm).

On September 20, the lad, who was the son of a Hunslet boatman residing in Vaux Street, was playing with several other boys in St Matthew's School, when he suddenly fell upon the floor. His head came in contact with the heating apparatus, causing the base of the skull to swell, but otherwise he was apparently not severely hurt. He did not afterwards seem much the worse for the mishap, and attended school regularly until Saturday last, when he complained of pains in the head. His grandmother, with whom he was staying on Low Moor Side, put him to bed in the evening. He rambled during the night, and the next day, Mr Moore, a local surgeon, was called in, and he attended the boy at the time of his death.

The boys who were playing with the deceased had testified that the fall was a pure accident. The jury found that death was due to convulsions and a lowered system from a fall and injury to the head.

94 17 January 1912

AFTER THREE YEARS

CHARGE AGAINST A BOATMAN AT BINGLEY At Bingley today, **William Neill**, boatman of no fixed abode, was charged with being on enclosed premises at Bingley for an unlawful purpose, and also for assaulting Ellen Rhodes, married woman, Hill Street, Bingley. The alleged offences occurred on February 12th 1909, since which time the prisoner has been out of the district, but he gave himself up to the Blackburn police on the charges, and was brought to Bingley. Prisoner admitted his guilt in the first case, but denied the assault, but the cases were adjourned as the woman was unable to attend court owing to illness.

95 22 February 1912

WOMAN'S BODY IN THE CANAL

BOATMAN'S DISCOVERY NEAR ARMLEY PARK RAILWAY BRIDGE Early this morning, while going with his boat in the direction of Kirkstall, **William Poole** of Cooper's Court, Bowman Lane, found the body of a woman in the canal near to Armley Park Railway Bridge.

The body was taken to Kirkstall Mortuary to await identification. The woman appears to be about 45 years of age. She was wearing a blue and white striped cotton dress, two aprons, and a pair of black velvet slippers. Her hair is black and her eyes brown.

96 20 May 1912

BRADFORD POLICE IMPUGNED

WITNESS WHO WAS ASKED TO STAND DOWN – REFUSAL TO APOLOGISE

CHARGE THAT POLICE HANDLED A MAN ROUGHLY There was an unusual incident at the Bradford West Riding Court today, during the hearing of charges against **Stephen Noble**, boatman, for being drunk and disorderly and assaulting Police-constable Wynne.

The accused called as a witness Mr James Tiplady, an elderly gentleman who resides at Shipley, and the latter charged the police with having treated Noble in a disgraceful way.

Turning from the Bench in the direction of the body of the court, he said, "There would have been nothing at all if the officer here had not interfered".

The Chairman (Dr W H Ellis) : You are not making a speech. Just address your remarks to the chairman and not to the court.

Mr Tiplady (warmly) : I know what I am doing. You and me have been neighbours for years. I know you well. I am not going to be browbeaten by you.

The Chairman : I simply asked you to address your remarks to the Bench, and unless you do so, you can stand down.

Mr Tiplady : I will stand down. There will not be much justice where you are.

The witness then left the box, remarking, "I don't care for Dr Ellis, I can tell you".

Another witness also spoke against the conduct of the police.

It was stated that there were 10 previous convictions against the accused, three for assaults on private persons.

He was fined 12s 6d including costs for being drunk and disorderly, and 20s and costs for assaulting the police.

Mr Tiplady was then called forward again, and the Magistrates' Clerk said, "Do you wish to make any apology or expression of regret to the Bench for what you have said?"

Mr Tiplady (emphatically) : No.

The Magistrates' Clerk : Very well then, you may leave the court.

Mr Tiplady then left.

97 27 June 1912

RESCUED FROM THE OUSE

A BOATMAN'S GALLANT RESCUE AT SELBY A brave rescue from drowning in the river Ouse at Selby was witnessed yesterday evening. Freddy Hetherington, aged seven, who lives in Ouse Court, was playing near the railway jetty when, going too near the edge, he fell into the river.

Tom Grace, boatman of Shipyard, Selby, at once divested himself of his coat, plunged into the water and swam towards the drowning boy, who sank and rose about three times. Grace, who is an expert swimmer, managed to get a secure hold of him and brought him safely to the bank. The lad was taken home, and was medically attended, making a satisfactory recovery in the course of the evening.

98 1 July 1912

WEST RIDING QUARTER SESSIONS The following sentences were passed at the West Riding Quarter Sessions, held at Leeds Town Hall today :-

John Foulston (50), boatman, pleaded guilty to embezzling £1 1s from J H Dyson at Wakefield. Six months.

99 3 July 1912

TO MANCHESTER BY BARGE

TALE OF AN ADVENTUROUS JOURNEY - "CRIBB'D, CABIN'D AND CONFINED"

NINETEEN HOURS IN THE STANDEGE TUNNEL

(By a Peripatetic)

"Allees : whoever you are, come travel with me!"

When I inquired in Leeds as to the probable time it would take me to reach Manchester as a passenger on a barge, or series of barges, by a certain route of the waterways, a young man in an office nearly had a fit.

But I did not throw cold water over him. No : we reversed the usual order of things, and he liberally doused my project, and would have utterly swamped me in a flood of "whys" and "wherefores" had I not recovered my breath sufficiently to dam the flowing tide of his speech. I told him that I had already met an ancient waterman who, years ago, spent five or six days on the journey ; that I knew that I could get to New York in that time, and that I was fully aware that it was possible to get to Manchester by train or tram.

I mentioned that I had mused o'er the map, and seen for myself that to get to Manchester on that particular route, I should have to pass over five distinct waterways : The Aire and Calder to Wakefield ; the Hebble Navigation to Mirfield ; Sir John Ramsden's canal at Huddersfield ; the Huddersfield canal to Ashton ; and the Ashton canal to Manchester. Still the young man sought to deter me, and suggested the car to Wakefield.

I sought the banks of the canal and the society of water folk ; worried through to Wakefield and on, on.

It really looked as if I should be stranded on the shore at Huddersfield, for nobody there – at least nobody that I met – appeared to know of any boat going through to Manchester via the Standedge Tunnel. One old man, who worked on the waterway, told me that he thought it wasn't much used now, but if I went to "Slowit", I might see or hear of someone who had been through it.

"SLOWIT" Standing on the historic bridge of "Slowit", I thought of the story that has made it famous. Of that simple soul who, seeing the moon reflected in the water, mistook it for a cheese and started to rake for it, whilst his son, seeing the stars also reflected, shouted, "Eh, feyther, if tha can't manage t' big un, rake up some of t' little uns". Since then, Slowit folk have been known as "t' moon rakers". But, bless you, they're not ashamed of the cognomen, and the official seal of the Slaithwaite Gas Company depicts a crescent moon and a sloe tree, designed by a former vicar of the parish.

"Why of course", said the boatman, "Come aboard".

So I stepped on the top of the cabin, and took a seat on the water can. Somehow the sitting on a water can and slowly passing through the green scenery at the close of a summer day is singularly soothing. The rising in the locks – there are 12 between Huddersfield and Marsden, and I forget how many I missed by boarding at Slaithwaite, but I enjoyed them all.

BOB THE BOATMAN Bob the boatman lifted up his voice and sang as he steered. An old, old music hall song that took me back to the days when I thought music halls were wicked, but nice. Now, alas, I think them neither – only tedious.

“Going to be a dirty night”, said Bob. “Why not get inter t' cabin”.

I found the Boy there. He was not really the cabin boy, but Bob's son who, being delicate, had come on the cruise in search of health. And the lad liked the life of the waterways ; it was better than being in hospital. But Bob and the boy did not compose the entire crew. There was the skipper, who was doing horse marine duty on the bank, and **Jack Brierley**, who was to help “leg it” through the tunnel.

At ten o'clock we moored at the bottom of Standedge. In the semi darkness the mountain looked enormous, and the entrance to the canal tunnel seemed strangely small. A snorting train rushed past, and was lost in a tunnel above it, and somewhere higher up a motor “bike” explosively went its way. But we did not linger o'er the scene, for we had to be in the tunnel by ten o'clock or wait till two next morning. 'Tis the rule. Four hours is allowed for the passage of each boat.

A TIGHT FIT The barge was seven feet in width and it just fitted the passageway. Oh, but it was dark and clammy cold in there! Bob and Jack crawled for'ard, and lying sideways on the deck, pushed against the walls with their feet, and so propelled the boat along. A quaint means of locomotion in these days of swift travelling. Here, beneath the passing trains, we went the same pace that they went when this tunnel was opened on April 4th, 101 years ago. Why didn't they open it on April 1st? If it took sixteen years to construct, surely they might have put a spurt on for the sake of those three days.

The clatter of the clogs made music of a kind, for the beats were in harmony. “Cone for'ard”, shouted Bob, “and see how we do it”.

A NARROW ESCAPE I went for'ard, crawling on hands and knees along a narrow plank over which the tarpaulin covers were stretched, making that part of the boat look like a house top. But I kept bumping my head against the top of the tunnel and, thinking that I might get along more easily by walking along the ledge of the boat, I slid down the tarpaulin – and missed the ledge. My clothes caught in something or other, and part of my scanty store of silver splashed into the water. My watch was going too. In a wild effort to save it, I managed to release my clothing, and slipped further down. I knew the lad was somewhere behind with a lamp, but I could see nothing, nothing. There seemed to be scarcely anything to grasp at, and I felt myself slipping, slipping

“Why so quiet, mate”, shouted Bob, “Summat up?”

In a moment, the music of the clogs stopped, and Bob had clambered aft and pulled me to safety.

The clogs rhythmically struck the walls, and the dripping waters from the roof and sides of the tunnel seemed to murmur soft low songs.

STUCK IN THE TUNNEL Suddenly we stopped dead. The clogs beat against the walls until the breath of the “leggers” came in tortured gasps. They strove and strove, but we moved not an inch. An hour passed, an hour of hard efforts, with a long push, a strong push and a push altogether, etc. But the barge refused to budge ; it was wedged between the walls. We were stuck under Standedge which, to quote a public house sign, stands 1230 feet above the level of the sea.

“Ah'm played out”, said Jack, “You please yersens what you do ; Ah'm bahn to 'ave a rest”. And he retired behind the tarpaulin. So Bob, the Boy and I went aft. You can get an idea of the size of the cabin when I remind you that the width of the boat was seven feet. Our little home was rather less, and a man of 5ft 8in had to keep his head bowed in it.

The Boy let down the bed, tucked himself in, and was in the Land of Nod ere Bob and I had properly lighted up and exchanged yarns. I felt as if I had known Bob all my life. And yet, but a few hours before, he had accepted me on my face value – which isn't much – and given a lift to a chap looking for a job and who was making for Manchester. And he was offering of his best – a

share in the bed, or a make up on the locker. I chose the latter, and volunteered to keep an eye on the fire and the lamp alight. Perhaps I had better mention that I had placed the latter outside, partly because it was too familiar, and partly as a signal.

It was a hungry little fire, and if it wasn't fed all the time, it sulked and suddenly went out. I must have dozed off, for when I opened my eyes I found that I could see nothing. Utter blackness. The fire had apparently gone out, and the lamp had borne it company.

DAYLIGHT ONCE MORE Perhaps the dawn was breaking o'er the hills ; maybe it was day outside, and people had taken up the common round, the daily task, again.

Oh, but I was glad to find that match. And even if the tea, the bacon and the bread did taste of paraffin, I nevertheless enjoyed the breakfast,

Friday, noon : We had been here fourteen hours. We should have met the skipper and the horse at Diggle ten hours ago. Why hadn't he been to our assistance? "Happen", said Bob, "he overslept hissen".

At two o'clock, a yellow light in the distance. Nearer, nearer. The voices of men. Then the outline of a barge. Much shouting, pushing with poles, and at last we are free and moving again.

Five men "leg" now, and yet we move but slowly. The tunnel widens, and we are in a cavern with rocky sides, where waters fall. A strange, weird place, and our lamps turn the walls into beautiful greens and golds.

Looking at the arches above, one seems to be wandering in some vast cathedral, and the silhouetted figure of the Boy ahead appears like some acolyte approaching a white door – the door that leads up to day.

Diggle at five o'clock. We had covered three and a quarter miles in nineteen hours.

100 23 July 1912

UNKNOWN WOMAN IN THE CANAL

CORONER AND A HOLBECK BOATMAN'S ACTION An inquest was held this afternoon at Rothwell, on an unknown woman.

George William Gower, a boatman of Holbeck, said on Monday morning while travelling on the canal he saw the body. He fastened a rope around it and towed it opposite the Anchor Inn. He fastened it to the rails of the canal side and went for the police.

The Coroner said witness was foolish to have left the body in the water as there might have been a little life left.

"Found drowned" was the verdict.

101 22 August 1912

KNOTTINGLEY BOATMAN AND HIS HORSE **Alfred Pearson**, a boatman of Screw Bridge, Knottingley, was summoned at Leeds today, under the Protection of Animals Act 1911, for working a horse when it was in an unfit condition.

The animal, according to Inspector Stanbridge, was lame and unfit for work, and Mr Mason, veterinary surgeon, confirmed him in that respect.

Defendant was ordered to hand over the horse for destruction, and to pay the costs of the summons – 27s in all.

102 13 September 1912

DROWNED IN THE RIVER AIRE

INQUEST ON AN UNKNOWN IN LEEDS An inquest was held at the Leeds Town Hall this afternoon on the body of an unknown man, which was found this morning in the river Aire, between Leeds Bridge and Victoria Bridge, by a bargeman named **Thomas Clark**.

Police-constable Thomas Brown described the body as that of "a labourer or boatman, aged between 35 and 40 years of age ; height 5ft 7in ; of powerful build, dark brown hair, two front teeth missing, eyes blue, and dressed in black vicuna suit, blue smock, blue and white striped cotton shirt". The deceased's right eye was badly swollen.

The jury returned a verdict of “Found drowned”.

103 3 October 1912

WATCHES WHICH ARE MADE TO TRAVEL INCIDENTS AT BARKISLAND

A BROOCH THAT IS DOING DUTY IN CHESHIRE The story of a man who acted the part of good Samaritan and was treated with ingratitude was told at the Huddersfield Police Court today.

John William McCarthy (66), a boatman, said to be an old offender, was charged with having stolen 22s 6d and a silver watch, the property of Benjamin Lund of Stolps Farm, Barkisland, on September 10th. The prisoner yesterday at Halifax was committed for trial at the Assizes for breaking into Fixby Hall, the headquarters of the Huddersfield Golf Club.

Superintendent Barraclough said that Stolps Farm was an isolated place, and last winter the prisoner called there and made a statement – which was probably true – that he was very hungry and exhausted. Food was supplied him, for which he paid 4d. Six weeks ago, he again visited the farm, and was wet to the skin. Mrs Lund acted the good Samaritan, took him in and gave him ham and eggs. Prisoner had a thoroughly “good do”.

On the 4th ult, he made a further visit, and was allowed to sleep downstairs for the night. He stayed for a few days, going errands, and was apparently honest, as he brought back change. On the 10th he disappeared, and the money and watch were then missed. Detective Robotham received the prisoner at Halifax yesterday.

McCarthy admitted the robbery, and said that if he had not thought the Lunds were worth plenty of money, he would not have “done it on them”.

Mary Elizabeth Lund, wife of Benjamin Lund, farm labourer, bore out this statement, saying she made the prisoner's acquaintance early in December.

Prisoner : She is mistaken. I was in Parkhurst (convict prison) then.

The witness said that on the third occasion, prisoner gave her a small silver plated brooch bearing the name “Sarah Jane”, and a ring, and sold her the silver watch which he afterwards stole.

The Prisoner : The watch is neither hers nor mine. Watches are like shillings. They are made to travel around the country from hand to hand.

The witness said on one occasion, prisoner's hair was not grey as at present.

The Prisoner : I had some Russian tan on it. (Laughter)

The witness said that prisoner told the children to call him “Uncle Will” and gave the name of William Hall.

The prisoner said the brooch belonged to “Sarah Jane” and it was now “doing duty” in Cheshire.

When asked if he had any questions to ask the detective, he replied, “No, sir, I never contradict men of honour”. Replying to the charge, he used abusive language to the deputy clerk to the magistrates. The prisoner was committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions.

104 16 December 1912

CASTLEFORD DROWNING MYSTERY About noon today, the body of a man was recovered from the river Aire near Breffitt's Glass Works, Castleford, answering the description of **Hanson Whitfield** (21), a boatman, who has been missing since November 27th.

The missing man was the son of a Mirfield canal carrier, and on the 27th November, after tying a boat to the side, he disappeared, and it was feared that he had fallen into the water, but dragging operations failed to find any trace of him.

105 20 December 1912

DRINK AND MURDER

JUDGE'S COMMENT IN MANCHESTER MAN'S APPEAL A Manchester boatman, **Tom Mason**, unsuccessfully appealed in the Court of Criminal Appeal today against a death sentence passed upon him at the Manchester Assizes for murdering his wife.

The chief ground of appeal was that Mr Justice Coleridge, who tried the case, is alleged to have

erroneously dealt with certain evidence in his summing up to the jury.

It was urged by counsel that the prisoner was drunk when he committed the murder, and on this point he submitted that he was then in a state of unbalanced mind.

Mr Justice Phillimore : It is very seldom that murder is committed except under the influence of drink.

The decision of the Court, it was intimated, was not to be taken into account to prejudice any application which the friends of the prisoner might make to the Home Office.

106 23 December 1912

FLUNG HERSELF INTO THE CANAL

WINDHILL GIRL CHARGED WITH ATTEMPTED SUICIDE A particularly painful case was heard at the West Riding Police Court, Bradford, this morning, when Gertrude Wilson, aged 16, a millhand of Windhill, was charged with attempting to commit suicide.

It was stated that the girl tried to drown herself at Windhill on Thursday the 19th December. About three o'clock in the afternoon, a boatman, **Job Hudson**, noticed the girl on the towing-path. She took off her hat and jacket and, after throwing them down, deliberately jumped into the water. The boatman promptly ran to the girl's rescue.

Her mother, who lived at Windhill, had been warned to attend the court, but she had not put in an appearance.

In remanding the case for a week, The Chairman announced that the Bench had granted the sum of 5s to Hudson for his timely rescue.

107 6 January 1913

BODY FOUND IN THE CANAL AT SHIPLEY Yesterday afternoon, **Charles Simmons**, a boatman of Baildon, discovered the body of a man floating in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near to the Victoria Bridge, Shipley.

The body was removed to the mortuary, and was later identified as that of John Bancroft, a Keighley woolcomber. Bancroft, who had been employed at Shipley, had been missing for about three weeks.

108 7 January 1913

LEEDS WOMAN COMMITS SUICIDE ON SUNDAY MORNING An inquest was held in Leeds this afternoon on Mabel Richardson (39), lately residing with her parents at 52 Bellhouse Avenue, Leeds, who jumped into the river Aire on Sunday.

Joseph Boulton, boatman, said that at 11.20 am on Sunday, while on his lighter near the Aire and Calder Wharf, he saw a woman stand on the wall and jump into the water.

Mrs L Butterworth identified the body as that of her sister. Nothing had been heard of her since their home was broken up a few months ago on the death of her father. She understood she had taken a situation as housekeeper in Wakefield. She would probably have been short of money.

The jury returned a verdict of suicide by drowning, there being no evidence to show the state of the woman's mind at the time.

109 24 March 1913

THREATENED WITH A REVOLVER

CHARGES AGAINST HUNSLET BOATMAN AT THE POLICE COURT At the Leeds Police Court today, Mr George Brown in the chair, **Louis Fowweather** (26), boatman of 4 Smeaton Grove, Hunslet, and Charles Abbott (31) of 33 Hannah Street, Hunslet, were charged with being drunk and disorderly.

When the case was called, Superintendent Handley told the magistrates that just before Fowweather was arrested on Saturday night, he had violently assaulted a girl of 19 by taking her by the throat. Her father came to her assistance, and Fowweather pulled out a revolver and threatened to shoot him.

Abbott then came on the scene, and helped to take the revolver away from Fowweather. The Superintendent asked that Fowweather should be remanded until tomorrow. In reply to the magistrates, Fowweather said he did not know anything about it, and had never had a revolver. Fowweather was remanded in custody and Abbott, on promising to appear as a witness, was discharged.

110 25 March 1913

HUNSLET HOLIDAY FRACAS – STRUGGLE WITH MAN WITH A LOADED REVOLVER BOATMAN SEVERELY PUNISHED At the Leeds Police Court today, **Louis Fowweather** (26), boatman of 4 Smeaton Grove, Hunslet, was charged with being drunk and disorderly, assault and threatening to shoot William Thomas Giles of 39 Grape Street, Hunslet.

Ethel Giles, single, of 39 Grape Street, said she was going along Canal Street, Hunslet, at 11.15 on Saturday night, when defendant came up to her and asked her where she was going. He then gripped her by the throat and afterwards put both his hands down her throat.

A young woman who saw the struggle called William Thomas Giles, father of the witness, who came to her assistance. She had never seen the man before.

Mr William Scholes (for the defence) : How did you recognise the man? I saw him when he pulled out a revolver to my father. He pulled it out of his left hand coat pocket.

The Clerk : Did he present it at your father. Yes, sir. He said, "If you speak or stir I shall shoot you".

Mr Scholes : What became of the revolver? My uncle and six or seven more got it from him.

Mr George Brown (the presiding magistrate) : You are no worse now then? No, sir.

Mrs Charlotte Wainwright of 6 Canal Street spoke to seeing the struggle, but stated that she was not quite sure the defendant was the man, as it was dark at the time.

Mr F R Spark : Why didn't you go and help her? I hadn't enough pluck to go to the man.

William Nicholson, foreman of Canal Street, said he saw a man running down the street, and the crowd shouted, "He's been going to shoot your Tom".

Mr Scholes : You are sure this is the man? Well, he knows I give 'un a black eye, anyway. (Laughter)

Witness also said that he took the revolver from defendant, and "gave him a clout in t'lug". "A few more set about him," he added, "and I said ;"Let poor feller go ; he's 'ad enough"" (Laughter)

PRESENTED REVOLVER AT HIS FOREHEAD

Mr Scholes : What did he do? He showed fight, but I give him one in t'ee. (Laughter)

Charles Abbott (21), labourer of Hannah Street, Hunslet, said he held defendant's hand while Nicholson took the revolver away from him, and afterwards took defendant away "out of the bother", but defendant started to fight him, and they were both apprehended for being drunk and disorderly.

William Thomas Giles said that when he went to his daughter's assistance, defendant presented the revolver at his forehead and said, "If you come another yard farther I will do you in". He afterwards ran away.

Police-constable Ellis said that Nicholson brought the revolver to the police station. It was loaded in five chambers.

TWO MONTHS FOR THE ASSAULT

For the defence, Mr Scholes said the defendant admitted being drunk, but denied that he had possession of the revolver when he went out. He did not know how it came into his possession. He had been drinking with a woman earlier in the evening and had lost a sovereign, and he probably thought the first witness was the woman.

The magistrate remarked that it was a merciful thing that defendant was not charged with a more serious crime. For being drunk and disorderly he would have to pay 20s and costs, or go to prison for 14 days with hard labour ; for the assault he would go to prison for two months with hard labour; and for the threats he would be bound over for 12 months.

111 9 May 1913

HUNSLET WOMAN WHO HAD "NOTHING TO LIVE FOR" A boatman named **Walter Clarkson** was working on a barge on the river Aire at Hunslet yesterday afternoon, when he heard screams, and a minute later saw a woman struggling in the water.

He got a large boat hook and pulled the woman out of the river. She was placed on the bank, and first aid was administered by Police-sergeant Spencer. When she recovered, she was taken to the Hunslet police station, where she was supplied with dry clothing and attended by a doctor.

This morning, the woman, whose name is Eva Rider (38) of Hillidge Street, Hunslet, was charged at the Leeds City Police Court with attempting to commit suicide. In reply to the charge, she said, "I have nothing to live for". The accused, it was stated, was living with her father, a man of 74, and was of weak intellect.

Mr H Marshall (Stipendiary Magistrate) ordered the prisoner to go to the Workhouse Infirmary for 14 days.

112 9 May 1913

GOOLE TRAGEDY INQUEST

JURY RETURN A VERDICT OF MANSLAUGHTER An inquest was opened at Goole today on William Bateman Lord, farmer of Pollington, in respect of whose death **Jack Stead**, a Goole boathauler, is in custody.

The accused elected to be present during the proceedings.

Two witnesses named **Robert Gleason**, boat agent, and **Thomas Shires**, boatman, spoke to Lord coming on to the canal bridge at Goole on Tuesday afternoon. On seeing Stead he used bad language, and Stead immediately struck him in the face.

Lord fell into a sitting position, and then fell backwards, his head striking the stone setts, and he became unconscious.

Stead helped to carry him into his (Stead's) home, and then sent for Dr O'Donnell. During Wednesday morning, Lord was found dead by Stead's grandson.

Dr O'Donnell said that Lord bore no external marks on his head except a cut on his nose. His skull, which was a thin one, was fractured, and death was due to cerebral haemorrhage consequent on a fracture of the skull.

The jury were agreed that Lord's death was due to haemorrhage of the brain consequent on blows given by Stead following provocative language by deceased.

The Coroner : That is a verdict of murder.

The Foreman : No, our verdict is manslaughter.

113 24 May 1913

RESCUE SCENE AT SELBY

TWO BOATMEN HAVE A NARROW ESCAPE Two young boatmen, **Samuel Dews** and **William Walden**, have had a narrow escape from drowning at Selby.

Walden, who is mate on the Leeds lighter *Mercury*, and his companion, who is a boatman on the lighter *Comet*, went for a sail in a cog boat, but on reaching midstream opposite the Olympia Works, the boat suddenly capsized and sank.

The position of the boatmen was one of great danger, and they were at once in difficulties. A boat was rowed to them from a lighter moored near. Dews was the first rescued, but the second man, Walden, was only seized as he was sinking in a state of exhaustion. His hand only could be seen above the water, but he was secured by **Sam Holmes**, a young boatman on the lighter *Eclipse*, and drawn into the boat. He had been under water for some minutes.

Walden, who is 26 years of age, has only been married a fortnight, and his wife, who was on the deck of a boat nearby, fainted. The cog boat, which had sunk out of sight, could not be found.

114 30 June 1913

SENTENCES AT WEST RIDING QUARTER SESSIONS The following sentences were passed at

the West Riding Quarter Sessions at the Leeds Town Hall today :-

Leonard Shaw (29), boatman, theft of £2 11s at Goole on April 17th, six months hard labour.

115 1 September 1913

LEEDS BOY FOUND DROWNED AT BINGLEY This morning, the body of a boy was discovered in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Bingley. It was identified as that of Joe Pagotto (8), son of Orlando Pagotto, feast stall holder of 5 Club Yard, York Road, Leeds.

The boy last week was on a visit to his uncle, **Joseph Crowther**, boatman of Eldon Place, Bingley, and last Thursday night went out to play with Alec Perigo, another boy. Some time afterwards, he was seen playing on the bank of the canal close to the spot where his body was found today.

116 8 September 1913

A BOY'S NOMADIC LIFE

SAYS HE WAS GIVEN AWAY TO A BOATMAN A fifteen year old boy named **William Barlow** was charged at the Bradford West Riding Police Court today with wandering abroad at Shipley.

Superintendent Keel said the boy, who was very bright and intelligent, was found by a constable wandering in Shipley after midnight. The boy said that he had been living with his parents at Castleford, but his father had deserted him. Subsequently his mother gave him away to a boatman. He had travelled about with that boatman and other boatmen until about six weeks ago, when he was cast adrift. Since then he had been wandering about.

On the suggestion of the Superintendent, the boy was remanded to the Detention Home at Shipley for inquiries to be made, and also to see what could be done in the boy's interests.

117 24 September 1913

BRADFORD WOMAN RESCUED FROM DROWNING

KNARESBOROUGH BOATMAN'S PLUCK A timely rescue from drowning of a stylishly dressed young woman named Alice Smith (25) of Bradford, has been effected by **William Bramley**, a Knaresborough boatman.

Bramley was near the High Bridge when he heard a scream proceeding from the direction of Bilton Fields, about a hundred yards distant. Although it was pitch dark, he ran to the spot, and was able to locate a person struggling desperately in the river, which hereabouts is very deep.

Without divesting himself of his clothing, Bramley pluckily walked in up to the chest and fortunately was able to seize hold of the woman as she floundered about.

With the assistance of another man named Tom Taylor, she was brought to the bank and thence to the George Inn, where restoratives were applied with satisfactory results.

She expressed regret to her rescuer for having done such a foolish act, and stated she had gone straight down from business at Harrogate and jumped into the river consequent on a family bereavement having greatly worried her.

118 27 September 1913

HANDED OVER TO HER FRIENDS

BRADFORD GIRL WHO TRIED TO DROWN HERSELF At Knaresborough today, Alice Smith (25) of Bradford, employed in a Harrogate drapery establishment, was charged with attempting to commit suicide by throwing herself into the river Nidd at Knaresborough late on Tuesday night.

Superintendent Morley stated that the woman's screams were heard by **William Bramley**, a Knaresborough boatman, who pluckily entered the water, which was very deep, and with assistance rescued the woman, who was revived and taken to the Knaresborough Workhouse. The defendant had been in a depressed state of health for some time, owing to illness, which no doubt accounted for her rash act.

The defendant expressed her regret and, on promising not to repeat the offence, was handed over to the care of friends from Bradford, who promised to look after her.

119 29 September 1913

Newton Calvert, boatman, Selby, and **John Hill**, labourer, Selby, were fined 1s and costs at Selby today for breaches of the Swine Fever order.

120 11 November 1913

A RETIRED LEEDS TRAVELLER'S TRAGIC END The Leeds City Coroner (Mr J C Malcolm) held an inquest today at Kirkstall on the body of **Henry Arthur Wathen** (56), retired traveller, of 10 Scotland Place, Dewsbury Road, whose body was found in the Leeds and Liverpool canal on Sunday morning.

Wathen left home on Saturday night at 10.20 pm, saying he was just going out for an hour, but he did not return. He had been very much depressed of late, because he had been unable to sleep.

The body was found near the Thomson Bridge, Redcote, Armley, by **Thomas Jennings**, boatman of 3 Cromwell Road, Shipley, who saw it floating in the water and secured it with a rope.

A verdict of "Suicide whilst of unsound mind" was returned.

121 13 November 1913

A BRAVE KNARESBOROUGH BOATMAN



The plucky rescue of a young woman from the river Nidd at Knaresborough by Mr William Bramley, boatman of Kirkgate, Knaresborough, has been brought to the notice of the Royal Humane Society by the Knaresborough Urban District Council. On the night of September 23rd, Mr Bramley saved a young woman from drowning at a dangerous spot in the Nidd known as "Cherry Tree Deep". It was about 9.15 when Mr Bramley heard screams, and dashing down the river bank he at once plunged into the water and brought the woman to the bank, artificial respiration being successfully applied. He has rescued more than a dozen persons from the Nidd.

Mr Bramley informed our representative that he could not swim a stroke. His rescues are therefore all the more praiseworthy. He was born at Harrogate, but has lived in Knaresborough nearly all his life.

122 27 December 1913

SKIPTON DROWNING MYSTERY Dragging operations have been proceeding this morning in the Eller beck at Skipton, with the object of recovering the body of **Robert Moorby**, a middle aged boatman, who resided in Spring Gardens, Skipton.

Last night the deceased returned late by train, and the suggestion is that after leaving the station he climbed the wall near the Belle Vue Mills and entered land belonging to the Skipton Auction Mart Co, through which the beck runs. It is said that he was heard to cry for help.

Up to 12 o'clock his body had not been recovered.

123 29 December 1913

GOOLE WOMAN RESCUED FROM THE DOCK A married woman named **Goodaire** had a narrow escape from drowning in the barge dock at Goole last night, being rescued by a boatman named **Calvert**.

The woman was on her way to see her husband, who was working on one of the tugs, and in crossing from one vessel to another, fell overboard. Calvert heard the splash, but on going to the place, he could not see anyone. He got a boathook, and immediately hooked the woman and brought her to the surface.

124 1 January 1914

THE MAN WHO WAS GIVEN UP FOR DEAD – WARMTH RETAINED IN THE BODY
STRANGE STORY TOLD AT A SHIPLEY INQUEST Some extraordinary evidence was given at the inquest held by Mr E H Hill, District Coroner, at Shipley today, on the body of John Pearson Hornsby, who had been for the last 28 years employed at Bradford Royal Infirmary. The body, as reported yesterday, was found floating in the canal by a passing boatman.

Evidence of identification having been given, PC Tounrow spoke to finding £4 7s on the deceased. He also found a bottle of whisky, which was nearly empty.

The Coroner : Was there any smell of spirits? Yes, sir, very strong. I remarked, “What a smell of whisky”.

There was no sign of his being robbed? No, sir.

Did the smell of whisky come from the deceased or from the bottle? It could not very well come from the bottle, sir, when the cork was in.

The Coroner : Oh yes, it might if the cork was saturated with spirit.

Richard Nicholls, a Goole boatman, gave evidence of finding the body floating in the canal.

It was stated that the body was warm when it arrived at the mortuary.

The Coroner said it was quite possible that, when the man was pulled out of the canal, he was not dead. The large quantity of whisky that the deceased had drunk would cause catalepsy, and the pulse might appear almost gone. It was quite possible that death had not been caused by drowning. On such a day as yesterday, if the man had been dead, he would have been cold when pulled out. It was quite contrary to the usual state of affairs that a man could be pulled out of the water dead, and retain warmth in the body for two hours afterwards.

A Juror : When the covering was taken off at the mortuary, steam arose from the body.

Another Juror : But I am sure he was dead at the mortuary.

The Coroner : You may have thought so, but you may have been mistaken.

The Juror : I have had a lot of experience in such matters, and I think he was dead.

The Coroner : The other people you thought dead might possibly have been alive.

Subsequently the Coroner said that the actual cause of death must be ascertained. He would accordingly adjourn the inquest until tomorrow morning. In the meantime, Dr Ward Smith could make a *post mortem* examination.

125 16 February 1914

UNKNOWN MAN'S BODY FOUND IN THE RIVER AIRE The decomposed body of a man was taken from the river Aire, near East Street, Leeds, this morning. It was noticed in the water by a Hull boatman, **George Hayes**, on the boat *Gainsborough*.

Identification may be difficult. The body is that of a man about five feet six or seven inches in height and probably about 34 years of age.

126 10 March 1914

WHY BARGEES USED TO SWEAR

THE PUNGENT ODOURS OF THE WATERWAYS

DOMESTIC LIFE IN THE CABIN OF A BARGE One half of the world knows not how the other half lives. And it is certain, as the Rev Ferdinand Fowkes, the North Eastern district superintendent

of the Incorporated Seamen and Boatmen's Friendly Society, remarked to a representative of "*The Yorkshire Evening Post*" today, that an ordinary town dweller has little idea of the conditions under which thousands of his fellow men live, whose home is the cabin of a canal boat, and whose bed is a bunk. Our canal population, nevertheless, exceeds 50,000.

Boat people are a healthy class, and live to a good old age. There are many retired old boatmen in Leeds whose racy anecdotes would gladden the heart of a Jacobs. One old bargeman, long past his eightieth year, is **Pierce Hindley**, for whom the doings of barges and bargees eclipse all other happenings. Another old man, turned seventy, always sure of a patient hearing among his cronies, is boatman **Fairweather**, while **Cap'n Walker**, now that he has put aside active association with the barges, has some half dozen sons who cheer his heart by their prowess on the boats.

"I have a great love for the boatmen", Mr Fowkes remarked, "and I should say they bear favourable comparison with the very best class of workmen on shore. There is very little drunkenness now among the keelmen, who are a steady, industrious class".

Since the introduction of steam towage as a substitute for horse haulage, the number of families who sleep on board has considerably diminished. Yet it is surprising how many wives prefer to live on board, notwithstanding the inconvenience of such a life.

The cabin of a keel is usually not more than eight feet square, with sundry recesses, separated from the living room by folding or sliding doors. Behind one of these doors is the bed, another recess contains the crockery and cooking utensils, a third holds the food, and in some keels there is a recess used as a washing place.

There is also a small hearth, with fireplace and flue, and a bench or settee running the whole length of the cabin. A lamp hangs from the roof.

Here a man and his wife may live year in and year out, and bring up their family, until the latter are old enough to go to work. Many keel people possess a furnished house on shore, but seldom sleep in it, preferring the open air and changing environment of boat life.

Although a few of the older men can neither read nor write, they are supposed to be able to reckon the value of a freight to a fraction. The bargee has a reputation for "langwidge" and it has been facetiously suggested, says Mr Fowkes, that the pungent odours of the waterways may have something to do with it!

All the same, a Kent clergyman protests that the saying, "Swears like a boatman" should be classed with Charles Lamb's "Popular Fallacies", and he has formed a Bargemen's Brotherhood, whose members pledge themselves to "endeavour not to swear".

USE OF BAD LANGUAGE DECREASING Mr Fowkes testifies to the fact that among keelmen the habit of swearing is not so common as formerly.

The keelman's wife is generally "a daughter of the cut", for the reason that it would be difficult for a woman not brought up to the life to settle down with a cabin for a cottage. She can work the boat through the locks, make fast a rope, comport herself with dignity at the helm, and drive the horse if necessary.

127 13 April 1914

A CHARGE OF WIFE BEATING **John Arthur Calverley** (46), boatman, Elland, was charged at Halifax today with doing grievous bodily harm to his wife **Annie**.

It was alleged that on Saturday night the prisoner came home drunk, and beat his wife so severely that she would be unfit to attend the court for a week or ten days.

The prisoner was remanded to gaol for a week.

128 19 May 1914

Fred Strauss, a Goole boatman, was this morning awarded £450 compensation for having his leg torn off while working on board a Goole steamer.

129 23 June 1914

GOLCAR YOUNG MAN'S DEATH

TRAGIC SEQUEL TO MOTHER'S PROTEST ABOUT LATE HOURS A pathetic drowning case was inquired into at Golcar today, concerning the death of Arnold Hartley (21), woollen weaver of 6 Brook Lane, Golcar, who was found in the canal on Saturday.

It was stated that deceased arrived home after midnight last Friday and his mother asked him where he had been, and told him that he was killing her by coming home so late. The young man, remarking that he could go where he had been, put on his boots again and went out. He had never threatened to commit suicide.

Albert Edward Wood, a boatman who found the body, said that at the point where he saw it, the canal curved to pass over the river Colne, and was very narrow. It was possible to walk into the canal if a person walked straight on in the dark.

The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

130 20 November 1914

FATAL FRACAS AT HULL

BOATMAN CHARGED WITH MANSLAUGHTER AT THE ASSIZES At York Assizes today, before Mr Commissioner H T Kemp KC, **Tom Dinsdale**, boatman, pleaded not guilty to an indictment charging him with the manslaughter of Ernest Manton at Hull on October 28.

The deceased and the prisoner had a dispute on the Albert Dock in Hull, which led to a fight. Later, after another fight, Marton was walking away when, it was alleged, prisoner walked up behind him and struck him on the jaw, which was fractured. The injuries necessitated a serious operation, under which the patient died.

It was alleged that Dinsdale had an iron key in his hand when he struck Manton, and that he threatened to break his neck. Prisoner's brother told him he had done enough, and Dinsdale then struck Manton for the last time.

Charles Blenkin, an eye witness of the fight, said in cross-examination that deceased was the aggressor.

Dr Jeffcote, surgeon at Hull Royal Infirmary, said that death was not due to the fracture, but to alcoholism. He agreed a severe blow would be required to fracture the jaw.

Dinsdale was acquitted.

131 5 January 1915

ANOTHER CHILD VICTIM AT WEST HARTLEPOOL **William Chapple** (15), boatman's apprentice, who was struck by a fragment of shell during the bombardment of West Hartlepool, died this morning from his injuries. He is the 110th victim.

132 1 February 1915

ARMLEY BOATMAN'S ALLEGED THEFT OF WHEAT **Alfred Bramham** of Armley, captain of a fly boat owned by the Aire and Calder Navigation Co, was today at Wakefield charged with stealing a quantity of wheat from a lighter in the Alexandra Dock, Hull.

It was stated that about 17 cwts of the wheat have been recovered. Defendant was remanded until Friday, when he will appear together with two other men, who will be charged with receiving the wheat, knowing it to have been stolen.

133 5 February 1915

ALLEGED DEAL IN STOLEN WHEAT At Wakefield today, **Alfred Bramham**, boatman, Armley, was charged with having stolen a quantity of wheat from a boat at Hull, and **George Byram**, lock-keeper and Alfred H Warrington, miner, both of Stanley Ferry, were charged with having received the wheat knowing it to have been stolen.

Bramham is the captain of a fly boat, and on the 13th ult he visited Hull. After his departure, a quantity of wheat was missed from a lighter.

The prisoners were handed over to the Hull police.

134 23 February 1915

A KINDNESS REPAID BY THEFT William Nicholson (23) of Cobden Place was charged at Leeds today with stealing a watch and other goods from **William Collett**, a canal boatman of Ashley Street, Hunslet.

Prosecutor stated that on June 17th he allowed the prisoner to sleep for the night on his boat, which was at the Canal Wharf. The following morning, prisoner absconded with the articles.

Detective Sergeant Elmy saw him in the cells at the Town Hall, where he was awaiting trial on another charge.

Prisoner was sentenced to one months hard labour.

135 17 June 1915

MOTHER AND SON SEEK DEATH Herbert Lindley (22) of Hyam Street, Hunslet, was charged at Leeds today with having attempted to commit suicide. A boatman, **J Minshull**, rescued him from the river Aire three times, and then tended him whilst he had fits.

Prisoner said he had been discharged from the Army to support his mother, and what he had done was owing to a quarrel with her.

Inspector Wiles said the mother had been in court twice on a similar charge.

Prisoner was discharged.

136 6 January 1916

BOATMEN'S THEFTS AT CASTLEFORD At Pontefract today, **John Miller**, boatman, Shipley, was charged with having stolen 25 yards of cotton rope, value 12s, the property of Messrs Hunt Bros, chemical manufacturers, Castleford. The rope was found by Police-sergeant Charlesworth in the cabin of prisoner's barge at Briggs Basin, Whitwood.

During his search, the officer found also a bridle, which proved to be the property of William Henry Nicholson, builder, Duke of York Street, Wakefield, and **James Hudson**, a boatman also of Shipley, was charged with having stolen it.

The prisoner's explanation was that, as men of his class were accustomed to stable their horses and take them off early in the morning, without paying for their accommodation, the landlord of the Garden Arms, Castleford, secreted prisoner's bridle, whereupon prisoner, calling for his horse early in the morning, took the one belonging to Mr Nicholson.

The Bench declined to accept the prisoner's excuse and fined him £2.

137 29 January 1916

A TERRIBLE STRUGGLE IN A CANAL

SOLDIER AND CONSTABLE

SHAKING OFF A DROWNING MAN UNDER WATER The story of an exciting struggle between a policeman and a soldier in the canal at Thornhill Lees, near Dewsbury, which ended in the soldier losing his life, was told by the police officer himself to a representative of the "*Yorkshire Evening Post*" today.

The soldier, Private Lewis Jackson of the 11th Battalion Yorkshire Light Infantry, stationed at Rugeley Camp, Staffordshire, was reported to the Chief Constable of Dewsbury yesterday for being an absentee, he having overstayed his period of leave. In consequence, Police-constable George Hall, who resides in Trinity Place, The Flatts, Dewsbury, was instructed to arrest Jackson.

The policeman, who is a special constable of the first police reserve, says he went to 14 George Street, Thornhill Lees, where Jackson's parents reside, and was told that the soldier was in bed. The soldier's mother went upstairs and tried to persuade him to get up, but he refused, and the mother then gave the officer permission to go upstairs. Jackson said he was not well, and wanted to see a doctor, but Hall insisted that he must accompany him to the Town Hall and see a doctor there. He agreed and, having washed and dressed, went downstairs with the constable.

When the mother suggested that her son should have something to eat before they left, the constable agreed, and also allowed Jackson to write a letter to his wife. While he was writing, the soldier repeatedly placed the pencil between his lips and stained them with the lead. Then he made an excuse to go into the back scullery to wash his mouth, and as soon as he got near the door he darted away and ran towards the Calder and Hebble Canal, the constable following about 20 yards behind. The chase was across some waste ground and down on to the towing path for over half a mile. When both runners were approaching the railway which crosses the canal, Hall shouted, "Stop him!" to several railwaymen who were working on the lines, and two or three of them jumped down on to the towing-path and barred the absentee's way. The canal at this point is crossed by two railway bridges about fifty yards apart, and the water is 10 or 12 feet deep.

A DIVE FOR LIBERTY The canal is also 12 or 15 yards wide, but Jackson, seeing his other chances of escape cut off, immediately dived into the water and began to swim across. His exhaustion after the long run and the weight of his clothes prevented him from reaching the other bank, and in a minute or two he seemed to be in difficulties, and sank.

"I could see he was done", said the policeman, "and I slipped off my greatcoat, tunic and helmet, and dived in to help him out. He was still underneath when I came to the top, so I dived and managed to reach him and pull him to the surface. I had hold of his throat, and though my boots and clothing were weighing me down, I held him up for a minute or two. Then he suddenly got a deep breath of air, and revived, and began to struggle like a madman. We both went down and separated, and as I came up again, I felt him clutch hold of my jersey and shirt at the back of the neck. He was right behind me, and he clung fast, and then got either his knees or feet into the small of my back and levered himself up on the top of me."

A STRUGGLE UNDER WATER "I was forced right under the water, and it seemed as if he was kneeling or standing on my back. I really thought my time had come, and I struggled with every atom of strength I had. My only thought was to get to the top of the water, and somehow or other I got free and came to the surface. I was completely exhausted and went under again, but just managed to reach a long pole which was handed out, and the railwaymen dragged me to the side and on to the towing-path. I was helpless, but I did not lose consciousness."

The story is best continued in the words of several railwaymen as they told it today. The men who were first on the scene were Edward Dawson and Wilburn Bedford, shunters, and Ted Senior and J E North, plate layers. They had obtained the long pole and having pulled the constable out, they revived him by rough and ready means. The soldier was still under the water, and, said Dawson in an interview this morning, the policeman had no sooner revived than he tried to jump into the water again to continue his brave attempt at rescue.

THE BODY RECOVERED The railwaymen held him back and shouted to a boatman who had approached, and he raised Jackson's body with a boat hook without difficulty. Life, however, was extinct, although he had not been in the water more than 8 or 10 minutes.

All the railwaymen agreed that the struggle in the water was a deadly fight, although it only lasted three or four minutes. They said the harder Hall fought to shake the drowning soldier off his back, the closer the man clung. It was only after both men had been completely out of sight under the water that the constable managed to free himself. Hall was taken to the Perseverance Inn, which stands on the main road overlooking the scene of the tragedy, and later removed home. He is little the worse today for his ordeal.

The dead soldier, who was 21 years of age, was married a few months ago, and his widow is only 16 years of age.

The inquest will be held at Dewsbury Infirmary on Monday.

138 11 September 1916

A DESERTER'S ESCAPE FROM CUSTODY **William Hodgetts** of Tipton, formerly a boatman, who was in custody charged with being a deserter from the Worcestershire Regiment, escaped from the custody of the Tipton police today in a daring manner.

He was permitted to walk in the police station yard without his boots and, while left alone for a few

minutes, he mounted to the roof of a building by climbing a waterpipe, and then descending by another pipe, made good his escape.

139 26 September 1916

**WAR'S HEAVY TOLL OF GALLANT YORKSHIREMEN
CASUALTIES REPORTED TODAY**

Private **James Corcoran** (23), son of Mrs Corcoran of Leeds, killed in action, was formerly a boatman at Leeds.

140 29 September 1916

HOW A HALFPENNY WAS PASSED OFF AS A SHILLING

A YOUNG LEEDS GIRL'S OFFENCES A Leeds boatman's daughter was summoned at the Leeds Children's Court today for stealing a tablecloth from her father's house at Hunslet.

There are three other children living at home, and this girl (of fourteen years) looked after the home. The father, who is a widower, said he got a woman in recently to look after the family, but she got drunk, and he showed her the door. The defendant had been a bad girl. He had given her money to pay for the coal, but she had spent it. Similarly, money given her for the other children's food had been partly spent, the children being given only bread and butter.

A police officer said that in one case the girl had covered a half penny with silver paper, and passed the coin off as a shilling.

Sir George Cockburn : Do you mean to say there is any shopkeeper in Leeds fool enough to be taken in like that?

The Officer : Well, they took it.

The girl said she wanted to be taken away from home, and her father offering to pay 3s a week, she was sent to Thorparch.

141 22 February 1917

BODY RECOVERED FROM THE AIRE The body of **William Walker** (36), a boatman of 8 Warehouse Hill, The Calls, Leeds, was recovered from the River Aire within a few yards of his house this afternoon.

He accidentally fell into the river on Monday.

142 8 May 1917

YORK BOATING FATALITY

YOUNG WELSH SOLDIER DROWNED An inquest was held at the Law Court, York, this morning, of David Hughes (18), a driver in the artillery temporarily attached to a farm furlough company, whose body was recovered from the Ouse, near Skeldergate Bridge, on Sunday. Deceased's home address was Fisher Bridge Farm, Slantwet, Cardiff.

On the afternoon of Saturday April 11th, the anniversary of his birthday, deceased and Private Charles Smith Wilding, also attached to a farm furlough company, hired a boat and went down the river. They returned to within about 30 yards of Skeldergate Bridge, when they saw a young lady, and asked her if she would like a ride. She consented, and Wilding got out in order to make room for her. After rowing the young lady down the river, Hughes passed through Skeldergate Bridge. In turning the craft round, it hit the protecting woodwork and the boat capsized, throwing both occupants into the water. The young lady clung to the boat, and Hughes swam towards her, but when within about two yards of her, he disappeared.

Wilding, giving evidence, said he had been told Hughes was a very good swimmer ; he attributed his sinking to cramp.

Elizabeth Ward, 31 Farndale Street, munitions worker, deceased's companion when the accident happened, and **Thomas Sharpe**, Terry's Avenue, boatman, who rescued her, also gave evidence. Sharpe stated that the river was about a foot and a half in flood at the time of the accident.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental drowning".

143 3 October 1917

THE YORKSHIRE ROLL OF HONOUR

Gunner **J Harrison**, Australian Field Artillery, has been wounded, and is now in hospital in London. He is the second son of Mr J Harrison of Bramley, and before going to Australia he was employed by the Leeds Corporation (Electricity Dept) as a boatman.

144 8 May 1918

BOATING FATALITY AT KNARESBOROUGH A boating fatality occurred last night at Cherry Tree Deep, Knaresborough, a couple of hundred yards above High Bridge. Joseph Green (16), Butter Road, Bilton, was punting down the river about 8.30 pm, the other occupant of the punt being a girl friend. It is surmised he overbalanced and went head foremost into the river, which is 14 ft deep hereabouts.

A boatman named **Barnes** hurried upstream with a punt, but was too late to render aid. He recovered the body a quarter of an hour later.

145 11 June 1918

A WRECK IN THE CALDER

STANLEY BOATMAN'S DEATH AT BATTYEFORD BRIDGE Some interesting evidence was given at an inquest held at Dewsbury Infirmary this morning on the body of a man which was recovered from the (river) at Dewsbury last Thursday night. The body was in an advanced state of decomposition when the inquest was opened on Friday. (.....) have discovered that the remains are those of **Joseph Boulton** (41), boatman of Lee (.....) near Wakefield, and that he was (.....) by Robert Carey, boat owner of Well(.....) Dalton, Huddersfield.

Boulton was employed to look after one of the boats used in connection with a Government (.....) at Bradley. Two of the boats moored at Heaton Lodge broke away from their moorings when the river was in flood on February 6, (.....) down the river to Battyeford Bridge (.....) one collided with the structure and capsized. The second boat piled itself on the (....) The boats are still there, waiting, it is said, "for His Majesty to get them". Boulton was in the first boat.

It seems that a man's screams for help had been heard, and the inquest was adjourned for evidence on this point.

146 13 June 1918

A CRY FROM THE RIVER IN THE DARK A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned at the resumed inquest at Dewsbury today on the remains of **Joseph Boulton** (41), boatman of Stanley near Wakefield, which were found in the river last week.

Willie Robinson, coal miner, Heaton Lodge Bridge, said that about 10.30 pm on February 6th last, he and a friend named Beaumont were walking along Huddersfield Road at Battyeford, Mirfield, when they heard a cry for help from the river. It was very dark and stormy at the time, but they saw dimly a boat drifting on the flood down the river. A man was standing at the bow.

They ran on to the ferry bridge close by, and were just in time to see the stern of the boat collide with a pillar of the bridge and disappear beneath the water. They never saw anything more of either the man or the boat although they obtained assistance and made a search.

147 20 August 1918

At the Leeds West Riding Court today, **Thomas Pickles**, boatman, Bingley, was fined 40s for having trespassed in pursuit of game at Swillington.

148 20 February 1919

THE BOATMEN OF LEEDS

STILL AT WORK ON FOREIGN WATERWAYS Where are the boatmen and keelmen who, in prewar days, navigated their boats along the inland waterways of Yorkshire? The Rev Ferdinand Fowkes, who has charge of the North eastern district of the Boatmen's Friend Society (his "diocese"

extends from the borders of Yorkshire and Lancashire to Hull) says the men, in large numbers, are navigating barges along the waterways in France, and even in Mesopotamia. So far, very few have returned, and it is anticipated that they will be amongst the last to be demobilised.

Many men have been "doing their bit" on mine sweepers, and the "Bishop" - his title is conferred not assumed - has been in France for nearly two years doing hut work. Two boatmen have won commissions.

There has been a great change in the life of the boatman since the years when sailing vessels used to come up the river to Leeds. The sailing boat has practically disappeared from local waters, and its place is taken by the train of barges hauled by a steam tug. It is claimed that in some cases the boats can beat the railway in expediting the transport of goods. For instance, a train of barges leaves Leeds every evening about seven o'clock, with about 500 tons of freight. These are towed to Goole, arriving there about three o'clock the following morning. Then a powerful tug takes them over to complete the journey to Hull, where they arrive about nine o'clock. Thus goods put aboard the barges by six o'clock in the evening can be at the disposal of the consignees in the Humber by noon next day.

The men on the boats today are the sons of boatmen and grandsons of boatmen, and are a distinct and separate class. Curiously enough, they do not fraternise with the seamen they meet in the ports. It is proposed shortly to enlarge the Canal Wharf Institute and add a cafe, where the boatmen and the men employed on the wharf may obtain refreshment.

149 1 May 1919

A CAREFUL BOATMAN AND HIS MONEY At Selby today, **John William Newell** (17), married, boatman, Hull, was fined £2 for stealing a £1 Treasury note belonging to **George Milner**, fireman on the steam tug, *Sir Joseph Rymer*.

Evidence was given that prosecutor had missed the note from a pocket of his trousers which had been left in his bunk in the cabin of the vessel. On the police being called in, the note was found in possession of Newell, one of the crew, and he ultimately admitted stealing it. Prosecutor had entered the number of the note in his pocket book.

The Chairman (Mr W N Cheesman) said that had simplified matters considerably.

Superintendent Stafford informed the Bench that though only 17 years of age, defendant was a married man.

150 24 June 1919

BRAMLEY WOMAN'S DEATH IN THE CANAL

HUSBAND'S MOVEMENTS BEFORE HER DISAPPEARANCE Before Mr Horace Marshall, Stipendiary Magistrate, at Leeds today, Herbert Isaac Shepherd (28) of 174 Kirkstall Road, Leeds, again appeared in the dock on a charge of murdering his wife, Edith Shepherd, whose body was found in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near Armley Park on May 12. There is a further charge against the accused of having bigamously married Miss Ethel Lillian Teague, of Hawthorn Cottage, Eastdene Road, Old Town, Eastbourne, on March 31 1919.

Mr E O Simpson prosecuted on behalf of the Public Prosecutor, and Mr Arthur Willey defended.

Evidence in support of the bigamy charge had already been given, and the case for the prosecution was now completed by the evidence of Detective Inspector Watson, who arrested the accused on May 15. He said that, when charged, the accused made no reply.

The charge of murder was then taken.

Mr Simpson said Shepherd's wife was last seen alive about 9.15 pm on Saturday May 3. Her body was found on May 12 in the canal. Medical testimony showed the cause of death to be syncope produced by shock - not drowning - and showed that the shock could be caused by sudden immersion in the water, the woman being in a state of pregnancy.

So far as the history of the accused and his wife was concerned, the prisoner was married to her on August 1 1916. At that time, he was employed as a fitter at the Viaduct Tannery. He enlisted in the Coldstream Guards in October 1914, and was discharged for medical reasons in 1914. He later

joined the Royal Engineers, and was eventually discharged in January last. He lived with his wife for about one week in Bramley, and he then left her, in consequence of the discovery by the wife of an irregular connection which he had formed with a person living in Eastbourne.

The brother-in-law had an interview with Shepherd about the beginning of January, and Shepherd then said the connection with his wife had ended. His wife continued to live in Bramley, and he went into lodgings at 174 Kirkstall Road.

On May 2, the day before the date on which the prosecution suggested the murder was committed, the prisoner was seen after 10 o'clock at night coming from the immediate neighbourhood of his wife's house, which he had been seen entering a short time previously. On the following day, Mrs Shepherd was in the best of health and spirits, and was seen at various times during the day.

LAST SEEN ALIVE Late in the evening, she was seen by some neighbours. She was then dressed and ready to go out, it being about 7 o'clock. At 9 o'clock, she was seen to board a tram going to Leeds. The tram would pass Cockshott Lane, Ridge Road and Redcote Lane. At 9.15, she was seen walking between Cockshott Lane and Ridge Road, and that was the last time she was seen alive.

The accused was seen at 9.15 at the end of Redcote Lane, he being stood in the attitude of a man waiting for someone. That was as far as they could trace the movements of Shepherd and his wife on that night. The woman's body was found at a spot where the canal bank fell rather steeply to the water, though there was a footpath to which access could be gained from Redcote Lane.

The suggestion of the prosecution was that the prisoner and his wife went down to the canal side, and that there the prisoner threw her into the water. Screams were heard by a signalman on the Midland Railway about 10.30, but such noises being not unusual, he opened his window and, hearing nothing further, paid no more attention to the matter. The body was found by a passing boatman on May 12.

Inquiries were made as to the absence of the deceased woman, and on May 8, Detective Inspector Wright had an interview with the prisoner. Shepherd denied having seen his wife since April 19, and also denied having been at Bramley on May 2. Further, he denied having been in Stanningley Road on May 3. On May 9, the detectives had a further interview with Shepherd, when he said - "Supposing anything has happened, what will become of the home? I have been allowing her 12s a week, and I have been keeping her mother".

When the body was found, in the woman's purse was found a document in her handwriting, as follows:-

My Will - If anything happens to me, I leave everything to my husband. All my household effects to him and no one else.

Mrs H I Shepherd, 10 Bramley Street, Bramley, Leeds.

SHEPHERD'S STORY Shepherd, when informed of the finding of the body, told his landlady, Mrs Preston, that she need have no fear; he was perfectly innocent of any connection with the matter. He said that he spent the afternoon of May 3 at the New Inn, Kirkstall Road; then he went home, and afterwards went to Leeds Markets. He returned home to tea at five o'clock, and again went to the markets, and at 8.30 entered a picture house. He added that he started to walk home at 9.30, after leaving a public house.

Mrs Preston, added counsel, would say that at 10.30 on that night she returned home, and the prisoner arrived shortly afterwards.

Another material point, said Mr Simpson, was the fact that Shepherd had made an appointment on the night of May 3 with a girl named Penn for 8.45. The girl said Shepherd did not keep the appointment. As to the girl Teague, correspondence showed that Shepherd had formed a very strong attachment for her.

On May 10, he went to the police station to inquire if anything had been heard of his wife. He was told that nothing had been heard, and on May 11, he wrote to Teague: "I think it is best to stop here, although it is a long way from your parents. If you want some money, just let me know. I shall have a little house of our own, and I think it will be best for us all". The girl expressed her willingness to come to Leeds.

It would appear, said counsel, that the principal difficulty in the way of Teague and the accused

living together in Leeds was the existence of his own wife.

Evidence was called, and Eliza Wainwright said an examination of the body disclosed no marks of injury. She produced the will found in the woman's purse.

Dr Woodcock said death, in all probability, was due to syncope following the shock of immersion.

In reply to Mr Willey, the witness said that the woman's condition, if due to illicit relations, would tend towards affecting her mentality.

Mr Willey objected to the document found in the dead woman's purse being put in or read.

151 27 June 1919

DISPUTED IDENTITY

CURIOUS CASE OF A MAN WHO FELL FROM BARGE AT SELBY At the Selby County Court today, the judge had to arbitrate in an application by **Rachel Gale** of Swann Street, Hull, against Peter Spence and Co (Ltd), chemical manufacturers of Goole, for compensation for the death of her husband **Joseph Gale**. It was stated that Gale fell overboard from the respondent's vessel, the steam barge *Ammonia*, while it was in the river Ouse near Selby.

The case has attracted considerable attention by reason of the fact that the boatman who fell overboard was known to his employers and the captain as **Joseph Watson**, which name he gave when engaged as mate. Mrs Gale, on seeing the body at Selby, where it was recovered after 16 weeks, identified it as that of her husband, and her evidence was supported by her son in law. The Coroner's jury found that the name of the man was Joseph Gale. Mrs Gale now said she was married to Gale at Hull in 1915, but they only lived together a short time.

Respondents disputed the identification of the man as Joseph Gale.

The Judge, remarking that it was a most extraordinary case, said he had come to the conclusion that Gale was not proved to be the same person as Joseph Watson, and dismissed the application.

152 21 July 1919

DOWN THE CANAL TO HULL

GETTING INSIDE KNOWLEDGE OF BOATMEN'S WORK A black, irregular bulk, standing out in sharply cut relief against a sky where the moon dodged in and out between drifting cloud banks. Here and there, a light blinking out of the darkness. That was Leeds.

Black water at my feet, and behind, a great dim building where spluttering arc lights cast long, mysterious shadows among the bales and barrows piled beneath. That was the dock.

A bent figure carrying a lantern, and another huddled in a trench coat, shivering in the damp morning breeze. One was the watchman. The other, myself. Alternately he told me tales of soldiering in India, 'way back in the 70s, and threw pebbles on to the deck of a tug lying at the wharf.

Scene : The canal docks, Leeds. Time : 4.0 am.

Ultimately the pebbles produced the desired effect. A very sleepy head came up out of a hatchway, and the owner of the head inquired the time. Then it disappeared. Soon, however, another head took its place, and a body followed. The figure, a shapeless mass in the dim light, stumbled along the deck, and vanished down another hatchway.

Almost immediately, there followed queer rumbling sounds and a prolonged hissing. Little waves splashed against the wharf, as the boat rocked in time to the engine.

"Better come on board," the first head called to me as it reappeared from the hatchway. "We'll be getting away soon.

I jumped down upon the deck. The thud of my feet seemed to be a signal for the whole crew to come on deck. There were three of them – captain, mate and engineer. They were too busy to talk, so I dumped my haversack upon a coiled hawser, and looked about me. The moon had fled in the early morning light, and the black bulks on the canal had gradually resolved themselves into fly boats.

They too were beginning to show signs of life. A boatman or two appeared on deck, exchanging remarks with each other and with the tugmen. I saw a woman's head protruding from a hatch. She

regarded me sharply, wondering, no doubt, what I was idling there for. A man came forward with a long boat hook and began pushing the barge away from the wharf. The boat swung out into the stream, and floated slowly off.

The tug shook as the propeller began to turn. The water roared at the stern, giving off an odour that made me wish for my old gas mask. The canal water in the Leeds district is an awful compound of weird smells. An industrial chemist would feel quite at home here.

THE VOYAGE BEGUN We were off now, winding in and out among the barges. Some of the latter were moving with us, smoke coming out of the chimneys in their bows, where their crews were making their morning cup of tea. Others still slept. The morning wind was cold, and I went below to “chum up” with the engines. When I came on deck again, we were in the first locks.

From Leeds to Castleford there are five locks, all rather small. We had five barges in tow, and our string had to be sent through each lock in two “pens”, as the canal men call them. First the tug and two fly boats went through the locks. While we waited below, the lock filled again, and the three others followed after us.

The speed of a tow depends upon the number of boats in the string. Besides retarding the speed of the tug, the small size of the locks often necessitates cutting the tow into as many as three “pens”, which, of course, involves long waits at each lock.

“Why do you call them “fly boats”?” I asked the captain of the tug, as we cleared the first lock.

“Because they fly”, was the laconic answer. “They look slow, but before the war we used to leave Leeds at night and be in Goole early in the morning, ready to catch the tide in the Ouse. The boats would be in Hull in about twenty hours after leaving Leeds. If coal was the cargo, it was sent down in forty ton compartments. At Goole and Hull are giant cranes which pick up the compartment bodily out of the river, and dump the whole forty tons into a steamer”.

“What cargoes do we carry?” “Any sort of goods, just as the railways do. There's a boat back there – that red one with a pump in the centre of the hatch – which is filled with tar. It's being sent to France or Belgium, where the tar will be used to make the potent fuel they use over there”.

Slowly, we steamed down the river, gradually drawing out of Leeds. Once we passed a coal barge towed by a horse. It was reminiscent of the old tow path days. Between Leeds and Castleford, said the captain, there are still a number of horses used, but they are being superseded by the more efficient steam tugs.

Until we reached Castleford, the country was uninteresting. Had it not been for the boatmen and their tales of canal life, I should have been very much “fed up”. We floated along through a flat monotonous country, relieved here and there by a colliery and the villages where the pitmen live.

From Castleford, the land assumes a different character. The level country gives place to low hills, gradually becoming higher as we near Goole. The mines disappear, and on either bank are rolling meadows and little stretches of wooded country.

We had dinner in the tiny cabin of the tug, and as we ate the men told me something of their life on the canal. Eight hour day devotees will probably be shocked to learn that the tugmen work from fourteen to fifteen hours a day. They're up at four o'clock in the morning, and seldom get in before six or seven pm. There are no half holidays for them. Even on Sundays they come down to the boat to overhaul the engine, and clean up things generally.

The captain apologised because, he said, the boat was not as clean as it should be. I've seen dining rooms which were a lot more in need of cleaning. I had always thought that canal boats were dirty affairs, but I know better now. If my (hypothetical) wife keeps my home as clean as that boat, I'll not worry.

Knottingley, which we passed in the middle of the afternoon, is a picturesque old village, with crumbling walls where flowers bloom and birds make their nests.

At one time, Knottingley was a seaport. “Billy boys”, ketch rigged vessels with round sterns, sailed from there, and the captains and mates lived in the high gabled houses along the river. Great rusty iron rings, let into the walls, showed where the “Billy boys” had once been moored.

We came into Goole at 7 o'clock the following day, and there ended the first stage of the trip. The tug would go back to Leeds next morning, but the fly boats would go through the locks and into the

Ouse to wait for the tide.

High tide came about ten the following day, and we were off for Hull. This time I travelled in a sea going tug, which towed two strings of four barges each. Like the canal tug, this boat was spotlessly clean, and the captain and crew did all in their power to make the trip pleasant.

DOWN THE HUMBER They told me of the treacherous channel of the Humber, where the sands shift with every tide, and of the vessels that had been wrecked on their way up the river. They showed me the "made land" below Swinefleet – land dredged up from the bottom of the river and dumped on to the banks at either side, behind piles and stone walls.

The primary object was to make the channel narrower, so that the current would flow more swiftly and cut away the deposit of silt brought in from the sea. But some of this new land makes excellent salt meadows, where we could see farmers making hay.

Near Whitgift are great stretches of mustard, glowing yellow in the sunlight.

"On a rainy night", chuckled the captain, "we don't need lights to tell us when we are near Whitgift. We can smell those mustard flowers for two or three miles".

We came to the junction of the Ouse, the Trent and the Humber – a magnificent stretch of water, where the farther banks are hidden in the mist.

From there down to Hull we zig-zagged back and forth, following the tortuous windings of the channel. In the middle of the afternoon, we came in sight of the Fish Docks, the first of the five mile line of docks which stretch along the water front at Hull. Numerous trawlers were drawn up on the ways, and as we steamed past the Victoria Dock, we could see the masts of some American standard ships – those vessels which were all built to one pattern like Ford cars. They had just returned from Germany, and were stopping at Hull to fill their bunkers for the homeward trip.

We caught glimpses of dozens of fly boats crowded into the basins, and an occasional small schooner stranded on a mud bank by a receding tide.

Our tug leaped forward suddenly, and I saw that six of our barges had cut loose and were on their way to join the throng lying in the basins. A little farther down, out remaining two cast off their hawser, and we scooted down the harbour free.

Alexandra Dock loomed up in front of us. Everywhere were great travelling cranes, looking like some of H G Wells's Martians as they straddled along over the railway tracks.

The bell in our engine room jingled. The propeller stopped. We swung in and bumped against the side of the pier. Our journey was over.

153 13 October 1919

MAN DIES BY THE ROADSIDE A tragic affair is reported from East Cowick near Goole, **Albert Conway**, (45), a boatman, having been found dead on the main road from Goole to Selby.

It appears that on Saturday night Conway was at Snaith, and at 10 o'clock left the local inn in the company of two other man, to go to his home. These men, Henry West, grocer, and Robert Walton, labourer, state that when 300 yards from home, Conway, without any remark, left them and went across the road. They did not stop, thinking that he would be following on, and they never saw him again.

It was not until Sunday morning about 8 o'clock that Conway was found dead across the footpath by a soldier named Boldy. He was then about 50 yards from where his companions of the previous night had left him.

The inquest has been fixed for Tuesday.

154 13 November 1919

THE BARGEE OF THE FUTURE

DIFFICULTIES OF EDUCATING THE RISING GENERATION The education of canal boat children is a problem that the Board of Education, for a long time, have found difficult of solution. In reply to a deputation from the National Transport Workers' Union, the President of the Board of Education (Mr H A L Fisher) expressed the great difficulty that is experienced of securing for the children on canal boats anything like a satisfactory education, and he has promised to consult the

Minister of Transport to see what steps can be taken to investigate the conditions.

Leeds is fortunately placed from the fact that the bulk of the bargees registered in the city have houses of their own, where the children remain and attend school regularly. Only two families of three children each take the youngsters with them on the boat, and then only in the summer months. It is then expected that the children will attend school at whatever port the boat happens to call.

There are, however, a number of regular visitors to Leeds who are registered in other towns, and who are under the obligation of sending their children to school in Leeds when their boat calls. Upon these, a watchful eye is kept by the school attendance officer, who pays regular weekly visits to the wharves, and who works in connection with the canal boat inspector attached to the Sanitary Department of the Corporation.

Very little trouble is experienced with these people, who for some years have come to recognise the value of education. Not many illiterate men are now to be found amongst the bargees, and it is estimated that with the coming of the next generation, the canal boatman who cannot read his newspaper will have passed out of existence.

155 14 November 1919

THE DOUBTFUL IDENTITY OF A DEAD MAN

A MYSTERY OF THE OUSE A curious problem occupied the Judge at the Selby County Court today, regarding the identity of a boatman, said to be **Joseph Gale**, formerly of Hull and latterly of Goole, where he was in the employ of Messrs P Spence and Son (Ltd), chemical manufacturers.

To Messrs Spence, the man was known as Joseph Watson, and he was employed on their steamboat *Ammonia*. While the boat was in the Ouse near Selby, the man fell overboard and was drowned. His widow, Mrs Gale, brought a claim for compensation against the owners of the boat, which was heard at the Selby County Court early this year.

At the inquest, the body had been identified as that of Joseph Gale, but the Judge at the County Court held that the evidence did not establish this, and gave a verdict in favour of the respondents.

A further application was made today by Mr B Pearlman of Hull, on behalf of the widow. Fresh witnesses were called, including a sister of Joseph Gale, who saw the body of the boatman at Selby and identified it as that of her brother.

The application was resisted by Mr Payne of Hull, on behalf of the respondents, and ultimately the case was adjourned for further hearing at the Hull County Court.

156 12 January 1920

A BOATMAN'S BRUTALITY

FELLED HIS WIFE AND JUMPED ON HER IN CLOGS What was described by the magistrates as a cowardly and unspeakable assault was described to the West Riding Bench at Bradford this morning, when **Tom Stead**, boatman of Lupton Street, Shipley, was charged with assaulting his wife.

According to the statement of the latter, on December 20th last, the prisoner visited the Airedale Inn during the evening. Later she went there, and he sent her home to prepare supper. She did so, and then went into a neighbour's house. When she returned to her own home, the prisoner was sitting in an armchair. He walked straight to the door and locked it. Then he knocked her down and jumped on her for a quarter of an hour. He was wearing clogs. She was taken to Saltaire Hospital, where she remained for a fortnight.

Dr C W Eames said he found Mrs Stead to be suffering from shock, bruises on the head and all over the body, and a fractured rib, which he found later had penetrated the lung. Her condition was at one time critical.

The prisoner was sent to gaol for six months with hard labour, and an application by his wife for a separation order was granted, she to have the custody of the four children, and Stead to pay her £2 per week.

157 1 March 1920

CANAL BOATMAN AND WIFE'S MAINTENANCE The failure of his wife to wash his shirt oftener than once a year was one reason advanced at Skipton today by **James Sharpe**, a boatman on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, when asked why he had failed to contribute £1 a week towards his wife's maintenance, under a separation order issued last June.

His wife admitted that in November she and her husband agreed to live together ; but since then, she declared, he had preferred the company of another woman, whom he had taken for excursions on his canal boat. During that time, he only gave her £1.

When her husband was ill, he came home, and she had to keep him, she said.

The magistrates were satisfied that defendant and his wife had been living together since November, and the case against Sharpe was accordingly dismissed.

158 19 April 1920

BOATMAN'S FATAL FALL FROM A BARGE A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned at an inquest held in Leeds today on the body of **James Hudson** (25), boatman of Taylor Street, Shipley, who was drowned in the river Aire at Knostrop on Friday last. He fell overboard from a barge which was being towed towards Leeds.

Hudson was on the deck of the barge *Leek* which, after passing through the locks, was driven by the wind into an island in the middle of the river. He lost his balance and was thrown overboard.

Several unavailing attempts at rescue were made. Eventually the body was recovered by dragging operations.

159 19 April 1920

AN OBSERVANT POLICEMAN Through the alertness of PC Townroe, Arthur C Leeming (20) of Eccleshill, Bradford, was apprehended on Saturday, and charged today, at Bradford, with stealing a suit, a pair of boots and a watch, of the value of £8 15s, the property of a Shipley boatman, **Edward Foster**.

The owner of the goods stated that on April 12, he left his boat, which was moored at Shipley, and when he returned, the goods were gone.

PC Townroe saw the prisoner and noticed that the prisoner was wearing a pair of boots, which answered to the description of those which had been stolen. On the way to the police station, Leeming acknowledged having stolen the goods and pawned the suit in Bradford for 10s.

Prisoner was bound over for 12 months.

160 9 June 1920

GREEN BICYCLE MURDER MYSTERY

RONALD LIGHT ON TRIAL

A CHAIN OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE At Leicester today, before Mr Justice Horridge, Ronald Vivian Light (34), described as a civil engineer and an ex officer of the Royal Marines, was indicted for the murder near Leicester of Annie Bella Wright (21), a worker at a rubber factory, on



July 5 last.

Great interest is centred on the case, which has come to be known as the "Green Bicycle Murder", owing to the fact that the victim was seen on the evening of the murder in the company of a man who rode a machine of that description, while portions of a similar machine were dragged up accidentally by a boatman in a canal near the Leicester railway bridge last February.

Shortly afterwards, the accused was arrested at Cheltenham, where he was engaged as an assistant mathematical master at Deanclose School.

The prisoner pleaded "not guilty". The Attorney General outlined the circumstances of the alleged crime as already told at the inquest and police court proceedings. Miss Wright, he said, lived with her parents, who were labouring people, at Stoughton. She was described as a well built girl of attractive appearance. It was her practice to go to and from her work on a bicycle. She was keeping company with a young man who was a stoker in the Navy, and expected to be demobilised in August last. At 4 pm on July 5 she went to the post office, and returned shortly after half past. She was last seen alive by her mother a little before that time, when she was in good health and spirits. A few hours later, her dead body was discovered. The road where it was found had two gateways separated by some little distance, and to get to the spot it was necessary for her to pass through each gateway. It was not her shortest way home.

A farmer named Powell found the body. She was lying partly on her back and partly on her left side, and close to her was her bicycle. The body was warm, blood was coming from the nose, and the head lay in a pool of blood. There was no sign of any struggle. To all appearances death had been due to collapse or exhaustion, and it then looked as if death was due to natural causes.

AN ASTUTE POLICE-CONSTABLE The Attorney General at this stage complimented Police-constable Hall, who was not satisfied and went back to the place next morning. After a long search, about six yards from where the body lay, he found a bullet which apparently had been trodden into the ground by a horse's hoof. Dr Williams was called, and a bullet wound was found behind the left ear, and another one just over the right cheek bone.

"Bullets make very slight punctures", added the Attorney General. "It is very easy for them to escape notice, and one wonders what might have happened if it had not been for the vigilance of PC Hall." There was no blackening, as from gunpowder, indicating that the shot had come from a weapon several feet away. There were no other marks on the body, and no sign of anything in the nature of an attempted outrage.

The conclusion was inevitable, counsel proceeded, that someone had murdered that young girl. The question was, "Who was the murderer, and by what means was he evading detection?"

Counsel asked the jury to return for a moment to the crime. On the afternoon of Saturday July 2, he said, two little girls riding on their bicycles on a road leading from Leicester met a man riding in the opposite direction. As he passed he smiled and spoke to them. He turned round, followed and overtook them, and the little girls, becoming alarmed, turned about and rode towards Leicester, leaving the man standing by his bicycle near a farm gate. These girls would identify that man, and say that he was carrying a raincoat and, further, that the bicycle he was riding was enamelled green. The road Miss Wright took has one connected with the road on which the two little girls had met the man with the green bicycle.

About 7.30 pm, Miss Wright arrived at the house of James Measures, her uncle, at Gaulby. She went into the house, and stayed about an hour. A man with a green bicycle, who had ridden with her into the village, waited outside the house. That man was seen by the girl's uncle and by her cousins, Mr and Mrs Evans, who were on a visit to Mr Measures's house. When the girl was ready to go, the man with the green bicycle came up and said to Miss Wright, "Bella, I thought you had gone the other way".

"You will observe", said counsel, "that he addressed her by her Christian name, and evidently knew her sufficiently to be assured that she would not resent being so addressed. Nor did she. Later the girl and the man went off together, and appeared on the most friendly terms. Their departure was about a quarter past nine in the evening. About thirty five minutes later, a farmer named Powell came upon the dead body of Miss Wright about two and a half miles from Gaulby".

“Who was the man with the green bicycle?” asked counsel. “He was the man who arrived with Miss Wright at her uncle's house, and was the man in whose company she was last seen. That man, I shall call evidence to show, was Ronald Light, and his was the hand that killed the girl”.

THE EVIDENCE Mrs Mary Ann Wright, mother of the victim, examined by Mr Maddock, said on July 4 her daughter returned from work at 11.30 pm and stayed indoors until 2.30 pm the next day (Saturday). She wrote some letters and went out on her bicycle to Evington to post them. She never saw her daughter alive again. On the following Monday she saw the dead body at Little Stretton.

Joseph Powell, a farmer living at Stretton Parva, described the finding of the body. The girl, he said, was lying on her back in blood. Close by her was a lady's green bicycle with the front wheel pointing towards Leicester. He left someone to take care of the body, which he had lifted on the grass, while he went to get Constable Hall, and while the latter went to where the body was on his bicycle, witness telephoned to Dr Williams.

PC Alfred Hall (Staffordshire Constabulary) said he found that the hair on the left side was clotted with blood. There was no blood on her hands, but there were a few splashes on her raincoat. Her clothes were in order and her hat was on her head. There was no reason to suppose that there had been foul play. An empty purse, a box of matches and a handkerchief were all that was found upon the body.

“After the doctor had left”, said the witness, “I began to reflect. I decided to visit the place next morning. I did so, and found the bullet.”

161 10 June 1920

GREEN BICYCLE CLUE IN THE MURDER MYSTERY

FILLING IN THE DETAILS

FATAL CARTRIDGE LIKE THOSE FOUND IN THE CANAL

Leicester, Thursday

Great interest was again shown at Leicester Assizes today, when Ronald Vivien Light, civil engineer, appeared for the second day on a charge of murdering Annie Bella Wright at Little Stretton on July 5 last year. The court was filled, and there was a large crowd outside.

At the opening, Mr Justice Horridge asked that Dr Williams should be recalled, but it was explained that he was not present, and did not expect the court to sit so early.

The Judge said that yesterday no one put a question to the doctor as to the cause of death.

Sir Marshall Hall said it was an oversight, and the Judge rejoined that it was necessary for everything to be properly proved.



Joseph Orton of Orton Bros, cycle agents, Derby, produced a letter showing that a BSA bicycle, No 1013648, was sold to the prisoner on May 13 1919.

John Henry Atkins, farm labourer of Little Stretton, said that while walking near Gaulby between 7 and 7.30 pm on July 5, he saw a man and woman cycling towards Gaulby. When they passed him the man was in front and witness heard him speaking with a highish tone, but could not hear what was said. The man then dismounted and walked beside the woman.

Mary Elizabeth Webb, domestic servant, said she lived with prisoner's mother at 34 Highfield Street, Leicester, and had been in her employ for eight years. Prisoner was a civil engineer, and at one time used to work at Derby, going home to Leicester at week ends. He left his position at Derby in 1914, and stayed at home till 1915, bringing with him a green bicycle.

In April 1915 he took a commission in the Army, and the bicycle was left at home. He returned home after being demobilised in either January or February 1919, and used the bicycle frequently.

That was until July. His mother went to Rhyl on July 8, and just before then witness remembered the prisoner taking the bicycle to be repaired. On a Saturday, the date of which she did not remember, while his mother was away, he took the machine home from the repairers, had tea, and went out for a ride.

TIRED AND DUSTY He did not return until about 10 pm, when she let him in through the back gate. He had the bicycle with him, and looked tired and dusty.

She said, "Why are you so late?" and he replied that his cycle had broken down again, and he had had to walk. He had supper and went to bed.

Next day he took the cycle to the box room at the top of the house, and it was not brought down again until just before Christmas, when he took it out and did not return with it. Later, he told her he had sold it.

Whilst his mother was at Rhyl, witness said she saw an account of the murder, and said to prisoner, "Have you seen there has been a murder?" He merely replied, "Oh?"

The frame of a green bicycle was produced in court at this stage, and witness said the handlebars were of the same shape as those of the bicycle owned by the prisoner.

Counsel asked about the prisoner's clothing in July, and witness said he generally wore grey and had several raincoats.

Counsel : Do you know what became of the clothes used by the prisoner in July? Some of the clothes were sold just before Christmas.

Sir Marshall Hall questioned the witness on a statement that she had been out on the Sunday and missed the bicycle on the Monday morning. It was elicited that the Sunday referred to was the Sunday week after the prisoner came home tired and dusty.

Dr Williams, recalled, gave formal evidence that death was due to gunshot wounds.

FINDING THE BICYCLE **Enoch Arthur Whitehouse**, canal boatman, said that on February 23 he was passing through Leicester on the canal when his tow rope sagged. When it tightened again, he saw the frame of a bicycle on it, but it fell off. He went back next day, fished it out of the water, and handed it to the police.

When Joseph Chambers, the next witness, was called, the Judge said his name did not appear on the depositions.

Mr Maddocks : It is on mine.

The Judge : The way in which these documents have been sent to the Judge is a scandal. I have had to complain at Maidstone, and my recollection is that I have also had to complain here of the same thing.

Chambers gave evidence of recovering from the canal a gear wheel, crank and pedal, on April 27, and another crank and pedal on April 30. Both were near where the frame of the bicycle was found. Police-sergeant Healey of the Leicestershire police, said he dragged the canal and recovered a holster containing a large number of cartridges about 28 yards from where the bicycle was found.

Henry Clarke, gunsmith of Leicester, said the bullet which caused the death of Miss Wright was of the calibre adopted for army service. It was identical with the bullets in the holster recovered from the canal.

Cross-examined by Sir Marshall Hall, the witness said he could not say approximately how many thousand millions of these cartridges were made. The bullet produced was a standard bullet, issued as long ago as the Boer War. The bullet showed marks which, in his opinion, were marks of the passage of the bullet through a rifled barrel. The greater the length of the barrel, the greater the velocity of the bullet. The .455 cartridge was adopted immediately after the Boer War. Cordite enormously increased the velocity of a bullet as compared with black powder.

RANGE OF REVOLVER BULLET The range of a bullet fired from a Service revolver was at least 1,000 yards. At 50 or 60 yards such a bullet would penetrate an inch of deal, and probably two inches. The entrance hole of the bullet would be relatively small, and the exit hole relatively large.

Sir Marshall Hall : We are told the exit hole in this girl's head was one and a half inches by half an inch. Is not that an unusually small exit hole to be made by a bullet of this size? - No.

Witness further said that a bullet travelling at a great velocity was very little deflected when it struck anything. The exit hole in this case showed that the bullet had been deflected from its course a little, but the position of the exit showed that the velocity of the bullet when it entered had been very little diminished.

Sir Marshall Hall : If the bullet had been fired six or seven feet from the metalled road, would you have expected to have found the bullet in this condition? - Yes, if it struck the road at an angle.

Have you ever seen a human being who has been shot from a distance of five yards with a service revolver? - No.

Sir Marshall Hall : I suggest that the effect of such a bullet upon the skull of a human being would be almost to blow the side of the head off.

Witness : It depends upon the velocity, and upon what part of the head it strikes.

He agreed that the bullet could be fired from a rifle as well as from a revolver. Asked if he would expect to find a scorching of the face if the bullet had been fired from a distance of six or seven feet, witness replied in the negative.

Walter Franks, cycle repairer of Leicester, identified the cycle produced as the one he had repaired for prisoner.

The court then adjourned for lunch, the Judge intimating that he would sit rather later than usual tonight.

TIRED OF "MESSING ABOUT" Harry Cox, cycle dealer and repairer, Leicester, said the prisoner brought a BSA bicycle on July 2 and asked him to repair it. He said he was a commissioned officer on a month's leave visiting friends in Leicester.

The cycle was repaired, and on July 5 the prisoner took it away, saying he was fed up with messing about in the town, and was going for a ride in the country.

Evidence was then given by Superintendent Taylor, who arrested the prisoner at Cheltenham.