

ILLUSTRATED POLICE NEWS 1867 to 1879

1 January 12 1867

THE STABBING CASE NEAR BOLTON On Monday afternoon, **James Thompson**, boatman of Aspswell, was brought before the county magistrates at Bolton, charged with stabbing John Deakin as Aspswell. **Jane Robinson**, whose husband is also a boatman employed at the Kirkless Hall Colliery Company, stated that on Thursday last the parties were at Tyler's public house, and she saw prisoner jump upon the table and try to punch Deakin, but the latter moved out of the way. Afterwards, they went outside to fight. When they again entered the house, she saw the prisoner strike at Deakin, not, however, noticing that he had anything in his hand, but when he withdrew his hand she saw he had a knife, and it was then covered in blood. She screamed out to Deakin, "You're stabbed", and he replied, "Aye, wench, I'm done for". The injured man bled very much from a dreadful gash in his body. He still lies in a dangerous state, and little hopes are entertained of his recovery. The magistrates remanded Thompson to await the result of the wound.

2 January 26 1867

EXTRAORDINARY CASE – A FALSE CHARACTER **Mary Ann Moss**, a very respectable woman, the wife of a waterman and dwelling at 41 Back Church Lane, Whitechapel, appeared before Mr Partridge on a summons, charged under the Act 32nd George III, cap 56, with unlawfully and falsely personating herself as the mistress of Hannah Briant, and did personally give to her a false character upon her offering herself to be hired as a servant into the service of Isaac Levy of the Kettle-drum, in Ratcliff Highway, by which she had incurred a penalty of £20, or imprisonment and hard labour for three months. Mr Stoddart, solicitor, appeared for the defendant, and pleaded not guilty. Mr Levy stated that a girl named Hannah Briant offered her services to him on December 28th, and he sent his barwoman, Sergeant, to inquire. Half an hour later, he took Briant into his service, and after thirteen days he discharged her, because he lost a good deal of property. He did not, however, accuse Briant, but another of his servants, who was convicted and sentenced to four months imprisonment with hard labour. After Briant had been with him seven or eight days, he called on defendant and asked her why she had given Briant a character, adding, "You know the girl has never been in your service". The defendant said, "The girl has been in my service". He answered her, "I am in a position to prove that she was in the service of Mr and Mrs Rose at the Standard at the time you gave her nine months' character". A girl standing by said, "Mother, don't give him any other satisfaction", and the conversation terminated. In cross-examination by Mr Stoddart, the witness said : Catherine Troy was in my service five or six months. I cannot say that Hannah Briant was a criminal party in the robberies. Sarah Sergeant, barwoman in the service of Mr Levy, said : On the 28th of December last, I went to defendant's house by the directions of my master. I said, "What sort of a character has Hannah Briant?" She replied, "She is a very honest and good girl". I said, "How long has she been in your service?", to which she replied, "Nine months". I said, "How long has she left?" She said, "About a month". I asked her why she discharged her. She said, "Why, I thought I could do with a smaller girl". I asked her if she was at all forward or impudent. The defendant said, "No ; if she was, she would have no chance in my house". That was all that took place. Mrs Ellen Rose, wife of Mr George Rose, who until recently kept two licensed public houses in Whitechapel, said that Hannah Briant, who was between twenty three and twenty four years of age, came into her service in the month of January 1866, and remained with her until the 28th of September. She discharged her only because her services were no longer required, in consequence of leaving the house, the Standard, in Wall Street, Whitechapel. Cross-examined by Mr Stoddart : The character of the girl Hannah Briant was very good. She was very honest and industrious. She would have no objection to give her a character, or to take her into her own service again. The defendant's daughter was in her service five years, and was as good a girl as ever lived. Samuel Fromberg, landlord of a beerhouse in Dock Street, said that Hannah Briant was in his service for five days only, about five weeks ago, and he discharged her for drunkenness. Mr Stoddart : You discharged two servants in one day? Witness : Yes, I did. Mr

Stoddart : And you did not take the trouble of going to Mr Rose, your opposite neighbour, for a character? Witness : No, I did not. Mr Stoddart : The girl gave you a reference to Mr Rose? Witness : Yes, she did. Mr Stoddart said that the defendant did not wish to take advantage of any technicalities, and would admit that she had acted wrong, and had most improperly represented herself as the mistress of the girl Hannah Briant. The Act of Parliament was a most salutary one. There was a traffic going on in false characters, which ought to be put down. The girl Hannah Briant was an honest, industrious, civil and attentive servant, and could have obtained an excellent character from Mr and Mrs Rose. She was an orphan, and the defendant, out of kindness to her and to enable her to obtain an honest living, made a false representation concerning her by which no one was injured. The defendant acted as she had done out of kindness and without the slightest knowledge of the Act of Parliament, or that she was acting wrongly. The girl Briant was perfectly honest, and Mr and Mrs Rose would have given her a good character if they had been applied to. The defendant's husband was a respectable man, and he submitted that a small fine would meet the justice of the case. All that had been done by the defendant was from the best of motives. The woman had acted with kindness, humanity and good feeling, and she deeply regretted acting contrary to law. Mr Levy said he should be glad if the defendant was leniently dealt with. Her husband was a respectable man. Mr Partridge said the conduct of the defendant was most abominable, and that he had never heard of a worse case of this kind. The defendant, without rhyme or reason, had made a false statement, and he saw no mitigatory circumstance in the case. If he intended to convict, and had the power of punishing the defendant, he should inflict the full penalty of £20, with the alternative of three months imprisonment. The defendant had falsely represented the girl Hannah Briant to be a good reliable servant. That statement was altogether false. He was of opinion that the defendant had committed an abominable fraud, but the question was had she brought herself within the meaning of the Act of Parliament. He was sorry to say he had no means of punishing the offence. The defendant had not personally or in writing given the girl Hannah Briant a false character. The false representation was made to a third person, the woman Sergeant. The false representation was not made to Mr Levy, or in writing. Mr Partridge then went through the various sections of the Act of Parliament, and said it was quite plain that to constitute the offence, the character must be made in writing or personally. He was compelled to dismiss the summons. If he had the power he would have inflicted the full penalty, because the act of the defendant was disgraceful and unfair. The defendant : Thank you, sir. I am sorry for what I have done.

3 February 23 1867

MANSION HOUSE

IMPORTANT DECISION UNDER THE WATERMAN'S ACT A respectable young man named Charles Braden attended before the Lord Mayor to answer a summons issued at the instance of Mr **Richard Robert Fairbairn** of 5 Upper Stamford Street, licensed lighterman, charging him “for that he on the 7th of February unlawfully did take charge of and navigate on the River Thames a certain barge called the *Jane*, from White Lion Wharf to (...), without having a licence from the Master, Wardens and Assistants of the Waterman's Company, contrary to the provisions of the 35th bye law of the said company”. The question raised was whether the defendant, who was a journeyman barge builder, had a right to fetch a barge to his master's yard for repair, as a part of his daily work and not for hire or gain, or whether this was an illegal “navigation” of the Thames within the meaning of the Waterman's Act. There was no dispute as to the facts ; and barge builder's men, it was alleged, were in the habit of offending in this way. **Mr Carter**, the defendant's employer, called attention to one fact, viz, that the barge was “towed” across from Messrs Lockett and Judkins's, and he held that this was not “navigation” within the meaning of the Act. The summons was dismissed.

4 March 2 1867

GREENWICH

CAUTION TO THAMES WATERMEN **John Allen**, waterman of Ratcliffe Cross, was charged, at the instance of **Mr Trumble**, inspector of the Waterman's Company, with unlawfully working with a boat not truly licensed on the River Thames. The complainant deposed that on the 18th instant he found the defendant working a boat which had not been licensed, and on telling him he was doing wrong, he was assailed with a volley of abuse. The defendant had before been summoned for a similar offence. The defendant said the boat was ready to be measured previous to being licensed, but he could not get the inspection made. Mr Trumble said the defendant was in arrears for "quarterage dues" to the company, and until these were paid, the boat would not be licensed. Mr Traill informed the defendant that the company's requirements under their Act must be complied with, and a fine of 10s and costs was then imposed, or seven days imprisonment.

5 April 27 1867

DROWNED IN THE THAMES An inquest was held on Monday night at the Vestry Hall, Fair Street, Southwark, respecting the death of Ellen Robinson, aged twenty four.

From the evidence it appeared that the deceased and her sister were standing at the Tooley Street end of Bermondsey Street at about one o'clock in the morning of the 6th March. A lighterman named **Williams** stood with them, and the deceased, instead of going home with her sister, went off with the lighterman. He had to go to a barge which was moored at Beale's Wharf ; but as the watchman would not let him take the woman through the gate, he left her at the Battle Bridge stairs whilst he went round to the yard. As it was high water at the time, it was impossible for anyone to walk from the Bridge stairs to the wharf. Williams was admitted to the wharf by the watchman. There were two barges moored close to each other, and it was one of these of which Williams had charge. After going on board, he took the small boat which lay by and pulled to the stairs, where he took deceased in, and rowed back with her to the barge. After they had been there about an hour, Williams came on shore and asked the watchman to open the gate for him. The watchman then saw the woman standing near the end of the barge, and at the other end was a man named Hurley, who afterwards stated that he had been sleeping there until a few minutes before. The watchman asked Williams what he meant by having a woman on the barge "like that", and Williams replied that he had not taken her there. Whilst the watchman was opening the gate to allow Williams to pass through, he heard a scream, and looking towards the barge he saw Hurley, who had shouted, "She is gone!", bent over the side as if looking for the woman. How she had fallen into the water he could not say ; nor did he know how Hurley had got to the barge. A few hours after, the bonnet which the deceased had worn was found, but the body was not recovered until Tuesday last. On the morning of that day a waterman caught it as it was floating by the Old Stairs at Horselydown.

The sister of the deceased said that when they parted at one o'clock in the morning of the 6th March, the deceased had the portrait of a gentleman in her pocket. That portrait was missing when the body was found on Tuesday.

After some consideration, the jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

6 June 8 1867

BOAT RACE FOR £50 On Tuesday afternoon, **William Saddington**, a waterman of Wapping, and **George Baker**, a waterman of Mill Stairs, Bermondsey, rowed from Putney to Mortlake in old fashioned boats for £25 a side, the result of the race oversetting a general opinion that Baker had been an overrated man, and would easily suffer defeat. Baker has rowed second for Doggett's coat and badge, been beaten by **Deal** of Cherry Garden Stairs, and won the Wapping boat last year, beating Saddington, whose first appearance in public was on that occasion. Two steamers accompanied the race, and betting was brisk at 2 to 1 and 5 to 2 on Saddington. Mr Charles Westhall of *Bell's Life* was referee. Mr Wilcox of the White Hart, Barnes, was umpire for Baker, who had for pilot **Fred Russell** of Rotherhithe. **David Coombes** was Saddington's umpire, and he was shown up by Kelly, the champion. Baker won the toss for choice of sides, and they were nearly

half an hour (?dodging?) the start. This at last Baker got the best of, (.....) it, was clear at Simmons', and two (.....) ahead at the half mile post. The race was over. Saddington tried hard, but Baker went away very rapidly and won in the hollowest manner by twenty lengths.

7 June 29 1867

DROWNED WHILE FISHING On Monday evening Mr Bedford, the coroner for Westminster, held an inquiry in St George's boardroom, Ebury Bridge, Pimlico, on the body of **Henry Ewen**, nine years of age, who was drowned in the Grosvenor Canal on Thursday last.

The father of the deceased was employed with other men unloading a barge at a wharf near Ebury Bridge, when his son brought him his dinner. During the dinner hour the deceased amused himself by leaning over the side of the barge catching sticklebacks with a net attached to a short whip handle and, overbalancing himself, fell into the canal. A boy saw him fall over, but did not give the slightest alarm. The father soon missed the boy, and fancying he had fallen overboard, with great anxiety seized a hitcher and endeavoured to find the body. Another man relieved the father and immediately caught the boy by the jacket and placed him on the barge, when medical assistance was in prompt attendance. The water was about nine feet deep.

Dr E L Webb said he believed the deceased had been in the water about a quarter of an hour. He attempted resuscitation, but without effect. The cause of death was suffocation by drowning.

The jury having returned a verdict of accidental death,

The Coroner condemned the conduct of the boy who saw the deceased fall into the water without giving intimation to anybody.

8 July 6 1867

SOUTHWARK

ROBBERY **John Welsh**, a waterman, was charged with assaulting Mr James McDonald, steward of one of her Majesty's ships stationed at Sheerness, and robbing him of his purse and contents. The prosecutor deposed that between twelve and one in the morning he met the prisoner, and asked him if he could row him across the river from the Bermondsey wall. While arranging about the fare the prisoner pushed against him, and all of a sudden he missed his purse and contents. He caught hold of the prisoner, and said, "You villain, you have robbed me", when he said he had not, and struck him a violent blow on the cheek and endeavoured to get away. He, however, detained him until a constable came up, and then gave him into custody. The prisoner ultimately pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to six months hard labour.

9 August 10 1867

THE TRAGEDY IN LIMEHOUSE

RESUMPTION OF THE INQUEST On Thursday morning at ten o'clock, Mr Richards, the deputy coroner, resumed at the Salisbury Arms Tavern, Eastfield Street, Limehouse, the investigation respecting the alleged murder of Agnes Oates, aged twenty three.

The court and the streets nearby were densely crowded by persons anxious to get a glimpse of the accused, **John Wiggins**.

Mr Charles Young, solicitor, appeared to watch the proceeding on behalf of the prisoner, John Wiggins, who has been arrested by the police on the charge of murder.

Inspector Brady represented the Commissioner of Police and conducted the case for the prosecution.

The Coroner said he had applied to the Secretary of State in order that the accused, John Wiggins, might be brought up before the court ; and he had been informed that the prisoner would be sent before the court on a future day. As the prisoner was today represented by his solicitor, he (the Coroner) thought it would be better to go into the case today.

Dr Horton, recalled, said that he had at the request of the jury carefully examined the body of the deceased since the inquest. There were no marks of violence on the deceased's hands.

Coroner : When you were called in to see the deceased on the morning of her death, had the

stiffness of death set in?

Witness : Yes ; she might have been dead an hour, it might be more. There was blood on the hands, it was smeared over there. There was blood on her chemise. The blood was in spots. It had the appearance as if it had fallen down while she was standing.

By a Juror : Her arms were straight out, and her legs were straight.

By Mr Young : In consequence of the great loss of blood, I should expect the body to get colder sooner than it otherwise would in ordinary cases.

(.....) Ellen Oates, sister of the deceased, was recalled, and the coroner read over to her the deposition of the evidence she had given at the first sitting of the court.

The Coroner said that he did so in order that Mr Young might be thoroughly acquainted with everything that had already taken place in his absence. It will be recollected she deposed to a quarrel which had taken place between the accused and the deceased.

The witness was cross-examined by Mr Young, and she said that she would swear that she had come up to (... ..) to Liverpool. Witness continued : I do not (... ..) my father ever left Liverpool. I had seen my father a week before I left. My sister told me (.....) My sister was in the habit of "taking a drop". She never got drunk. I do not know that she pawned Wiggins's things to get drink. She told me she had (.....) on the Saturday. I do not know that she was in the habit of stopping out late at night. I did not see her low spirited for the last six months.

George Wiggins, an old man, said that he lived at Temperance Cottage, Limehouse. He was a bargeman. John Wiggins was his son. Deceased had lived with him in witness's cottage for the last six months. He was not married to her. They had wrangles together "like most people", all through her intemperate habits. She became intemperate almost as soon as she came there. She kept bad company. She was decidedly not immoral. She only drank. On the Sunday previous to the deceased's death, no altercation took place in witness's presence, although the deceased's sister had stated that one had taken place ; "but", continued the witness, " as I stand in the presence of my God, no quarrel took place on that day. He came down and sat in the garden. There was no quarrel on that day. There was one on the previous night. She threw a tureen at him and cut his arm open".

The Coroner : I cannot take that if you were not present.

Witness : I was not. The deceased and my son were lodgers. One day my wife was there, and found all the things in disorder, and she gave the deceased warning to leave. I have seen the deceased very low and desponding. On the Tuesday night (the night of the fatal occurrence) my son came home and said he should like a kidney for supper. While it was cooking, two men called for him and said that they wanted him to take a horse to Pimlico. He left and returned at one. When he came in he said, "Mother, call me early in the morning, for I have to get that barge in". He ate part of the kidney and drank some beer he brought home with him. When he left with the two men in the evening, he did not in the least leave in anger with the deceased. No words were spoken. The deceased was a most (.....) creature on that night. She was very (....) about the separation that was to take place (.....)

The Coroner : What do you know of your own knowledge (.....)

Witness : Everything was very peaceable until a few minutes before five o'clock. I then heard a feeble voice cry out (...) I got up.

Coroner : Was that voice a man's or a woman's?

Witness : It was a man's voice. I went towards the room door, and my son ran out with his hands up to his throat. He cried out, "Oh, oh ; father, father. Aggy has cut my throat". The handkerchief, which was a red one, was tied around his throat. It was lightsome then. I could see no blood, for the handkerchief was red. I did not see a cut on his hand. I asked him, "What has she done it with?" "I do not know", he replied. "Is it with your pocket knife?" I asked. "No," said he. "I have got that in my pocket. I cannot make out what she has done it with". My wife rushed past me, and he ran downstairs in his stockings. He did not leave the house. I heard my wife cry out, "Oh, Johnny, come up ; she is dying, come up". I was in the room when he came up. He came into the room ; I did not take particular notice what he did with his hands. He cried out when he saw his mother holding the deceased. He cried out, "Oh, father, father, save her, save her, poor girl, save

her". I then said, "Wrap something around her throat while a doctor is sent for". He went to the table.

By Mr Young : I did hear my son tell the deceased on the Wednesday previous that he should leave her, as he could not put up with her conduct any longer. I know about a watch, and I know that the deceased got a further sum of one pound advanced upon it. It had been pledged. She was drinking all the day on Sunday. She got the ticket of the watch. Now, gentlemen, I wish to say that I have buried the deceased. Every farthing came out of my pocket.

(Six thousand people attended at the funeral of the deceased on Sunday week. She was interred at Bow).

Martha Wiggins said that the accused was her son. He had never bitterly or maliciously threatened to injure the deceased. He had said, "Don't reprobate Agnes". She was given to drink.

Some other witnesses having been examined,

Inspector Bray put in evidence a letter from Liverpool, and it stated that the writer "having seen in the newspapers of the awful tragedy that had happened to Agnes", he wished to say that he was her father and that he was not dead. The two girls had left Liverpool without his knowledge while he was searching for work. He wished to know all about the tragedy, and if it was necessary to bring him up to London to give evidence, he would come.

The Coroner said that he should now adjourn the inquiry for the purpose of allowing the prisoner to be brought before the jury.

The proceedings were then adjourned. The crowd outside was immense during the whole day.

10 September 1 1867

GREENWICH

ONE MONTH OF MARRIED LIFE AND SIXTEEN YEARS' SEPARATION Mark Ford, a seafaring man about fifty years of age, was charged before Mr Traill with assaulting his wife, Caroline Ford, and threatening to murder her, and also with damaging various articles of furniture, valued at £10, the property of **James Sims**, a waterman of 2 Claremont Street, Greenwich. Caroline Ford, who appeared in court with a blackened eye, said that sixteen years ago she was married to the prisoner. A month afterwards they separated from each other and the prisoner went to sea. At the end of ten months and a half, the prisoner returned, and they met each other in the street, but did not again live together, nor did they speak to each other. During the last two years she had neither seen nor heard anything of him, but on Friday afternoon at half past one, he came to the place where she was living and entered the house. After standing for some time looking at her, he said, "I was bent upon coming, and now I will have your life and break everything in the place". He then commenced destroying the furniture, and went into the back yard and did other damage. On returning into the house, he struck her violently on the eye, and seizing her, forced her into a corner of the room, where he held her, and threatened to knock out her brains with a poker and shovel he had possessed himself of, but which she succeeded in getting from him, and a constable being sent for she gave him into custody. The property destroyed, she added, belonged to James Sims, a man whom she admitted she was cohabiting with. The prisoner said he was greatly excited, and if he had struck the complainant (he would not, he said, call her his wife), it was done by accident when breaking up the furniture. When first married, he spent £75 with the complainant, and had allowed her his half pay, amounting to £26, while at sea, but when he returned home he found her living with the same man she was now cohabiting with. Mr Traill said that whatever might be the misconduct by the complainant, the law would not permit the prisoner to seek her out and assault her. For this he would have to procure someone who would become bound for his good behaviour during the next three months. Sims here came forward and said he charged the prisoner with destroying his furniture, but Mr Traill told him that if he chose to take away a man's wife and live with her, he must seek redress for any damage done to him by the husband elsewhere.

11 September 14 1867

THE TRAGEDY IN LIMEHOUSE **John Wiggins**, a lighterman, was brought up on remand for

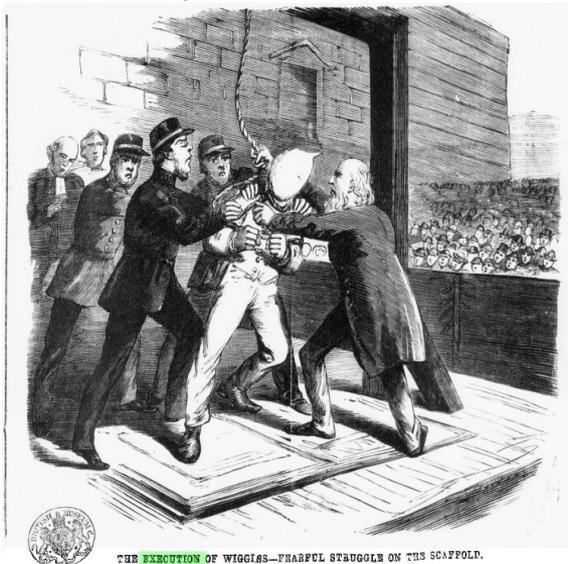
final examination on Tuesday, and committed before Mr Paget at the Thames Police Court, charged with the wilful murder of Agnes Oates, aged twenty two years, at No 1 Temperance Cottages, Lower North Street, Limehouse, on the morning of the 24th of July last.

All the facts of the case have been already given ; and on this occasion two eminent doctors deposed their belief that the deceased could not have cut her own throat in the manner presented by the wounds of the deceased.

The prisoner was committed for trial for wilful murder.

12 October 1867

EXECUTION OF WIGGINS – FEARFUL STRUGGLE ON THE SCAFFOLD On Tuesday morning, **John Wiggins**, a lighterman, who was convicted at the last sittings of the Central Criminal Court of the murder of a young woman named Agnes Oates, with whom he had cohabited in Limehouse, in July last, underwent the punishment of death in front of the gaol of Newgate.



THE EXECUTION OF WIGGINS—FEARFUL STRUGGLE ON THE SCAFFOLD.

There were probably never fewer people assembled at an execution in London. By seven o'clock and some time afterwards, the whole length of the Old Bailey from Ludgate Hill nearly as far as the governor's house was less crowded than on an ordinary day, and there was no difficulty in reaching the scaffold. This was attributed partly to the then approaching execution of Bordier at Horsemonger Lane gaol, which had the effect, though it would not take place until two hours afterwards, of dividing the crowd. Nor was an assemblage of people collected at an execution ever more orderly perhaps.

The sheriffs (Alderman Stone and Mr McArthur), with the under sheriffs, arrived at the prison shortly before eight o'clock. Forming themselves into a procession, with the governor of Newgate, the prison surgeon, the chaplain and the representatives of the press, they walked to an open yard at the back of the governor's residence. There they halted a few moments and then the convict, attended by two warders, passed before them to the press room, followed by the authorities. He was cool and collected, and easily submitted himself to the process of pinioning, but complained once or twice that he was being too tightly bound. The process over, the Rev Mr Lloyd Jones, the ordinary, addressed a few words of consolation to him, after which the convict said he wished to address the crowd outside. The governor told him he would not have an opportunity of doing that, and that what he had to say he had better say at once in the presence of the representatives of the press. The convict then said, "I am entirely innocent of the charge for which I am about to die. I can assure you on my dying oath that I never did it. I can go with a clear conscience and a clear heart to my Almighty Maker. It was her that cut my throat and then cut her own. I never lifted a hand or a finger to her, with my dying breath".

With that, the prison bell began to toll, and the convict was escorted to the scaffold, which he ascended with a light step, attended by the ordinary and the executioner. There a very unusual and

very painful scene occurred. The crowd, on seeing the convict, became very excited, and he began to resist the efforts of Calcraft to place him below the beam. First one of the stalwart prisoner warders and then another were summoned to assist in restraining him, until four or five of them, with the executioner, were upon the scaffold at one time. After the cap had been drawn over his face, the convict shouted to the crowd, "I am innocent ; on my dying oath, I am innocent. Cut my head off, but don't hang me. I am innocent." By the motion of his lips, he managed to work the cap from off part of his mouth, and he continued addressing the crowd, to declare his innocence again and again. Though his arms were pinioned at the elbows, he managed also to clutch hold of the rope by which he was about to be suspended, and to hold it for some moments with a firm grasp, swaying himself about, and resisting the attempts of the warders to place him upon the drop, shouting the while that he was innocent. At length he was overcome by sheer force ; the rope was adjusted, the drop fell, and the convict soon ceased to live. To the last he declared he was innocent. Since his trial, the convict has availed himself of every opportunity to asseverate his innocence in various terms, and that the woman attempted to cut his throat, and then cut her own. But there is strong feeling in the public mind, nevertheless, and especially among the prison authorities, that he committed the murder. On Saturday he was visited by his father, a man upwards of seventy, and during the interview the father repeatedly urged him "to die like a man and a Christian". The old man then knelt down, and in his own simple, homely language, offered up prayers for his son. The convict had previously seen his brother and his sister-in-law. He was constantly in communication with the ordinary after his conviction, and by the prison authorities was regarded as a man of irascible temper. On Monday the ordinary had an interview with him and sought to prepare him for death. At times while it lasted, the convict was amenable to the exhortations of the rev gentleman, and at others he rose from his seat and walked about the cell with an air of determination as if it should not contain him.

13 October 26 1867

BOYS DROWNED Mr Hereford, city coroner, held inquests on Monday on the bodies of **William Cutler**, aged eleven years, the son of a boatman plying on the Rochdale Canal, and **Alfred Goodier** of Runcorn, aged ten years, who also was employed on a barge. The bodies of both lads were found in the Rochdale Canal at different times, a short time after they had been last seen alive. It was supposed that Cutler had fallen into the canal whilst crossing a lock at Gaythorn, and that the other lad had met with his death through amusing himself by lowering a bucket into the water. In each case an open verdict was returned.

14 November 16 1867

THAMES

IMPOSITION ON STEAMBOAT PASSENGERS **John Tracy** was brought before Mr Paget charged with using foul and abusive language and threats towards a police-constable named Samuel Danniell, 140H. The complainant has been stationed at the British and Foreign Steam Wharf, Lower East Smithfield, to protect passengers from the insults and extortions of porters, loafers and watermen. Yesterday (Sunday) at noon, on the arrival of a steamer from Rotterdam at the wharf, the prisoner demanded 1s 6d for bringing two packets from a small boat in which the passenger came on shore to a cab. A shilling was offered and refused, and the officer interfered to prevent the passenger from being abused by the prisoner. Thereupon the prisoner turned upon him and heaped the vilest abuse upon him. He took him into custody. Mr Paget expressed his approval of the conduct of the constable, and fined the prisoner 10s.

15 December 21 1867

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT

ROBBERY ON BOARD SHIP **Henry Ledger**, a waterman, was charged with stealing a purse containing £2 15s 6d, the property of Henry Reed. The prosecutor was mate of a 36 ton coaster lying in the Thames. The prisoner, on the night of the 10th inst, was employed to take off the master

and a friend. He was to receive 1s 6d and his supper. He went down to the cabin, and there seeing the purse of the prosecutor lying on a locker, he took it and went off without waiting for his supper. The mate was lying in his berth, and the master asked him to lend the 1s 6d to pay the prisoner. The cabin boy got the 1s 6d out of the mate's purse, which he then laid on a locker. The prisoner told the boy he was going to see after his boat, and went upon deck. The boy then saw that the purse was missing. He gave the alarm, and the prisoner was pursued, but not caught. The prisoner was arrested the next day at his own house by the Thames police, but nothing was found on him. The prisoner was found guilty and sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour.

16 January 11 1868

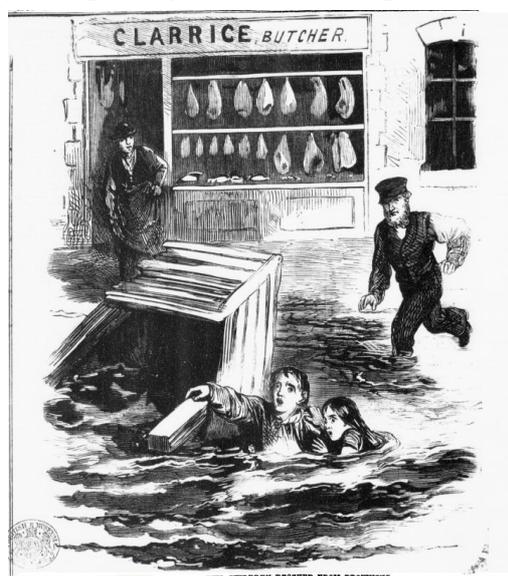
WORSHIP STREET

JUVENILE CRIME Robert Clack, aged ten years, and **June Quarrell**, a lighterman's widow, aged forty four years, of No 5 London Street, Ratcliff, were charged, the former with stealing and the other with receiving, knowing it to be stolen, 12 lbs of bacon, the property of Rhoda Hill, shopkeeper of No 19 Ball Lane, Stepney. Another boy named Patrick Sullivan is under remand for being concerned in the robbery. Mr Stoddart defended Mrs Quarrell. On Wednesday night, Mrs Hill left her shop unattended to warm her hands at the parlour fire, and in her absence a gang of daring young thieves surrounded her shop, and one of them took a cushion of bacon from a tub and handed it to another of the gang outside. All ran away. The alarm was given by an honest boy named Thomas James Bennett, and two police-constables on duty opposite the Commercial Gasworks captured the prisoners, and the bacon was discovered in Mrs Quarrell's house. The value of it was 9s. She bought it of one of the boys for 2s 6d. Clack, in defence, said he only went into the shop to buy a "penn'orth" of cheese. Mr Stoddart urged, in defence of Mrs Quarrell, that she had incautiously purchased the bacon for 2s 6d, not knowing it was stolen. Mr Paget said he should remand both prisoners until the 9th instant. Mr Stoddart asked the magistrate to take bail for Mrs Quarrell who, he said, had five children. Mr Paget : I will not take bail. Other people have children. It is such receivers as these that cause our convict prisons to be filled with thieves. Bail, certainly not.

17 February 1 1868

THE FLOOD AT OXFORD

TWO CHILDREN SAVED FROM DROWNING The meadows round Oxford, and in fact the upper valley of the Thames, the banks of the Cherwell, and tributary streams have been more or less under water owing to the repeated rains, and a vast expanse of low lying ground has been completely submerged. A curious scene was witnessed as the flood was rising at the end of Fisher's Row, Oxford, which is chiefly occupied by fishermen and punt owners.



THE FLOOD AT OXFORD—TWO CHILDREN RESCUED FROM DROWNING.

At the end of this row of buildings, on the neck of a little promontory, washed by the (?.....) of the Isle, stands, or rather totters (for it is so rickety as to shake with the wind), the dwelling of **Thomas Beasley**, the sire of a well known race of Oxford watermen. At the back of this wretched tenement, a closet overhung the stream which runs from this point through Morrell's sluices ; it was chiefly composed of timber, slated on the roof, and had been put up by the city authorities, to whom the property belongs, some 4 or 5 years ago. The south westerly gale which was blowing on Saturday morning blew this closet into the rising waters of the flood and quickly bore it out of reach. At the time of the occurrence there were two children in the closet, a boy of eight and a girl of five, who screamed loudly for help, which could not be given, owing to the way in which the stream is closed in. The curious structure, borne rapidly along by the flood, was approaching its rapid destruction at Lower Hythe Bridge, where the inundation was several feet above the crown of the arch. The boy tried to grasp the twigs of some willow trees on the bank, but the force of the current wrenched them from his hand. But he showed himself equal to the occasion and worthy of the race from which he sprang. Enclosing one of the timbers supporting the roof with his little right arm, and holding on with a desperate grip, he managed to keep his younger companion afloat, notwithstanding the rollings of the structure from side to side, both of them crying aloud for assistance. Their cries were fortunately heard, before they reached the bridge, by Mr Claridge, whose shop overlooks the stream. He took up the cry, which was answered by Sproston, ticket collector of the London and North Western Railway Company, throwing off his coat and jumping in. The almost certain loss of life was thus gallantly prevented ; but the most curious part of the affair remains to be told ; the children were saved, but the closet was stolen!

18 February 29 1868

SHOCKING INHUMANITY At Bolton on Saturday, a boatman named **Richard Barrow** was charged with wilfully scalding his wife and two children at Blackrod, near Wigan. The prisoner, it appeared, entered the cabin of his boat late on Saturday evening in a state of intoxication, his wife and children being then in bed. The wife reproached him for his misconduct, on which he deliberately took the kettle off the fire, and poured its boiling contents upon her and the children. The woman was scalded on the side of her face and arms, and the poor children received worse injuries. The youngest, only twelve months old, lies in a dangerous condition, and as its life was despaired of, the Magistrates remanded the prisoner.

19 April 11 1868

DARING ROBBERY OF TEA ON THE RIVER Benjamin Thomas Goodacre, a carman, and **William Tilly**, a lighterman, were charged with stealing three chests of tea from a barge called the *Rosa* on the river. A watchman had been left in charge of a barge, but he left it for half an hour to "warm" himself on board another barge where there was a fire, and while he was gone the tea was taken. He gave an alarm, and Goodacre was watched and stopped with the tea in a cart. He was seen to land it from a punt from which nine bags of stolen coffee were landed some time ago. Tilly was proved to have hired the horse and cart and to have engaged Goodacre to drive it to Milwall. The property was identified, and the prisoners were remanded.

20 May 2 1868

MIDDLESEX SESSIONS

EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF TEA **William Tilly**, 27, and Bernard Craven, 34, were charged with stealing 200lb weight of tea, value £40, the property of David Cruttenden, from a barge called the *Rosa*, lying on the river Thames. Mr Metcalfe, instructed by Mr Stoddart, prosecuted. Mr Starling defended Tilly. On the 1st of April, a quantity of tea was stolen from the barge in question. About seven o'clock on the morning of the 2nd, Tilly and another hired a cart in Shadwell from a man named Fearn, who sent one of his own men with it. By direction of the hirers, this latter man drove the cart to Milwall where the tea was loaded into it, Tilly being one of those assisting to load the cart. A witness named Collings, a fireman, saw four men on land and two in a boat unloading

something from the boat and taking it to the cart, Craven being one of them, and at once gave information to the police. Craven was taken into custody the same day and made no answer to the charge. Tilly denied having been near Shadwell on the morning in question, or having hired a cart there. The jury returned a verdict of guilty against both prisoners. Several previous convictions were proved against Craven. Tilly was known as a companion of thieves. The Assistant Judge sentenced Tilly to eighteen months imprisonment with hard labour ; and Craven to seven years penal servitude.

21 May 9 1868

SWIMMING MATCH FOR £20 A swimming match for the above amount came off on Monday morning in the Thames between Thomas Jones and William Edwards, both potters employed in the Lambeth potteries. The course was from Westminster to Vauxhall, and the start was early, **Charles Taylor**, a waterman, being referee. Edwards had the call in the betting, having performed in this element with credit on several occasions, and he was favourite at 6 to 4. His more youthful opponent, however, struck one as being the better man when they rose from the plunge, and had swum about 200 yards when he took the lead, holding it well by ten yards to near Lambeth Bridge. Here the other challenged him, and a fine race ensued to the Penitentiary, where it was a toss up between them, but at length the superior physique of Jones told, and he gradually took the lead, his opponent coming up well in the last few yards, the latter being only beaten by three yards. The time was 15 min 30 secs.

22 May 16 1868

SCULLERS' RACE FOR £20 A rowing match for £10 a side took place on Tuesday, below bridge, between two young watermen of Blackwall named **Edward Martin** and **William Smith** ; the course was from the Old Barge House at North Woolwich to Blackwall Stairs, about four miles, and the men rowed in two old fashioned boats, by Mr Salter of Wandsworth. The steamer Sibyl accompanied the race with a large party, and J (**Kinniple?**), waterman of Limehouse, was referee, Mr G Patman acting as umpire for Martin, and G Carter for Smith. The men were attended by cutters, and came to the post on a good tide, Martin having won the toss and taken the north or best side. In point of condition Smith was the better man, but as regarded size and style his opponent was his superior. The betting was 5 to 4 on Martin, who was smartest away, but was collared in a few strokes by Smith, who had established himself with a lead of a clear length at North Woolwich Pier ; further on, however, his opponent gradually caught him, and they fouled in 200 yards, Smith getting away first and going on with a good lead. The water was very rough, and it was anybody's race for five minutes, during which repeated offers were made to bet that one boat sank, the wash so broke over them ; Smith was the more favoured, however, by the steamers and, gradually getting away, he won easily by 100 yards. The time throughout was 28 min 50 secs ; very good, considering the difficulties, which were not few.

23 July 18 1868

SAD ACCIDENT – STRANGE CASE An inquest was held on Friday at Greenwich by Mr C J Carttar, coroner, respecting the death of **Sarah Ann Brooker**, aged 22. The deceased belonged to Ipswich. On Saturday afternoon last, while leaving a wharf in Limehouse Reach, her husband's barge came in contact with the chain of another barge, causing the tiller of the barge *William and Mary* to fly round, by which the deceased was struck in the chest and knocked into the river and drowned. Her body was found floating in the river off Greenwich marshes and, being brought ashore, was about to be conveyed through the grounds of a factory to the main road, and thence to the parish dead house, when the foreman at the factory demurred to this being done, under the idea that any land across which a dead body might be carried became ever afterwards a public right of way. The coroner observed that such an idea was most fallacious, and the sooner such erroneous opinions were removed the better. The jury returned a verdict of “Accidental death”.

24 July 25 1868

LAMBETH

MURDEROUS ASSAULT **John Lyons**, 19, a powerful looking fellow described as a lighterman's apprentice, living in East Street, Kennington Road, was charged before Mr Newton with violently assaulting John and Harriet Thatcher by striking and kicking them. Harriet Thatcher said that her husband was a general dealer, carrying on business at No 1 East Place, East Street. About one o'clock that (Saturday) morning she was in company with her husband in Kennington Road, on their way home, when they met the prisoner, whom they knew. Her husband said, "Well, Jack, how are you?" when, making use of an oath, the prisoner struck him on the face. She endeavoured to protect him, when the prisoner hit her twice on the face, and then knocked her down as well as her husband. While on the ground prisoner savagely kicked her husband on the body and face, rendering him almost senseless. She screamed for help, when a constable arrived, and prisoner ran off. Mr Newton : Where is your husband? Witness : He is quite incapable of coming, being confined to his bed suffering from two broken ribs and other injuries caused by the prisoner's violence. She then handed in a medical certificate proving such to be the case. Sergeant McGillicuddy, 21L, said he heard the screams for help, and near East Street saw prisoner knock down the man. He was about to take the prisoner, but he ran off and was not captured until after a sharp chase. The man was bleeding profusely from a wound on his forehead, caused by a kick, and had to be assisted to the station. He was now quite unable to attend. Prisoner did not deny striking the man, but said he did so in consequence of being assaulted by him. Mr Newton said it was a most savage and serious assault. The prisoner would be remanded in order to see how the injured man progressed.

25 August 1 1868

THE ADVERTISING MONEY LENDER CASE George Simpson Mackennal, money lender, Avenue Road, St John's Wood, and Edward Tiddy, formerly a clerk in his employ, were brought before Mr Knox for final examination, charged with defrauding John Lewis Hazard and numerous other parties. The evidence of Mr Hazard, printer, Camden Street, and Mr Harrowby, clerk in the Colonial Office, of Talbot Road, Bayswater, taken on the last occasion, having been read over, the particulars of several other cases were gone into. **Mr Jesse Thompson**, barge builder, Grays, Essex, said about twelve months ago he paid Mackennal a fee of three guineas and offered a barge as security for a loan of £100 ; but the loan was never granted nor any part of the inquiry fee returned. Mr L Hughes, No 8 Albion Grove, Barnsbury, in July 1867 wanted a loan and deposited three guineas on the understanding that if they did not come to terms one half that amount was to be returned. He was told he must get another name as surety, and he did so. But, of course, the loan was not granted, and equally of course no portion of the deposit was returned. Mr Boyer, a contractor of Hamberley Wharf, Paddington, wanted £200 on security worth £800. He deposited £2 2s ; and although he did not get the loan, he was so fortunate as to get £2 of the deposit returned. On cross-examination this witness said he believed he had paid about £5 5s in all to Mackennal. James Ellis, formerly clerk to Mackennal, said he left Mackennal's service about last Christmas. Hardy, Tiddy, Goodman and Patrick Mackennal were all employed in the office, either permanently or for occasional jobs. Mackennal advertised to lend money. Had taken advertisements to the papers for Mackennal. Sometimes 20, sometimes 30, and sometimes not more than 10 or 15 persons came to the office during the day. When applications were made, applicants were told they had to pay the expenses of an inquiry. The charges varied according to the distance. Four guineas and the railway fare were usually charged for country inspections, and sometimes more. No fee was under a guinea, even for an inquiry in London. He used to be sent on these journeys, and all the other clerks except Hardy, who was corresponding clerk. Mackennal sometimes requested him to put another name on the report when it was good. The reports were filed monthly. He never knew Mackennal to advance money on bills of sale, nor to advance money out of his own pocket. Did not think Mackennal was in a condition to lend money, and his reason was because Mackennal had been so short of money that he could not pay for the advertisements or the wages of those in the

office. Had pledged a ring received from Mackennal to pay for advertisements and his own wages. He heard sometimes what passed when persons applied. Had been called in by Mackennal, and told to go to the bankers, although Mackennal did not keep a banking account. Dummy shares and bills had been given to him in the presence of applicants, with orders to pay them into the bankers, but there were no bankers to pay them to. Was directed to make a report after Mr Hazard had applied, and had told Mackennal that it was right. Was present when Mr Hazard called and made a disturbance because he did not get the money. Had also read reports relative to other witnesses. People were daily in the habit of coming to the office and demanding their money back. Richard Thornton, assistant messenger at the Bankruptcy Court, produced a registry showing that proceedings had been taken in Bankruptcy against Mackennal in June 1865. Cyril Williams, a clerk in the judges' department, Queen's Bench Office, produced a bill of sale, dated 6th May 1867. Police-constable Butcher, C137, said when he took Mackennal on a warrant, Mackennal remarked that he thought a summons would have been sufficient. On apprehending Tiddy at Loughborough Cottages, Tiddy said he thought all the proceedings had been done with, as the office in Piccadilly was closed. He produced a quantity of books and papers taken from Mackennal's possession. Among the papers were a number of sham bills of exchange. Ellis said, when giving evidence against Mackennal on the former occasion, he was apprehended on a charge of felony ; but on the case being called on for trial, Mr Metcalfe, acting on the suggestion of Sir W Bodkin, withdrew from the prosecution. Mr Knox said he had no doubt the witness would be justified in indicting the parties who preferred the charge against him. Mr Knox committed both prisoners, but took bail.

26 August 22 1868

FATAL BOAT ACCIDENT ON THE THAMES On Tuesday about half past three o'clock, a serious calamity occurred beneath one of the arches of Blackfriars Bridge, causing the death of a woman, and endangering the lives of her child and husband. The barge *Rochford*, **Captain Chapman**, belonging to Mr Knight of Rainham, which was proceeding from Westminster down the river for a freight, was passing underneath one of the arches of Blackfriars Bridge when a hook attached to one of the ropes, which hung loosely from the rigging over the side of the barge, caught a chain which bound a number of planks together at the side of the arch to act as a fender for preventing vessels running foul of the piles of the bridge or becoming entangled amongst them. As the barge proceeded the rope became tighter until it caught the back of the captain's wife, who was sitting on the hatches, having a child in her arms, when both mother and child were precipitated into the Thames. The screams of the children who were on board drew the attention of the skipper, who was horrified to find his wife and child in the water. The frantic husband snatched the babe from his wife's arms as she floated past, and giving it into the care of one of the boys on deck, jumped into the boat in tow of the barge with a view of rescuing the mother, but was too late, as she had sunk to rise no more alive.

27 September 12 1868

The master of a barge named the *Brothers*, trading between London and Milton, Kent, was surprised on finding in his bed cabin one morning last week a viper, 18 inches long, within a foot of the pillow. How the dangerous bedfellow came there is a mystery. Of course, the reptile was killed without delay by **Mr Rudge**, master.

28 October 10 1868

CHILDREN SHOT AT LEICESTER An extraordinary case of shooting is reported from Leicester. The annual races have taken place this week and, as is customary, the children attending the various Sunday schools have been treated to little excursions by their teachers and friends. On Wednesday afternoon, the children attending the Bishop Street Wesleyan Schools were taken to a field near the Abbey Meadow, which field abuts on the canal. Between four and five o'clock, the teachers were startled by hearing the report of a gun and the rattling of the shots on the windows and roof of a factory hard by, and on going towards the canal they were shocked to find that four of their scholars

had been shot by a youth who was in charge of a boat that was passing along the canal. The names of the children are :- Edwin Brown, aged twelve ; Arthur Ball, thirteen ; Emma Ford and John Shelton, nine. They were at once removed from the field, and Dr Crane, who fortunately happened to be passing at the time, took the injured children Brown and Ford into his carriage to the surgery of Mr J R Crossley, where their injuries were attended to. It was found that the boy Brown was most seriously injured, and was suffering acutely from numerous wounds in his face, one shot having entered just beneath the right eye, another had penetrated the ball of the left eye, one of his front teeth was shot out, and nine shots had entered his cheeks. He was removed home in a cab. Emma Ford was found not to have been dangerously wounded, although one of the shots had entered her face near the right eye. The two other boys, Shelton and Ball, were both likewise shot in the face, but their injuries were not of a serious character, and they were taken to their homes. While the wounded children were being attended to, one of the teachers followed the boat, which he overtook at Belgrave and boarded. He caused the boat to be stopped, detained the cowardly fellow of whom he was in pursuit, and then sent for assistance. On the arrival of the Belgrave parish constable, the boatman was given into his custody, and by him taken to the police station at Leicester. The prisoner, who appeared to be the worse for drink, gave the name of **Charles Mitchell**, and said he came from Cleethorpes and was seventeen years old. On hearing the charge against him, he stated that as he was passing along the canal by the side of the field, the children threw stones at him ; and as they took no heed of his remonstrances but persisted in annoying him, he took up a gun, which lay loaded in the boat, and fired amongst them. The prisoner was taken before the magistrates and remanded.

29 December 5 1868

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE At the Thames Police Court on Wednesday, Honora Maclean, a very respectable young Irishwoman, was brought before Mr Benson, charged with attempting to drown herself in the Thames.

A waterman named **Kent** saw the prisoner in the plying place called Limehouse Hole at a late hour on Tuesday night. She jumped over the jetty into a boat, and after divesting herself of her bonnet and shawl, plunged into the water. She was taken out of the water immediately by Police-constable Tucker, who saved her life.

The prisoner, who was in much grief, said her husband was employed in Rotherhithe, and that she came over to the Middlesex side of the river with some money of her husband's and cash entrusted to her by another person to make some purchases, and met with a woman who induced her to drink. She bought two joints of meat for herself and another, and some boots and shoes for her children, and lost them all.

John Tucker, a police-constable, No 458K, said the prisoner was intoxicated when he took her into custody, and that he understood she had been living very comfortably with her husband, an industrious man, in Rotherhithe.

The prisoner said her baby was very ill, and that she had lost all her money, and the money of her neighbour, and all the things she had purchased.

Mr Benson : Who gave you the money?

The prisoner : My husband, and a widow with two children, gave me some.

Mr Benson : And you have lost it all?

The prisoner : Sorrow I have, sir.

Mr Benson said this was a very sad case. Here was a woman with a family, living comfortably with her husband, and she begins drinking with an idle and abandoned gossip, and becomes intoxicated. All her money and her goods were gone, and she completes her day of dissipation by making an attempt on her life – to destroy her own soul and body. He hoped this would be a warning to her for the rest of her life. He should remand her for a week, unless someone could give bail for her.

The prisoner : It is the first time I ever became intoxicated, your honour.

Mr Benson : And I hope it will be the last. See the disgrace and loss it has brought on you and your husband.

The prisoner, who said her child was very delicate, was then removed in custody of the jailer, and her baby was ordered to be restored to her.

30 December 12 1868

GREAT GALE A gale, which had for some time the force of a hurricane, swept over the metropolitan district on Sunday night, and its fury was not spent until about three o'clock on Monday morning. On Saturday night there was a great deal of rain, with a gusty wind. The wind moderated towards midnight, but the rain, except at short intervals, fell in heavier showers than before. At noon on Sunday, the rain still continued, and the wind freshened to a gale. Throughout the afternoon and evening the gale continued, with driving sleety rain. Towards midnight it obtained a hurricane like force, and it became exceedingly dangerous for pedestrians to pass along the streets and squares. Windows were blown in, chimney stacks and slates were carried from the roofs of houses, and fell with great crashing noises into the roadways, and the leafless branches of trees were torn away and blown to considerable distances. In the parks the paths were so strewn with branches of trees that it was found necessary to have them swept with besoms on Monday morning.

Many years have passed since such fierce gusts of rain swept through London. The pressure was more than 27 lbs on the square foot in Blackwall Reach, and at least 30 lbs in elevated positions. Telegrams and reports which have been received show that the gale was very general, and that we may expect news of very serious loss of life, and of damage to shipping. In London the storm may be said to have ended about three o'clock on Monday morning.

The following are some of the incidents of the storm reported from the metropolitan district : On Sunday several collisions which took place both above and below London Bridge were attributable to the gale. In one case, below Greenwich, a steamer came into collision with some barges which, through the force of the wind, had broken from their moorings, and a sailor named O'Beirne, in endeavouring to lessen the effects of the blow, was seriously injured. Several barges were injured or sunk, and one of them lay in a dangerous position off the Temple Stairs. Two lightermen who were in charge of the barge are said to have been drowned. A boat, in which were two young men, was driven against a barge in Battersea Reach, and smashed, the young men being drowned. The contents of the timber yard of Messrs Saxton and Co, Upper Ground Street, Blackfriars Road, were scattered far and wide by the wind. Great piles of deals and other sorts of timber, 50 or 60 feet high, were blown down. In the same locality, the first floor of the premises of Mr Meymott, on the Crescent, was considerably damaged by the wind, some of the windows being blown in ; while at the Railway Tavern, between Upper Ground Street and Stamford Street, a tall chimney fell and crushed in the roof and the back part of the premises, without, however, hurting any of the inmates. The windows of the Blackfriars Railway Station also sustained considerable injury. In Denmark Street, Camberwell New Road, a water cistern was carried three houses off, and fell upon the greenhouse of Mr Appleby, destroying the glass and injuring the plants. About half past eleven on Sunday night the roof of a cottage, situated at the rear of 26 Thomas Street, Clerkenwell, was blown off, and the house and its contents were seriously injured. The occupier of the house, with his wife and two daughters, were buried in the debris, but were got out little the worse for the occurrence. The roof of a house in Cupid's Court, Golden Lane, was also blown off, and portions of it fell into the rooms beneath, almost burying the occupants, who were in bed at the time. Fortunately they managed to escape without more serious injuries than cuts and bruises. A stack of chimneys was blown down in St John's Street, Clerkenwell, and broke through the roof of a house, but did no damage to the occupants.

A telegram from Birmingham states that "the force of the wind there at one o'clock on Monday was 22 lbs. The barometer fell two fifths of an inch in twelve hours on Sunday, and then rose three quarters of an inch in nine hours since midnight. The mean temperature of the last six days has been forty nine degrees, which is ten degrees above the average. The storm has been unequalled in Birmingham since December 1826". The gentleman who telegraphs adds that if the recent fluctuations of the barometer and the high temperature continue, persons having the responsibility

of mining operations ought to exercise great caution. At Windsor the force of the wind was very great, and much damage was done both in the town and to the trees in the forest.

Throughout the whole of Sunday night it blew a tremendous gale from the southward over Chatham, causing more or less serious damage to the vessels outward bound. Towards nightfall a large fleet of ships, including several colliers, had sought the shelter of Grain Spit, many of them with losses of cables, bowsprits and spars. Grave fears were at one time felt for the *Great Eastern*, which is now lying in the Medway ; but, with the precautions taken, the huge vessel rode out the gale in safety. The large floating dock *Bermuda*, also in the river, sustained no damage. While the gale was at its height two barges in the river sank, the crews being saved ; and it was announced on Tuesday morning that a large vessel had gone on shore on the Essex coast. In the neighbourhood of Brompton and Gillingham, the gale caused a great deal of damage, chimney stacks being blown down and large trees uprooted. Today (Tuesday) the weather has moderated.

A Ramsgate correspondent, writing on Monday, says :- A tremendous gale of wind has been blowing, accompanied with heavy showers of rain, since Saturday afternoon, and it did not abate until this morning. About eight o'clock last evening, as the fishing smack *Fawn* of this part (Miller master) was entering the Royal Harbour, the foresheet gave way, which caused her to strike the east pier, and she became a total wreck. Efforts were immediately made by those on the pier to save the crew, which consisted of the master, two men and two boys. Life buoys and ropes were thrown over to them, and the master and two men were pulled up. The two lads, however, were unfortunately drowned, and their bodies were picked up on the sands this morning. Their names are William Hopkins, aged 18, and Fred Auburn, between 14 and 15 years. Both lads belonged to London, Hopkins being a runaway (*runaway*) and Auburn taken from the Bethnal Green School. The harbour steam tug, *Aid*, has just gone out to a large vessel behind the Goodwin. The vessel is in tow of a screw steamer, which is signalling for assistance. The inside of a large house at St Lawrence-on-the-Sea, in the course of erection by Mr Pugin, was wrecked last night by the blowing down of the chimney. A large barque of about 500 tons was driven ashore on the Goodwin Sands. She was boarded by a Ramsgate lugger, and fortunately on the flow of the tide she was got off again, but in a very leaky condition. Five hands were left on board from the lugger, and a screw steamer, bound from Antwerp to Belfast, also went to the assistance of the distressed vessel, which had now five feet of water in her hold. The Ramsgate Harbour steam tug also went out this morning to the vessel, in response to signals, and assisted in towing her up to London. The barque's name is not known, but she is laden with oil.

31 March 27 1869

THE LATE BOAT ACCIDENT AT PUTNEY BRIDGE With reference to our account of the upsetting of a skiff by coming into collision with a barge at Putney Bridge on the day of the Oxford and Cambridge boat race, in consequence of which 21 persons narrowly escaped a watery grave, we are requested by Mr J L Beech of the "Queen's Arms", Hackney Road, to state that the whole of the 21 persons were not thrown overboard, as stated by our first informant. Our correspondent says that only 18 of them were thrown into the water, and that they were not all rescued by the bargemen, as stated, but by the waterman and those who were left on board. The waterman, seeing his danger, jumped on board the barge and called upon the passengers to do the same. The bargeman declined to assist in the rescue of the passengers, stating that he had enough to do to mind his barge. **Edward Allford**, a lighterman, rescued one lad, and got him safely on board his barge.

32 April 17 1869

THE SUNDERLAND MURDER At the Guildhall Police Court on Monday, **Peter Connor**, a lighterman residing in Red Lion Court, Red Lion Street, Wapping, was placed at the bar before Alderman Owden, charged on suspicion with the wilful murder of Maria Fitzsimmons on the 20th of February last.

The unfortunate woman was found dead in a room in Baines's Street, Sunderland, with several wounds in her breast, and the jury at the inquest returned a verdict of "Wilful murder against some

person or persons unknown". A reward of £100 was offered for the apprehension of the murderer. The suspected murderer was a man about 30 to 36 years of age, five feet five inches or six inches high, fair complexion, light blue eyes, rather long thin face, rather flat nose, a little turned up, wide nostrils, ears pierced but without earrings, very little sandy coloured hair, short tuft on the chin of the same colour, spoke in the Yankee and Irish, and at times in the Norfolk dialect, with an occasional lisp.

James Hann, detective officer, said that on Saturday night about ten o'clock he was in the Falcon public house, Fetter Lane, in company with Hawkins, another officer. He saw the prisoner there and told him he was a police officer, and that he was going to take him into custody on suspicion of murdering a woman in Baines's Lane, Sunderland. He said he knew nothing about it, and never was in Sunderland in his life. On attempting to remove him, he resisted very violently, and they had to get assistance to remove him to the station house, where the charge was entered. The prisoner made the same answer as before, and said that he was never further to sea than Gravesend in his life. He answered the description given in the bill offering the reward. He was wearing a blue guernsey at the time, and it had a hole in one shoulder as described. His hair was dark brown. The prisoner said at the station house that he was working at Messrs Wellock and Sons, and had been so for the last twelve years. Messrs Wellock carried on business at Black Raven Court, Seething Lane. He had made inquiries there, and they said they had no such person on their books. He had received a telegram from Sunderland, stating that somebody would come up to identify him.

The prisoner said that Mr Wellock's foreman would corroborate his statement.

Alderman Owden said he had no alternative but to remand him.

The prisoner was then remanded.

On Tuesday the accused was again placed at the bar, this time before Mr Alderman Stone, for further examination.

James Hann, detective officer, produced the description of the supposed murderer, then the offer of the reward of £100 for his apprehension. The evidence he gave on Monday having been read over to the witness, and re sworn to,

James Gilhooley was called, and said he lived at No 5 Baines's Lane, Sunderland. He was a painter and glazier. That was not the house where the murder was committed. He knew the woman who was murdered by sight. He saw the supposed murderer, but he had never seen the prisoner until that day. The prisoner was not the supposed murderer. He was somewhat like him in the face, but he was a taller man than the prisoner. The guernsey he wore was longer than that worn by the prisoner. He never saw the supposed murderer but once. He had lighter hair than the prisoner.

James Elliott said he was a detective inspector of the Sunderland police. He knew a good many people at Sunderland, but he never saw the prisoner there in his life. He thought he was not the supposed murderer.

Mr Alderman Stone said that, after the evidence, he could not detain the man at the bar – he would not call him a prisoner – and he was therefore discharged.

The man Connor applied to the Bench for some compensation for being locked up since Saturday night, and losing his week's work.

Detective Hawkins said he was not in work when apprehended

Mr Alderman Stone asked whether the defendant was a respectable man.

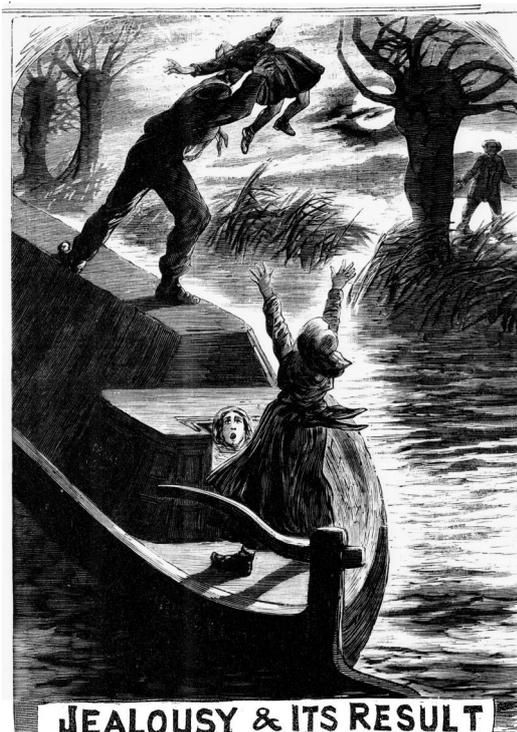
Inspector Elliott said that his mother had informed him that the defendant had had six month's imprisonment. Mr Alderman Stone said he had no funds out of which he could order him anything ; all he could do was discharge him.

The man was then liberated.

33 June 5 1869

JEALOUSY AND ITS RESULTS A most lamentable instance of the sad effects of giving way to passion occurred on Monday last. It appears that **Walter Myers**, a native of Merthyr Tydfil, who has for the last two years been employed to take charge of one of the canal boats plying between

London and the Midland Counties, has of late become jealous of his wife. This has been the occasion of frequent bickerings, and at times violent quarrels. During the passage of the boat on



Monday evening, a quarrel took place between the two, when, in a fit of ungovernable rage, Myers snatched up his little boy, and in spite of his wife's entreaties he threw the child overboard. The scene that followed was of a most agonising description. The miserable mother issued a series of shrieks, and ultimately fainted. Myers, when his burst of passion was over, bitterly regretted the unnatural act of which he had been guilty. The child was nowhere to be seen, and both father and mother believed it had perished. Happily for both, a boy on board a barge saw something floating on the surface of the water, which, upon closer inspection, he found to be a human being. The boy attached a rope to his body and plunged in, and with praiseworthy promptitude succeeded in saving Walter Myers's son. We cannot enter into any further history of this domestic drama any more than to state that there is not the slightest ground for the jealousy exhibited by the headstrong and misguided boatman who, we trust, has been by this time taught a lesson he will not readily forget.

34 August 28 1869

GREENWICH

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE IN THE THAMES Margaret Dibley, aged forty five, of John Street, Deptford, widow, was charged with attempting self destruction by throwing herself into the River Thames. The prisoner was rescued by **Henry Bunhill**, a Deptford waterman, as she was in the act of disappearing under the water a third time, and on recovering consciousness she declared it to be her intention to destroy herself. Her statement was that she had lost her husband through an accident on board a steam vessel, and had been awarded £100 as compensation by the owners, but the solicitor who conducted the case had died before paying the money to her, and she was without hope of getting it. Mr Patteson said it would be advisable that the unfortunate woman should receive spiritual advice from the chaplain of Maidstone gaol, and she was remanded for a few days for that purpose.

35 March 26 1870

THE FATAL COLLISION NEAR GRAVESEND The sailing barge *Sir Edward Banks* of Burham, which was run down by the steamer *Berlin* in Gravesend Reach, has been raised and brought inshore on the Kentish side, and the bodies of the crew were found in their berths in the cabin of the vessel. They evidently were asleep when the vessel was struck, and as the stern was nearly cut off

and the barge instantly sunk, the poor fellows had no chance of saving themselves. Their names were **Francis May**, aged 29, master ; **Henry Dunmore**, aged 34, mate ; and **Samuel Nicholls**, aged 22, seaman. Two of the unfortunate men have left large families. On the part of the steamer, it is stated that the barge did not show any anchor light. This, however, is denied, and it is averred that the light was seen to disappear under water when the barge sank, and that the lamp was found on the stay. The inquiry was adjourned.

36 **March 26 1870**

THE ALLEGED MURDER FROM WESTMINSTER BRIDGE Mr W Carter, coroner, opened an inquiry at the "Henry the Eighth", High Street, Lambeth, respecting the death of Louisa Overy, aged twenty nine, the reputed wife of Charles Nobbs, a porter in the India Office, by whom, it is alleged, she was thrown over Westminster Bridge into the river on the evening of the 12th February. **James Stratford**, a lighterman, stated that on Friday morning last week he discovered the body of a woman floating in the river near the Free Dock, Broad Street, above Lambeth Bridge. She was fully dressed, her bonnet held on by strings around her throat. He conveyed the body to the dead house and placed it in the care of Isaac Sheppard, the coroner's officer. Eliza Maynard, who laid out the body, said there were no marks of violence, and nothing found upon her but an empty purse in her bosom. Elizabeth Overy of High Street, Dartford, mother of the deceased, identified the body, particularly from a jacket she wore, which witness gave her about a fortnight before last Christmas. Knew that she lived with Charles Nobbs as his wife. Believed they had lived together for eleven or twelve years, and there was one child eleven years of age. Came to London on Sunday, and was staying in the same house with Nobbs. By the Coroner : He made no confession, but on the contrary declared his innocence of the crime with which he had been charged. Deceased was of a very violent temper, especially latterly, since she had given way to drink. Never heard her threaten to commit suicide. She once at witness's house got a razor, apparently as though she intended to destroy herself, but it was taken from her. When she had a little drink, she did not seem to know what she was doing. The inquiry was then adjourned.

37 **March 26 1870**

THAMES

EXTENSIVE SMUGGLING OF TOBACCO **Morris Lyons**, a waterman aged twenty two years, of No 2 Providence Place, Rosemary Lane, was charged with carrying and conveying 104 lb of foreign manufactured tobacco in a boat in the precinct of St Katherine. He was further charged with wilfully throwing the tobacco into the Thames to avoid seizure. George Read, inspector of Thames Police and officer of Customs, with his boat's crew, were in a police galley on the Thames, off St Katherine's, and saw the prisoner leave a steam ship moored in the middle of the river, and deposit a large bag containing something bulky in his boat. He rowed rapidly towards the shore ; the police galley started in pursuit, and the officers were fast overhauling the prisoner's boat when he threw the bag and its contents into the river. The bag was recovered. It contained 104 lb of tobacco. An application was made for an adjournment of the case to allow the Solicitor of Customs to proceed against the prisoner by information, and the prisoner was remanded.

38 **April 2 1870**

A fatality occurred at Rotherhithe. A boat came in contact with a coal barge near the Victuallers' Docks, and a youth, about sixteen years of age, named **John Winch**, was drowned.

39 **April 9 1870**

SCANDALOUS PLUNDER OF BEER IN TRANSIT At the Thames Police Court, **John Richards** and **John Clements**, lightermen, were brought before Mr Lushington, charged with committing a serious robbery on the Thames.

Mr Chas Young, solicitor, on behalf of the Steam-Tug and Lighterage Company (Limited), said that a man in the employ of the prosecutors took in seven casks of beer at Dowgate Wharf, City. They

were all in good condition. The tug boat containing the beer was navigated to the Londonderry Wharf, Wapping, and in the absence of the lighterman in charge of the tug boat, it was boarded, two of the casks broached, and three quarters of a barrel of beer taken from each. The company's lighterman discovered the casks were leaking on his return. Suspicion fell upon the prisoners, who were on another barge called the *St John*, and upon Mr Wm Thomas going on board he found the prisoners asleep and helplessly drunk. They smelt strongly of beer. On a coal locker there was a tin can containing beer. It corresponded in colour, strength and flavour with the beer in the casks which had been plundered. There was a bucket which had been used to carry beer from the tug boat to the *St John*, and he believed the prisoners had been drinking beer out of the bucket, and had poured some out of the bucket into the can.

Mr Lushington : The prisoners could not have drunk a barrel and a half of beer.

Mr Young : No, that quantity had been drunk and wasted. The two bungs had been taken out of the casks, and three quarters of each were deficient. It is a most serious robbery, which the company I represent will have to make good.

Thomas Bolt, a lighterman, confirmed the statement of Mr Young, and said beer was running from each cask. He heard singing on board the *St John*, and the refrain was, there is nothing like a drop of good beer, and there was a noise of kicking a bucket. There was a deficiency of about forty gallons in the two casks.

Mr Lushington remanded the prisoners for a week.

40 **April 9 1870**

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT

DEFRAUDING AN MP John Ashton, fifty five, shoemaker and **William Godfrey**, fifty, waterman, were indicted for obtaining a guinea from Lord George Hamilton MP with intent to defraud. Mr Straight prosecuted. On the 8th ult the prisoner Ashton went to the residence of Lord G Hamilton in Hertford Street, Mayfair, and producing a subscription list headed "Tottenham Rowing Matches 1869", with a variety of influential names attached, asked his lordship to subscribe his guinea as usual. The matches this year being altered to a regatta, Lord George had his suspicions excited, and after questioning the prisoner gave him a guinea, but at the same time sent for a policeman and handed the man into custody. The other prisoner was waiting outside at the time. Mr T Hughes MP, Mr C H Mills MP, Lord Enfield MP, Mr W H Smith MP, and Mr J G Talbot MP, whose names appeared on the subscription list, severally deposed that they had not subscribed either to the Tottenham Rowing Matches or Regatta in 1869 or 1870. An old list, with a new heading, had been used to deceive the subscribers. The prisoners were found guilty, and Mr Straight informed the court that the frauds had been carried on by the prisoner for some time past. Godfrey was afflicted with an impediment in his speech, and by that means he had been recognised by a number of gentlemen who had subscribed. When the prisoners found that they were likely to be detected, they left the list behind them and decamped. Two witnesses named Grace and **Campbell**, the latter of whom said he was waterman to her Majesty, were called to prove that the prisoners were imposters. The prisoners were sentenced to twelve months hard labour each.

41 **April 16 1870**

ALLEGED MURDER OF A YOUNG LADY AT MAIDSTONE Great excitement was occasioned on Friday by the discovery of the body of a young lady at Maidstone. It appears that as far back as the 28th of February, a young person named Mary Jane Brown left her residence in the Sandling Road, Maidstone. She was about nineteen years of age. She did not return, and on the following day her bonnet was found on the Barrack Pier at Maidstone. A search was made in the Medway for her body but without avail. On Friday Sergeant Rolls of the borough police discovered her body floating in the water at Arlington Rock, her clothes were very much disarranged and her body much decomposed. **Henry Smith**, mate of a barge, heard screams from the direction of the Barrack Pier, and afterwards a splash in the water. The police are making active inquiries, and an inquest will be held.

42

April 23 1870

SUSPICIOUS DEATH OF A DOMESTIC SERVANT Mr Langham, the deputy coroner for Westminster, held an inquiry on Saturday into the cause of death of Emma Jackson. Deceased was a domestic servant at Kingston on Thames, where she had been cook and housekeeper in a family for twenty years. On Tuesday March 8th, she wrote to John Shepherd, a butler in Grosvenor Square, requesting him to meet her on the following Thursday, and he did so. She was then greatly depressed owing to her having had a month's notice to leave her situation. Shepherd accompanied deceased from the house on her way back. They arrived at 9.31, and the train had gone four minutes. The next train was at eleven o'clock. Shepherd stopped with her till half past ten, when she said he had better go or he would be late home. He bade her goodbye, and never saw her again. He was not aware why she received notice to leave after a service of twenty years.

Mrs Chevis, sister of deceased, corroborated the evidence of last witness as to the deceased being depressed owing to her having received notice to leave her situation, but deceased said nothing about suicide.

Robert Wise, a bargeman, deposed to having taken the body out of the river on Thursday last. He saw it float past his barge. The deceased was dressed but had no bonnet on ; the purse, containing 19s 10d, and the half of a return ticket to Malden was found in the pocket of her dress.

The Foreman of the Jury said the jury thought that some person connected with the family should have been produced before them to state why the deceased had been discharged from her service and as to her general habits. It was very strange that after twenty years service as cook she should have notice to leave on the ground that her cooking did not give satisfaction. He should like to know the name of the family in which the deceased had been living.

The Coroner said the name had nothing to do with the inquiry. He understood from the relatives that none of the family could throw any light on the matter.

Dr Bond said he had made a post mortem examination. He found a great effusion of blood under the scalp, evidently the result of a severe blow on the head from a blunt instrument. The blow had been inflicted before death. It was possible she might have received the blow while falling into the water. Death had been caused by drowning. The body must have been in the water more than a month.

The Jury found, after some consideration, an open verdict, "That the body of the deceased was found in the Thames, but how it came there, there was no evidence to show".

43

April 30 1870

MIDDLESEX SESSIONS

ROBBERY ON THE RIVER THAMES **John Clements**, 17, and **John Arthur**, 19, were indicted for stealing forty gallons of beer, value 40s, the property of the Thames Steamtug and Lighterage Company, in the boat *Blanche*, lying in the river Thames. Mr Metcalfe prosecuted, instructed by Mr Young ; and Mr Ribton defended the prisoners. It appeared that seven barrels of beer were taken on to the tug *Blanche* at Dowgate Wharf, in good condition, to be conveyed to the Londonderry Wharf at Wapping, and the tug was moored alongside the barge *St John*. The person in charge went away at half past eight o'clock, and on his return at ten o'clock he found the casks running from the head, the corks having been taken out. At this time, singing and revelry were heard on board the *St John*, and on a policeman going on board the *St John* he found the prisoners asleep in the cabin, and a tin can with a pint of beer which corresponded in taste and quality with that contained in the barrels. The prisoners, who were both in liquor, said they knew nothing of it. The beer was of the strongest description, and was brewed by Messrs Devenish and Co of Weymouth, and one of their servants spoke to its identity. Mr Ribton addressed the jury for the prisoners, and they returned a verdict of "Not Guilty".

44

July 9 1870

SAD CASE OF DROWNING On Sunday afternoon between four and five o'clock, a sad case of drowning happened which has caused a little talk in Woolwich, owing to the peculiar circumstances

concerned with the unhappy affair. It appears that two men named **George Robinson** of 15 Hardin's Lane, Woolwich, and **Henry Terry** of the same place, went down to the "Ship and Half Moon" staircase, a little below the Woolwich steamboat pier, to get on board a barge lying at anchor almost within reach of the wharf. Robinson was the first to jump on board, and was quickly followed by his companion Terry, but the poor fellow unfortunately jumped short and fell into the river, the tide being high at the time. Being a good swimmer, he soon rose to the surface, and would have been rescued only that the barge swung at the very moment with the swell of a steamer, and caused him to sink a second time. There was plenty of assistance at hand, and in a very few moments the body, yet warm, was recovered by a man named Evans, who is celebrated in Woolwich for the number of persons he has taken out of the river, and at once was covered up and taken to a public house close to the spot. Strange to say, however, the landlord decidedly refused to open his house, and after considerable loss of time, the body was hurried along to another licensed victuallers. Dr Coleman arrived soon after and applied every remedy possible, but by that time the vital spark had fled, although it is believed by those who first saw the deceased after being taken from the water that he might have been resuscitated if no loss of time had taken place.

45 **July 23 1870**

SAD CASE OF SUDDEN DEATH On Monday evening Mr Redford held an inquest at the Westminster Hospital on the body of **George Grimshire**, aged 40, a lighterman.

It appeared that the deceased was in the employ of a barge owner at Kingston-on-Thames, and for some time past had been suffering from heart disease and a nervous affection in the head. On Friday morning last he was engaged with another man in navigating a barge from Kingston to London, and when they arrived off Pimlico, having complained of feeling sick for some time previously, he suddenly placed his hand to his head, and exclaiming, "Oh dear me", fell backwards on the deck apparently dead. His companion called the constable in a Thames police boat which was close by at the time, and they came on board the barge and removed the deceased to Millbank Pier, from whence he was taken in a cab to the hospital, but was declared to be quite dead on arriving there.

The *post mortem* examination revealed a great softening of the brain and ossification of the valves of the heart.

A verdict of "Death from natural causes" was returned.

46 **August 20 1870**

DARING ROBBERY At the Mansion House Police Court on Monday, **John Jones**, 23, sail maker, was charged on remand, before the Lord Mayor and Mr Alderman Carter, with a daring robbery.

The complainant was **George Camburn**, the mate of the ship *Edith* of Whitstable, now lying in the river off Nicholson's Wharf. On the night of Monday week he was sleeping in the vessel, which was lying outside another ship, and between one and two o'clock in the morning he was disturbed by a noise in his berth. He looked round and observed a hand endeavouring to get his watch and chain off a large nail at the head of his bed. The candle had been lighted, but he could not distinguish by whom the robbery was being attempted. The nail had a large head, and the watch could not without much difficulty be removed. He seized the man by the coat collar, and found it was the prisoner. He made a desperate attempt to escape, but was retained by the master and some of the crew of the vessel. While waiting for an officer he threw some money into the river, and the complainant afterwards missed from his trousers pocket a florin and some coppers.

In answer to the charge, the prisoner said he had no home.

On Monday, Richard Newton, a constable in the Thames police force, proved that in May 1869 the prisoner was sentenced with another man to two months hard labour for a violent assault on a lighterman ; that he had been known for many years past as a dangerous riverside thief, and that many of his companions were now suffering long terms of penal servitude.

The prisoner pleaded guilty to the charge, and stating that he had never been convicted of felony, asked to be dealt with summarily.

found in the pockets of deceased and a belt round the waist, as like what he had seen on Felling. He also spoke to the similarity of his trousers with those found on the corpse, as to some binding on the coat, which he had often noticed on Felling's coat. Other evidence was adduced, and the jury in the absence of positive testimony, returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

52 **November 26 1870**

MIDDLESEX SESSIONS

ROBBERY BY A CUSTOM HOUSE OFFICER **William James**, 31, who for twelve years has been an officer of the Customs, was charged with stealing twelve bottles of champagne, value £3, the property of William Baths, in the barge *Hufful*, in the London Docks. Mr Ribton prosecuted ; Mr Beeley defended. It appeared that on the night of the 15th inst the barge was lying in the London Docks, when a policeman on duty saw something of a suspicious character, and which attracted his attention, on the barge *Hufful*. He saw something resembling a case of champagne glide along the barge and descend to the cabin. He went on board, and saw someone in the cabin, and immediately he reached the hatchway a light was put out. When he descended, he found the prisoner there with a case of champagne, one side of which had been recently opened, and immediately behind him he found a chisel. The prisoner said it "was all right", that none had been taken, and afterwards made some observation about his poor wife. The champagne had been removed from a cargo of 200 cases in the barge. The defence was that the prisoner neglected his duty by going on to the barge, and that someone else had been before him and left the champagne in the cabin. Mr Beesley made an energetic appeal to the jury. The Judge summed up the case, which had lasted a considerable time, and said if the theory of the defence were true, it was strange that the prisoner did not make it at the time he was taken into custody. Guilty. Sentenced deferred.

53 **April 15 1871**

SINGULAR EFFECTS OF A COLD DINNER On Thursday, Dr Lankester held an inquest at the Hall Arms Tavern, Paddington, on the body of **Richard Taverner**, aged 38 years. Deceased, a boatman, was called Black Billy ; he was single and of very sober habits. On Monday last he was found in the canal at the bottom of Hobbs' Wharf, Paddington, having been missed over three weeks. The *post mortem* was made by Dr G Westmacott, who failed to discover any marks of violence, and was inclined to think that deceased must have taken a cold meal and drunk cold liquor, which brought on a fit of apoplexy, in which he fell into the water. Verdict : Death from an effusion of blood on the brain, but how he got into the water, there is no evidence to show.

54 **May 13 1871**

MANSION HOUSE

VIOLENT ASSAULT Thomas Beaumont, aged 30, who described himself as a musician, was charged before the Lord Mayor with assaulting Matthew Foley by inflicting several wounds on his head and face. The prosecutor, who is also a musician, had been fulfilling an engagement with the prisoner at a concert room in Well-close Square, and it appeared that after leaving they quarrelled and fought. They were separated by the police in Royal Mint Street about one o'clock in the morning, and the prisoner, who had apparently got the worst of it, and whose face was covered with blood, was led away by a labourer named Cocklin. They were followed by the prosecutor and, according to Cocklin, they kept saying what they would do to each other, till at last he told them they had better fight it out, and they accordingly proceeded to do so. A lighterman named **Newman**, who saw what occurred at this point, said that the prisoner knocked the prosecutor down, and struck him on the face and head as hard as he could. A constable came up, and the prosecutor, who was insensible for some minutes and was covered with blood, was conveyed to the hospital in a cab, very seriously injured. There were nine wounds on his head, and it was feared that he may lose the sight of his left eye. The Lord Mayor remanded the prisoner.

55 June 17 1871

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF A WINDSOR MAGISTRATE In last week's *Police News* we announced the mysterious disappearance of Mr John Bedborough, the well known "providore" of Windsor Palace, and a magistrate of the borough. The mystery has since received a melancholy elucidation. On Sunday morning, Mr Superintendent Hayes received a communication from the Reading Police, stating that a bargeman in the employment of **Mr Thatcher**, barge owner of Reading, while on his way with his master's barge between Egham and Reading, had picked up a hat and ivory headed stick with a gold rim near the Victoria Bridge in the Home Park, Windsor. The bargeman stated that he found the hat and stick about nine o'clock on Thursday morning, which was the morning after the disappearance of Mr Bedborough. Acting upon this information, Mr Superintendent Hayes, with some of the Windsor Police and several of the Humane Society's men, proceeded, with drags, to search the river. Mr Devereux, ex-Mayor of Windsor, and other gentlemen to whom the deceased was well known, accompanied the searching party. As one of the punts was passing down the river, those in it perceived the body of Mr Bedborough lying at the bottom in about eight feet of water, at a spot between the Victoria Bridge and that of the London and South Western Railway. The actual place where the corpse was discovered is opposite the Home Park, about 200 yards from the railway bridge, and five or six yards from the Berks side of the Thames. The body of the unfortunate gentleman, which had thus been lying in the river for four days, almost within sight of his home, was at once placed in a punt and taken to the King's Arms Inn at Thames Side to await the inquest. It is not known how Mr Bedborough came in the water, but it is feared that he has committed suicide. The sad occurrence has created the greatest sympathy for his family. Mr Bedborough has filled most of the municipal offices of the borough with credit to himself and his constituents. He was once Mayor of Windsor, and till his death remained a magistrate. There has been considerable litigation with regard to a large estate in which he had an interest, and it is believed this has preyed on his mind.

On Monday an inquest was held at the Town Hall, Windsor, on the body of Mr John Bedborough sen, a Windsor magistrate, who was missing on Wednesday last and was found drowned in the river Thames on Sunday morning. After the body had been identified by a relation, Mr Joseph Radnor of Windsor deposed that the deceased seemed haggard of late, and depressed, but that he could not say anything about the state of his mind. He had referred a great many times to the property in Clarence Crescent, which seemed to be preying on his mind. In answer to the Coroner, witness said that other members of the deceased's family had committed suicide. Richard Evans, guard on the Great Western Railway, said he remembered seeing the deceased on Wednesday night last on the down platform of the Paddington station, and booked him for Slough, but did not notice anything in his appearance. Mary Ashley had known the deceased for years, and saw him a little before ten o'clock on the Slough road ; he was standing against the stile of the field leading to Datchet, and seemed confused in his appearance. **Charles Green**, a bargeman, who was in charge of a barge from Staines to Reading, deposed that about 130 yards from the South Western Railway Bridge, in the Home Park, Windsor, the hat and stick were found on the bank of the Thames, which proved to belong to the deceased. This witness was censured by the coroner for not mentioning the circumstance to the lock-keeper at Windsor, and he declined to allow him his expenses. **Robert H Brades**, waterman, discovered the body at the bottom of the river, about 200 yards below the railway bridge, on Sunday morning. Edward Casey, surgeon, said he had found no marks of violence ; and the appearances were consistent with death from drowning. The jury returned a verdict of "Suicide whilst in an unsound state of mind". Much sympathy is felt by the inhabitants of Windsor for the family of deceased.

56 August 5 1871

WHOLESALE POLLUTION OF THE RIVER THAMES On Saturday, **William Shelbourne**, lighterman and contractor of Fore Street, Limehouse, was summoned before the Ilford bench of magistrates at the instance of the Thames Conservancy, charged with polluting the river Thames by throwing mud into it. Inspector Rane represented the conservators, and Mr John Layton the

defendant. Inspector Rane deposed that on the 7th inst he was on the watch all night where the barge *Thaney*, the property of the defendant, was moored, near to the Victoria Docks. About a quarter to six he saw several men go from the shore to the barge and, placing a pump in the barge, proceed to pump a vast quantity of mud into the river. Every now and then, however, a man would wheel a barrow along the plank stretching to the shore, as though they suspected that they were watched. Upon his approaching, a signal was given, and the pumping was discontinued. Two other officers corroborated this evidence. For the defence three of the men employed were called, who swore deliberately that no mud was thrown into the river. The Chairman, Mr Henry Ford Barclay, said the bench had no difficulty in coming to a decision. They should inflict the highest penalty, £20 and costs.

57 August 5 1871

DOGGETT'S COAT AND BADGE This race, from London Bridge to Chelsea, was rowed on Tuesday afternoon by six young watermen whose term of apprenticeship had expired since the entry for the contest of 1870. The following were the competitors :- **Alfred Charles Fortescue**, Lambeth ; **John Owen Mostyn**, Horselydown ; **Thomas James Mackinney**, Richmond ; **John Murphy** and **William Hambledon**, Horselydown ; and **Thomas Henry Maxwell**, Custom House. Of late years the prizes have been most liberally increased by the Fishmongers' Company, who have the control of this wager. From time immemorial the only addition to the coat and badge was the interest on £200 South Sea Stock bequeathed by Sir W Jolliffe, in proportion of five eighths to the second man, and three eighths to the third. This partition of the prizes remains undisturbed, and this year amounts to £4 17s 9d and £2 15s 9d ; but through the liberal source before named, the second has five guineas to line the pockets of his coat, the fourth man a guinea and a half, and the fifth and last a guinea each, if they row the whole distance. We need not say that this race is always highly attractive, and that thousands crowd to witness it on shore and afloat. The start took place at a quarter to three, Mr C Dards, the bargemaster of the Fishmongers' Company, giving the signal by report of pistol. Mackinney and Fortescue at once broke away with the lead, Maxwell getting into the surf and nearly being turned out of his boat ; in fact the rough water was so heavy that he was soon left last, and remained there the whole of the distance ; meanwhile Mackinney led out from the favourite, Fortescue, and they soon drew away from the others, Mackinney leading by a length at Cannon Street Bridge, and crossing his opponent, taking his water on the south shore, Hambledon going third and Murphy fourth. The latter and Mostyn had several fine spurts together, and frequently fouled off the Temple and under Blackfriars Bridge, but in the end Murphy shook him off, and drew close on Hambledon towards Westminster. Here Fortescue began to pick up Mackinney, and in fact drew fast on him to the finish, but the Richmond man came in with six lengths in hand. Fortescue was second, Hambledon third, Murphy fourth, Mostyn fifth and Maxwell last. The arrangements of the Thames Police under Superintendent (Alstin?) were deserving of commendation, and as there were no cutters allowed to pilot the competitors, a great deal of inconvenience was avoided, and everything was of a satisfactory character.

58 August 19 1871

GREENWICH

IMPUDENT WATCH ROBBERY ON BOARD SHIP **James Connolly**, a waterman of Sarah Street, Deptford, was charged with stealing a silver watch, value £5, the property of William Voes, mate of the ship *Isabel*, lying in the Lady Dock, Rotherhithe. Mr Patterson committed the prisoner for trial.

59 October 28 1871

THAMES

ALLEGED ILLEGAL DETENTION OF PROPERTY BY A POLICE INSPECTOR **Mr William Henry Ross**, a lighterman and barge owner of 50 Jamaica Row, Bermondsey, applied for a summons against Inspector Holloway of the H Division of Police, for detaining a large tarpaulin,

alleged to be the property of **Messrs Joyce and Co**, lightermen and barge owners in the City. On Friday last Messrs Joyce sued Mr Ross for the unlawful detention of the tarpaulin, and using it without lawful excuse. Mr Paget dismissed the summons, and was of opinion that Messrs Joyce's people had no right to remove the tarpaulin. At the request of Mr Pelham, the tarpaulin was delivered into the care of Inspector Holloway. Mr Ross now applied for a summons against Mr Holloway for detaining the tarpaulin, which he said was his property, and one of the tarpaulins he bought for £6. Mr Paget said that all had been done by Mr Holloway was under the magistrate's direction, and that the applicant might take a summons against him (Mr Paget) if he pleased, and the case would be heard before Mr Chance of the Lambeth Court, who would preside at the Thames Police Court on Wednesday and Thursday next. He would grant a summons against John Paget if Mr Ross wished. Mr Ross preferred the summons against Mr Holloway, and that Mr Paget should hear it. Mr Paget : If I grant the summons against myself Mr Chance must hear it. Take your summons against Mr Holloway, who will not part with the tarpaulin until he has my order to do so. Mr Holloway : The tarpaulin is safe enough at present.

60 November 18 1871

GREENWICH

STEALING WHEAT – AN IMPUDENT DEFENCE IF UNTRUE **Joshua John Gardiner**, a lighterman of Rotherhithe, was brought up on remand, charged with being in possession of a sack of Dantzic wheat and not satisfactorily accounting for the same. From the evidence of Middleton, a plain clothes constable of the R Division, it appeared that at seven o'clock on Monday evening he met the prisoner in Rotherhithe Street, coming from the direction of the King and Queen Corn Granary, and carrying the sack produced. There was no mark upon the sack, which contained about 1 1/2 cwt of wheat. The prisoner said the wheat was sweepings from a barge, but it was perfectly clean, and he said a man named Snell had employed him to carry it up an alley. The prisoner was then taken into custody. **George Snell** of Sear's Buildings, Rotherhithe, also a lighterman, was sworn, and denied all knowledge of the wheat, but said he had known the prisoner from a child. The prisoner (to witness) : George, you know you told me to carry the wheat up the alley to Charlotte Row, where you were to meet me, and that you would give me a pint of beer. Mr Maude said it was a very bad case. There would be a penalty of £3 for the unlawful possession, or one months imprisonment with hard labour.

61 December 2 1871

SOUTHWARK

STEALING A PORTMANTEAU **John Chapman**, a waterman and lighterman, was placed at the bar for final examination, charged with stealing a portmanteau containing wearing apparel &c worth upwards of £30 from a cab, the property of Mr Otho Cartlin. It appeared that the prosecutor hired a cabman at the Moorgate Street Railway Station on Friday evening, the 17th, to convey him and his luggage to Hartley's Wharf, Horselydown, for the purpose of proceeding by the *Havelock* steamship to Sunderland. He saw the portmanteau and box placed on the roof of the cab, but on their arrival at Hartley's Wharf the portmanteau was missing. William Benson, cab driver, badge number 1,941, said he took the prosecutor up, and placed the portmanteau and box on the roof, passing the chain over them. When he turned down Tooley Street they were safe. On getting to the top of Horselydown the prisoner came running by the cab, and witness asked him the way to Hartley's Wharf. He pointed out the way, and on his arrival there, the prosecutor entered the office, and witness handed the box from the roof to the prisoner, who carried it into the office. He came out again in a minute or so, and asked for the portmanteau, and then witness for the first time missed it. Mr Partridge expressed his surprise that the portmanteau could be taken from the cab without his knowing it, especially as the chain had been passed over it. His conduct was very suspicious. Witness said he had been a cab driver 23 years, and never lost anything from his cab before. He had no idea how the portmanteau was taken. Two lads named Brown and Mason, residing in Queen Elizabeth Street, said they saw a man get up behind the cab, take a portmanteau from the roof, and

hand it to another man, who ran off with it. They could not recognise the prisoner. The latter denied the charge, and said he plied at Horselydown Stairs to the steamboats, and was looking out for a job. Mr Partridge said there was not sufficient evidence to detain him, therefore he must be discharged.

62 January 20 1872

ALLEGED MURDER Margaret Riley, thirty three, living in Little James Street, Lisson Grove, was charged on suspicion of feloniously throwing Mary Ann Fraser, alias Farrell, into the Grand Junction Canal, and thereby causing her death. **George Holford**, boatman, said, about eleven o'clock he was walking along the towing path of the Grand Junction Canal, and when near the Bishop's Road Bridge heard a woman call out, "Help". He ran along the path, and saw a woman about twenty feet from the side. He ran to the lodge close by, and got a hitcher, but on his return the woman was gone under the water. He ran to the police station and fetched the drags, but they were of no avail, for when the body was brought up life was extinct. The prisoner was on the path calling out, "Help! There's a woman in the water". He would have jumped into the water, but he had a very bad cold through jumping into the canal last week and rescuing a lunatic and a police-constable. He was told by the wife of a boatman that she heard two women walking along the pathway, and one said to the other, "I will throw you into the canal". Harriet Oldburn, widow, said the deceased used to lodge in the same house. She was a middle aged woman, and deceased and the prisoner were quarrelling on Saturday night about some money. They were standing near the canal, and deceased asked the prisoner for her money for the rent. The prisoner, who had been drinking, said, "If you ask me for any money I will throw you in the cut". That took place at nine, and she saw them again next night about ten. Churchhouse, 38X, said the prisoner came to the station with a constable, and said that Kate Farrell and she went on the towing path together, and a boatman that she knew, of the name of **Bill Wheeler**, came up to them, and he wanted to take liberties with Farrell. She would not let him, and he took her round the waist and threw her into the water. After Farrell was in the water, the prisoner said she caught her by the arm, and said, "I cannot assist you". Farrell went under the water, and she saw no more of her. He asked the prisoner for the address of Bill, and she said 16 North Wharf, Paddington. She had been drinking, but knew what she was about. He sent to make inquiries, and found that Bill had left his house about a fortnight ago. Harriet Oldburn said she had often heard the prisoner threaten to throw the deceased into the canal. Mr d'Eyncourt remanded the prisoner.

63 January 27 1872

THE ALLEGED MURDER AT PADDINGTON At the Marylebone Police Court on Wednesday, Margaret Riley, 33, was charged with throwing Mary Ann Fraser alias Farrell in the Grand Junction Canal, and thereby causing her death. The facts of this case have been fully reported, and it will be remembered that the deceased was living in the same room as the prisoner. On Saturday night week, the deceased and prisoner were quarrelling about some money, and the prisoner, who had been drinking, said, "If you ask me for any money I will throw you into the cut". About eleven o'clock on the next night, **George Holford**, a boatman in the employ of Mr Josen, a contractor of North Wharf Road, Paddington, was walking along the towing path of the Grand Junction Canal, when he heard a woman call out, "Police! Help! Murder!" He ran along the path, and when near the Bishop's Road Bridge he saw a woman in the water, about twenty feet from the side. He ran to the lodge close by and got a hitcher, but on his return the woman was gone under the water. He ran to the police station and procured the drags, but they were of no avail, for when the body was brought up life was extinct. The prisoner was on the path calling out, "Help! There's a woman in the water". The prisoner went to the police station, where she told Police-sergeant Churchhouse, 38X, that Farrell and she were on the towing path together, and a boatman that she knew, of the name of **Bill Wheeler**, came up to them and wanted to take liberties with Farrell. She would not let him, and he took her round the waist and threw her into the water. After Farrell was in the water, the prisoner said she caught her by the arm and said, "I cannot assist you". She was asked for the

address of Bill Wheeler, and she said 16 North Wharf Road, Paddington, but on going there it was found that he had left about a fortnight. She had often threatened to throw the deceased into the canal, and told two or three different statements of how the deceased met her death. Inspector Hersley informed the magistrate that Dr Lankester had held an inquest on the body of the deceased, and the jury returned a verdict that she was found drowned, but how she came by her death there was no evidence to show. He (Inspector Hersley) said when the witness Hodburn (*Oldburn in previous article*) entered the police station, she said, "How can you say I was present when the deceased was thrown in the water?" and the witness replied, "So you were". Hodburn said, "If the truth were known no one else was present but you, and you pushed her in". The prisoner said, with an oath, "You, and I would have put you in too". He told the prisoner to put on her bonnet, and she said she had not got one. He asked her what she had done with it, and she said she lost it in the scuffle, and she said, "You want to get at me, but you won't". He told her, from the various statements she had made, he should charge her on suspicion of throwing the deceased into the water. When he read the charge to her, she said, "Yes, yes, yes". He examined the spot near where the deceased was found, but he could not find any bonnet.

Mary Rudge, wife of a boatman, said on Sunday week, about a quarter to eleven, she was in bed in a boat on the Grand Junction Canal, when she heard two women quarrelling opposite to her boat. She heard one woman say to the other, "You ----, I will have my revenge before I sleep tonight". They then walked away, and she heard no more till the policemen were dragging the canal. When she heard the above threat she did not hear a splash in the water shortly after. She did not hear the woman call out, "Police! Murder! Help!"

The prisoner said she had a quarrel with the deceased and she went to strike her (the prisoner) when deceased slipped and fell into the canal. She should not have called for help if she had pushed her in.

Mr D'Eyncourt committed the prisoner for trial on the charge of murder.

64 February 17 1872

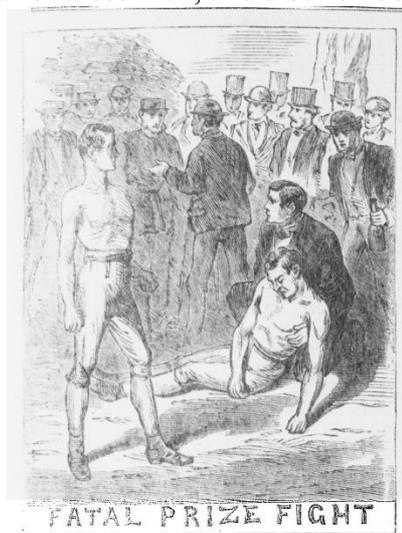
FATAL COLLISION ON THE RIVER On Saturday afternoon a screw collier was proceeding down the river, when off North Woolwich it came into collision with an unladen barge containing two men, the barge being the property of **Mr Jacobs**, lighterman of Greenwich. The men, seeing the danger, shouted out to the steamer, and then seeing no other chance of escape, laid themselves down on the bottom of the barge, but the collier struck the barge, which turned over three times, precipitating the two men into the river, the bodies not being recovered. The collier proceeded on her way down the river.

65 March 23 1872

FATAL PRIZE FIGHT At the Dartford Police Court on Saturday last, John Connor, aged twenty nine, of Fulham Fields, London, a cowman, and three other men as accessories, were brought up by Inspector Varley on a charge of manslaughter. Inspector Varley, on Friday the 15th inst, went down to Long Reach, a place famous in the annals of the PR, and there he saw the prisoner John Connor and a man named Callis engaged in a prize fight. It was then discovered that it was the second day of the battle, which had lasted throughout the whole of Thursday without interruption. The inspector went for assistance, and when he returned he saw a boat putting off in the river containing a large number of persons. He noted some of them, and went subsequently, in company with Superintendent Brandon of the Kent constabulary, to the Long Reach Tavern, and there found the man Callis, covered with blood and bruises, and lying on a table insensible. The inspector removed the man to the infirmary of the Dartford Union, where he lingered in an insensible state until Saturday at noon, and then died. The charge was therefore changed from that of a mere breach of the peace into the more serious one of manslaughter. The man Connor was badly beaten and bruised, his face presenting a woefully cadaverous aspect, and his head being bandaged. At his request he was allowed to be seated.

Dennis Harrington, twenty one, a labourer of 1 Newmarket Street, Upper Smithfield ; **Alfred**

Patten, twenty, waterman, 4 Turner Street, Cartwright Street, Smithfield ; and John Hicks, publican, Weavers' Arms, Baker's Row, Whitechapel, were brought up charged with being accessories. Mr Pelham, solicitor of London, appeared for these men, and also for Connor.



Inspector Varley of the Thames Police, deposed that between twelve and one o'clock on Friday he received information of a prize fight at Long Reach. He went there and, on landing near the Long Reach Tavern, saw Callis (since dead) and Connor fighting in a ring enclosed with stakes and ropes, about 200 yards from the Tavern. He saw Hicks standing near or in the ring, inciting the men to fight, and heard him call "Time". The men then set to and fought. As he was going towards the ring, Hicks turned round, met him, and said, "Can we finish it, sir? We have not got much more to do". Witness replied, "Certainly not ; if you do not cease fighting I shall take you all into custody". He replied, "Very well, sir, then we will knock off", and then went to the ring and said to the fighting men, "That will do ; we can't finish it, the gentleman won't let us". They then left off fighting, and as soon as Callis left the ring he fell down insensible on the ground, and he saw them carry him into the tavern. He, with assistance, went to the Long Reach Tavern, and as he neared it, saw a boat put off, and on going alongside saw Connor and a number of men in it, and Sergeant Bond took Connor into custody. He saw another boat coming from the opposite shore towards the tavern, and on going alongside it saw Hicks and Patten, who were taken into custody. The men in this boat had been to Purfleet to fetch a doctor, who was with them. They then went on shore to the tavern, where he saw Callis lying insensible on a table. He was examined by Dr Gott, who stated that he was in a very dangerous condition and must be removed immediately. He then, with the assistance of some of the constables of the county constabulary, removed prisoners and the man Callis to Dartford. The prisoners were taken to the police station, while Callis was taken to the workhouse infirmary, where he expired. Witness had been to the workhouse and identified Callis as the man he saw fighting.

Cross-examined by Mr Pelham : Would swear Hicks called out "Time". There was a great uproar, but still he would swear that Hicks was the man who cried "Time". Hicks tried to stop the fight as soon as he saw witness.

William Cordee of the Thames Police said that when on duty in the galley, about one o'clock on Friday, with Inspector Varley and Constable Vine, they landed at Long Reach. He did not see the ring, but soon after landing he saw a man carrying another man on his shoulder, as if he intended to bring him down to the river's bank, but he turned back towards the public house. The prisoner Harrington came forward then, carrying "the ropes" on his shoulder towards the boat. He had no doubt that he was one of the parties connected with the fight, because he came up the bank in the same way as he did who was carrying the body.

The Bench decided upon remanding the case, refusing bail, and remarked that they regarded the three men Hicks, Harrington and Patten, as infinitely more guilty than the other poor battered and bruised fellow whom they had encouraged in this barbarism.

The prisoners were then remanded.

66 April 27 1872

POLLUTING THE RIVER **Jeremiah Donovan** and **Henry Parkes**, masters of barges, were charged before Mr Paget with throwing a large quantity of mud from their barges into the river off Blackwall Pier. James Reine, employed by the Thames Conservancy, said that on the 6th of April he was off the East India Dock Buoy, and hearing a noise he went to see what it was. He saw the prisoners, whose barges were against each other, throwing mud into the river. He watched them for ten minutes. He went on board the barges, and the prisoners could assign no reason for throwing the mud overboard. The barges were each fifty tons burden, and he had no doubt nearly that quantity of mud was thrown from each barge. Henry Stone, a day watchman to the East India Dock Company, said the defendants left the dock with their barges on the 5th of April. The barges were then full of mud, and they ought to have deposited it on the land at East Greenwich. They had probably thrown the mud overboard to save time. Mr Reine said that the practice of throwing mud overboard had become so prevalent, and there was such a large quantity of mud disposed of in that manner, that it had become very serious. The prisoners mumbled a few unintelligible words in defence, but Mr Paget fined each of them £5.

67 June 8 1872

THE FATAL BOAT ACCIDENT AT LONDON BRIDGE Mr W Carter has held an inquiry at Bermondsey touching the death of a youth named **Jewson**, who with two other lads was drowned on the occasion of a skiff coming in collision with the *Princess Alice*, Gravesend steamer, on Sunday the 26th ult at London Bridge. The skiff was returning with a party of twelve, in charge of **Mr Jewson**, a foreman lighterman and father of the deceased, from Kew, and on passing through the centre arch of London Bridge, about twenty minutes past nine o'clock, the steamer was seen about thirty yards off. She had just left Fresh Wharf, and was proceeding to her mooring. The steamer was hailed to go astern, and the helm of the boat was ported, and she almost immediately came into contact with the bow of the steamer and careened over, the whole of the occupants being thrown into the water. The mate of the steamer said as soon as he saw the boat he ordered the engines to be reversed, but before they could be moved, the boat struck the stern of the steamer. The engines were not moving when the boat was sighted. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death". The bodies of the other two lads have been picked up.

68 June 22 1872

THAMES

CHARGE OF BIGAMY **John Montier**, a lighterman, was charged before Mr Paget with bigamy. Thomas Mealing, a cab driver living at No 33 Park Road, Battersea Park, said he knew the prisoner and his first wife, Ann Sherwood, and was present at their wedding at St Peter's Church, Hammersmith, on the 20th of November about six years ago. June Williams, a well dressed young woman, said she lived at No 6 Golden Lane, City, and was living with her brother. On the 11th of March last she married the prisoner at St Peter's Church, Stepney; and after living with him for two months she separated from him, owing to some disagreement about money matters. In cross-examination by Mr Pelham, the witness said she was aware the prisoner had been married before he married her, but she thought he had been divorced from his first wife, although she did not think it necessary to ask for any confirmation as to the divorce. She gave information to the police after she had a serious quarrel with the prisoner. She was unable to agree with him, because he refused to allow her enough money. She had to sell all her own furniture off to maintain herself. She met the prisoner one night after she had left him, and stopped in the same house with him, but she denied having slept with him and said she slept in a chair all night. Mr Paget committed the prisoner for trial, but accepted two bails in £20 each.

69 July 6 1872

THE THAMES LIGHTERMEN A union for the mutual protection of all Thames lightermen was recently formed, and it was resolved that they should demand shorter hours and increase of pay.

With the view of carrying out this object, a large meeting of lightermen was held on Saturday night in the Edinburgh Castle, Mile End. A memorial had, it was stated, been drawn up and signed by nearly all the lightermen in London, requesting the masters to reduce the number of hours to 12 hours a day, and to increase the pay to 6s a day and 5s for each night. If this memorial should be refused, the men would have no alternative but to strike for what they considered their just rights.

70 July 13 1872

THE STRIKE OF THE THAMES LIGHTERMEN On Monday a numerously attended meeting of the Le(....) Quays and Dock Master Lightermen was held at Waterman's Hall, St-Mary-at-Hill, to consider their position with reference to the strike of a large number of the working lightermen employed on the Thames. Mr W S Page took the chair, and the principal members of the trade were present. It appeared that in the early part of last week the men in the service of many of the firms delivered a printed form upon their employers, asking for an increase of wages, and adding that in the event of the masters not complying by the 5th or 6th of this month they were to accept the usual week's notice which, it was urged on the part of the masters, expired on Friday or Saturday 13th. The men in their memorial asked that their wages might be increased to 6s a day and 5s for the night. The employers offered 5s 6d a day and 4s for the night's work. This the men declined, and intimated their intention of ceasing work on the 6th. The Masters' Committee had an interview on Saturday with **Mr Elliott**, a delegate from the men, and pointed out that the week's notice would only expire at the close of the following week, and it is stated that the delegate admitted that the notice was open to some objection, and promised to advise the men on the subject, to attend the adjourned meeting of the masters, and to communicate the result. The delegate, however, did not appear, and wrote a letter stating that the men declined to accept the masters' terms, and a large body left their employment on Saturday. The Chairman remarked that the men, by leaving their employment without giving proper notice, had rendered themselves liable to be proceeded against before the Lord Mayor, under the 22nd and 23rd Vic c 133. The masters could not make greater concessions than they had. It was urged that the terms offered by the masters were fair and liberal, and it was stated that the men who had expressed themselves satisfied with their employment had been coerced to take part in the movement and strike. The meeting of the masters was adjourned. A large number of the lightermen who have ceased work assembled on Tower Hill on Monday morning, and expressed their determination to adhere to the demand for their wages to be increased to 6s a day (12 hours) and 5s a night. They afterwards walked in procession through the streets.

71 January 18 1873

GREENWICH

POLLUTION ON THE RIVER **James Overton, William Woodcock** and **Charles Joyce**, in the employ of Messrs **Shelbourne**, lightermen of Limehouse, were charged before Mr Patteson with discharging a quantity of mud into the River Thames. Inspector Varley of the Thames Police said that at half past five on Friday evening, it then being dusk, he was on duty in a galley off Blackwall when he heard the splashing of something in the river, and on looking round saw Overton navigating the barge *Edward*. On rowing to the barge he found the deck, and also the gunwale, covered with mud. The other prisoners were in the mud in the hold, using their shovels, and the half of the contents of the barge had then been disgorged into the stream. On telling the prisoners they would be taken into custody, they said they would go to the station quietly. Overton had been fined at the Thames Police Court for a similar offence. The prisoners had no answer to the charge, and Mr Patteson fined Overton £5 or one month, and the other prisoners £3 each, or twenty one days imprisonment.

72 March 15 1873

CHARGE OF MANSLAUGHTER At the Thames Police Court, **Francis Searle**, a lighterman, was charged before Mr Lushington with causing the death of **Thomas Smith**, also a lighterman, of No 23 Sabberton Street, Poplar. **Thomas Crawford**, a waterman, said that at ten o'clock on the

morning of the 7th of February he was in his barge *Fred*, when he heard the prisoner and the deceased, who were in different barges about 17 feet apart, disputing who should enter the lock first. The prisoner got upon the deceased's barge, struck him a violent blow on the face with his fist, knocking him down bleeding from the nose and mouth. The deceased regained his feet and kicked the prisoner, who went to his own barge, but afterwards again went upon the deceased's barge and knocked him down. The deceased threw a piece of wood at the prisoner, but it did not hit him. He picked it up and threw it at the deceased, whom it struck on the back of the head, and witness saw that he was bleeding. The prisoner went back to his own barge, and witness took the deceased ashore, but saw no more of him. Maria Pyburn said the deceased was her son. On the 7th of February he came home with his head bandaged. He went to bed directly, and died on Friday morning last. Detective Norman, K Division, said that the result of the inquest was not yet known, and he asked for a remand. Mr Lushington remanded the prisoner for a week.

73 July 19 1873

A DANGEROUS CHARACTER At the Doncaster Borough Police Court, a waterman named **John Lindley** was charged with an assault upon Thomas Lewis of Stainforth on Saturday last. The men had been drinking at the New River Tavern in the afternoon, when they quarrelled and both went out of the house. As soon as they were outside, the defendant hit complainant a blow over the head which knocked him senseless to the ground and left a severe wound over the eye. It appeared that Lindley had been convicted of three similar offences during the past year, and he was now fined £3 and £1 5s costs.

74 November 6 1871

FOUR SHOCKING DEATHS The Essex coroners have just concluded inquiries in four very sad cases. In the first, the deceased, a girl aged 16, was filling a lamp with benzoline when the oil ignited from a candle and set fire to her clothes. Her mother was ill in bed and unable to help her, and she was fearfully burnt, death resulting in 36 hours. The subject of the second inquest was Maria Haden, a poor widow aged 75 who, while gathering sticks in the park of Sir John Maryon Wilson near Dunmow, was attacked by a vicious ram, which knocked her down and butted her so savagely about the head that she died within an hour. The third case was that of **James Baldwin**, mariner of Rochester, who, with another man, had gone down in a barge near Mucking Lighthouse. It is believed that the barge had been run into by a steamer. In the last case, a lad at Braintree, aged six years, died from neglect and want of food. Great popular indignation was expressed ; his grandmother, who had charge of him, being hooted, and the windows of her house broken.

75 January 10 1874

MIDDLESEX SESSIONS

ROBBERY FROM A BARGE ON THE RIVER THAMES **John Quarrell**, 17, was charged with stealing 7 lb of sugar, value 2s, the property of William Vekins, from the barge *James Fox*, in the port of London. On the evening of the 15th of December, the lighterman in charge of the barge found four men on board, and suspecting that they were there for a dishonest purpose he secured the prisoner, the others effecting their escape. When taken into custody he threw a handkerchief containing 7 lb of sugar into the hold of the barge, and then offered the constable 5s if he allowed him to make his escape. Several witnesses were called, amongst them two master lightermen, who gave the prisoner an excellent character for honesty. The jury returned a verdict of guilty, but strongly recommended the prisoner to mercy on account of his good character. The judge offered the prisoner to enter into his own recognisances in £20, and to find another in a like sum, to come up if called upon.

76 January 10 1874

STRANGE CONFESSION OF MURDER At the Gloucester board of guardians on Tuesday, it was stated that an old woman named **Hall**, who died on Sunday, had on her death bed confessed to

having murdered her husband four years ago. She stated that he was one evening standing on the deck of his boat on the Severn at Gloucester, when she struck him with a boat hook, and he fell into the water and was drowned. It appears that the body of a boatman named Hall was found in the Severn about four years ago under somewhat suspicious circumstances.

77 February 28 1874

HEROIC CONDUCT OF A LITTLE GIRL – A WOMAN SAVED FROM DROWNING Mr John W Waterhouse jun calls attention in the Times to a remarkable instance of courage and presence of mind in a little girl about ten years of age. On Tuesday week, a young woman named Coles attempted to commit suicide by throwing herself into the Basingstoke Canal near Woking station. A girl named **Kate Strudwick**, living with her parents by the river side, seeing this, immediately got into a boat, taking with her a plank, and pulled out to the spot. She then placed the plank on one side of the boat to balance it while she reached over the other and caught hold of the young woman by the hair of her head. With her arms resting on the side of the boat, she continued to hold her thus above the surface for fully fifteen minutes, until assistance arrived and the young woman Coles was taken from the canal in a very exhausted state. The child Strudwick is the daughter of poor parents, whose father is unable from age and illness to continue to work as a bargeman. His only son last year was drowned through the foundering of a barge in the Thames.

78 April 11 1874

SERIOUS CHARGE Elizabeth Blanee was charged on remand with attempting to drown herself and her child, Edith Blanee, aged seven years. Mr Young appeared for the defendant. **James Lambourne**, a lighterman, stated that about nine o'clock on the night of Thursday the 25th ult he was on his barge in the Regent's Canal, near the Isle of Dogs, and heard a child's voice say several times, "Oh don't mother". He went to the spot whence the voice proceeded, and saw the defendant and a child in the water. The woman was calling for help, and he threw a belt towards her, which she tried to catch hold of, but without success. Another man came to his assistance, and they drew the prisoner and the child out of the water with a hitcher. Robert Butt, a fireman, deposed to hearing the cries for help, and assisting the last witness in rescuing the defendant and her child. George Quantrall, a police-constable, No 570K, deposed that on the evening in question he was called to the Prince of Wales in North Street, and took the defendant to the station. She said she went right round the Isle of Dogs, and was walking and thinking until she got to a bridge, when she told a man she had not got any money, and asked him what she should do. He said, "Drown yourself", and she walked along the towing path, jumped into the water, and pulled her child in after her. In answer to Mr Young, the witness said the defendant appeared very excited at the time. Matthew Brownfield, a divisional surgeon of police, said he saw the defendant at the Poplar station, and thought she was not in a right state of mind, as she appeared to be suffering from *delirium tremens*. Mr Paget committed the defendant for trial, and accepted her husband and father's bail for her appearance at the trial.

79 May 2 1874

GREENWICH

SALE AND PURCHASE OF A WIFE Elizabeth Smith, a middle aged person of West Row, The Orchard, Deptford, appeared to a summons under the Industrial Schools Act, for not contributing to the support of a child detained under the Act. Mr Harris, the officer appointed to see to these payments, said that the case was of a peculiar character. On calling at the defendant's residence he was answered by a man named **Leonard Manns**, who said that seven years ago he bought the defendant of her husband, paying him £10 for her, and that he now considered her, in every respect, his wife. Since their cohabitation two children had been born, the youngest eighteen months old, the child in question being born prior to the sale named. The man defendant was a lighterman, earning weekly wages 35s, and he was willing to pay 2s out of these earnings for the child, and had given the defendant such money, but she refused to pay it, saying she could only be sent to prison

and she had the wish to see the inside of Maidstone Gaol. The defendant, in answer to the magistrate, said she could not pay more than 1s per week. Mr Harris said the defendant and the man who now claimed to be her husband were living in a comfortable house, and his instructions were to ask for a contribution of 2s 6d per week. Mr Pateson made an order for the payment of 2s per week, telling defendant that the child was wholly dependent on her, as she had left her lawful husband, who was not to be found, and if the payments were not kept up she would be liable to be committed to prison.

80 May 16 1874

GREENWICH

ASSAULTS WITH A CRUTCH **George Forbes** aged twenty four, a waterman of Rotherhithe, was charged with two assaults. It appeared that at eleven o'clock the previous evening the prisoner entered the Angel public house at Rotherhithe, and in consequence of his being the worse for liquor, the landlady refused to serve him. The prisoner, who has but one leg and walks with a crutch, alleged that he had handed the landlady a sixpence, which was denied, and a disturbance took place. James Harnell, the potman, on telling the prisoner he had not paid any money, was instantly knocked down. Police-constable Hirst, 214R, was then sent for and took the defendant into custody, when the prisoner struck him a violent blow with his crutch, bit one of his fingers, and tried to bite him on the thigh. His crutch was then taken from him, and he was carried to the station. It was stated, in answer to the magistrate, that the prisoner was one of the most troublesome and dangerous men in Rotherhithe. He had been several times in custody for assaults on the police, and had only recently left prison. Mr Balguy sentenced the prisoner to a month's hard labour.

81 July 11 1874

SOUTHWARK

A LIGHTERMAN LIGHTENED OF HIS PURSE Catherine Foley and Ellen Sullivan, well known thieves, were brought up for final examination, charged with stealing a purse, about twenty four shillings, and a pocket book containing memoranda, from **Richard Cheeseman**, in a public house in the borough. Police-constable Henry Turner, 48M, said that on the afternoon of Saturday the 27th ultimo, he saw the prisoners conversing with the prosecutor outside a public house opposite the Dover Road. Knowing them to be convicted thieves, he watched them, and shortly afterwards they entered the house, and some drink was called for. The prosecutor pulled out his purse and, having paid for it and drank a little, leant his head against a wall. The prisoner Foley then went up to him and pushed him against the partition, and took something from his side coat pocket and handed it to the other defendant. He then saw Foley hand Sullivan a purse, and she left the house. He followed her out and asked her what she had in her hand. She replied, "Nothing", but at the same time she dropped the purse and pocket book produced. He handed her over to another constable, and returned and apprehended Foley as she was trying to escape down the Mint. The purse contained only 1s 7d. Witness added that the prosecutor was stupid from the effects of drink or some drug. The prosecutor said he was a lighterman residing at Greenwich. On the afternoon in question he came up to Bankside with a barge, and after receiving about 30s, he met a friend in the Borough and had refreshments. After leaving him, he fell in with the prisoners, and treated them. He believed at that time he had a sovereign and four or five shillings in his possession. After being in the public house a short time he partially lost his senses, and when he recovered he found that he had been robbed of his purse and pocket book. One of the female warders from Wandsworth House of Correction recognised both prisoners as old offenders. Sullivan had been convicted twenty three times for felony and misdemeanour, and Foley eight times. Foley, in defence, said the prosecutor gave her his purse and pocket book, and Sullivan said Foley handed them to her to take care of. The magistrate committed them for trial.

82 September 2 1876

FATAL ACCIDENT AT THE ROYAL ARSENAL An inquest was held at Guy's Hospital last

week, on the body of John Chalk, aged 20, an artisan, who was mortally injured at the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich. The evidence given went to show that the deceased was engaged aboard a barge at the pier of the Royal Arsenal, superintending the loading of an iron box which, when full, was hoisted on to the quay by means of a steam crane. The work had been proceeding some time, when Absolom Bulgin, whose duty it was to steady the box in the ascent, failed to catch hold of it, and swerving out of his reach, it struck deceased a heavy blow in the chest, knocked him



backwards, and jammed him between the barge and the quay. He was fearfully injured, and was at once taken to the hospital, but notwithstanding the utmost attention of the medical staff, he gradually sank and died. It was clearly shown that the occurrence was purely accidental, and a verdict to that effect was recorded by the jury.

83 September 9 1876

ACCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES A barge of about seventy tons was observed by a waterman named **Chitty** to be floating in the Thames between Twickenham and Richmond, apparently without anyone on board, on seeing which Chitty got his boat and rowed out to it, and boarded the vessel, which he found to be the "*Elizabeth*" belonging to Mr Tompkins of the "Swan Inn", Walton on Thames when, on searching it, he discovered the captain, who it appeared had been navigating the vessel, lying in the stern sheets or after part of the hold quite dead. It is supposed that deceased fell into the hole and broke his neck. The body was taken ashore at Richmond to await an inquest. No one else was on the vessel but deceased.

On Saturday afternoon, a sad occurrence happened upon the Thames at Windsor. In the course of the morning, a large party of work people employed at Rudkin's laundry works, Brock Green, Hammersmith, arrived at Eton for the purpose of holding their annual bean feast at the "Crown and Cushion" Inn. Among the excursionists were a number of women and children, and four of the former, Mrs Hersey, Mrs Wright, Mrs Sell and Mrs Bryant, engaged a waterman named **Hatton**, about three o'clock in the afternoon, to take them out on a boat for a row up the river. The party left Windsor Bridge safely, and proceeded in the direction of the railway. When near the ait on the Windsor side of the Thames, two of the women rose in the boat to change places and capsized the skiff, the whole of its occupants being thrown into the river. The scene at the moment was very distressing, but fortunately the accident had been perceived by Gray, a Thames fisherman who was near in a punt, and who immediately went to the rescue. At the same time, two men named Warrell and Kempster plunged into the stream, and assisted in saving the lives of three women and the boatman Hatton. In the meantime, Mrs Hersey, who it is thought was covered by the boat when it was turned over, sank and was drowned before assistance could reach her. Drags were used by members of the Eton and Windsor Humane Society, and the body was recovered about twenty minutes afterwards. The three women who were saved were removed in an exhausted condition to

the "Crown and Cushion", where they received every attention. Mrs Hersey was a widow with three little children.

84 February 3 1877

A COURAGEOUS POLICEMAN **James Contan**, forty two, waterman, was indicted on Friday last at the Middlesex Sessions for stealing a cask of tallow, value £7, the property of Philip Griggs, from the barge "Mary Ann" in the port of London. On the night of December 10th, Police-constable Hilary Martell, 592K, saw the prisoner, in company with four other men, rolling a cask of tallow towards Nightingale Lane. On seeing him, they all ran away, but after a short chase he caught the prisoner, who cried out, "Lob!" and five men then returned and attempted to rescue the prisoner. Notwithstanding these odds, the constable stuck manfully to his captive, but at last they so punished him that he could hold on no longer, and the men made their escape. On the afternoon of the 7th inst, he took the prisoner into custody in Gun Lane. The cask of tallow was subsequently identified by the prosecutor. The jury found the prisoner guilty, and several previous convictions were proved against him. Mr Serjeant Cox passed sentence of ten years penal servitude, to be followed by seven years police supervision. His lordship then called forward the constable and said that the grand jury had made a presentment highly recommending him for the bravery he had displayed in endeavouring to do his duty against such odds. He entirely endorsed this opinion, and ordered him to receive a reward of £2.

85 February 3 1877

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Payne held an inquiry at Guy's Hospital relative to the death of Charles Snowden, aged 53, a resident of Blue Anchor Yard, High Road, Peckham. The poor fellow was employed at a warehouse in (Shad?) Thames, and was engaged in lowering some leather into a barge from the second floor of the warehouse. He had just signalled for the crane to lift the goods, when a hook he had in his hand caught in the chain, and he was drawn out of the warehouse, where he hung for some time, and then dropped into a barge and broke his spine in two places. A verdict of accidental death was returned.

86 March 3 1877

CORONERS' INQUESTS Dr Diplock held an inquiry at the Fulham Workhouse into the cause of death of a male unknown. Evidence was given showing that a lighterman named **Keene** saw the body of the deceased floating in the Thames close to Hammersmith Bridge, and at once gave notice to the police. The body was in a terrible state of putrefaction. Dr Blackmore, who made a *post mortem* examination, expressed his opinion that death had resulted from drowning, and an open verdict was recorded. When the verdict was given, half a crown was tendered to Keene, who indignantly refused to accept it, saying he had lost a day's work, representing 10s, in coming to court, besides the trouble, bother and expense of recovering the body. The Coroner told the man that the Middlesex magistrates had settled 4s as the total fee to be paid in such cases, including the giving of evidence, and the remaining 1s 6d had been handed to the police-sergeant, who had given his evidence and brought the body to the mortuary. Keene thereupon expressed his intention of suing the magistrates, and said that instead of 4s, the man who carried the body should be paid at least £4, so horrible was the task ; and, for his part, he would not have done it for £20 ; and he wished the Middlesex magistrates joy of the next corpse he brought ashore.

Dr Hardwicke, Coroner for Central Middlesex, held an inquiry on Friday, at the Islington Coroner's Court, as to the death of **Robert Burrows**, aged 46, of 1 Eden Grove, Islington, a waterman at the "Brecknock". On Wednesday week, deceased exhibited strange symptoms, and continued to get worse. When his mother called to see him on Sunday, he jumped and barked at her in the most alarming manner, at the same time saying he did not want to hurt her. She was compelled to hold him down. At his lodgings he ran about the house covered only with a blanket, and making the most terrible noises. On Sunday an order was produced, and deceased, having been got into a cab,

was conveyed to the infirmary of Islington Workhouse, Hornsey Rise. The evidence of Dr Cowan and the nurse of the Infirmary showed that deceased, after admission, had repeated convulsive fits throughout the night, but in the intervals was quite rational. He was very wild occasionally, and the least draught of air troubled him very much. He could take no nourishment. He bit the sheets through and, jumping out of bed, rushed about the ward, ejecting saliva all over the floor. He died at six on Monday morning. The doctor said that the propensity to bite and other symptoms convinced him that the death was from hydrophobia, brought on by the bite of a dog. Hydrophobia was a very uncommon disease in this country, and could not be mistaken for any other disease. Evidence was adduced that deceased was fond of dogs and had been bitten several times, there being a small wound on his hand, as if from the bite of a dog. The jury found that death was caused by hydrophobia.

87 March 24 1877

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Payne held an inquest at the "King's Head and Lamb", Upper Thames Street, respecting the death of Arnold William Trublood, aged 36, who was drowned in the Thames. He lived at 14 Wootten Street, Lambeth, and was employed at wharves along the bank of the Thames. The deceased had had a little to drink, and was engaged in carrying some iron pipes along a plank from the barge to the wharf, when a steamer passed, and the wash caused the deceased to topple over and fall into the water. **Mr Alfred Day**, the piermaster at St Paul's pier, rendered prompt assistance, but deceased could not be recovered until life was extinct. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death, and recommended that life lines should be affixed to all the planks at wharves.

88 April 28 1877

ACCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES The undermentioned were admitted to St Mary's Hospital :- **Thomas Reynolds**, a boatman of South Wharf Road, Paddington, fell from his boat and sustained severe internal injuries.

89 May 5 1877

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Donaldson held an inquiry at the "Black Horse", High Street, Poplar, relative to the death of a female child. **James Hart**, a waterman living at 43 Giles Street, Limehouse, said that at a quarter to eleven on Thursday morning whilst on board his barge in the Lea Cut he found the body of deceased wrapped in a tablecloth. Dr Giles said deceased was a full time child, and had breathed, but whether there had been a separate existence he could not say. A verdict in accordance with the above facts was returned by the jury.

Dr Diplock held an inquest at the "Lamb" Tavern, High Street, Chiswick, on the body of **William Deverson**, aged 19, the mate of a barge, who was drowned in the Thames off Chiswick on Thursday morning. The evidence given went to show that on the morning in question the barge "*Comet*" was lying at anchor in mid stream, and without any lights being exhibited, when the tugboat "*Lark*" with two barges came down the river, and suddenly the captain found the "*Comet*" right in front of him. He ported his helm and managed to steer clear of it, but one of the barges behind containing the deceased came in contact with the "*Comet*" and the concussion threw the deceased into the river and he was drowned. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

Mr Humphreys held an inquest at the London Hospital relative to the death of Alfred Tyler, aged 19 years, a costermonger, who died from the effects of the bite of a dog, which occurred on Saturday the 17th of February last. Elizabeth Tyler, 14 Devonshire Street, Mile End, stated that on Saturday the 17th February, deceased, her son, came home and said he had been bitten on the right hand by a mad dog in Philpot Street, Commercial Road. He went to the hospital and had it cauterised, and continued to go to his work as usual until Monday last, when he refused to take water or any liquids, and appeared as if going out of his mind. She at once called in Dr Kay, who ordered his

removal to the hospital, where he was at once taken in, but died in her presence on Thursday in great agony. The day deceased was bitten she heard that several others had been bitten also. Police-sergeant Harvey, 1K reserve, stated that on Saturday February 17th, great consternation was created in the Commercial Road East by the appearance of a half bred bull mastiff tearing about in a rabid state. Several persons were bitten, no less than eight being taken to the London Hospital, where one poor boy, who had his arm amputated, now remains. The beast was ultimately knocked down by a stone, and a butcher rushing out of his shop cut the animal's throat. The owner of the dog had not been discovered. Mr William Mears, house surgeon, having stated death to be due to hydrophobia, the jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

90 May 5 1877

An adjourned inquest touching the death of **Charles Moston**, boatman of Wolverhampton, who was found in a dying state on the canal bank at Waverton, near Chester, on the 15th inst, has been concluded at Waverton after a hearing of eight hours. Evidence was adduced to show that on the Sunday evening **Probert** and his wife, who were the only occupants of a boat on which deceased was, went to a boat in advance and said Charles (the deceased) had fallen into the canal off the boat, but had got out again and was walking along the bank, but refused to come on board. Three men went back to look for him, but it being nearly dark, and Probert saying that Moston would be sure to join them at Chester, they turned back and went on to Chester, where Mrs Probert made the significant statement that "she could not rest in her bed until that chap came home", and added that "somebody would be sure to find him dead in the morning". The medical evidence showed that death was caused by dislocation of the fifth and sixth cervical vertebrae, which could only have been caused by intense violence. Probert, who was in custody, and his wife made long statements to the effect that Moston had been drinking, and when getting from the boat on the bank fell into the canal, but got out again and walked along the bank. He refused to come on board, and the boat gradually got ahead of him till he was out of sight. The Coroner said it was clear to him that the injuries must have been caused while on the boat, and the jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against Probert and his wife, who were accordingly committed for trial.

91 May 12 1877

SHOCKING REVELATIONS OF CANAL LIFE **John Probert**, a boatman in the employ of the Shropshire Union Company, and his wife, already committed on the coroner's warrant for the murder of **Charles Moston**, another boatman, of Wolverhampton, at Waverton, on the 15th of April, were on the 3rd inst brought before the Broxton magistrates. Among some sixteen witnesses examined, only two or three were able to append their signatures to the deposition, and the evidence disclosed some of the most shocking features of canal boat life. In some cases, several adults of both sexes were living in a small cabin. In one boat, it was stated, were man and wife and five children. One witness had never heard of the Bible. The prisoners were committed to take their trial.

92 May 26 1877

THE LAW AND THE JUDGES "The law's delay" received an illustration last week in Westminster Hall, which sought to challenge the public criticism. A man in charge of a barge had to deliver goods to a great railway company, and in the course of the operation of slinging heavy laden bags, one of them fell upon him so violently that he was killed. A special jury found that there was negligence on the part of the servants of the railway company. The plea of the railway company was that the deceased contributed to his own death by negligence in standing in the compartment from which the bag had been taken. A new trial was ordered, and again a jury found for the widow. On a point of law, the case was directed to be tried again, but on this occasion the learned Judge directed a non suit. On Tuesday the Judges decided that the direction of the Judge was wrong, and that the case must go down for trial again. If the widow is able to bear the expense of a fourth trial, she will probably recover a verdict for more or less damages than the sums awarded to her by two

former juries ; if not, she will be left without resources. It would seem as if it was not impossible to decide on a first trial whether there was negligence on both sides, in which case the law splits the knot, and says that neither are entitled to recovery. The suggestion that the poor unfortunate bargee was a contributory in negligence is simply absurd. As the Lord Chief Baron put it, "He had a right to be in his barge and in every part of his barge", and the contention that by his act of standing in the compartment from which the bag had been taken so that it fell upon him, would lead to a very dangerous interpretation of negligence. The (...) peculiarity of the case is that a wealthy defendant may employ the police of (...), and by legal tactics ruin a poor plaintiff. And yet it was only the other day that it was represented as a hardship upon defendants to call upon them for security for costs if they removed a cause from the County Court to the High Court of Justices.

93 June 23 1877

ACCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES **Henry B A Fraser** aged 15, a resident of Alfred Villas, Scarborough, was in the service of the owner of the "*William and Alice*" of Goole, Yorkshire, with a view to his being apprenticed. While lying off Battle Bridge stairs, the deceased went to the Middlesex shore in a boat to fetch a friend. Having taken this person on board, he stood in the boat watching some mud larks seeking for halfpence. One of the two then attempted to push the boat off, and the boat striking against a barge, the deceased fell over into the water and was drowned. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

94 July 7 1877

ACCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES On Sunday afternoon, an explosion occurred on board a powder barge belonging to **Mr T F Wood**, lying in the river off the "Ship and Lobster" at Gravesend. The shock was felt at some distance from the scene. No cause can be assigned for the accident. Three persons on board at the time were killed. One was the son of Mr Wood, another the son of a foreman in his employ, and the third a man named **Whale**. One of the bodies, frightfully disfigured, has been recovered. The barge was chiefly laden with fuses.

95 July 21 1877

MANSION HOUSE

BITING OFF A MAN'S EAR Lawrence Lawrenson was charged with the shocking offence of biting off part of a man's ear. The complainant, whose head was bandaged, was **Thomas Williams**, a lighterman living in King Street, St George's-in-the-East. He said that he was in Buckmaster's beershop, Lower Thames Street, when the prisoner, a stranger, came in with some sticks under his arm, and commenced to flourish them about as if to conjure. Witness had some fish in a pocket handkerchief, which the prisoner claimed as his and tried to wrench from his hand. Witness pushed him away, and in a struggle for the handkerchief they both fell. As he was getting away from him, he felt the prisoner bite a piece off his left ear. (The piece, preserved in spirits of wine, was produced in court). He bled a great deal, and suffered much pain. Sir Robert Carden remanded the prisoner for the evidence of a medical man, intimating his intention then to commit him for trial.

96 August 4 1877

LAMBETH

PROSECUTION UNDER THE WATERMAN'S ACT – CAUTION TO LIGHTERMEN **John Cowderoy** was summoned that, as a freeman of the Waterman's Company, in charge of the barge "*Saxby*", he did wilfully lose the tide without the consent of his master, and also leave the barge without some authorised person on board capable of taking charge of the same. Mr W H Fullager prosecuted, and from his statement, borne out by the evidence, it appeared that **Mr James Sarby Jarvis**, the owner of several barges on the river, engaged the defendant to take a barge from Lambeth and get a load of sand. When engaged, as is customary in the trade, prosecutor advanced 30s, which was termed "Tommy money", and was supposed to be spent in food for the crew before starting. It was found that defendant did (*not*) attempt to move the barge for a long time after it was

his duty to have done so. In consequence, nine tides were missed, and the complainant was put to a loss of something like £4 10s. The complainant, in answer to the magistrate, said masters unfortunately were bound to employ licensed lightermen, and to refuse employment to many worthy men who would willingly do the work. The "Tommy money", it was ascertained, was spent on shore in drink. Defendant said he could not get the crew together, and called one of them to speak in his favour. This witness at once said it was because they got too much beer that they did not go. Mr Ellison said it was clear if defendant wished to carry on his trade he must employ men who could be relied upon. Such a man as had been called as a witness was not fit to be employed in anything. Defendant was responsible, and it was a serious offence, for which he would have to suffer punishment. He ordered him to pay a penalty of 40s or one month. The money was paid.

97 August 18 1877

FATAL ACCIDENT ON THE THAMES On Saturday evening, **Edward Martin**, a lighterman of 55 Beatrice Road, Bermondsey, fell overboard near Paul's Wharf whilst navigating a barge. His description is as follows :- Age 25 years, height 5ft 6in, blind in the left eye ; dressed in tweed vest and trousers.

98 August 25 1877

CORONERS' INQUESTS The Surrey coroner, Mr William Carter, held an inquest at Lower Rotherhithe concerning the death, under melancholy circumstances, of a young man named **Edward William Martin**, aged 25, a lighterman and son of a barge owner living at 20 Roseberry Street, Bermondsey. On the evening of Saturday last week, at about 6.30, the deceased was seen at Paul's Wharf, trying to step from one barge to another, and in making a jump he missed his footing and fell clear into the water. A praiseworthy effort was made by a young man named G F Howard to save him by diving but, becoming exhausted, he was obliged to strike out for the shore to save himself, and deceased sank. When the body was picked up at Rotherhithe on Wednesday, all the property known to belong to deceased was found, with the exception of a very valuable watch, and this was gone, but there still hung to the waistcoat buttonhole the broken remnants of the chain, and the waistcoat itself was undone. The man who found the body swore that no watch was in the pocket at the time of the discovery. The coroner said that while the deceased had been lying near the shore and the barges, the watch had no doubt been appropriated, and the robbing of dead persons was, of course, a felony, and the matter could be taken up. Such things had become quite systematic. A verdict of accidental death was returned.

99 September 22 1877

GREENWICH

THE DIFFICULTIES OF THAMES LIGHTERMEN **John Fuller** and **Edwin Blackmore**, watermen and lightermen of Greenwich, appeared to adjourned summonses under the Master and Servants Act for breach of contract, and for which compensation of £10 in each case was claimed for neglect of duty. Mr Carttar attended for the prosecution and Mr Scale defended. At the first hearing of the case a doubt was raised as to whether Thames watermen acting as lightermen on the river were amenable under the amended Act affecting masters and servants, or whether redress for neglect of duty was not confined to a bye law made under an Act of Parliament obtained in 1852, which provides that persons engaged in such duties and neglecting the same were liable to a penalty not exceeding £3. An adjournment had been made to consider the law, and the proceedings were taken under the new Act. The evidence given showed that in August last the two defendants, who were in the service of **Mr Allen**, a lighterman at Greenwich, were each deputed to take charge of a loaded barge, to navigate the same, attend at the delivery of cargo into ships, take tally of the goods with the mate of the ship, and to bring the barge empty to Greenwich. Fuller had a barge laden with bags of guano, valued at £1,000, which he had to take from the West India Docks ; but on the second day of his engagement he failed to attend the shipment, the consequence of which had been that the prosecutor had sustained damage by being charged with damaged bags. In the case of

Blackmore, he had to being a barge, with cargo valued at £600 from Nine Elms to Plaistow for shipment by a morning tide, instead of which he had been found in a state of drunkenness at three o'clock in the afternoon, and other assistance had to be obtained, Blackmore going to the residence of prosecutor, demanding payment, and abusing him. On the part of the prosecution, it was stated that excessive compensation was not sought, the object being that lightermen should know that they were liable to be prosecuted under the Act named. Mr Slade ordered Fuller to pay £3 3s cost of compensation and 2s cost of summons, and Blackmore 20s and 2s cost of summons.

100 October 20 1877

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Carter held an inquiry at the "Europa" Tavern, Church Street, Rotherhithe, relative to the death of **Joseph Sanders**, aged 27, residing at Plaistow, Essex. Deceased was engaged on a barge in unloading deals, when a passing steamer caused a heavy swell, and the deceased, owing to the rocking of the barge, slipped into the Thames and sank. Witness procured a drag, and in about five minutes the deceased was recovered. He was removed to the boiler house in the saw mill. Dr Kelly was sent for, and Mr Milne, his assistant, attended the deceased, who recovered. He was removed to Burt's wharf, where he died suddenly four hours after his immersion in the water. After a long consultation the jury returned a verdict of accidental death, caused by immersion in the Thames.

101 December 8 1877

BOAT RACE FOR £50 A SIDE On Monday afternoon, **Thomas Smith** of Surbiton, a waterman, and **Walter Messenger**, an apprentice of Teddington, sculled from the Aqueduct to the Ship at Mortlake for £100. The former is considerably the senior, and among other races had defeated **John Coxon** of Twickenham, while Messenger, although quite a stripling, made a good fight for the Coat and Badge at the late National Regatta with **Clasper** of Oxford, in the year 1876. They had been both judiciously trained, Messenger under Joe Cannon of Kingston at the "Bull's Head" at Barnes ; while Smith, who was taken in hand by Burgoine of Kingston, and trained at Wandsworth, was very lusty, in contrast with the remarkably fine physical condition of the other. Messenger won the toss, and chose the side nearest the bishop's palace. The tide was on the turn as he paddled to the station, Tom Green of Barnes looking after him, while Burgoine performed office of pilot for Smith, betting ruling at six to four on Messenger. Mr W H Leverell of *Bell's Life in London* was the referee. Starting at 44 to his opponent's 40, the Teddington lad dashed away with the lead, and was well clear at the "Star and Garter", and keeping well in shore in the slack water ; while Smith had the force of the tide making down, had placed a clear length and a half between the boats at East's boat house, and on the top of the concrete wall three lengths, adding another off Craven. They rowed thus until making the shoot for the Soap Works, and when straight under the tail end of the Soap Works he was fully five lengths ahead. Smith came up a bit on sufferance at Hammersmith, but at the bridge, reached in 12 min 30 secs, there were five or six lengths between them. After the bridge, Smith fell to steering wildly, and losing considerable ground, was beaten eventually by six lengths in 33 min 55 secs, the tide having dropped quite a foot and a half at the finish. The attendance was very poor throughout, and the weather was anything but enjoyable.

102 December 29 1877

HAMMERSMITH

POLLUTING THE RIVER THAMES Three men named **Frank Sarkle**, **George Harris** and **Samuel King** were summoned for throwing a quantity of mud into a stream communicating with the river Thames. The defendants pleaded not guilty. **George John Rough**, the river keeper, said on the 5th inst, while making an inspection of the shores in Fulham, he saw dirty water flowing from a creek into the river. Five men were bailing dirty water with pails and scoops out of a barge. The defendants were three of the men ; the other two escaped. The men said they were throwing it out to form an embankment. In consequence of the wet weather the road scrapings brought up the river to be thrown on the banks were in a liquid state. The defendant King said they wanted all the stuff

on the bank to prevent the river flooding market garden grounds. Mr Bridge felt satisfied that the work was done improperly. He fined King 5s and 2s, and ordered the other defendants each to pay costs.

103 January 19 1878

GREENWICH

THE "POLICE ASSAULTING COMBINATION" (LIMITED?) **John Burgess**, 24, of Brewhouse Lane, Greenwich, waterman, who had been apprehended on a warrant, was charged with assaulting Police-constable Whitcomb, 193R. It appeared that about half past ten at night of Boxing Day last, the complainant and his brother, and four other constables, all in plain clothes and off duty, were at a public house in Church Street, Greenwich, when the prisoner and four other men entered, and were refused to be served by the landlord. A short time ago a man had been committed to four months' imprisonment for an assault on Whitcomb, and on the constables coming out and walking along, the prisoner shouldered Whitcomb and knocked him off the footway into the gutter, afterwards striking him in the face and kicking him in the side. The others with the prisoner joined in the attack and, on the other constables, who were following behind, going up to protect Whitcomb, were severally attacked by them, one of the constables losing his hat and walking stick. The result of the attack on Whitcomb was that he had to remain on the sick list of the force, and he still felt pain from the violence he received. Inspector Brown stated that the four men who were with the prisoner at the public house were roughs of the town. Mr Carttar, who was instructed in the case, asked for a remand in order to produce witnesses for the defence, and it was granted.

104 February 2 1878

HAMMERSMITH

BREAKING THE RIVER BYE LAWS **George Gadney**, the master of the steamtug "*John Blake*", was summoned for towing more than six vessels together at one time, contrary to the bye laws of the Conservators of the River Thames. The defendant pleaded guilty. **Mr Rough**, the river keeper, proved that the defendant towed seven barges. The defence was that it was a case of extreme emergency, the vessel requiring to be towed out of danger. Replying to the magistrate, the river keeper said he saw the defendant off Chiswick, going up on the flood tide. Mr Bridge said there was not any danger. The defendant replied that if the barge had been left behind there was a chance of it sinking. Mr Bridge, ascertaining that the defendant had been fined before, inflicted the full penalty of £5 with 2s costs, with the alternative of one month's imprisonment, in default of distress.

105 February 9 1878

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Carter held an inquiry at the "Cricketers" Tavern, Putney, touching the death of James Alexander Tester, 29 years of age, of Chatham Street, Old Kent Road. Mr Frederick Tester, a brother, identified deceased, and stated that he leaves a widow and four children. Mr Charles Hedford, a reporter living at Rotherhithe, stated that on Thursday afternoon last he acted as umpire and starter at a handicap boat race, to be rowed from Hammersmith to Putney. Deceased was one of five competitors, and had fifty seconds start. Witness rowed behind, and when a short distance from Craven Point, he saw deceased's boat strike a barge that was moored opposite. He rowed immediately to the spot, but could not see deceased. At that time three of the competitors were some distance ahead, and another was about twenty yards behind. The coroner said this was an important fact, as it thought it should be known that if anyone purposely fouled another at a boat race, and a fatality ensued, a charge of manslaughter would be sustained. **William Pearce**, the owner of the barge named, said he shouted to deceased when within twenty yards of the barge. Some persons were shouting on the towing-path. The deceased's boat struck the barge and went completely under it from stem to stern. Witness saw the boat when it came out from under the barge, but did not see deceased. The body was recovered about twenty minutes after. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

106 February 16 1878

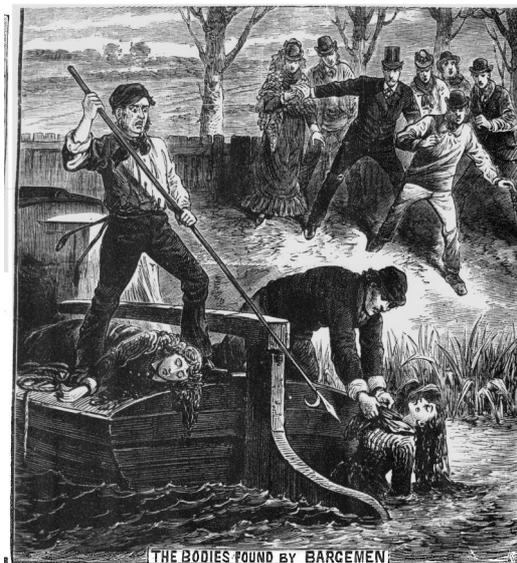
CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr John Humphreys held an inquest at the "Nag's Head", Cotton Street, Poplar, on the body of **Edward Seal**, aged 22 years, a labourer living at 158 Brunswick Road, Blackwall. Deceased, who was in the employ of the General Steam Navigation Company, left home for the purpose of taking a barge from the old dock into Messrs Collier's new dock, Milwall, but he never returned. The next morning his cap and hitcher were found near the barge, and shortly after the body of deceased. There was no evidence to show how he came into the water, but, the night being foggy, it is supposed he slipped off the barge. The jury returned a verdict of found drowned.

107 March 16 1878

ACCIDENT AT THE ROYAL ARSENAL On Saturday morning it was discovered that the barge "*Gabriel*", which arrived at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, on the previous day with fifty tons of lead for the bullet machines of the Royal Laboratory, had sunk during the night, and that the two men who were sleeping on board were in all probability drowned. In consequence of there being so many craft alongside the Arsenal Wharf, embarking and delivering stores, the bargemen made fast to the inner side of the T pier by a head rope ; but it seems that they neglected to provide against the danger of "under-sleighting", which the use of a stern rope might have averted. The men went on board at ten o'clock and, as they were not afterwards seen by the police, it is presumed that they went to bed. As the tide rose the nose of the barge got fixed under one of the iron beams of the pier and, being deep in the water, she was soon overwhelmed and sunk before the unfortunate men could cry for help. Their names were **James Sharpe**, about thirty years of age, a married man with five children, and **William Dyson**, a young fellow of eighteen. They were in the employ of **Mr Alfred Drew**, lighterman of Martin's Lane, London. On Sunday morning, efforts were commenced to raise the sunken barge, a large lighter being placed above it and attached by chains passed underneath. The submerged craft was thus lifted by the flood tide.

108 March 23 1878

SUSPICIOUS DEATH OF TWO GIRLS The death of two girls, whose bodies were recently found in the River Lea near Ware, Herefordshire, is (a correspondent states) exciting much interest in the town and neighbourhood. On Sunday evening, the 24th of February, a girl named Felicitas Squibbs, sixteen, lady's maid to Miss Bonsor of Great Cozens, Ware, and Ellen Maddox, twenty, living at her father's house, left their houses about half past six, ostensibly to go to church. As they did not return, handbills offering £10 reward for information respecting them were issued, and on Tuesday last the bodies of both girls were found in the river near Stanstead. An inquest was held before Mr Sworder, coroner for Herts. Mrs Susan Warner, cook in Mr Bonsor's family, was called and



questioned about a man said to have lately been a "follower" of Ellen Maddox. The woman,

however, becoming nervous under the cross-examination, obtained leave to go out of the room for a short time, but instead of returning, went away. Two witnesses stated that, as they were walking from church at Ware by the side of the river to Stanstead on the Sunday evening named, they passed two girls answering the description of the deceased, and they heard one say to the other, "I would not walk along here by myself for the world". The girls, it was stated, seemed anxious to keep up with company on the road, and were last seen by the river side near Stanstead. **William Lambert** and a man named **Royden**, bargemen, proved taking the bodies out of the water. They had no bonnets or hats on. Dr Butcher of Ware said he had examined the bodies, and so far as he could see there was no outward marks of violence. There were abrasions, but such as could be accounted for after death. He had only, in company with Dr Evans, made a superficial examination, but he should think they died from suffocation from drowning. Dr Evans said he concurred with Dr Butcher, but he would not undertake to say anything without a *post mortem* examination. Mr Hunt said that on the part of friends of the girl Squibbs he had to apply for an adjournment, as he thought Warner ought not to be permitted to walk off as she had done. The coroner said he could not see any good in adjourning the case. Mr Hunt said that a number of letters had been given up to the friends of the deceased, some of which showed that the girl had been "keeping company" with a man, an entire stranger to her friends, and that as an appointment had been made for a walk that night, the girl's friends thought that every facility should be given for a full inquiry, so as to ascertain in whose company the girls had last been. The coroner again said he saw no reason for an adjournment, the only result of which would be scandal upon various persons. After a long discussion, he ordered the room to be cleared. Five minutes afterwards the public were readmitted, and the coroner said that the jury had found a verdict that the two girls were found drowned in the river Lea, but how they got into the water there was no evidence to show. Great dissatisfaction is felt with the result of the inquiry.

109 April 20 1878

SHAMEFUL OUTRAGE BY CANAL BOATMEN At the Oxford County Police Court, two men named **George Griffin** and **Emanuel Dann** were charged on remand with committing a criminal assault on Emily Parsons, a tradesman's daughter, of Bullingdon, near Oxford. The girl, who is not fifteen years of age, was proceeding along the bank of the Oxford Canal, accompanied by her little brother, when the prisoners, who were on a barge, asked her if she would like to have a ride. They took her and her brother on the vessel, but when they had got a short distance the boy was put off onto the canal bank. The prisoners then forced the girl into the cabin of the barge, committing a shameful outrage on her. After taking her a distance of five miles they left her, and she did not find her way back till nearly midnight. Medical evidence went to show that the offence named in the charge had been committed. Both prisoners were now fully committed.

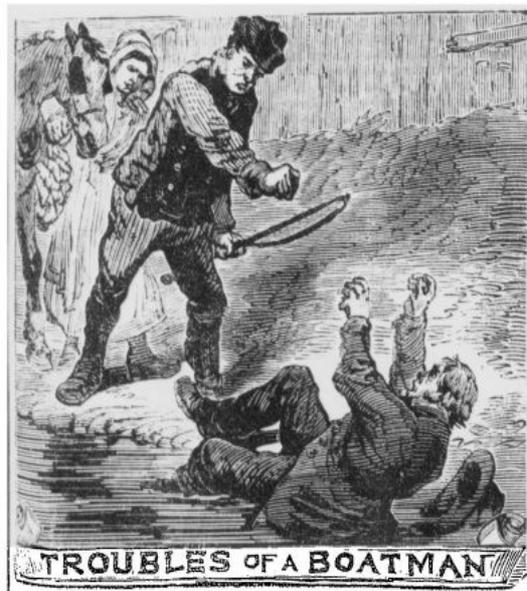
110 May 4 1878

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr John Humphreys held an inquest at the "Town of Ramsgate", High Street, Wapping, on the body of Catherine Dixon, aged 66. Deceased was an inmate of the Bethnal Green Workhouse, and was a laundrywoman. She left the house on Wednesday in perfect health, and was not traced again until **James Vickers**, a waterman, found her body floating on Thursday, close to Wapping Station. The body bore no indication of any violence having been offered her ; and as she had long given way to habits of intoxication, especially when she took a holiday, there was too much reason to suppose that she had walked into the water while drunk. A verdict of "Found drowned" was recorded in this case.

111 May 4 1878

TROUBLES OF A BOATMAN AT WEST STOCKWITH **George Hewitt**, a boatman, was summoned for assaulting Richard Graham at West Stockwith on March 29th. Mr Bescoby appeared for the defendant, who pleaded not guilty. Graham said that on Wednesday March 20th he was in his garden, which runs down to a footpath by the Trent bank. This was not a bridle road. Defendant

was coming along with a horse, and he (Graham) put up his hand to stop him, when Hewitt seized him by the collar, shook him, and pushed him into the Trent, previously threatening he would do it. There was about eight feet of water. When he had pushed him in, he passed on with his horse and began laughing at him. Cross-examined by Mr Bescoby : He did not get wet up to the neck. He clutched hold of a boat, or he might have gone under and been drowned. There is a dispute as to whether horses should use this path. It did not belong to him. He was empowered by the landlord to stop people. He had been a boatman himself. Mr Bescoby : Have you ever used it? That's no business of yours. Didn't you use it? I shall answer you when I think proper. The horse was drawing a boat, and the tide was running fast. When Hewitt pushed him in, he slipped down. He had brought no witness. Mr Bescoby contended the Bench had no jurisdiction because there was a dispute as to the right of way, and Hewitt was justified in pushing Graham aside. Mr Simpson : Into the Trent? If there is a dispute that is no reason why one man should push another into the Trent.



The objection was overruled. Mr Bescoby, for the defence, called **J Hewitt**, who said he was in charge of a boat he was working from Stockwith towards Hull. It was heavily laden with manure. The tide was strong, and a horse was required. There was no towing path ; it begins at Gainsborough, and the path in question was often used. He had seen it used on various occasions for the past twenty years. On the day in question Hewitt (the defendant, his cousin) was going along with the horse when Graham tried to stop him, and had he succeeded they would probably have lost the boat altogether. Graham stopped while the horse got up, and he placed himself between it and the Trent. Defendant pushed Graham aside and he slipped into the Trent. Gertrude Shaw was called and corroborated. She was about two yards off, and did not hear Hewitt say, "You old ---- I'll put you into the Trent". The Bench found the defendant guilty, and ordered him to pay 24s fine and costs. Defendant : Thank you, sir, and all for nothing.

112 May 18 1878

CORONERS' INQUESTS Dr Diplock held an inquest at the Fulham union on the body of **William Waldon**, 27 years of age, of Filian Road, Barnes. From the evidence it appeared that deceased was in the employ of Messrs Aird and Son, contractors. He was engaged with other men in drawing large wooden piles from a "coffer dam" in the Thames off Hammersmith, close to the West Middlesex water works. The piles were being drawn over a barge by a heavy chain passed over a "crab". The chain snapped and struck deceased on the head with such force as to cause almost instantaneous death. The deceased and other men had been cautioned to stand away from the chain while the piles were being drawn. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

113 May 25 1878

A LIGHTERMAN DROWNED Mr Humphreys held an inquest at the "Black Horse" tavern, High Street, Poplar, on the body of **John Potter**, aged 17, a lighterman's apprentice residing at 11 Burgess Street, Limehouse. On Saturday morning deceased was moving his barge from Blackwall when, it was stated, he fell overboard and was drowned in the Thames off Poplar. The inquiry was adjourned for the attendance of the men who saw deceased fall off the barge.

114 May 25 1878

GREENWICH

THE RIGHTS OF SUNDAY BOATING ON THE THAMES Inspector James Terry of the Thames Police Station, Wapping, appeared to a summons under the Thames Watermen's Company's Act, charging him with unlawfully carrying a fare across the river on Sunday, 14th ult. Mr Carttar attended for the defence. The complainant, **Richard Moore** of Derrick Street, Rotherhithe, said he was a waterman and holder of leases of several ferries on the Thames on Sundays, one of which was near St George's Stairs, Deptford. On Sunday morning, at seven o'clock, he was in his boat in midstream, having been there nearly two hours, and saw a person near Millwall Dock, to whom he called, asking him if he wanted to cross the river. He did not hear any answer, and he then saw the police boat go towards Millwall Dock, the person to whom he called being taken in that boat, which proceeded up the river. He rowed after the boat, and called out loudly, "Police", when the boat was stopped, two men rowing the boat in their waistcoat sleeves, the defendant being in his uniform and steering, and the person alluded to as a fare. He told defendant he was robbing him of his Sunday fare, when defendant denied doing anything of the kind, and the man, **Thomas Targett**, then entered his boat and was landed at Acorn Wharf, Rotherhithe. He saw no money paid to the defendant, and he complained that he had no means of knowing who the two men were who were rowing, as they had no coats on showing their numbers. On the way to Acorn Wharf, the man Targett said he had no money to pay the fare, 2d. Witness took out three bronze coins, and offered to lend him 2d to pay the fare. In answer to Mr Carttar, complainant said that he had married the sister of Targett, who had died, and therefore he did not think there was any relationship existing between them. He had frequently appeared at this and other police courts, and two years ago had been fined £5 in a case of Messrs Gabriel. Mr Carttar said that there was no taking of a fare by defendant, and that it was usual for police employed on the river to take persons from one side of the river to the other when no waterman was present, and this assistance was often rendered when persons with children had stayed for hours at night time and early hours in the morning, when watermen were not to be found. Thomas Targett of Charles Street, Deptford, said he was a lighterman, and on Saturday night he made Woolwich with a barge from Northfleet, and remained there till the turn of the tide at twenty three minutes after three the following day. Thence he went to Millwall Dock. After waiting an hour and a half the police boat came up, and Inspector Terry gave him "a cast" to the other side of the river. He had no money with him, as he had been four days from home, and he refused to take 2d complainant offered him as a loan to pay him his fare. The two constables who were rowing the boat were present, and it was shown that complainant knew they were police officers, and that the boat had a number on it. Mr Slade said his opinion was that the police, or any person with a boat, could give a lift to any other person, not taking money for so doing. In dismissing the summons, the complainant, if he thought his decision was wrong, could appeal against it.

115 August 3 1878

CORONERS' INQUESTS Dr Diplock held two inquests at the "De Burgh Arms", West Drayton, on the bodies of two men drowned in the Grand Junction Canal. The first case was that of **David Emerton**, 49 years of age, a bargeman. From the evidence of deceased's son, it appeared that he and his father were on a barge in the canal. The boat was loaded with hay, with a waterproof cloth on it. Deceased was sitting on the cloth and the son, who was steering, suddenly saw his father in the water. He at once jumped overboard and swam to his assistance, but was obliged to relinquish

his hold and call for assistance himself. The body of deceased was recovered ten minutes after. The jury, in returning a verdict of accidental death, said they were strongly of opinion that lifebuoys should be provided for barges as well as for vessels at sea. The second inquiry held by the coroner was on the body of William Baldwin, a bricklayer aged 58. It seemed from the evidence of a man named Christopher William Wyman that he was at work in a garden which adjoins the canal when he was informed that a man was in the water, and upon going to the spot he picked up the dead body of the deceased, which was in the shallow water near the towing-path. John Brown, police-constable 161X, said he saw the deceased on the canal bridge on Thursday night. Other evidence was given as to finding the deceased's hat in the grass near the towing-path. The Coroner said the testimony given did not show how deceased got into the water, and the jury returned an open verdict.

116 August 17 1878

THE FATAL COLLISION IN THE SWALE The barge "*Empress*" belonging to **Mr John Hudson** of Sittingbourne, which was lying at anchor in the East Swale on Friday week, with 40,000 bricks, and which suddenly sank at midnight, was raised on Saturday. The body of the mate, **James Hole**, aged 20, son of a brick sorter living at 1 Flood Lane, Faversham, was found in bed in the cabin, the door of which was fastened by a boat hook. It was removed to the "Elmley Ferry Inn", where the same night Mr W J Harris, coroner for the Sittingbourne district of Kent, opened an inquiry into the circumstances attending the death. The jury personally inspected the "*Empress*", which had only been afloat a year, and her condition shows, as at first surmised, that a collision was the cause of her sinking. Her whale is completely smashed in. The barge which ran into her, the name of which is at present unknown, went off without waiting to ascertain what damage was done or to see if any assistance was wanted. She does not appear to have been at fault so far as the collision is concerned, inasmuch as it was quite clear that the "*Empress*" was lying at anchor without having a light up, the lantern being found in the fore-castle. There was another barge moored to the "*Empress*" before the collision, and this had a light. The deceased probably thought that one light would do for both barges, but the "*Empress*" was lying slightly in front. The inquest was adjourned on sufficient evidence being taken to prove that the cause of the sinking of the "*Empress*" was a collision, pending inquiries as to the name of the barge which ran into her, and a further examination of the vessel.

117 September 7 1878

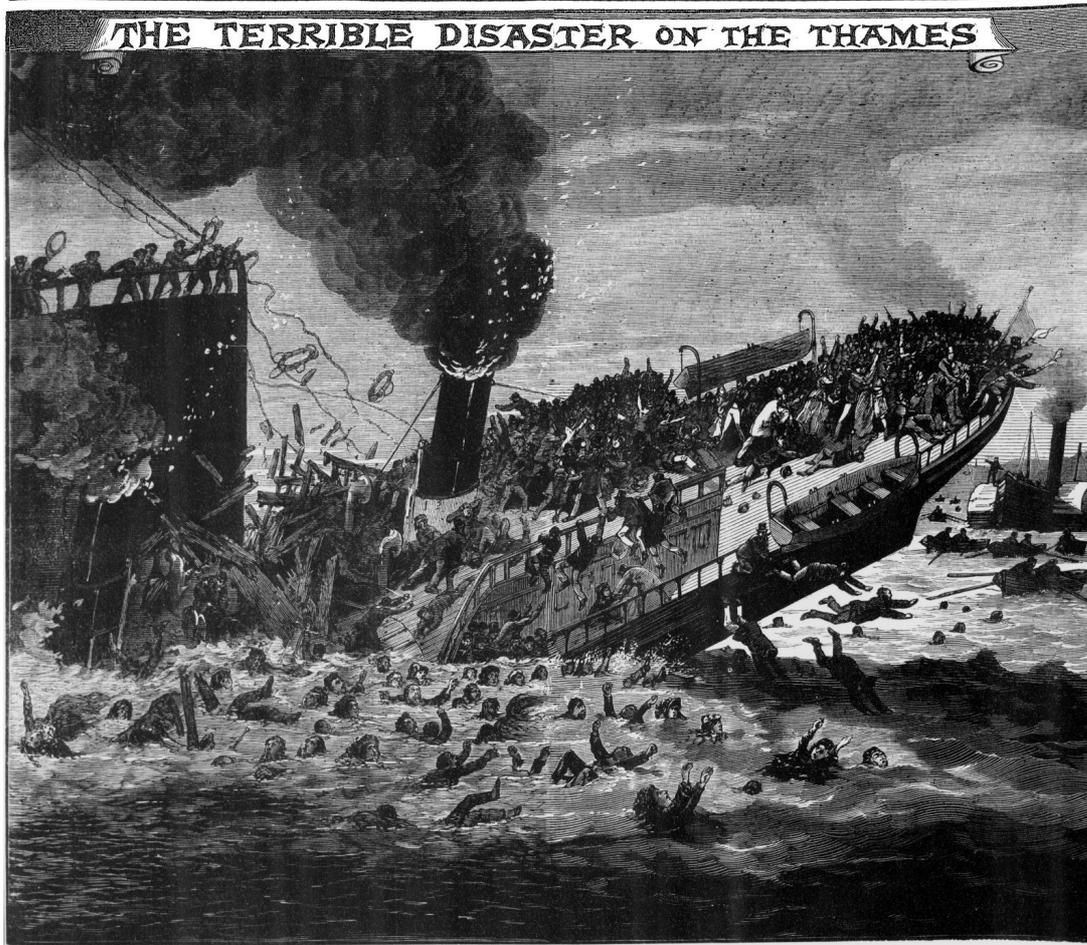
CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Minter, Borough Coroner, held an inquest at the Town Hall, Folkestone, on the body of Thomas James Thomas, one of the divers employed at the wreck of the "*Grosser Kurfurst*". Edward Young said he was a diver, and was employed with Thomas and another at the wreck of the German ironclad. Thomas went down to the vessel for the purpose of attaching a large anchor to a pontoon with which it was intended to raise it. He came up three times, and was down altogether about an hour and a half. On his rising the third time, he said the pontoon was all right, and that they could get the steam pump at work to inflate it. Directly his diving dress was taken off he became insensible, and was subsequently taken ashore, where he died shortly afterwards. Dr Eastes said he had made a *post mortem* examination of the body of Thomas, and had found the heart dilated and the kidneys diseased. There was extreme lividness of neck, head and chest, and there was a remarkably tarry state of the blood, like pitch, which was not firmly clotted anywhere. The vessels of the brain and its membranes contained too much of the dark blood. Inhaling air rendered impure by breathing it over and over again would make the system altogether weaker. On returning to the surface of the water, the pressure of the atmosphere was removed and the action of the heart was paralysed. In the majority of cases, the men gradually recovered. In this man's case exactly the same chain of events took place but, having a dilated heart, it was the more readily paralysed, and recovery was rendered less probable. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical testimony.

The deputy coroner for East Middlesex held an inquiry at Poplar relative to the death of **John Hawley**, aged 47, of Park Street, Poplar. Deceased had been a barge builder, but had fallen into indigent circumstances and, according to the evidence of a fellow lodger (an army pensioner), occupied one wretched room in which all his domestic duties were performed, besides his being scarcely able to find food. He had on many occasions complained of feeling stifled, and died before a doctor could be called in. Dr McAndrew, Three Colt Street, said on making a *post mortem* examination, he found the body to be in a very feeble state. The cause of death he attributed to inflammation of the lungs, accelerated by the impure atmosphere of the room in which he lived. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, drawing the attention of the Local Board to the state of the room.

Dr Hardwicke held an inquest at the Court House, Holloway Road, on the body of **Jemima Prior** aged 42, wife of a bargeman living at 18 Grosvenor Street. The husband stated that latterly he had been out of work, consequently he and deceased went short of food. He had never applied for parish relief, and did not think that the deceased was in such great danger. He hoped for better days. Ann Mead, a daughter of deceased by a former husband, said that three months ago her mother sent her to ask the relieving officer for relief. She saw a man, who afterwards visited them, but gave her mother nothing. A doctor then came, the result being the same. Mr Harle, a surgeon, said he was called to see the deceased, and found her dead. The *post mortem* showed that the bowels were quite empty. The cause of death was failure of the heart's action from the bloodless state of the system, caused by want of food, which must have been the case for three or four months. Had she been supplied with ordinary food she would have been alive at the present time. The coroner told the husband that he ought to have applied for relief. The jury returned the following verdict :- That the deceased expired from failure of the heart's action, caused through the bloodless state of the body, and that the husband was guilty of neglect in not sending her to hospital or workhouse, where she could have been fed and attended.

118 September 7 1878

ESCAPE OF A CONVICT FROM CHATHAM GAOL Some further particulars are published regarding the escape from St Mary's Convict Establishment at Chatham during Sunday night of Charles Skinner, a convict undergoing fourteen years penal servitude for burglary. The prisoner was seen safe in his cell at half past ten on Sunday night, but on the warder going at seven o'clock on Monday morning to let the man out to work on the dockyard extension works, it was seen that he had gone. It was then found that he had made his escape from the cell by taking up one of the large stones with which it is paved, and afterwards by the removal of some bricks, getting into the large flue which ventilates the building. He crawled along this, and on coming to the iron bars through which the air passes, tried to remove them. He, however, failed in doing this, but took out some bricks in the wall, and thus got into the corridor of the building. Thence he walked into the prison yard, tore down a large piece of gas pipe from the building and, having made a hook at one end, attached it to the outer wall of the prison and climbed up, no doubt his previous occupation, that of a sailor, rendering this a more easy task than it would have been to other men. On dropping on the outside of the prison wall, it is supposed that he proceeded direct to the terrace occupied by the prison officers, as during the night a burglary was committed at the residence of Mr Goodfellow, engineer at the prison, and a black frock coat, a tall black hat, a pair of opera glasses and a pocket handkerchief were taken away, as well as a table knife and a hammer. Skinner must then have proceeded to Gillingham, where he broke into the captain's cabin on a barge lying alongside one of the wharves, from which he took a dark pair of trousers, a pair of socks, a pair of side sprung boots and 8s in money, leaving his own socks behind. Here all trace is lost of the man. The usual reward of £3 has been offered for his recovery. Although there were night watchmen both inside and outside the building, they did not hear any noise during the night. The darkness of the night no doubt assisted his escape.



TERRIBLE ACCIDENT ON THE THAMES One of the most fearful disasters of modern times occurred on Tuesday evening last week, on the River Thames at Woolwich. The "*Princess Alice*", one of the largest saloon steamers of the London Steamboat Company, with 600 or 700 souls on board, left London about eleven o'clock on Tuesday morning for Gravesend and Sheerness, many excursionists being induced by the fine weather to go on board for a holiday trip. The vessel left Gravesend on the return journey soon after six o'clock in the evening, and arrived within sight of the Arsenal, Woolwich, at about eight. A large screw steamer, the "*Bywell Castle*", was then approaching on the opposite course. The two steamers were near the middle of the stream, just off the well known City of London Gasworks at Beckton, and just below North Woolwich Gardens ; almost the precise spot, in fact, where the fatal collision occurred between the "*Metis*" and the "*Wentworth*" some ten years ago. The screw ship struck the "*Princess Alice*" on the port side near the fore sponson. A scene which has no parallel on the river ensued. A few – very few – clambered on to the other vessel ; nearly all rushed to the after part of the steamer as the bow subsided gradually under water. The shrieks were fearful, and nothing could be done to save life. There were a dozen or more lifebuoys on board, and some boats were swinging in the davits ; but, even if they could have been got at, what would they have been among so many? The "*Princess Alice*" sank deeper and deeper, and within five minutes of the fatal blow she heeled completely over and went down in deep water. Some small boats which happened to be near hastened to the dreadful scene, and the "*Duke of Teck*", another steamer belonging to the same company, which was also on her passage up with a party of excursionists, went to the rescue, but the river for a hundred yards was full of drowning people screaming in anguish and praying for help.

The dead were soon afterwards brought in – men, women and little children. The boardroom of the steamboat company on Roff's Wharf was turned into a temporary mortuary, and the gas was lighted in the Town Hall to receive any bodies that might be recovered. The floor of the scanty boardroom was almost covered with the bodies as they lie where they were put down for shells, and stretchers

were bringing them up from the "*Duke of Teck*" and the small boats. All the police of the town and Arsenal helped in the work, laying the corpses in order and putting labels on their breasts, and doing all the little that there is to be done when all are impatient to do much. Outside the boardroom window is a balcony, upon which lay as in repose the bodies of three or four little children – mere babies. The engineer was saved, but the captain, **William Grinstead**, and all, or nearly all, the remainder of his crew were among the lost in the dark river.

The vessel which ran into the "*Princess Alice*" was in charge of a pilot named **Dicks**. Captain Grinstead was not seen after the accident, but he was observed at his post shortly before the collision. A large proportion of the passengers were on the upper or saloon deck, and must have seen beforehand their impending doom ; but those in the stern of the vessel had no warning until they heard the crash and found the fore passengers running aft.

The "*Princess Alice*" was a paddle steamer belonging to the London Steamboat Company (Limited) of Bennett's Hill, Doctors' Commons, London. Her official number was 52614. She was built of iron, and was of 158 tons net tonnage and 251 gross tonnage. Her length was 219 ft 4 in ; her breadth 20 ft 2 in ; her depth 8 ft 4 in. Her engines were by Caird and Co of Greenock. They were of 140 horse power. The vessel was built by Messrs Caird of Greenock in 1865, and belonged to the port of London. She passed, with the rest of the fleet, into the possession of the London Steamboat Company, when this undertaking, of which the chairman is Captain Pelly RN, and the principal promoter was Mr John Orrell Lever, absorbed the minor associations for the river passenger traffic.

The "*Bywell Castle*" is an iron screw steamer, having the official number 63546. She is known by the signal letters J K P W. Her registered tonnage is 892 tons net ; 1168 tons under the deck. Her length is 250 ft 8 in ; her breadth 39 ft 10 in ; her depth 10 ft 6 in. She has compound inverted engines with two cylinders, diameter 27 in, and length of stroke 54-8 in. They are of 120 horse power, and by Palmer's Company, Newcastle. She was built by Palmer, Newcastle, in the year 1870. Her owners are Hall Brothers of London.

A Woolwich correspondent writes :- Many stories of a most heart rending nature lend a sorrowful interest to this catastrophe. The first voice I heard on entering the yard on my way to the landing stage at Woolwich was that of a middle aged man exclaiming, in reply to the entreaties of his friends to be calm, "I have lost three dear little children". Another man supported two of his children by the hair of the head till he was obliged to let them go. One little boy, when brought ashore, said, "I am all right, and I could find my way home if I had any money, but I don't know where to find father or mother". They went on board with him, but there were no tidings of them among the saved. But there is also another side to the picture. One man, who had lost his wife and four children, left Woolwich by the last train, though bodies were being constantly brought ashore. Bodies have been put ashore along the banks on each side, and it is therefore impossible for some time to get at any accurate amount of the number picked up. It is hoped that many now missing will be accounted for as saved in a similar way. The river is being dragged, and bodies brought ashore at Woolwich are placed in the company's offices. As they are laid down for a moment at the door to be lifted from the stretcher, anxious ones crowd around, and if the form be recognised – for the face is covered – the name is passed round from mouth to mouth.

NARRATIVES OF SURVIVORS The following is the statement of one of the survivors, James Lynn, who did not give his address, but who was apparently about twenty years of age. He said :- I was a passenger on board the "*Princess Alice*", which went down on Tuesday night. I was in company with my mother and my aunt, and we were returning from Sheerness. Until just before we reached the Royal Arsenal Powder Magazine, which is opposite the Beckton Gasworks, everything had gone smoothly. Just before we arrived at the point we passed a screw bark, and all was right. In about two minutes more we discovered that a huge screw steamer was bearing down upon us. There was then a general cry to get out of the way of the boat, and the captain and the crew called out to those on board the other vessel to stop. In another moment the crash came. They came right into us, striking us just beside the paddle box, and nearly cut the vessel in halves. I then attempted to find my mother and aunt, not thinking the damage was so much as it really was, but I soon found

all was over with us. Attempting to save myself, therefore, I caught hold of the chains of the other vessel, but was knocked off in the great crush. I, however, again attempted, and this time managed, to climb up the side of the paddle box of the boat, and caught hold of the rail. No sooner had I done this, however, than she went down. I cannot swim very much, but I had the presence of mind to strike out a little, and thereby kept myself up until I got hold of a form and floated down the stream towards the screw. I then called out for a rope, which was held out to me after I had been in the water some three or four minutes. I was then conveyed to a cottage, where I was treated very kindly. The screw pulled up immediately after striking the "*Princess Alice*", but did not lower a boat for fully ten minutes after the accident. I should think that there were something like 700 people on board.

Mr Childs makes the following statement :- I live at 14 Sovereign Mews, Edgware Road. We were coming back from Gravesend – my wife, three children, my brother and his young lady. When we had just passed the powder magazine there was a fearful acclamation throughout the boat of, "Look, that ship is down upon us!" I had my boy in my arms at the time, and rushed forwards to see what was the matter, and suddenly the crash came, and our boat was very nearly cut in halves near the paddle box. It rapidly filled with water, and went down stern foremost. She went down in about two minutes after the vessel struck. There were so many climbing up the side of the barque that some were thrown off into the water. I had climbed up on the bridge of the sinking vessel with my boy in my arms all the time ; but somebody fell off the ropes and dashed him into the water, and he was drowned – at least, I suppose so, for I cannot find him. I then threw off my coat and jumped into the water. I swam towards the shore, when I was picked up by a boat. God knows there were few enough of them. I was taken to the gasworks, and was well looked after. The shouting and screaming at the moment when the ship was struck was something fearful. I was in the water only a few seconds after the disaster. I did not see any boats lowered from the barque, although there might have been. We were on the upper deck of the saloon. My wife and child, seven weeks old, were saved and are now lying in the Plumstead and Woolwich Infirmary. The boat was crowded, there being, I should think, about 600 on board. I do not see how my wife could possibly have been saved, although they tell me she is. I don't see how anyone who could not swim could possibly be saved. I have seen twenty bodies, but none of them are my relatives.

Henry Totman makes the following statement :- I was a passenger by the "*Princess Alice*" steamer, which left Sheerness at a quarter to four. I should think that there were six or seven hundred passengers on board. Everything went well until we left Gravesend – in fact, until we were just off Barking. I was standing abaft the paddle box, and all I know of the matter is that I heard the captain from the bridge shout out, "Hi, hi, where are you coming to?" He had no sooner done this than the vessel cut us amidships. The captain gave the order to stop the engines when he saw the ship coming, and I believe he stopped as soon as he possibly could, when the big ship struck us with a sort of gentle crash. In five minutes there was not a particle left of our boat beyond a few pieces floating in the water. I owe my life to catching hold of a lifebuoy that was thrown from the "*Bywell Castle*". I do not think they launched their boats for five minutes. When I was picked up I saw a lot of people clinging to the ropes, and they took some of them in. When the boat began to sink, the after part went down first, and I ran forward until she went away from under my feet. When I heard the captain call out I looked round, and I saw the collier's red light quite plainly, but I really do not know whether we had our lights burning, as I had taken no notice. When she sank I followed the screw. The steam came up, and I thought the boilers would have burst. I cannot describe the scene that ensued, as it was too awful to think of.

The following is the statement of the second steward :- My name is William Alexander Law, and I live at 37 Wansey Street, Walworth Road. I was second steward on board the "*Princess Alice*". We left Gravesend at about six o'clock. At the time of the collision I was in the saloon, and there were about fifteen people there. The time, I should say, was about a quarter to eight pm, when I heard a crash. It was not very heavy the first time, and I said to the stewardess, "There's a barge alongside", when immediately there was another crash. I ran upon deck, and amid the confusion and screams of the passengers I heard the water rushing in below, and saw we were sinking. I then rushed to the

top of the saloon gangway, and shouted, "Come on deck ; we are sinking". The scene on board I shall never forget. I ran to a young lady with whom I was keeping company and took her on my shoulder, being a good swimmer, but as I was going my poor girl slipped off my shoulders, or was dragged off, and I lost her, although I dived for her. I saw a gentleman (Mr Talbot of Forest Hill) who was sinking, and I caught hold of him and held him up till we were picked up. We saw hundreds in the water drowning, but could not help them. He thinks there were about 700 on board. One young woman, now at the workhouse, says that her baby was washed out of her arms, and that she has lost her husband and three little ones. One man reached the north shore with a lifebuoy round him. He states that he jumped overboard, after telling his wife to throw the children and jump after him ; but he lost them all. At the Beckton Gas Works, Mr Trueby and Mr Bush, the manager and assistant manager, provided warm clothing and nourishment for the survivors and, like the helpers in the town of Woolwich, did all that in them lay to restore animation to the lifeless bodies, all of which had been too long immersed to give hope of restoration. Some of the living were, however, in such a prostrate condition that but for the help they received they must have been added to the list of the dead.

Benjamin Smith of 37 Market Street, Edgware Road, one of the survivors in the infirmary, states that the first he knew of the accident was hearing someone shout, "Good God, there is a ship down on us!" and, on looking up, he saw a huge vessel strike them under the paddlewheel. The lights of the "*Princess Alice*" were burning brightly, and he had noticed them being lighted about twenty minutes earlier. When the collision took place, one man held out his arms and said they need not be alarmed. The speaker, however, mounted the side of the saloon by a rope, so as to take him a little higher and within reach of the ladder at the side of the ship that had struck them. There were, however, five or six hanging to it, and it gave way bodily. He was thrown into the water and struck by the side of the saloon. At this time he could hear the windows cracking. As he came up out of the wreckage he was struck over the bridge of the nose (the gentleman was bandaged on the face). He thought the vessel went down within two minutes of being struck.

Mr Fred Love, another patient, said :- Directly before the collision a steamer passed quite close to us, but did not touch us, and directly after that had gone, we saw the other coming on. At that time, it seemed to be in a direct line with the one which had just passed. When I looked again, it seemed to be coming in our direction and would, perhaps, then be at a distance of 200 yards from us. There was a deal of shouting and much confusion, but in an instant the collision occurred. I am a good swimmer and was in the water about twenty minutes before I was picked up. Several of those in the water caught hold of me, but I had to strike out for myself. I was at a disadvantage, as I jumped away from the boat and got carried away by the stream. I was picked up by a small boat and taken on to a barge, where I was treated with the greatest kindness during the night, being brought on here this morning. I lost my adopted mother, Mrs Laws, in the accident. I think that whole families must have been drowned in the saloon, because numbers had gone inside, complaining of it being a chilly evening. When the collision occurred the struggle upon the paddle boxes was something awful, each one endeavouring to save himself.

The brothers Wiele are intelligent young men, and their descriptions are clear, though they do not throw much light on the unhappy event. The younger, Claude Hamilton Wiele, says :- I am a clerk in London, and was returning with my brother after a three days' holiday at Sheerness. I was standing on the lower part of the after gangway at the time of the accident, having left my brother somewhere on the top of the saloon deck. We had come up slowly against tide from Gravesend, which we left at six o'clock. All the crew were sober, and everything appeared to be in good order. The "*Princess Alice*" was fully loaded, and the fore part especially was crowded. I estimated the number on board at 700 – quite that number ; the saloons and cabins were full. I did not witness the collision, nor did I see the ship which struck us until I was in the water. Our vessel seemed to be almost cut in two, and in a few minutes she seemed to double up in the middle and sink in deep water. The people rolled down the decks towards the opening. It was so steep they could not stand. I did not wait for her to sink, and after giving a peculiar whistle which my brother might recognise, I jumped into the water. Presently I found my brother swimming about ; we are both good

swimmers, and we made for the screw steamer. The water was full of people, especially about the hull of the screw, and we had great difficulty in avoiding them. A woman clutched me, but I got away, and I saw her go down like a stone. The "*Princess Alice*" sank as I leapt off, and I was one of the last left on board, working my way to the stern before I jumped. I took off my boots, coat and waistcoat, and reached her in my trousers and shirt only. My brother is twenty one years of age, and I am twenty. Herbert Augustus Wiele, brother of the former deponent, says :- I was on the saloon deck aft, but looking ahead. I heard a shouting, when I saw the huge hull of a steamer coming upon us, towering high above our saloon. She struck us amidships on the right hand side, and then we seemed to lie still for a minute. I ran down the companion ladder and got to the extreme after part of the boat, and I took off my boots ready for a dive. The passengers were frantic, and I tried to pacify some of them, for I did not think we should sink, and I think the people got a little quieter, but in three or four minutes our vessel parted in the middle, and she seemed to double up. The part where I was rose so high in the air that I was almost afraid to dive. I shut my eyes and plunged in, taking a long dive to get clear of the people in the water. I had seen them sliding down the decks before I leaped. Our vessel seemed near the north shore just before the accident, and we were not steaming at all, for the captain had stopped to avoid another vessel which had just shaved us, and before we could go ahead this other one came upon us. The captain and officers shouted, "Where are you coming to?" and she drove into our side. When I came up after diving, the "*Princess Alice*" was not to be seen, but I wiped the water from out of my eyes, and saw my brother. We swam together to the screw ship, and got hold of a rope which someone threw over to us. The screw had stopped, and did what it could to save life, but it did not lower any boats. I saw four or five men on board, and they said they had no boats. The money taker of the "*Alice*" climbed up the chain of the funnel when the accident took place, and got on board the screw as she came flashing in, and I also saw one of the stewards catch hold of the anchor chain.

Charles Handley, the captain of the "*Chance*" barge belonging to **Messrs Fuller**, and residing in the Cliftonville Road, Gravesend, states :- About a quarter to eight I was with my barge at Beckton, when I heard dreadful screaming, the blowing of whistles, and cries for help, and on looking down the river I saw that a collision had occurred. There was a regular tearing crash. Instantly I took my boat and my mate, **William Robinson**, and rowed to the spot. Ours was about the first boat there. I shall never forget the sight I saw. The whole river seemed alive with heads and hair. It looked like a river full of coconuts. Some people were holding on to forms, others to chairs and pieces of wood. A stout gentleman came close to me, and I grabbed at him at once, but he was so heavy that he nearly pulled us over. He was like a madman, and could not be quiet. I ordered him to sit down in the boat, but he would not, and my mate and I had to push him down. Then another gentleman cried out, "Twenty pounds to save my life!" The promise of money did not influence me, but I seized hold of him, but he was so heavy. We tugged and tugged away, and at last we got him in, and whilst we were doing this four little boys floated by us, and their beseeching looks were something dreadful. We saved them, thank God. Then a young lady, whom I at once recognised as Miss Towse, the daughter of the superintendent of the Steamboat Company, came close by, and she seemed to know me. I seized her, and drew her in too. Our boat was now pretty full, and we found we could not take in any more ; and as we turned we saw the bodies of two women, but of course we did not know they were quite dead. My mate and I were nearly paralysed with the efforts we had made, but we did not like to see the bodies go by us. We got them in with great difficulty, as their dresses held so much water. There were nice gold watches and chains on the bodies, but they were so heavy. The young lady was holding on to the form, and was turning over and over when I caught her. Oh, how I wished I had a bigger boat, as I could have saved so many! When we got the bodies in, I placed my ear to their mouths, but I could not hear them breathe and it seemed that all was over. Still, as I have before said, we did not like to pitch them over again, so we brought the live and the dead in together. When we got to the "*Duke of Teck*" steamer, the living people were taken on board, and then we hitched our boat, with the two corpses in it, to the stern, and so we proceeded to Woolwich pier. When we got to the pier, the boat was full of water, and it was with difficulty we saved her from sinking. So loud were the screams and cries for help that we could not

hear ourselves speak. The rush of steam and fire, too, was something terrible. In a few minutes all was over, and I could not see the funnel of the "*Princess Alice*". It was a crash, and no mistake. A correspondent writes :- I was witness to a terrible sight. Between the sunken steamer and the shore we were hailed by two boatmen, one of whom was holding on to a submerged pole, while the other was sitting on the opposite gunwhale to balance the boat. Speedily two other skiffs engaged in a similar errand made for the spot. I surmised, too readily, the task which awaited us. Before we could get alongside, the work of raising a human body to the surface of the water had been accomplished. Carefully and tenderly, these Thames boatmen dealt with the dreadful burden. No attempt was made to raise it until four of them had placed their long poles with small hooks under different parts of the body. Gently, and with difficulty, it at length came to the surface, and then, I am happy to tell, reverent hands laid hold of it. They knew it was a woman, they told me, before they brought it above water. It was not a time to ask questions. The body was that of a lady apparently about thirty years of age. She was dressed in black silk, with a white fichu tied in front, and a dark felt hat and feathers. Her watch chain hung to her waist, and doubtless her watch would have told the time of the disaster. Her right hand was ungloved, and brilliant rings were upon her fingers. The face had been beautiful in life, and was placid and without a wound in death. If ever lifeless human form was lifted tenderly by rough looking Thames watermen, surely this was. There was no cloth ready to cover the features ; but the half closed lids were gently brought down over the sightless orbs, and an old flag was spread over the fair face. It was like these men, too, to cover the feet of the hapless one, the tidings of whose fate have, perhaps, yet to be borne to her agonised home. This was the last body which the steamer "*Heron*" received on board before she carried her lifeless freight of sixteen bodies to the Woolwich mortuary. Swiftly she steams up the river, and leaves us to meditate on what we have seen.

Another thus describes his visit to the Woolwich Town Hall :- The most unimaginative of mankind could not have looked upon a single corpse, placed upon the straw with which the floor was covered, without acknowledging that the spectacle before him was a hideous reality of death in its most repulsive form. Placid and peaceful in expression, the faces of the dead were almost aglow with a sickening ruddy colour indicative of death from asphyxia, and approaching decomposition. The extremities, the hands, and other parts of the body, where exposed, were pale and colourless as wax, and the contrast between the coppery hue of the swollen features and the pallid ashen tint of the limbs was as horrid as it was painful to the beholder. There were twenty eight men and four women of whom, at three o'clock in the afternoon, only six had been identified. All were lying peacefully and calmly on the floor, but in every case the hands, clenched, raised and distorted, too plainly indicated the violent death they had suffered. One had the left hand below his hips, but the fist tightly clenched, while the right was raised a foot high, as if trying to grasp something at the moment of death. An unfortunate woman, aged about fifty, presented a sickening spectacle. The face swollen, the blood slowly oozing from the clammy nostrils, the hands upraised as if imploring assistance, all were horribly suggestive of the unnatural death which had overtaken the poor creature. Leaving the Town Hall, with its crowd still surging about the doors, noisy and clamorous as before, I with difficulty regain the fly awaiting me and drive to the office of the steamboat company at the pier gate. Here are nineteen bodies, ten in the room itself and nine out on the verandah looking upon the river from which they have so lately been taken. It is indeed a piteous sight. Here, too, the most agonising sight I witnessed took place, the recognition of a baby a few months old by its mother – a spectacle I never witnessed before, and certainly never wish to see again. Of the nineteen bodies here, fifteen have been identified. In the rather small space of the boardroom lie ten corpses ; over eight of them is stretched the friendly covering of a white blanket, denoting the fact that they have been identified. They are in striking contrast to those in the Town Hall. They lie so naturally and seem in their attitude so little distorted, their faces, too, being less muddy than those I before saw, that they appear, notwithstanding the unmistakeable signs of violent death, much less repulsive in aspect than any I have yet come across. Stepping out on to the verandah I for once fall back, feeling for a moment more than overcome. Before me lies a girl of tender years, neatly dressed, evidently for the pleasure excursion which was no doubt so happily

anticipated and so joyously looked forward to, and by her side are ranged four little babies, tiny morsels of humanity with wax like features, wan in death, and the inane and sickening smile of the dead permanently fixed upon their features. A pitiful sight, as they lie by the side of the hapless young maiden, their faces upturned to the blue sunny sky their glazed eyes shall never again behold. Almost overcome, I turn half round, and a sight scarcely less affecting meets my eye. There lies a fine hale old man, the steward of the steamer "*Princess Alice*", a man known by all the Woolwich people and everywhere respected. A faithful servant of the company who engaged him. He died at his post, a brave old fellow. He seems so peaceful and still, his face so little altered, his features so little distorted, that one can scarcely realise the fact that he is really and truly dead. Close by him is a young woman of about two and three and twenty, "bravely" appalled as if for a holiday, her dress bedraggled, her features swollen, and her complexion horrid. The blood, too, begins slowly to trickle from the nostrils and, sickened, I am forced to turn aside. Standing a little back, I watch the entry of those coming to "seek their dead".

PERSONS SAVED The following are to be added to the list of saved :-

Mr Milsom, assistant to Mr Cockerell, 109 Hammersmith Road. Mr Leaver sen and Edward Leaver, jun, 20 High Street, Church Street, Lambeth. Mr Philip Hilson, 46 Wandsworth Road, Vauxhall Cross. Mr George Childs, 14 Sovereign Mews, Edgware Road, London. His wife is lost. Mr John Broadribb. William Herbert Bell, age 10 years, orphan of William Edward Bell of Beverley House, East Barnet, who was lost with two other sons in the wreck. This child was found at Barking. Mr Samuel Roberts, 33 Auckland Road, Roman Road, Old Ford. Mr Edward Warren, 6 Calthorpe Street, Grays Inn Road ; this gentleman broke the window of the saloon, jumped through, pulled his wife after him, climbed the ropes and was taken on the "*Bywell Castle*", whence he was transferred to the "*Duke of Teck*". Mr Marshall of Strickland Street, Newtown, Deptford, was on board the "*Princess Alice*" when she was struck, and swam with his wife some distance, but becoming exhausted they parted, and with great difficulty he reached the shore, but his wife was drowned. After in some measure recovering his strength, he again plunged into the water, and was successful in rescuing two children. The address of Mr Hardy, mentioned in a previous list, is 71 Montpelier Road, Peckham. Mr Herbert of 60 Stockwell Park Road, whose name was returned among the missing to the Woolwich Police was, as we are glad to learn from Mr T H Russel, not a return passenger by the "*Princess Alice*". Charles Acourt, Lewes. John Wilson, Cross Street, York Road, Lambeth, William Sharp, Lewes. Herbert and Alexander Kelly of 141 Queen's Road, Dalston. H E De Weell, 12 St Mary Axe. G T Miles, hairdresser, 118 New Bond Street. G W Liniward, 65 Eaton Street, Peckham Rye. H F White, Staines. William Woollam, West Ham. Elizabeth Maria Randall, governess, Queen's College, Tuffnell Park. Mabel Lizzie Ogbourne of 4 Dockhead, Bermondsey.

THE HARVEST OF THE DEAD Woolwich, Saturday, noon.

The recovery and identification of bodies is being continued this morning. Coming down by the early morning train, many were the anxious inquiries heard of lamenting fathers, mothers and relatives of the lost. They all wend their way to those chambers of the dead in the Dockyard. The gates of the Dockyard were not opened until ten o'clock, and the consequence was that outside were collected hundreds of people, whose countenances spoke plainly of the awful weight that was bearing them down. I had just been into the sheds where the dead are lying, and on coming out was eagerly asked by many voices, trembling with emotion, whether any bodies had been recorded. I had previously ascertained the fact that about fourteen corpses had been taken to the Dockyard during the early morning. Some were brought in by the steamer "*Heron*" and others by small boats. This morning after ten o'clock, several of the bodies in the Dockyard, which have not been identified, will be buried by the parish authorities. This has become necessary in the interest of health, as many of them are in a decomposed state. Their features are frightfully distorted ; but before the interment they will all be photographed and their general description kept, so that future identifications may be possible. From further inquiries, I find 15 bodies have been recovered this morning. Only one corpse will be buried today. It is that of a woman who was one of the first picked up on the night of the collision. The body is in such a state that it cannot be kept longer.

There are now 31 bodies at the Dockyard not identified, 27 of which are women, the other four being men. This state of things can hardly be believed, seeing that the descriptions have been widely published. The unidentified bodies have been brought in from Rainham and Barking, and placed in the sheds at the Dockyard. The description of one of the bodies found this morning is as follows :- Lady, about 5 ft 6 in in height, and 30 years of age, dark ; brown hair ; dark stuff dress with thick cord in front ; dark stockings, with red rings ; black gloves ; rings on each hand, locket around neck, having the initials "AEI" ; watch and chain.

It is scarcely necessary to state that the banks of the Thames were crowded throughout on Sunday by spectators. The numbers were enormous. Doubtless the vast majority were actuated by curiosity simply, but there were also very many inquiring for missing relatives and friends. Many had remained all through the night watching the operations in anxious expectancy. From eight o'clock on Sunday morning until late at night an increasing stream of people poured through the roads from Woolwich to the river's bank opposite Beckton Gas Works, where the fore part of the wreck lies high and dry, and the paddles of the other portion are just visible at low water. The police computed the number of sightseers at 100,000 ; but any estimate must be a mere guess. The scene was one the like of which has probably never been witnessed on the Thames. Not only was every available position of frontage from which a view could be obtained of the place of the disaster occupied, but in most cases the ranks were three and four deep, and though the individual spectators changed from moment to moment, the total was constant. The concourse was maintained from hour to hour, only thinned when fading daylight and departing trains made it impossible to distinguish the objects or prolong the stay. What shows how powerfully this awful calamity has possessed the public mind is that there was really very little in the nature of a spectacle to be observed. The doings at the wreck were necessarily slow and tedious, and for hour after hour uneventful, and the only sight that could have any possible attraction was the crowd of sightseers itself, and the sad and repulsive sight of recovered corpses, on which we have forbore to dwell.

Between eleven o'clock on Saturday night and eleven o'clock on Sunday morning, seventy eight additional bodies were recovered. At two o'clock, the total number recovered since the occurrence of the terrible disaster amounted to 426, and up to that night they had reached 500. This does not include the bodies known to be in the aft cabin, and it is becoming pretty certain that the full account of lives sacrificed will exceed 700. The resources of the Royal Dockyard have been severely tested, as boatload after boatload of the dead came alongside. At noon, another mortuary had to be provided. Fifty additional soldiers were drafted down from the barracks, and twenty of the Army Service Corps from the Herbert Hospital. The latter were employed all the afternoon in preparing the bodies of the men for interment, twelve women from the Woolwich Union Workhouse being engaged all day in performing the same service for the women and children.

WAITING IDENTIFICATION The following bodies were brought into the identification shed late on Sunday night :-

Supposed to be Gertrude Penney, age 21, length 5 ft 2 in, hair black, crimson dress kilted, brown bone buttons on dress, crossover, grey stockings, Oxonian laced boots, common brooch, two 2 anna pieces.

A girl aged 15, hair light brown, matelasse costume, high buttoned boots, grey stockings, well dressed, on person a book snapped locket, portrait of a little boy inside.

A man aged 22, length 5 ft 7 in, hair dark brown ; dress, grey mixture suit ; on person, a purse containing 1s 0 1/2d, bunch of keys, a corkscrew knife and silver watch, stopped at a quarter to eight.

A girl aged 14, hair dark ; dress, grey wool, pearl buttons down front.

A boy aged 14, hair light ; blue serge suit, shepherd's scarf, white stockings, side spring boots.

A woman aged 35 ; length 5 ft 2 in ; hair dark brown, turning grey. Dress : blue serge skirt, satin cloth jacket, broad braid down front, white stockings, blue striped button boots, black straw bonnet, black feathers. On person : a brooch, wedding ring and keeper, two earrings, globe pendant.

A woman aged 38. Dress : Black silk dress and jacket. On person : A gold watch, long gold chain, half sovereign and gold dollar attached ; pair of gold earrings, fringe pattern, three gold rings – one

with blue set round with pearls, another with red stone and two pearls.

A woman aged 60, length 5 ft 4 in, hair black, turning grey ; dress maroon serge, black buttons, long black jacket ; on person, a receipt from a photographer, The Grove, Stratford, "Received of Mrs Ledger the sum of 6s for twelve cards de visite, No 6547".

A youth, 17, hair sandy ; no coat ; grey mixture vest and trousers ; sidespring boots (old) ; blue, red and white collar shirt. Found by Richard Cannon, Blackwall.

A woman aged 40 ; length 5 ft 5 in ; hair light brown ; dress, black grenardine, two kilts, flounce ; blackberage jacket, black buttons ; white stockings ; leather buckle garters ; sidespring boots ; on person, a wedding ring. Found by Cannon of Blackwall.

A woman aged 30 ; length 5 ft 5 in ; hair auburn ; Russell cord costume, black buttons.

A woman aged 40 ; hair dark ; Russell cord dress ; white stockings ; sidespring boots.

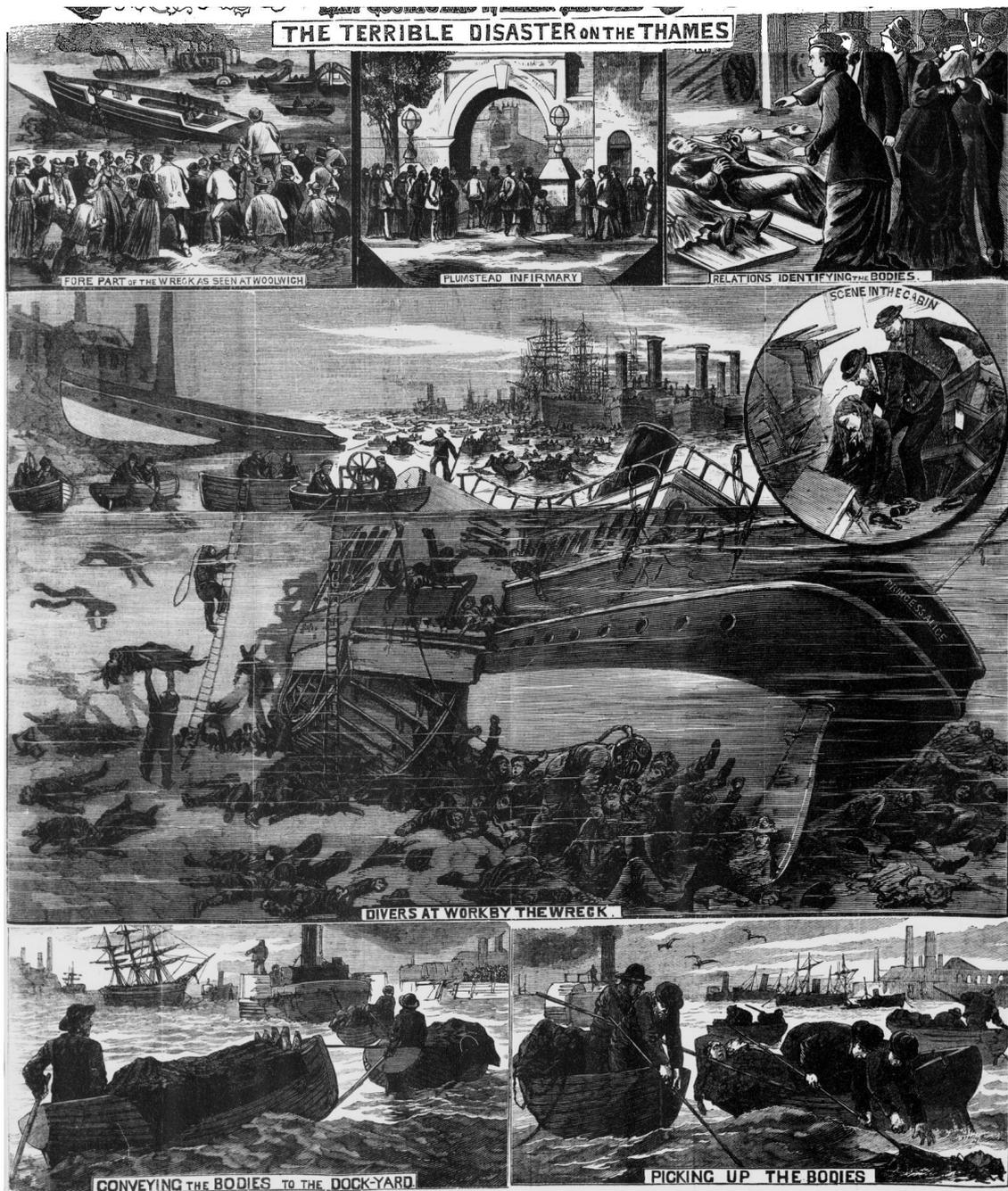
A boy aged 11 ; hair light brown ; brown tweed dress ; Oxford shoes ; flannel shirt ; on person, a small toy hammer.

The body of a well dressed man, supposed to be that of George Ingram of Abney House, Stoke Newington. He had a bill upon him receipted for having received a skeleton mat, 4s 2d ; fibre mat 6s 2d, 5 1/2 yards of cocoa-nut matting, 10s 6d.

120 September 21 1878

THE DISASTER ON THE THAMES

THE WRECK RAISED The stern of the "*Princess Alice*" was safely brought to land on Tuesday morning last week, between the hours of twelve and one, and the sundered portions of the unfortunate vessel are now lying close together on the western extremity of the property belonging to the Government and forming part of Woolwich Arsenal. This successful result, however, did not end the labours of Mr Charles Wood and his subordinates, as the foremost boiler of the wreck lay in mid stream, whence it was necessary to raise it. The several parts of the hull will probably be broken up on the spot where they now lie ; the injury they have received being of such a nature as to render it quite impossible for them ever again to be put to any nautical purpose. The whole of the wreck has been surrendered by the Steamboat Company to the Thames Conservators. As soon as the tide sank sufficiently to allow the resumption of the search begun on Monday in the second half of the raised vessel, a body of Thames policemen, together with some of the crew from the lighters, made their way to the cabins and began the disagreeable task. Some difficulty attached to it also, for the condition of the inside of the vessel was one of the greatest confusion. The furniture was found piled and locked together in quite an unaccountable way, and the heaped up tables and chairs effectually frustrated any attempt to enter rapidly. Every object also was clothed with mud, which covered the floor to a depth of more than three feet. One of the first to make his way into the after cabin said the whole place looked as if somebody had been doing as much harm as he could with an axe and a hammer, and the description could hardly have been improved upon. It was some little time before anything was found of more importance than beer bottles and glasses, but the searchers at last came upon that which they would willingly have avoided. In the ladies' cabin, where it had probably been washed by the water, the body of a man was discovered in an advanced state of decomposition. Soon afterwards one of the lightermen named **John Waterfall** came upon the corpse of a female under a table in the after cabin. The body, though sadly disfigured, was evidently that of a fine woman. Further search but too quickly brought to light a third body – that of a woman – which lay buried in the mud under a large piece of oilcloth. These were the only bodies taken from the wreck on Tuesday, and it may now be asserted with safety that the vessel holds no more. The views of those who considered that the disclosure of what the after cabin contained would add yet another hundred to the number of the dead have therefore happily been proved wrong.



THE FUNERALS Early on Monday morning, nearly 150 corpses were ranged across the immense shed at Woolwich, but before night eighty three had been consigned to their last resting place in Wickham Cemetery – namely forty seven women, eighteen men and eighteen children. These were bodies still unclaimed, and it was well that the authorities decided no longer to defer the burials, so many of the bodies having become decomposed to such an extent as to be unrecognisable. Coffins having been provided at the expense of the authorities, sixteen bodies were first selected for burial, but prior to the melancholy cortege quitting the Dockyard, three of them were identified by means of the clothes exposed to view in another shed. The thirteen corpses, contained in four Army Service transport waggons, were conveyed to the cemetery, followed by several hundred people, and interred in the presence of two or three thousand. The funeral service was read by the Hon and Rev A Anson, rector of Woolwich, who at the conclusion of the solemn ceremony briefly addressed the crowd. He said he considered that occasion the most melancholy it was possible for the human mind to conceive. They had laid in their last resting place the bodies of some whose very names those who stood around were ignorant of. There were doubtless amongst the number those who had left fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters alive, who would give the world

could they but be present, and whose hearts would nearly break when they discovered they had lost those nearest and dearest to them.

In the afternoon seventy more bodies were interred at the cemetery. The first instalment of twenty eight left the Dockyard at four o'clock in seven transport waggons. The procession was headed by a mounted policeman, a churchwarden and an overseer, as representing the parish. For some distance from the point of departure the streets were lined with spectators, who observed the mournful cortege pass in respectful silence, the men reverently lifting their hats, while not a few of the women were affected to tears. The route was through High Street, Edward Street, Powis Street, and thence along the Plumstead Road, and the procession was followed by several thousand persons of all ages, some of them in vehicles, but the majority on foot. After the lapse of more than an hour the cemetery was reached, and there the vast multitude was met by the Rev R T Love, curate of St Mary's, Woolwich, who conducted the procession not into the church, but to a spot at the top of the hill where 100 graves had been prepared, reading the solemn sentences of the Burial Service on the way. The waggons ascended the path, and their contents were removed and deposited in the earth, not less than six or seven thousand persons witnessing the distressing scene. Before the service, in which the rector subsequently assisted, had been completed, twelve waggons bearing forty five additional corpses arrived at the ceremony, and forty two of them were buried in the same way as the others had been. Of the remaining three, one coffin had been taken by mistake, as it contained a body which had really been recognised, while at the last moment messengers hurriedly came with the statement that the two other corpses had been identified in the Dockyard by relatives, through seeing the clothes. The right of the relatives to bury their own dead was, of course, at once allowed. The melancholy ceremony did not terminate until nearly dark, and a large number of spectators stayed to the close.

The sad task of burying the unclaimed dead was continued on Tuesday but, although the operations were on a much smaller scale, the public sympathy manifested was in no wise diminished. Thirteen females and two males were buried during the afternoon at Wickham Cemetery. The funeral cortege was to have quitted the Dockyard at three o'clock, but the actual departure took place quite an hour and a quarter later. As on the previous day, the procession was headed by a mounted policeman, who controlled the traffic on the route with remarkable efficiency. It consisted of four Army Service transport waggons, three of which contained four bodies each, while the last bore five, including one child. Arrived at Wickham, the sad spectacle was witnessed by at least 3,000 persons, who formed a large circle round the graves, and as coffin after coffin was lowered into its last resting place, many an eye glistened with tears.

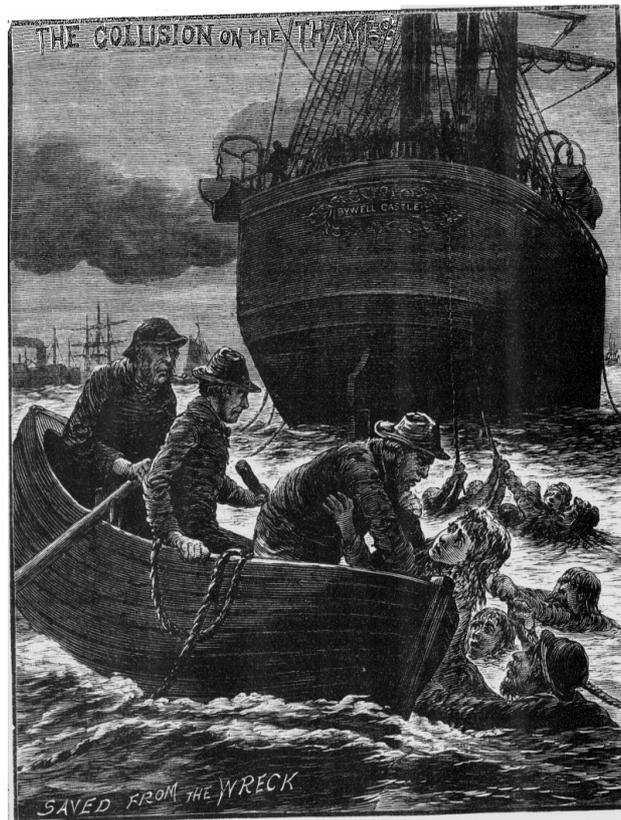
During the day several bodies which had been claimed by persons who were too poor themselves to pay the cost of transport, were conveyed to their homes in military waggons at the expense of the authorities. Numerous funerals of victims also occurred.

Twelve unknown and four identified bodies were buried on Wednesday at the cemetery at Wickham, whither they were conveyed in four military waggons.

121 September 28 1878

THE TERRIBLE DISASTER ON THE THAMES The reader will find a large illustration representing one of the many touching incidents connected with this ghastly tragedy. It is thus described by the leading actor in the scene :-

Mr Henry Reed, stationer of 57 Oxford Street, says :- My wife and I had been down at Gravesend spending the day ; we did not go down by the "*Princess Alice*", and our return by her was quite accidental. We were during the voyage on the upper fore deck, where there were other first class passengers, men, women and children, but the deck was not crowded. The other portions of the ship seemed to me to be very much crowded, chiefly by pleasure seekers. I never before saw so many children on board a Thames steamer, and the proportion of women on board seemed to me very large, but throughout the passage from Gravesend there was perfect order. I did not see one person under the influence of liquor on board. Up to within a few minutes of the collision a band was playing, and its last tune was "Nancy Lee". All went well and quietly until about twenty five



minutes to eight o'clock, when it was anything but dark. You might not have been able to read small print, but you would distinctly see a picture or a photograph. We were near North Woolwich, and had seen the powder magazine. The captain was standing on the paddle box, looking ahead and giving directions to the hands. I am perfectly certain we were slackening speed and going very slowly. Some of the people around us were straining their eyes, and looking ahead in the same direction as the captain, My wife and I turned to look, as the others did. We were then standing at the extreme point of the deck. Looking up the Thames, I saw a large vessel, a screw steamer, several lengths ahead, and coming directly towards us. It appeared to me that our vessel had altogether stopped and was standing still in the water. Everyone around us was anxious, and inquired one from the other what was the matter, but two or three men belonging to the "*Princess Alice*" who were on deck looking out, told us not to fear for we would go by all right, and that there was no danger. My wife expressed a fear that the great vessel towering so much above us would come into collision. She was some lengths off, but coming nearer in a direct line. I am quite sure she was coming straight on. I looked, but could see no lights on the large vessel, nor could I see any men in the fore part of her facing towards us. I jumped on to the seat, still looking towards the vessel approaching us, but one of the hands called upon me to come down by the captain's orders. I observed that the captain of the "*Princess Alice*" was still on the paddle box, and that our lights were hung out. As the large vessel came nearer to us while, I believe, we were standing still, I distinctly heard the captain shouting to her in a loud voice, "Where are you coming to?" I came down from the seat as ordered, when I found my wife and I were the only passengers on the upper fore deck. The large vessel was then close upon us. My wife, who had not lost her self possession, said, "Do not leave me", and I took her hands to keep her by me. I looked up at the vessel close upon us, but could see no person in her fore part nor hear any cries from her, but her great height above us would probably prevent our doing so. The collision must have occurred at that moment for, although there was no crash, we felt the "*Princess Alice*" tremble under us – a kind of strong, shivering motion. We turned, looking aft, seeking for means of safety, and I observed that the captain was no longer on the paddle box. I never saw him again. Screaming had then begun, and I saw a lot of people – quite a thick and excited crowd – rush, as I believe, across the gangway. I fancied there might have been a ladder there, for I saw several people, women with children and men with women, drop over the side, but whether on to a ladder or not I do not know ; but,

perceiving that there was a fierce rushing of steam up the side at that point, I feared approaching it, lest we might be scalded to death. Without any apparent shock, we found ourselves – my wife and I still holding together – in the water, and rose again. We sank again, I believe drawn by the suction of the “*Princess Alice*”. When we rose my wife was black in the face and nearly insensible. I could not swim, and could scarcely hold my wife up. She told me to keep quiet and to hold up. A plank was close by us, and going past. I seized it, and holding on to it, it carried us right behind the vessel which had come into collision with us. The “*Princess Alice*” must then have been behind. All around were people struggling in the water, screaming and calling to the men whom we could see looking over the bulwarks of the other vessel. My wife and I also shouted, and ropes, I believe several, were thrown over to us by the men. I distinctly saw three ropes thrown, and I believe there were more. I grasped one of the ropes, my wife still holding on to me ; some four or five others also took hold of the same rope, but I could not see how many took hold of the other ropes, as they were thrown behind us. The vessel moved on and, holding by the ropes, we floated down the river along with her, one of those clinging, a woman, screaming all the while. I believe she had lost a child. We must have floated in this manner for more than half an hour, going down the river with the ebb. We were shouting to the men above, and could hear them shouting, but could not hear what they said. Many vessels passed us at a distance, and we could see a good many boats moving about us, but unfortunately for us, none of them approached us. We could see the lights of Greenwich when a small boat hailed us and took us on board. It was a two oared boat with three men in it. We were taken on board with all those hanging on to our rope. Some of those clinging to the other rope must also have been taken on board, as there were twelve or thirteen of us altogether. I do not know the name of our rescuers, but from the fact that they were hailed by a passing vessel, I believe they belonged to her. They rowed us to Greenwich, where we landed. My wife and I, after procuring refreshment, took train to London, arriving home a few minutes before eleven. The men in the boat told us we were picked up two miles from the scene of the collision. We neither of us lost consciousness during the whole time.

Thursday last was the final day on which the clothing and other property found upon the “unknown” bodies were to remain at Woolwich Dockyard for inspection and identification. By Friday morning the town police cleared the yard, and it is not intended to continue the exhibition of relics elsewhere, a few articles from each parcel being alone preserved and the remainder disposed of. On Sunday, in order that the police in charge might have a few hours leisure, the collection was on view only from one till five pm, and for the remainder of the time the hours during which visitors will be admitted are to be those between ten am and six pm. No identification took place during Saturday or Sunday, but there have been a good many inquiries for missing friends. As an instance of the cases which the police are asked to investigate may be mentioned the application of a lady at Manchester, who has not heard of her husband for two years ; she is urging the officials to find out whether any of the unknown dead is likely to be her husband. No more bodies have been discovered at Woolwich, and the police are preparing an alphabetical list of those identified for the Mansion House Committee. Many persons, dressed chiefly in mourning, visited the graves in the cemetery on Sunday. Several wreaths and crosses of flowers now lie upon the fresh earth. Compared with the crowds who visited the wreck on the two previous Sundays, there were on Sunday but few persons on the beach or the river. During the week past most of the rewards due for the recovery of bodies have been paid by Mr Howes, one of the churchwardens, who has undertaken this duty. There are more than 100 claimants for the 5s a head reward. One waterman – **Varnham** of Greenwich – has established his claim for thirty two rewards, and there are several who picked up as many as ten or twelve bodies. In one case a waterman received £50 for finding the body of a missing person, and smaller sums of from £2 to £5 were given in other instances. The parish officers have allowed claims to the amount of £140, which accounts for 500 bodies. Mr Howes, who has questioned most of the men on the subject and has carefully examined the list of missing, thinks that there are still nearly 100 bodies in the river. Some, it is thought, may have got into holes where bargemen have been dredging for sand, and been there buried by the wash of the

tide ; men with drags state that they can “feel” bodies at the bottom of the river, but cannot disengage them owing to the suction of the mud. The local authorities have ascertained that the police employed on special duty since the accident number 400, and that to pay them at the usual rate of 3s 6d per day the sum of £210 would be required. It has been decided by the Mansion House Committee that no portion of their fund can be applied to paying the police, but several small sums sent specially for their reward will be handed over. The following are the names of the ships and the number of persons saved by each at the time of the collision between the “*Princess Alice*” and the “*Bywell Castle*” ; “*Mary*” of Whitby, Captain Hewson, saved thirteen lives ; “*Kate*” of St Ives, Captain Gatenby, saved twelve lives ; “*Pearl*” of Scarborough, Captain Moore, eleven lives ; “*Fly*” of Sunderland, about seven lives. The Mansion House “*Princess Alice*” Relief Fund amounted to £25,000 on Saturday ; four hundred pounds was received at the Mansion House for the sufferers during the day, including Lord Cranbrook £20 ; Messrs Hilditch, Williams and Co £25 ; the 13th Suffolk Volunteers £17 ; The Lord Chief Baron £10 ; and collection at St Mary's, Twickenham £37 1s 1d. In connection with this fund there were no additional particulars of any interest.

On Sunday afternoon the united bands of the Sunday League and the S Division of Police gave a special performance in Regent's Park in aid of the Mansion House Fund for the relief of the relatives of those lost in the Thames collision and the Abercarne explosion. The enclosure was well filled.

The following letter appeared in Monday's issue of the *Daily Telegraph* :- Sir – As becometh a Christian nation, now that the grave has swallowed up her victims, we are most generously bestirring ourselves in some slight way to alleviate the distresses of those left behind to lament their never to be forgotten bereavements. Of the 460 families directly involved in this direful calamity, there cannot be less than eighty families who have lost both parents, and probably leaving from 170 to 200 poor orphans, mostly young, and requiring substantial provision in orphanages &c. To this terrible catalogue must be added eighty widows, all but four with families, ranging in their households from one to ten children. The motherless, too, need as much if not more care than those deprived of their beloved fathers. These children will probably be nigh upon 300 – some, thank God, earning wages – yet many for whom our prayers and deepest sympathy are required must be dependent on their sole surviving parent for some years. There are, too, some 150 general cases, and the parents on both sides need something for garments of mourning, &c. It is probable that some families will not require any assistance, yet we have marked that the widows as a rule are of a highly respectable class and will find, unless generously helped, a difficulty in battling with the world for daily subsistence. What a mass of human woe and misery is involved in this one collision! I hope that everyone will esteem it a privilege to visit or help these orphans and widows and comfort them in their distress. I would also urge upon all the sufferers, their friends, or the clergy and ministers, to apply for, fill in and return at once the papers issued by the Lord Mayor and Committee for the relief of the sufferers. This last voluntary work, which God has appointed for me, has indeed been most trying to heart and body, yet I am glad to be of any assistance. One seems at times to live over again that life spent at Woolwich, and the cumulation of scenes of sorrow and woe makes one shudder involuntarily. Apologising to many friends for unanswering letters, and pleading the time occupied in disbursing £600 among the sufferers requiring immediate aid, I remain, sir, yours obediently.

A STYLEMAN HERRING, St Paul's, Clerkenwell.

122 October 19 1878

THE THAMES DISASTER A gang of engineers' labourers from the Steamboat Company's works at Woolwich have been engaged in removing the paddle wheels and shafting from the after part of the “*Princess Alice*”, and a barge load of the boiler casing, funnels and other fittings has been taken away from the wreck and landed at Roff's wharf. Such portions of the machinery as could be got at were detached from the engines and boilers, and the work of breaking up goes on at every ebb tide. The dismemberment of the hull, so far as the timber work is concerned, has not yet been commenced by the company, and the disposal of the materials is still a matter for consideration. At

Woolwich Dockyard the authorities are still engaged in removing the traces which remain of the purpose to which the yard was put during the early part of September. The covered space between the building slips, where the hosts of dead bodies lay, has had the gravel surface removed and is being paved with asphalt, for the patches of moisture with which the ground was saturated were, either from the state of the river or some other cause, quite visible for three weeks after the bodies were taken away. Whitewashing is being extensively prosecuted in various parts of the yard, and the odour of disinfectants permeates the atmosphere. Daily applications for missing friends are even now made to the police, some personally and some through the post, but no more of the clothing has been identified. Amongst the inquiries which the police have to answer, several have come from foreign parts, and more than one from America. The churchwardens and overseers of Woolwich have not yet made out their claim against the county of Kent for the expense incurred in the recovery and interment of the dead, and the question of liability remains uncertain. There is a strong desire in the town to save a possibility of scandal by making a rate of 3d or 4d in the pound, and paying the money without asking the county for an unwilling contribution ; but it is objected that this course would be hard upon the poorer ratepayers, and it is very questionable whether the Government auditor would pass the accounts. It is hoped that the county magistrates, when they meet at quarter sessions, will clear away the difficulty by consenting to spread the charge over the whole of their province.

123 February 1 1879

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Collier on Saturday held an inquest at the Poplar Hospital on the body of **Ambrose Leggett**, a lighterman. Deceased and another man were in the South West India Dock unloading goods from the ship "*Glad Tidings*" into their barge. When going down a ladder into the ship's hold he slipped in consequence of the ice upon the ladder, and although he clutched the sides failed to save himself, and fell a distance of twenty five feet on his head. He was conveyed in an insensible condition to Poplar Hospital, where he died next day from concussion of the brain. Verdict, accidental death.

124 February 22 1879

CORONERS' INQUESTS On Saturday Mr C James Curttar, West Kent Coroner, held an inquest at the "Admiral Hardy", Clarence Street, Greenwich, on the body of **John Edmund Tronbridge**, aged 26, lighterman of Thomas Street, Horselydown, late in the employ of Messrs Phillips and Graves. A witness named **Robinson** said on December 19 last he and deceased were being towed on the river, and in endeavouring to cross from one barge to another, deceased slipped into the water and was drowned opposite Mill Stairs. The body was picked up on Wednesday. The jury returned a verdict of accidentally drowned.

125 March 8 1879

DOINGS IN THE DIVORCE COURT

GREEN v GREEN AND TURNER This was the petition of the husband for a dissolution of his marriage on the grounds of his wife's adultery with the co-respondent. The parties were married at Carwood in Yorkshire in January 1855, and there have been several children issue, only one of whom is under sixteen years of age. The petitioner is a coal merchant and the owner of a barge, which he himself navigates. During his absence the co-respondent visited at the house, and according to the evidence of a woman named Smith, who was employed as a charwoman, she on one occasion saw the co-respondent at the house when the petitioner was away. Smith left them together, and having occasion to return, she found that the respondent and co-respondent were in the bedroom. The defence was a total denial of adultery on the part of the respondent, who is a woman considerably over middle age. She acknowledged that the co-respondent was in her bedroom for a few minutes, but he was there because he was the worse for liquor. Sir Jas Hannen was convinced of the adultery, and granted a decree nisi for a divorce with costs.

126 April 12 1879

BOAT RACE ACCIDENTS On Saturday morning, a party were being driven in a trap to the Oxford and Cambridge boat race by **Mr John Hemmings**, a master lighterman residing at Manor House, Old Road, Rotherhithe, and on arriving in the New Kent Road the horse fell. Mr Hemmings was thrown heavily to the ground, and on being picked up he was found to be dreadfully injured and bleeding profusely from a deep wound. He was removed to St Thomas's Hospital, where the house surgeon ascertained that he had sustained a severe comminuted fracture of the left leg.

127 April 12 1879

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Collier held an inquiry at the "Wade's Arms", Poplar, touching the death of **Reuben John Stafford**, aged 52, a licensed waterman of the port of Gravesend. The deceased on the 26th of last month was seen going into Milwall docks to take the ship "*Baldese*" to Gravesend. He was not again seen alive ; and being missed, his friends communicated with the police, who employed a diver, and he found the body at the bottom of the Milwall dock. There was no evidence forthcoming as to how the man got into the water, and there being no suggestion of foul play, the jury returned a verdict of found drowned.

128 April 26 1879

WOOLWICH

WHAT ARE WATERMEN'S RIGHTS? **John Kelsey** and **John Hermitage**, watermen, were summoned for assaults. The first complainant was James McMahon, who said that on Monday there was a regatta on the river at Woolwich, and that he was entering the boat of a waterman named **Chapple** at the Bell water gate when Kelsey tried to prevent him, saying that he was first sculler and had a right to take the fare. Witness said that he was entitled to hire any boat he pleased, and that he had been with Chapple earlier in the day ; but Kelsey dragged him out of the boat into the water, up to his knees. Witness and some friends proceeded in Chapple's boat some fifty yards from shore, when the two defendants rowed after them, threatening to drown them, and trying to stave the boat in. Eventually the defendant Kelsey seized witness by the collar of his coat, and tore the greater part of it off his back. Chapple, the waterman, was next called, and charged both the defendants with assaulting him by splashing him with water. In answer to the magistrates, he said that a passenger had as much right to select any boat he fancied as he had to pick a cab. Kelsey said that he was first sculler, and considered that Chapple was defrauding him and his mate of their legal fare. Mr Marston fined Hermitage 10s, and committed Kelsey to prison, with hard labour, for a month.

129 May 3 1879

THE SUICIDE FROM WATERLOO BRIDGE On Saturday Mr William Carter, Coroner for the Eastern Division of Surrey, held an inquiry at the "King Henry the Eighth" Tavern, High Street, Lambeth, into the circumstances attending the death of Miss Rosetta Jean Mercer, aged thirty years, late residing at No 89 Brixton Road, South Lambeth, who committed suicide by leaping from Waterloo Bridge on the evening of Wednesday last. It would appear, from the evidence of a waterman named **Audsley**, that at twenty minutes past seven o'clock on Wednesday evening last, while witness was standing on a boat raft on the Surrey side of Waterloo Bridge, and while looking towards Somerset House, he noticed a young woman standing on the parapet of the above bridge. She was about ninety yards from the late collection boxes. She leaped from the bridge and fell on the abutment, and rebounded, and dropped in the mud. Witness and three other watermen went to the spot and found the deceased apparently asleep. She breathed slightly, but was quite unconscious, and she died shortly afterwards. Mr John Mercer said he resided at No 89 Brixton Road, where he carried on business as a pawnbroker. He saw the deceased on Thursday morning at the mortuary. He recognised her as his daughter. Her name was Rosetta Jean Mercer, aged thirty. He saw her on Wednesday last shortly before five o'clock. She was partaking of an early tea in order to meet her mother at Vauxhall Station. In November last she was engaged to a German

gentleman. The letter produced witness received from his servant ; it was in the handwriting of his daughter. It ran as follows :- “Dear Father and Mother – I could not bear the disgrace. I could not marry him. He has had his revenge. Farewell, dear father and mother. - Your loving daughter, J MERCER. In answer to the Coroner, witness said that she was very low spirited, and he believed she was the cause of her own death. The jury, after hearing further evidence, returned a verdict that the deceased committed suicide by leaping from Waterloo Bridge whilst suffering from a fit of temporary insanity.

130 May 17 1879

THAMES

ALLEGED PILFERING BY CUSTOM HOUSE OFFICERS **Jeremiah Keleher** and **John Brady**, Custom House officers, were charged on remand with being in the unlawful possession of a bottle of Holland gin. About twelve o'clock at night, **William Selby** was in charge of the barge “*Oak*” outside the West India Dock when he heard a knocking, which induced him to go below, where he observed three men, but was unable to see their faces, and directly he spoke one of them blew out a candle. Brady was like the man who asked him (witness) what he wanted ; but he was not positive. It was stated that both prisoners were in charge of barges close to the “*Oak*”. At a quarter past three in the morning of the 8th, James Kemp, a sergeant of police, saw Keleher leading Brady, who was very drunk. Keleher was carrying a basket, and Kemp, on opening it, found a quart bottle of Holland gin. He then took both men into custody. The sergeant afterwards went on board the “*Oak*”, and found four bottles of hollands deficient in one of the cases. Keleher said he was not aware any bottle was in the basket, and was only doing a friendly turn to a brother officer in seeing Brady home. Mr Lushington remanded the prisoners for further evidence.

131 May 31 1879

THE RICHMOND MURDER

DISCOVERY OF A BLACK BAG IN DEPTFORD CREEK Considerable excitement prevailed on Saturday amongst the riverside population of Deptford, and the residents on both banks of Deptford Creek, by a rumour which was readily believed and circulated, that **John Gaston**, waterman of the Watergate, Deptford Green, had discovered in the mud on the shore of the creek the long sought for bag in connection with the Richmond murder, and in it the head of the murdered woman, Mrs Thomas. The creek at low tide has only a small stream running through it, fed by the rivers Ravensbourne and Quaggy, which pass through Lee and Lewisham and fall into the Kent waterworks and, consequently, there is always a large deposit of mud in the creek, but at high tide the water is on a level with the landing places and wharves, and vessels pass up through the creek bridge and the Greenwich Railway Bridge, as far as Ellis's Tide Mills in Church Street, the tide flowing as high as the office of the Kent Waterworks in Mill Lane, Deptford. The rumour of the finding of the bag with the head in it rapidly gained ground, and about seven o'clock on Saturday a London evening paper published an extra special edition, containing the following announcement :- “The Richmond Murder – Discovery of a black bag, with a woman's head. Gaston, a waterman of Deptford Watergate, discovered this morning the head of a woman in a black bag in Deptford Creek, and landed it at Penn's wharf”. Upon reading this, the authorities at Scotland Yard immediately wired to the police station at Prince Street, Deptford, requesting particulars, and Gaston having been communicated with, a reply was forwarded that he had found an empty bag in the mud of the creek. Shortly after, a detective from Scotland Yard visited Deptford and interviewed Gaston. From inquiries made by our Deptford correspondent, it appears that Gaston plies his calling as a waterman at the Watergate, Deptford, within a short distance of his residence, which is next the “Earl of Radney” public house, Deptford, and is also occasionally employed as a waterman by the General Steam Navigation Company, whose works are just inside the entrance from the Thames into Deptford Creek. About eight o'clock on Saturday morning he was conveying one of the captains of the company and his luggage from the works to the vessel lying in the creek when his attention was called to a black bag lying in the mud on the shore. He hailed a police

galley which was passing a short distance, but the men took no notice of the circumstance at the time, though they, after Gaston had picked up the bag, rowed back and took possession of it, the Thames inspector in charge of the galley taking it across the river to Wapping. There were some stains on the bag, which emitted a sickening odour and had evidently been in the river a long time ; but if the woman's head had ever been in it, it had been washed out by the action of the water. It had evidently not been long in the creek, or it would have been distinctly seen at low tide, when the bed is little better than an open sewer.

132 June 14 1879

THAMES

A RIVER SMUGGLER **George Steal**, a lighterman, was charged with the unlawful possession of three quarts of brandy, supposed to have been stolen. John Caley, a Thames police-constable, said that on Friday night he was in St George's Street when he noticed the prisoner looked bulky and stopped him. On asking him what he had under his waistcoat, he made no reply, but pressed something, when a quantity of hot liquor squirted into his eyes, nearly blinding him. The prisoner struggled desperately to get away, and kept exclaiming, "Stab it, burst it". With the assistance of another constable, he got the prisoner on to the ground, and beneath his clothing a large bladder, containing about three quarts of over proof brandy, was discovered. The prisoner said the liquor was smuggled, and had been given to him by a seaman. He now said he saw the bladder bobbing about in the water, and thinking it was a child's head, he picked it up, and was surprised to find it contained brandy. Mr Chance remanded the prisoner for a week for inquiries.

133 June 28 1879

A BARGE OWNER CONVICTED OF ASSAULT At the Ilford Petty Sessions, **John Thomas Brown**, barge owner of Montague Street, Canning Town, was charged with violently assaulting Mary Ann Bavin. The prosecutrix stated that on Tuesday evening the 10th inst, she saw the prisoner assaulting her son in the street, and on going out to protect him, the prisoner struck her on the head, and subsequently with an iron chain, which produced insensibility. The chairman characterised the assault as a cowardly one, and fined the defendant 50s, or thirty days hard labour. The money was paid.

134 August 2 1879

WESTMINSTER

A COMPLICATION OF CHARGES **Thomas Heathcote**, a bargeman, was charged before Mr D'Eyncourt with feloniously stealing a barge valued at £400, the property of his master, **Mr Charles Bates**, barge owner and contractor of Ashburnham Gardens, Chelsea. Mr A J Bristow prosecuted. It appeared that the prisoner was not a licensed lighterman, but was instructed on May 30th to take a freight of ashes from Chelsea to Southend, and either bring back a cargo of bricks from Mr Bates's fields there or return with the barge "light". It was also his duty to keep the log of the barge, and duly enter all transactions in it ; but he had failed to do so except in one instance, when he had taken a freight from Limehouse to Milton for a Mr Drake, and pocketed the £4 10s he had received. In fact, instead of returning in the barge, or reporting himself in the usual way, he seemed to have let her to hire and kept the money he earned in her. When taken into custody at Rotherhithe he had a cargo of bricks on board, which he was about to discharge on Thursday last. Prisoner said he was engaged under what was known as "share work". Mr Bates denied this positively. The barge was repaired at Southend, and he paid the bill, and the prisoner too. This sort of thing was very prevalent, and not only had he lost the use of the barge, but the customers had been defrauded by the prisoner. He was remanded for a week.

135 August 9 1879

A WOMAN'S ADVENTURE WITH A BURGLAR At the Runcorn Police Court, William Loxon alias Spikey, from Nottingham, was charged with burglariously entering the house of a **Mrs Carter**,

the wife of a boatman. The prosecutrix stated that on the night of the 1st ult, her husband being



away, she went home about half past eleven with her daughter, aged fourteen, who was to sleep with her. On getting near the door, she saw a man run up the street. She tried the door, but it would not unlock, and on pushing it, it flew open. She found the works of the lock upon the floor, and that the door had been burst open. She started to go upstairs, and when she had got up four or five steps she heard someone move in the bedroom. She felt startled, but plucked up her spirits and went upstairs. She said, "Who's there?" but received no answer. She then said, "You had better come out because I am not here by myself. Caroline, fetch that policeman from the top of the street". The prisoner then got up from the foot of the bed and showed himself. She asked him what brought him there, but his only reply was, "I don't know". She went downstairs and put her back against the door, being determined that the man should not leave the house. Prisoner shortly afterwards came downstairs, and heard her tell her daughter to fetch a policeman. Prisoner offered to give her 10s for the lock, but she refused to take it. He begged to be allowed to go, but she refused to let him. He then said, "I will soon make a road out", and went to the window for the purpose of making his way through it, but just at that moment the policeman arrived on the scene and took him into custody. The prisoner was committed to Chester Assizes for trial.

136 August 16 1879

BRUTAL OUTRAGE Two boatmen named **Hollinshead** and **Smith** were remanded by the Potteries Stipendiary at Burslem on Monday for a murderous outrage on a man named Lockett, who is not expected to recover. Returning home on Saturday night, he crossed the canal at Tunstall, when he was attacked by four men, and assaulted and kicked in a brutal manner, being found with his head cut open, and apparently dead.

137 September 6 1879

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Collier held an inquiry at the "Wade Arms", Jeremiah Street, Poplar, touching the death of Alick McFarlane, aged 30. The deceased, who was a seaman, was last observed alive on Friday week, from which time until Thursday morning nothing was seen of him. Early on that day a lighterman named **Smith** saw the body of a man rise to the surface of the water of the East India Docks, and with some difficulty recovered it and conveyed it to the mortuary, where it was ultimately identified as that of the missing man. There was no evidence as to how the unfortunate man came into the water, and an open verdict was returned.

138 September 13 1879

FATAL BOAT ACCIDENT ON THE RIVER THAMES On Sunday evening, at a quarter past nine o'clock, a shocking boat accident occurred on the River Thames near Southwark Bridge, whereby one person was drowned and seven others had a narrow escape from drowning. It appears that a party consisting of three married women, four men and a boy proceeded from Limehouse on an

excursion up river. On their return home on the ebb tide, the small boat ran foul of the "*Duke of Edinburgh*" saloon steamer, belonging to the London Steamboat Company, which was coming up river against the tide, between Southwark and Blackfriars Bridges. The boat was capsized and the eight people were immersed in the water. Their shrieks for help were heart-rending, and were plainly heard by persons crossing over Blackfriars Bridge. The mate, **Richard Rose**, who had charge of the "*Duke of Edinburgh*" immediately ordered the engines to be reversed, and a boat was lowered and the crew managed to rescue two women and two men and the boy. The other woman was saved by a waterman, as well as the man, but **Thomas Farmer**, a waterman and owner of the boat, was unfortunately drowned.

139 October 11 1879

WANDSWORTH

ATTEMPT AT SUICIDE BY AN ESCAPED LUNATIC Emma Walters, a ladylike woman, 50 years of age, was charged with attempting to commit suicide by jumping into the river from Battersea Park railway pier. **Richard Payne**, a lighterman, said the lady was on the pier all Friday afternoon, but he did not see her jump off. He picked her up at half past six, and saved her. Mr Paget inquired whether she was known. Mr Berrington, assistant medical officer at Peckham House Lunatic Asylum, said she was a certificated patient. He had the original certificate for her detention in the asylum. She escaped on Friday over the boundary fence. Information was given to the police, and at night he heard she was in custody. Mr Paget inquired of the prisoner if she had anything to say. The prisoner : Simply that I escaped. Mr Paget : Do you wish to say anything to me? Do you have any complaint to make? Prisoner (quietly) : No, except that I am detained there. Mr Paget : Is that all you have to say? Are you willing to go back? Prisoner : Yes, sooner than go to prison. Mr Paget then ordered the prisoner to be discharged, and allowed the lighterman 5s for his trouble in saving her.

140 October 18 1879

BRUTAL ASSAULT ON A CHILD On the 11th inst, a child of ten years named **Benjamin Bunce**, the son of a barge owner of 63 Albert Street, Bermondsey, was taken into Guy's Hospital with a deep knife wound between the shoulder blades. On recovering consciousness, the child stated that he was walking through Herring Place, a low locality by Thames side, and accidentally brushed against a man, apparently a sailor who, without any further provocation, drew a knife and stabbed the child in the back. The police have been informed of the affair.

141 November 8 1879

SHIPPING CASUALTIES AND LOSS OF LIFE At about nine o'clock on the morning of the 1st inst, the barge "*Edward*" belonging to Messrs Smeed, Dean and Co, brick merchants, Sittingbourne, bound from that place to London with a freight of flints, was rounding Grain Spit near Sheerness when she struck the sandbank and capsized, sinking immediately. The master, **George Joseph Green**, aged 24, **Rose Green**, aged 23, his wife, and **Ernest Broad**, a boy of 11, his brother-in-law, who acted as mate, were drowned. The barge "*Good Intent*" was close at hand, but the master (**Bartlett**) said the "*Edward*" sank so suddenly that he saw nothing whatever of Green and his wife. Green's body was recovered the same day by putting a boat hook down the cabin. A blanket was brought up with him, from which it is inferred that he had rushed down the cabin to save his wife, to whom he had only been married a few months, and perished in the attempt. The body of Green was removed to Sheerness pier. Green's parents are unknown, but he was brought up by a man named Allen, of Sittingbourne, who having no children, it is stated, bought him when an infant of his mother, who was residing at Dover.

142 November 8 1879

SUFFOCATION THROUGH DRINK **William Glass**, captain of a barge belonging to **Messrs Formby** of Rochester, has met with a frightful death through drink. He had been drinking in a

number of public houses at Rochester until he was in a helpless state of intoxication. In this condition he tried to get on board his barge, which was lying in the Medway but, in doing so, fell into the mud head foremost, and was suffocated.

143 November 15 1879

CORONERS' INQUESTS Dr Danford Thomas held an inquest at St Pancras on the body of James Perkins, aged 58, a painter of 33 Stanhope Street. On Friday fortnight deceased, who had been low spirited owing to slackness of work, left home without having breakfast, telling his wife that he would be back shortly. He did not return, and on Thursday **Thomas Pope**, a canal dredger, was at work near the Albert Bridge, and when tightening up his barge rope, pulled up the deceased, who Dr Job Collins said had been dead some days. Inspector Bassett having stated that the body was found near the footbridge which adjoins the Albert Bridge and that it was possible for a person to fall over the railing, the jury returned an open verdict of found drowned.

Mr G H Hull held an inquest at the "Queen's Head", Mortlake, on the body of Dennis Shaw, a packer aged 37. From the evidence of John Shaw, belonging to the fire brigade, Upper Tooting, it appeared that the deceased, who was his brother, had for some time been suffering from melancholia, having been unable to obtain work. He was missed from his home on the 15th ult. **Robert William Brooks**, a waterman living at 7 Alexander Road, Sandy Lane, Kew, deposed to finding the body of the deceased in the Thames, opposite the "Queen's Head", Mortlake, on the 31st ult. The body was much decomposed. The jury returned an open verdict.

144 November 22 1879

LOVE AND ATTEMPTED SUICIDE At the Brentford Petty Sessions on the 15th inst, a young woman was charged with attempting to commit suicide. She was seen to go down to the Thames at Twickenham, and ascend a heap of sand. After standing a little while, she threw herself in. A little girl raised the alarm, and **George Chamberlain**, a waterman, came up. The girl was floating slowly with the tide. The man jumped in and got her out, when she said, "Oh God, what have I done this for?" She afterwards said it was because she had seen her young man out with another female. Her mistress now came forward, and asked that she might be allowed to take her back into her service, as she had promised not to offend again. The girl was accordingly discharged.

145 December 27 1879

FATAL COLLISION IN THE THAMES On Friday Mr W Carter, Coroner for the Eastern Division of Surrey, resumed an inquiry at the "Neptune Tavern", Neptune Street, Rotherhithe, relative to the death of **Walter Allright**, aged 17 years, a waterman's apprentice lately residing at 35 Hickling Street, Southwark Park Road, Rotherhithe, who was found drowned in the Thames after having sustained a scalp wound and other injuries. Mr Erskine Pollock appeared to watch the case on behalf of Mr E Jury, the pilot of the "*Ambient*"; Mr Peroy (?Gyn) for the owner of the vessel, and Mr T T Buckrill for the owner of the barge "*Fisher*". **Thomas Lane**, a lighterman, was the first witness examined, and said he knew the deceased, who had been in the employ of **Mr W A Fisher**, master lighterman. On November 29, witness received orders to take the barge "*Fisher*" to the Suffrance Wharf, Rotherhithe, from the East India Dock, Limehouse, and the deceased boarded the "*Fisher*" and left the dock at one o'clock on Sunday morning on the flood tide. They arrived safe off Deadman's Dock, just below the lower entrance of the Surrey Commercial Docks, there intending to make the barge fast. They had arrived within 50 or 60 yards of the barge, on the south shore, about half past two o'clock in the morning, when witness noticed a steam vessel coming down about 800 yards from them. He noticed her masthead light as well as her port and starboard light. Witness could not state at what speed she was going. The vessel was on the southward of mid stream. Witness noticed that she was coming on the top of them, and he hailed them, and called out, "Starboard your helm". Witness did not notice any deviation of the vessel or slackening of speed, and immediately after, the screw steamer struck the barge about midships. The vessel's head was to the southward. On the collision, the steamer went over them and the barge sank.

Witness and the deceased went down with her. On rising to the surface, witness caught hold of an oar, when he saw the deceased, who cried out, "Tom, Tom, I am going". Witness endeavoured to throw a hitcher towards him, but he sank before he could catch hold of it. Witness did not receive any assistance from the vessel ; a boat was lowered. Prior to the collision, he did not see any persons on board. When he called out to the crew of the vessel, he received no response to the call. Witness was saved by **Alfred R Parkinson**, a waterman. The steamer's boat rowed towards him, and the crew asked him to accompany them on board. The vessel was the "*Ambient*" of Sunderland. It was moonlight at the time the "*Ambient*" collided with the "*Fisher*". Had the "*Ambient*" kept to the north shore, all would have been clear. **Alfred Ross Parker** (*sic*), a waterman and lighterman, deposed to seeing two steamers coming down Limehouse Reach, and to hearing someone say, "Where are you coming to?" The voice appeared as from a barge, but he had not noticed one. Witness then heard someone call out, "Starboard! Hard a starboard! Stop her" Immediately after he heard a blow struck and saw something rise under the bow of the vessel. The other steamer was following about a quarter of a mile behind the first steamer. He and another man saved the last witness in a boat. Herbert Davey gave similar evidence. Captain Buchanan Taylor of the "*Ambient*" deposed that prior to the collision he was standing at the starboard side of the bridge and telegraph of his vessel, Mr Jury being on the port side. The first mate was on the forecastle head, on the look out. He was perfectly sober, as well as the pilot. It was about three quarters of an hour before high water when they left the dock. They proceeded down river very easy, about three knots an hour. The collision took place abreast of the Victualling Yard, Deptford, when the "*Ambient*" was in mid stream. The pilot gave the order, "Hard a starboard". The collision occurred before the "*Ambient*" could pay off. A boat was lowered and manned by three of the crew for the purpose of rendering assistance to the men on the barge. Witness did not hear anyone from the steamer call out, "Stop her". Everything was done to save life. Nicholas Carveth, boatswain of the "*Ambient*" and Alexander Buchanan Taylor, the chief mate, having been examined, the Coroner summed up, and after a long consultation, the jury returned a verdict of accidental death, and appended the following rider :- "We, the jury, consider that a more proper look out ought to have been kept, and we also consider more care should be taken by those in command of steam vessels when passing up and down the river Thames".